



Students' Guide 10x10

-lists you can use-

Students' Guide to Colleges surveyed thousands of college students, and used the findings to create the 10x10: Ten lists, each containing ten schools, offering unique insights into America's top 100 colleges.

1.) Top 10 Schools You've Never Heard Of

These underrated gems offer incredible educations, and turn out graduates who go on to do truly impressive things. Never heard of them before? Now you have. We hope you'll take a closer look.

Antioch College

"Antioch doesn't offer a huge array of majors like other schools. If you want to judge us on that alone – your loss. What we do have is an amazing co-op department. Students take jobs while in school, we have the freedom to do almost anything we want to do."

- Rachel, an Undeclared major from Cincinnati, OH

Berea College

"Berea is an excellent school, very well-respected (by those who know it). Our professors are amazing, our campus is stunningly beautiful, and, if you get in, you don't have to pay any tuition at all. What more could you ask for from a college?"

- Paula, an International Relations major from Jackson, KY

Evergreen State College

"You get a lot of 'Isn't Evergreen that weird school where all the hippies go to do drugs, have tie-dye, dreadlocks, and slack off because they don't get real grades?' Kind of. But that's not the whole story ... there's a lot more to Evergreen State."

- Sarah, an English major from Los Angeles, CA

Grinnell College

"Many times people at home will ask me where I go to school, and when I tell them Grinnell they'll smile and say 'Oh, Cornell! Great school!' I then have to correct them – 'Uh, no. I go to GRIN-nell.' It's funny to see the embarrassment that then flashes across their faces. Nonetheless, we are a great school, with a gorgeous campus in rural Iowa, liberal students, **and a ranking in the top 15 by U.S. News.**"

- Jennifer, an English major from Dublin, OH

Harvey Mudd College

"We're a young school, only founded in 1955. That said, **we're still ranked the sixteenth** best liberal arts college in America. We also have the second best undergraduate engineering program in the country (at schools where the highest degree is a Bachelor's or a Master's). Pretty impressive, right?"

- Meghan, a Biology major from Mercer Island, WA

Hendrix College

"Hendrix is known in Arkansas and throughout the South as the finest college in the state and one of the best in the region. If it were located in the Northeast, Hendrix would be much more well-known and more difficult to get into. This little liberal arts college is a well-kept secret, but it won't be for long, especially if the administration has its way."

- Tyler, a History major from Frederick, MD

Kenyon College

"People have either never heard of Kenyon, or know absolutely everything about it because their friend/niece/doctor's-second-cousin went here, loved it, and couldn't stop talking about the place. And in

reality, Kenyon is top-notch. It has one of the most beautiful campuses in the country, small classes, liberal students, and a roster of fantastic professors, particularly in the English and Drama departments.”

- Sarah, an English major from Los Angeles, CA

Scripps College

“We are one of the only women’s colleges on the West Coast, and certainly one of the best. Somewhere around 80 percent of the Scripps students who apply to medical schools get in, and law school is about the same.”

- Katherine, a Cognitive Neuroscience major from Renton, WA

Wabash College

“While the idea of all-male single-sex education may seem old-fashioned and scary for many, it frees students from the distractions of women and creates a truly unique place to learn.”

- James, an English major from Fayetteville, AR

Whitman College

“Most students are from the Northwest, because Whitman isn’t too widely known on the East Coast. That’s too bad, because if Whitman spread its impressive name around, there’d be an East Coast population rushing to the school.”

- Ben, an Environmental Studies/Geology combo from Sammamish, WA

2.) Top 10 Sleep-Deprived Schools

*Students at these colleges work incredibly hard (and sometimes play incredibly hard, too!).
When there’s so much to do, who has time for sleep?*

Cornell University

“Cornell parties extremely hard. On the flip side, we also study extremely hard. We really are a school for academically masochistic students. In between partying and studying, there’s almost no time for sleep!

- George, a Government major from Matawan, NJ

Duke University

“Everything Duke students do, they do with intensity. We work hard. We play hard. We cheer hard at sports games. We study like fiends, even on Friday and Saturday nights. Especially on Friday and Saturday nights! There’s a lot of work here, and everyone understands work comes first (even if you have to give up sleep to get it done).”

- Russ, a Political Science major from Charlotte, NC

Georgia Institute of Technology

“You’ll be up until 3am on any given night, and you won’t be doing fun things – you’ll be up because there’s a test in electromagnetism the next day, or you’re finishing up a digital signal processing lab. If you don’t go to sleep soon, you’ll just pull an all-nighter and sleep one day...eventually.”

