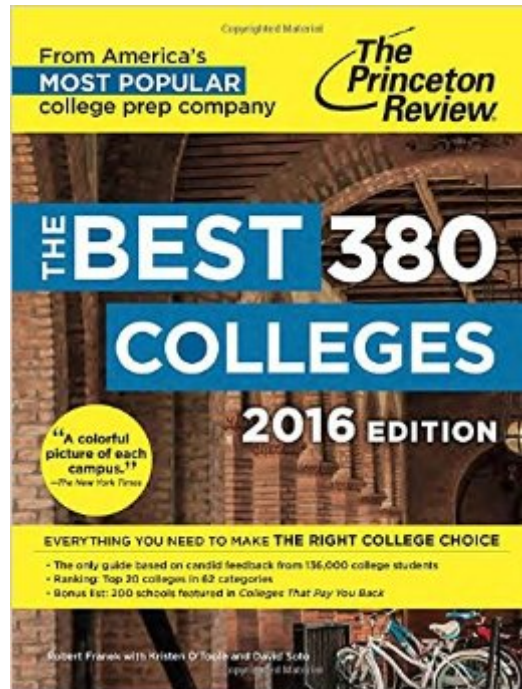


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# The Best 380 Colleges, 2016 Edition (College Admissions Guides)



## Synopsis

What Makes THE BEST 380 COLLEGES the Most Popular College Guide? Written for any student or parent mystified by the confusing college admissions process, The Best 380 Colleges provides the facts and information needed to make a smart decision about which of the country's best schools to consider. It contains everything you need to make the right college choice and features:

- DIRECT QUOTES FROM STUDENTS In-depth school profiles covering academics, administration, campus life, and financial aid
- Insights on unique college character, social scene, and more
- Candid feedback from 136,000 students
- RANKING LISTS & RATINGS SCORES Lists of the top 20 colleges in 62 categories based on students' opinions of academics, campus life, facilities, and much more
- Ratings for every school on Financial Aid, Selectivity, and Quality of Life
- Bonus list of the 200 schools featured in Colleges That Pay You Back
- DETAILED ADMISSIONS INFORMATION The "Inside Word" on competitive applications
- Tuition, graduation rates, and average indebtedness

What the media is saying about The Best 380 Colleges from The Princeton Review:

- “The offbeat indexes, along with the chattily written descriptions of each school, provide a colorful picture of each campus.”
- “The New York Times”
- “The most efficient of the college guidebooks. Has entertaining profiles larded with quotes from students.”
- “Rolling Stone”
- “A great book.... It's a bargain.”
- “CNN”
- “Our favorite college guidebook.”
- “Seventeen”
- “Provides the kind of feedback students would get from other students in a campus visit.”
- “USA Today

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Princeton Review "Best Colleges 2015" is a somewhat useful guide to about 400 of America's 2,000 four year colleges. It does a good job of describing how the "personality" of one college differs from its peers, which can help high school students decide which colleges would be the best fit for them. It has MANY weak points. Most of the colleges included are on the east coast and west coast. In most other states only one or two colleges are covered. Most of the college profiles have not been updated much, if at all, in the past five years. The cost information is a year or two out of date. Yet, even with those weaknesses, this book is worth buying IF a student is looking at some of the colleges that are profiled. By combining this book with the MUCH better Tanabe "Ultimate" guide to colleges, and by also using the up to date cost information on the free College Board website, it is possible to figure out which colleges offer the "best fit" and begin making plans for college visits. Note: The FREE College Board website offers the most current information for every four year college in America, including costs and financial aid, and accurate SAT and ACT score data for each college. The College Board website covers every four year college in America and is the most up to date source of trustworthy information. AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER OF SENIOR YEAR: Go to the admissions website of each college you are considering. Carefully study the deadlines and procedures for "Early Decision I", "Early Decision II" "Early Action", "Rolling Admissions" and for the regular admissions process. At many of the "Top One Hundred" colleges, applying "Early Decision" in October provides a big advantage compared with waiting until December. At many top public universities, the "rolling admissions" process greatly favors October applications over December and January applications. It is impossible for high school counselors to know the current details of the "Early Decision" admissions process at dozens of colleges. High School students and their parents need to do LOTS of homework to decide whether to apply "Early Decision" and students need to begin working in September on the required essays for each college.

**\*\*UPDATE AUGUST '15\*\*** Rather than have a brand new listing for the 2016 Edition of this book, lazily did a "cut and paste" and transported all the reviews from last year to here. Why?? As to the 2016 Edition (853 pages), we are now at "380 Best Colleges", with four colleges dropped and five new colleges added: Clark University, Earlham College, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Stetson University, and University of New England. Listed below in full is my review of last year's edition, which simply "cut and pasted" to be listed here: THE BEST COLLEGE SEARCH BOOK

(AND MY KIDS AGREE)The Princeton Review publishes a number of college search-related books, including the "Complete Book of Colleges" and this one. This book is essentially a distilled version of the "Complete Book", and frankly a lot more useful (but for people completely new to the college-searching process, definitely check that out too). "The Best 379 Colleges (2015 Edition)" (837 pages) is similar to last year's edition. After holding the number of best colleges at 378 last