- Andrew, an Industrial and Systems Engineering major from Lillington, NC

Johns Hopkins University

“If you’re looking for easy classes and crazy college life, you’ll fail out and be left behind. Really, we work ‘til we bleed at Hopkins.”

- Tami, a Sociology major from Liberty Center, OH

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

“It is pretty common to have to do two problem sets after a night of drinking. It’s all about compromise – and certainly no one’s willing to compromise their college years for sleep.”

- J. Wan, an Electrical Engineering and Computer Science double-major from Saskatoon, SK

Mount Holyoke College

“Everyone here is involved in a billion different activities. I even had a friend who had to schedule showering time into her date book!”

- Shana, an Undecided major from Brattleboro, VT

Stanford University

“An admissions officer probably wouldn’t tell you that everyone at Stanford seems laid back, but they’re really working very hard. It’s known around campus as the ‘Floating Duck Syndrome,’ where a duck seems calm and content when its floating on the water, but under the surface that same duck is paddling furiously so it doesn’t sink, half-exhausted at all times.”

- Layla, a Psychology major from Fayetteville, AR

Wake Forest

“Our unofficial motto here is: “Work Forest, where your best hasn’t been good enough since 1834.”

- Melissa, a Psychology and Neuroscience double major from Cleveland, OH

Wesleyan University

“Wesleyan’s a great place to be if you’re ready for it. You have to be motivated, because there’s a ton of work. Life moves pretty fast. Be ready to live in extremes – we work hard, protest hard, party hard.”

- Michael, a Biology major from Kansas City, MO

Yale University

“An admissions officer would never tell a prospective student that there will be times during their Yale career when they won’t sleep for seventy-two hours straight because of work. You will study until sunrise, and skip sleep, many times during your Yale career.”

- Thomas, an American Studies major from San Francisco, CA

3.) Top 10 Most Spirited Schools

Students at these colleges ooze with school spirit (and that’s a good thing!).

University of California – Santa Cruz

“Students really love Santa Cruz. For a school with almost no sports or frat life, we’re constantly flaunting our school pride. We get especially excited when we see our mascot, the mighty banana slug, on any of our oh-so-numerous wooded paths.”

- Ken, an Anthropology major from Pacifica, CA

California Institute of Technology

“We’re all big dorks at Caltech. We take pride in the fact our football team is undefeated – because it doesn’t exist. Our dorm whiteboards are covered with math sets. No college can outdo our nerdiness, and we absolutely love it that way.”

- Vera, an Applied/Computational Mathematics major from Stillwater, OK

Carnegie Mellon University

“Our athletics are less than stellar, so pride here is reserved for who we are and what we do in the lab, on the stage, and in the studio. (Our “Sine, cosine, cosine, sine; 3.14159” cheer really does say it all!) We have a distinct Scottish heritage at our school; hearing the Kiltie Band practicing on the Cut every Monday evening is an experience unique to Carnegie Mellon students.”

- Andrew, a College of Fine Arts and School of Architecture student from Flanders, NJ

Howard University

“Howard University has a rich history (with alums like Toni Morrison, Thurgood Marshall, and many more), which students are reminded of every day. Our lecturers admire this place, and our fellow students are truly impressive. Every day I hear stories about my classmates starting their own companies, recording their own albums, creating films and documentaries. This place is truly special, not just a university but a place where great things have happened, and great things are still happening, history in the making.”

- Kristina, a Film major from Oakland, CA

University of Michigan

“Everyone loves U Mich, Football Saturdays, tailgating, watching our team (the Wolverines!) with 110,000 of our closest friends. (On Football Saturdays, Michigan Stadium is the 186th largest city in America!)”

- Marisa, a Political Science major from Rancho Santa Fe, CA

University of Notre Dame

“Words cannot describe what football means to this school. Every home-football-weekend, thousands arrive on campus, there’s tailgating, marching-band concerts, marching Irish Guard members...”

- Matt, a Management Information Systems and History major from Charlotte, NC

Princeton University

“Every now and again, you wake up at Princeton surrounded by these gorgeous castles and you think ‘Where am I? How in the world did I end up here?’ School spirit really does run rampant. (Orange and black isn’t just for Halloween anymore!)”

- Natalie, an English and Theater major from Riverdale, NY

University of Texas at Austin

“I love this place. I love that, no matter where I am, I tell people I go to UT and they’re impressed. I love that our alums are so proud, that our students are so happy, that you can go to a football game and cheer in the stands with *thousands* of other UT kids. The noise is deafening. I love that everyone here feels, and shares, a deep, deep love for their alma mater.”

- Leah, a Mathematics major from Pasadena, TX

Wabash College

“It’s amazing, the students and staff love Wabash, and the alumni can only be described with one word: crazy. No matter where I am, if I run into an alumnus, he’ll instantly ask what house I’m in at Wabash, then launch into a story about the success of our football team, especially in the Monon Bell game.”

- Alex, a History major from Indianapolis, IN

Williams College

“Williams has an indescribable spirit. Our overriding cooperative atmosphere makes the students so proud – and you can see it, especially during, say, a Williams versus Amherst basketball game, when the stands are bathed in a sea of purple-and-yellow screaming fans.”

- Alexis, a Political Science and Environmental Studies major from Cherry Valley, NY

4.) Top 10 Most Intellectual Schools

Nerd? Geek? Dork? Students at these schools wear the labels proudly. They love learning, for its own sake, and will argue academic theory into the wee hours of the night.

Carleton College

“Carleton students really do talk about their classes constantly. It’s unreal how excited we get about what we’re studying. We just love to learn.”

- Gus, a Classical Languages major from Chicago, IL

University of Chicago

“My friend has a saying – ‘The University of Chicago is not the place where the high school valedictorian goes. It’s the place where the people the valedictorians were too intimidated by go to school.’ It’s true. The valedictorians studied to get good grades, but future U. Chicago students spent their time in the library purely in the name of learning.

- Abigail, a Physics major from Ridgewood, NJ

Grinnell College

“If you don’t like talking about classes when you’re not in class, you won’t like Grinnell. Students here will ramble on about their favorite subjects for hours, even on a Saturday night. We love to think, and we love to get our friends to challenge our notions of this and that. Intellectualism rules!”

- Mary, an English and French major from Fayetteville, AR

Haverford College

“Haverford attracts down-to-earth, intellectually hungry students. The life of the mind rules here; there’s rarely a meal or a movie that can escape a philosophical or moral discussion.”

- Caitlin, a Political Science major from West Milford, NJ

Macalester College

“At Macalester, we *love* the phrases ‘postmodernism,’ ‘post-Colonialist discourse,’ and ‘hegemony.’ Be prepared to say each phrase multiple times during any given week, in class and out. At Macalester, we just have a shockingly good time with our academics.”

- Luke, a Religion major from Sanford, ME

Reed College

“Academics are the focus of most things at Reed College. Everywhere you go, people talk about classes, professors, books, and ideas. My living room has been home to a semester-long, ongoing debate about ‘functional variability’ in psychology. I think this is fantastic.”

- Eben, a History major from Wellesley, MA

Rice University

“A Rice education is much like Navy SEAL training for your mind, except that it lasts four years while SEALs get out of their training much, much sooner.”

- Joshua, a Mechanical Engineering major from Kingston, Jamaica

Swarthmore College

“We always talk about classes. If we’re drinking or something, we’ll at least mention how we should be doing work. You should always be doing work.”

- Katherine, a Biology major from Princeton, NJ

Wellesley College

“I think what makes Wellesley consistently so highly ranked is that the people who apply here are all geeks of some fashion or another. Most students here are into being at school and learning, and actually enjoy spending time in the library, working themselves to the bone.”

- Larsen, a Theater Studies and American Studies major from Merced, CA

Wesleyan University

“I’m sure all the schools you’re considering are full of smart kids. But think about the difference between ‘smart’ and ‘intellectual.’ Being intellectual isn’t just about liking academics; it’s about a deep commitment to rigorous inquiry, about a passion for books, numbers and theories. If you scratch beneath the surface on your college tours, surprisingly few top schools actually have intellectual environments. Wesleyan does.”

- Michael, a Biology major from Mequon, WI

5.) Top 10 (or 15) Schools for Different Types of Students

Different types of students seek out different types of schools. There are many types, but these are schools where pre-professionals, Greeks, outdoorsmen/women, creatives, and activists find themselves at home.

Top Schools for Pre-professional-types:

George Washington University

“Internships are integral here. Most students do at *least* one internship during their time at GW, and many have a different internship each semester.”

- Rachel, an International Affairs major from Wayzata, MN

University of Pennsylvania

“Friends of mine who have come to Penn from the artsy communities have been converted to J. Crew-wearing, résumé-minded future i-banking consultants or law school students. Most here – especially from

the Wharton business school – head straight for Wall Street, Corporate America, Capitol Hill, or graduate school.”

- Dana, a Political Science major from Lansdale, PA

Bucknell University

“Bucknellians tend to have parents who are successful in business, and we want to be successful in some sort of career ourselves. We’re not intellectuals so much as we’re smart kids who are pushing pointedly onwards towards our eventual lucrative careers.”

- Sylvia, a Sociology major from Hillsboro, NH

Top Schools for Greek-types:

Cornell University

“Cornell’s Greek scene is *huge*, and throws most of the good parties on campus. If being in a fraternity or sorority isn’t your thing, you really might feel left out.”

- Gloria, a Hotel Administration major from Portland, OR

Gettysburg College

“Greek letters are written all over the busiest bathroom stalls, library cubicles, desks...Greek life is very important here.”

- Jessica, a Psychology major from San Antonio, TX

Washington and Lee University

“If you don’t envision yourself being able to coexist with a vibrant and visible Greek system, W&L might not be the place for you. If you come to W&L, the word ‘fratty’ will creep into your vocabulary. It’s slang for all things that fit the traditional stereotype of the fraternity lifestyle.”

- Jessica, a Biochemistry (and possibly English) major from Rockville, MD

Top Schools for Outdoorsy-types:

Colby College

“The average Colby student is athletic. They enjoy hiking, skiing, the outdoors. They’re a member of the Outing Club (the biggest group on campus, with more than three hundred members.) And they’re tough enough to spend lots of time outside without bitching about how cold it is in Maine.”

- Andrew, a Government major from Richmond, CA

Colorado College

“We get outside a lot. Climbing, skiing, biking, boating, trail running. There are many opportunities to do this sort of thing.”

- Alex, an English-Creative Writing major from Columbus, OH

Dartmouth College

“At Dartmouth, everyone plays sports. If you don’t play a varsity sport, you play an intramural. If you don’t play an intramural, you play for fun. If you don’t play for fun, you’re probably a theater major or thinking about transferring.”

- Blake, an English major from Lake Forest, IL

Top Schools for Creative-types:

Bard College

“Bardians are idealistic. They use their work to rail against the problematic status quo in an attempt to recreate the world as they feel it should be. Bard students have a keen awareness of history, politics, culture, art – you name it – and they use this knowledge as a base from which they can start critical investigations. We’re all square pegs. Outsiders. Creative types. Weirdos. Those kids in junior high school that were sent out into the hall for causing trouble or the kids you never heard from very much at all. That’s us.”

- Rebecca, a Photography major from Radnor, PA

Hampshire College

“Hampshire students are so creative they not only think outside the box, they get theoretical trucks full of explosives, park them outside the box, then blow the box up so it’s never seen or heard from again.”

- Rochelle, a Postmodern Theory major from Daytona Beach, FL

Sarah Lawrence College

“SLC is a great place for creative kids who love learning for the sake of learning. We make art. We read. We explore. Sarah Lawrence helps us along the way. What Sarah Lawrence doesn’t do is train us for specific careers or jobs or futures. In fact, most students have no clue what they’re going to do after they graduate (seniors included!). But that’s okay. We all find our paths eventually.”

- Elissa, a Liberal Arts major from Los Angeles, CA

Top Schools for Super-Activist-Types:

Oberlin College

“The image that you have built up in your mind about Oberlin – with everyone always trying to save the world, protesting every imaginable issue possible – is true. Students for a Free Palestine, Save the Tongass National Forest, Transgender Awareness Week, tell the Senate to Vote No on the Central American Free Trade Agreement – these are all actual groups/protests that have taken place on campus.”

- Andrew, an African American Studies/Politics major from Washington, DC

Grinnell College

“Grinnellians turn everything we can into a forum to express our views. When we’re passionate about an issue, we immediately stage protests, put up signs and posters, attend conferences, and scream about whatever it is from any rooftops we can get ourselves onto.”

- Jeremy, a Political Science major from new Ulm, MN

Macalester College

“Macalester students have an honest and profound desire to try and make the world a better place. Many join activist groups and student government, and do community service. Almost everyone gets involved and really tries to make a difference.”

- Maura, an English major from Galesburg, IL

6.) Top 10 Schools in Amazing Locations

When studying is done, students at these colleges live in some of the best cities or towns to have fun. They love their surroundings, and their place in them.

University of California – Berkeley (Berkeley, CA)

“San Francisco – those twinkling lights in the fog – is just a twenty-five-minute ride across the bay and has absolutely amazing shopping, restaurants, clubs, pretty much everything you could ever ask for. And right here in Berkeley, we have these gorgeous rolling hills, nature at its absolute finest.”

- Analisa, a Legal Studies major from Sunnyvale, CA

University of Colorado at Boulder (Boulder, CO)

“Boulder students definitely get the perfect college town experience. Boulder is located in the foothills of the Rockies and has a beautiful view. Of course the best thing is that top-notch skiing and snowboarding are only a few hours away!”

- Marilyn, a Finance major from Northglenn, CO

George Washington University (Washington, DC)

“Of all the universities in D.C., GW has the best location. The main freshman residence hall is located just blocks from the White House, the International Affairs building is across from the State Department, and another dorm used to be the Howard Johnson’s across from Watergate. GW is also a short walk from Georgetown, Dupont Circle, and the National Mall. While other D.C.-based universities require a shuttle bus to get to the nearest metro station, GW’s metro stop resides on campus.”

- Rachel, an International Affairs major from Wayzata, MN

Lewis & Clark College (Portland, OR)

“Lewis & Clark is located on a little hill on the outskirts of Portland. We’re nicely surrounded by trees, scenery, a little creek...Portland is not a big night city, but it has a fair share of options, from hanging out in the local coffee shop to going to concerts, plays, movies, etc. It also has a really big bookstore that sells all sorts of comics, travel guides, literature, and academic work.”

- Liv, an English Literature major from Oslo, Norway

New York University (New York, NY)

“There’s so much going on around NYU that students usually come for the city every bit as much as they come for the school. Whatever you’re interested in, you can find it here, whether it’s going to a club, getting tattooed, visiting art galleries, skateboarding in Union Square Park, watching break-dancers in Washington Square Park, or eating hot dogs at 3am. There aren’t words to describe how wonderful all this has been.

-Jennifer, a Studio Art major from Abington, MA

Smith College (Northampton, MA)

Smith is in the middle of a great, liberal, artsy town...There’s definitely a lot of interaction between the town and Smith; people from the town will even attend our theater productions and sporting events in the springtime. The athletic fields are connected to the old state hospital grounds right near campus, so there are lots of joggers with cute dogs, and also a river which is great for swimming on those hot New England days.

- Cary, a Psychology major from Northampton, MA

University of Texas at Austin (Austin, TX)

“Austin is this vibrant and fantastic young city. UT and the city off Austin are, in a sense, the same thing. By that I mean to say, fifty thousand UT students look for fun in Austin every weekend, and Austin colors UT students feelings towards their college years to a remarkable extent. And, because every year new young faces flood into Austin thanks to UT, Austin has remained a young and dynamic city – really, we’re the ones keeping the all-night diners, the theaters, the concert halls, the exotic clubs, the themed bars, everything – we keep everything in Austin in business.

- Foster, a Theater major from Rowlett, TX

Tulane University (New Orleans, LA)

“New Orleans is an amazing place to live, and an even more awesome place to go to college. Ninety percent of the time, the weather is absolutely amazing...When friends and I are bored, we go to the levy (where the Mississippi River runs) and hang out. Go shopping at all the boutiques on Magazine St. Eat at one of the amazing cafés/restaurants in the city. Go walk through the French Quarter, listen to some jazz...Going to Tulane, you cannot be bored, there is just too much to do.”

- Rachel, a Biomedical Engineering major from Tulsa, OK

University of Michigan (Ann Arbor, MI)

“The campus tour should be a tour of Ann Arbor because there’s no real difference between U of M and Ann Arbor. The campus and city are one, and it has got to be the best college town in the nation.”

- Mike, an English major from Grand Rapids, MI

College of William and Mary (Williamsburg, VA)

“William and Mary is on the doorstep of Colonial Williamsburg. One time, two tourists approached my friend and I and actually asked us whether or not the college was one of the colonial displays.”

- Angela, an English major from Nairobi, Kenya

7.) Top 10 Fun-Loving Schools

This is NOT a list of “party schools” – students overwhelmingly told Students’ Guide there is no such thing. There are just students who love to party, and schools that throw different types of parties, and schools big on barhopping, and...you get the picture.

Boston College

“When BC students aren’t working their butts off, they’re partying their butts off. Weekends begin on Thursday nights; Boston bars are packed with BC students from then until Sunday, and BC juniors and seniors hold biig parties at apartments off-campus.

- Bridget, a History major from Montpelier, VT

Bucknell University

“It’s hard to say which days of the week are the most popular to party. During my freshman year, I would have said Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday...but lately Mondays have begun asserting themselves, too. It depends on your schedule. When does getting drunk and hanging out with your friends best fit into the equation? Any day you want to party, Bucknell will provide the opportunity.

- Brian, an English major from Collegeville, PA

Cornell University

“The official word from my school is that ‘most students drink one to three drinks, or no drinks at all, when they party.’ Sorry, Cornell, I don’t think you’re pulling anything over on 13,000 of the brightest young minds in the country with that one! Was I hallucinating the other night, or didn’t I see three guys pass out while doing a beer bong? I’ll tell you the truth, here and now, Cornell students drink. And drink. And drink. Bottoms up!”

- Christopher, a Human Development major from Salt Lake City, UT

College of the Holy Cross

“There is no doubt that Holy Cross is known for its drinking, and a student from Holy Cross can drink most other people under the table. Our stress levels combined with our location in the middle of nowhere might explain why so many people party at Holy Cross. Parties are always available to you and are enjoyable whether you’re sober or not.”

- Courtlyn, an Economics major from Bremerton, WA

Lehigh University

“By the time you graduate from Lehigh you’ll be a partying aficionado. Partying is an art form here, and students quickly become masters. Fraternities are the nexus of campus social life, and when frat parties aren’t broken up by the police, they’re brilliant.

- Aliza, a Journalism major from New York, NY

University of Massachusetts

“People party every day. Frats are a big part of life at UMass, but it all depends on how involved you get with them. People are different, so of course they party differently: some parties are about drinking, others about dancing, others about pot smoking, others I don’t know...”

- Carla, a Marketing and Economics major from San Juan, Puerto Rico

Pennsylvania State University

“For Penn Staters, partying is the number 1 activity around. I have never gone through a weekend where there’s been a dull moment. Someone once said, ‘You can really see college kids’ intelligence come alive in the many ways they figure out how to drink.’ And at Penn State, that is so true ...”

- Steven, an American Studies major from Staten Island, NY

Tulane University

“Social scene? Hello! It’s New Orleans. Bourbon Street, French Quarter! Need I say more?

- Jed, an English major from Akron, OH

Wake Forest University

“Did I mention we like to party at Wake Forest? With lots of alcohol? ’Cause we do. On the weekends, kiss your sobriety good-bye. We even have an event called D.A.M. every Saturday. D.A.M. is short for Drinking in the AM, and it’s a social event put on by a frat where everyone rolls out of bed Saturday morning, grabs a beer, and immediately launches into full party mode!”

- Melissa, a Psychology/Neuroscience major from Cleveland, OH

Washington University in St. Louis

“Wash U. students spend a lot of time doing work. But they also spend a lot of time partying. On any given night of the week, the bars are packed. Every weekend, the campus comes alive with fraternity parties, suite parties, and apartment parties. The fraternity parties get particularly wild, and over 25 percent of the student body goes Greek. If going Greek isn’t your thing but you still like to get sloshed every now and again, don’t worry – Greek parties are usually open to all.

- Sarah, an Undecided major from Rockville Centre, NY

8.) Top 10 Schools with Traditional Values

Not every student at these schools would call themselves “conservative” or “traditional,” but most take pride in the values and ways of life that their student body shares.

Berea College

“Berea may not seem extremely Christian to us as students, but when you compare it to other supposedly ‘Christian’ schools, we really are. I love that I’m able to share my college experience with people who share my faith. And since one of the main tenements of our faith is helping those in financial need, I’m proud that Berea itself stands as an icon of charity: anyone who gets in can come here tuition-free.”

- Ellen, a Child and Family Studies major, in Tecumseh, MI

Boston College

“Since BC is a Jesuit Catholic institution, service and community are very important values here. BC also has two mottos: *cura personalis* (care of the entire individual) and ‘men and women for others,’ and the school does all it can to make sure every student lives up to them. BC believes that an institution should teach you to be both an academic person and a spiritual person. For those cynics among you, this doesn’t mean we churn out strict Catholics; it just means when you leave BC you should be able to argue and defend what you believe and why you believe it, and have the strength of character to live your life accordingly.”

- Bridget, a History major from Montpelier, Vermont

College of the Holy Cross

“The name kinda throws you off at first. The religious part, I don’t know. Sunday’s an ‘I’m-sorry-God-I’ve-been-so-caught-up-in-school-and-chillin’-with-my-friends-and-oh-yeah-getting-wasted-for-the-last-three-nights-that-I-couldn’t-find-an-earlier-time-to-pray’ kind of day.”

- Bron, a Biology/Pre-med major from West Hartford, CT

Furman University

“The only people I can imagine having a really hard time at Furman would be atheists. The concept of religions plays a very real part in student life here. I strongly believe in God, and I like the fact that most people here do also. If you don’t believe in God at all, and want to come to Furman, that could be a problem.”

- Donna, an Undecided major from Greensboro, North Carolina

Morehouse College

“97 percent of Morehouse is African American, and most students are either Christian or Muslim. Most students are also Democrats but, because Morehouse is such a traditional institution, and because most students are religious, they’re the most conservative Democrats you’ll ever meet. They’ll also be less accepting of alternative lifestyles than Democrat students at less traditional institutions.”

- Leon, a Business Administration major from Delton, Florida

University of Notre Dame

“All dorms are single-sex and ruled by the infamous parietals system. Parietals mean that no one of the opposite sex is allowed in your room after midnight on weekdays and after 2am on Friday and Saturday.”

- Alexandra, an English major from Houston, TX

Vanderbilt University

“I think being on the conservative side of the college political spectrum is a good thing because you’ll find more balance here – our political demographic is much more realistic, allowing for more mature, civil, and less judgmental political debate than you’ll find at the extreme left-wing schools comprising most of the top tier.”

- John, an Economics and Spanish major from Louisville, KY

Wabash College

“Wabash is a place that can be defined by the Gentleman’s Rule. The Gentleman’s Rule states that ‘A Wabash Man is to conduct himself at all times, both on and off campus, as a gentleman and responsible citizen.’ This is the single rule that has governed Wabash men since Wabash was founded in 1832.”

- Patrick, a Biology/Art double major from Springfield, IL

Washington and Lee University

“You aren’t going to see people picketing, ever. Students are politically interested (and mostly Republican) but you aren’t going to see protesters against Columbus Day because he took America from the natives (I’ve heard that really has happened at other schools).”

- Laura, an English and Business Administration major from Savannah, GA

9.) Top 10 Schools with Unconventional Attitudes

Not every student at these schools would call themselves “die-hard liberal” or “unconventional,” but they’re proud to be part of a student body that is.

Antioch College

Obviously, Antioch attracts progressive, radical, idealistic students. On arrival they must find ways to deal with the isolation of living in Yellow Springs, Ohio, and being less connected to the outside world than many are accustomed to. They find connections in the Waffle House and the Steak and Shake, road trips, nasal drugs, and political conversations in many forms.

- Martin, a Communications/Journalism major from Northfield, MN

Bard College

“Bard students are, largely, involved in a set of politics that breeds a generalized ‘damn the man’ hatred of the bourgeois capitalist what-have-you...Most Bard students are pretty bizarre, and they’re always in search of ways to be weirder. Campus band names, for example, include Duck Duck Blood, and a club recently devoted itself to building a boat out of trash (the BARDge) and sailing it down the Hudson to New York.”

- Scott, a Political Theory major from Evanston, IL

Brown University

“Everywhere you look you’ll find creative types, happily freed from the Western canon, exploring such topics as the treatment of transgender inmates in the New York prison system, the politics of West Indian poetry, and hip-hop as a tool of resistance in hegemonic societies.”

- Micah, an American Civilization major from Lawrence, KS

Carleton College

“Some students come here knowing Carleton is a zany school, and so they kind of force their zaniness at first. They obsess about Frisbee; they write nonsensical phrases in chalk on the ground; some people wear capes. After a year or so, most people drop the zaniness altogether and start thinking about grad school or find something that’s more suited to them, instead of doing the typical conformist nonconformist stuff.”

- Gus, a Classical Languages major from Chicago, IL

Grinnell College

“Grinnell is a tiny island of rampant liberalism in the middle of a bunch of Iowa cornfields.

STUDENTS' GUIDE TO COLLEGES

Politically, many Grinnellians leans toward the left, enough so that we're often categorized as a campus of 'flaming liberals.'"

- Mary, an English and French major from Fayetteville, AR

Hampshire College

"You know that 'unique-weird' kid from high school who was artsy and a little bit annoying, but if you ever spoke to him you found out he was also interesting and fun in a good way? That's the kid who winds up coming to Hampshire. These are kids who love to be challenged, who hate the status quo.

- Rochelle, a Postmodern Theory major from Daytona Beach, FL

Pitzer College

[Pitzer is known as] the most liberal of the Claremont Colleges (5Cs), with a student body of crazy, artsy hippies and activists...Despite the few conservative students, Pitzer remains quite liberal, and there are a good number of 'hippie'/artsy, environmentally friendly, peace lovin' students.

- Bertha, an Undecided major from Honolulu, HI

Reed College

"There is no average Reedie. Reedies can have purple hair or blonde hair (or both within the span of a few weeks), black clothes or pink clothes, scary facial piercings or no piercings, tattoos or toe rings, Abercrombie jeans (*maybe* we'll tolerate those) or no clothes at all.

- Kendall, an English major from Duluth, MN

Swarthmore College

Swarthmore has a largely left-of-center student population. A friend of mine once claimed that 'Everyone at Swarthmore is left-wing and/or queer and/or Jewish. And/or left-handed.' In general, if she had added 'oppressed,' she'd have a universal statement.

- Bryn, a Chemistry major from Exeter, NH

Vassar College

"I'd say our student body's devotion to rampant liberalism is roughly equivalent to the pope's devotion to Catholicism. (We have a student-run porno magazine on campus called Squirm, for god's sake.)"

- Jessica, an English major from New Rochelle, NY

10.) Top 10 Misunderstood Schools

When we asked students how the reality of going to their school differed from the reputation, they had a LOT to say. Here are ten schools where students strongly felt their schools are being misunderstood.

Barnard College

"Some people still think it's the backdoor to Columbia. Preposterous. The two schools are very separate entities, and even though they're next door to one another they offer entirely different feels, administrations, academic philosophies."

- Anne, a Sociology major from Augusta, GA

Bates College

"The student body is much preppier than rumors would have you believe. The hippie population is prominent and fairly outspoken, but if you take a look around Commons, the dining hall on campus, you are far more likely to notice the hordes of New Englanders clad in Abercrombie than the few hippies in the room."

- Randi, an English major from Milford, DE

Boston University

"Let's clear this up here and now: BU is a different school than BC. Just because both schools' abbreviations start with the letter B, and because both schools happen to coexist on the same portion of Commonwealth Avenue, does not make them the same school. We're our own entity, okay?"

- Lucia, a Latin American studies major from Springfield, MA



University of California – Berkeley

“Berkeley students used to be known as hippies, but there aren’t many hippies here anymore – if you walk around campus and take a look, no one’s wearing tie-dye, no one is any quirker looking than students anywhere else. Berkeley used to be known as a radical political powerhouse, but that’s been toned down.”

- Bob, a Business and Psychology major from Malibu, CA

University of Colorado at Boulder

“Well, UC Boulder was named the number-one party college in America by the *Princeton Review*. But it’s honestly not the biggest party school; it’s been blown out of proportion.”

- Marilyn, a Finance major from Northglenn, CO

College of the Holy Cross

“There unfortunately is the belief that Holy Cross students are a bunch of white Irish Catholics whose conservative nature oppresses anyone different. This is not the case. Holy Cross is an open environment that accepts you whether you are black, white, purple, gay, straight, unsure...anything.”

- Courtlyn, an Economics major from Bremerton, WA

Oberlin College

“Oberlin is often pegged as an oddity more than an actual rigorous academic environment. Yet I’ve visited friends who go to Ivy League schools, and they generally have a lot less work than I do.”

- April, a Chemistry major from Charlotte, NC

Scripps College

“Most people have either never heard of [Scripps] or assume it is part of the Scripps Oceanographic Institute in San Diego. Those who do know of it, however, know it to be an upper-tier private school with the high academic standards expected of an Ivy but without (thank God) the snootiness.”

- Amy, an English major from Fillmore, CA

Tufts University

“Tufts has a reputation as being just-under-Ivy and also has an academic reputation of being very strong for international relations and premed. A lot of us, myself included, turned down Ivies. Some of us didn’t even apply to any because we just had no desire to go there. The academics are just as rigorous as some of the Ivies, if not more. Yes, there are some Ivy rejects here, but there are Tufts rejects at Ivies, too.”

- David, a Political Science and Community Health major from Plainview, NY

All Women’s Colleges...for example:

Bryn Mawr College

“Typical misconceptions include: we’re a small school for “rich girls” who believe themselves to be among the academic and social elite; a school for cultish lesbians who don’t shower, and run around holding gay pride rallies every afternoon; or it’s a school full of highly intelligent, overworked, man-starved women who on weekends devolve into horny savages and have sex with any Haverford or Swarthmore boy that steps onto campus.”

- Laurel, an English major from Glassboro, NJ

Spelman College

“[Spelman’s known as] a small black college, notorious for attracting young and wealthy black girls from all over the world and turning them into man-eating feminists, full-fledged lesbians, or stuck up, spoiled, and educated brats. [Is this reputation accurate?] Hell no! Spelman women do come from all over the world, but we definitely don’t all think a certain way.”

- Charli, a Sociology and Anthropology major from Maplewood, NJ

Wellesley College

“We are sometimes frat-ho man-hating lesbians, sometimes dynamic leaders, sometimes the epitome of *Mona Lisa Smile*, sometimes rebellious. I’d say that every person at Wellesley is an intelligent human being. Every alumna that I’ve met is dazzling.”

- Sophie, a possible Economics and International Relations major from Audubon, PA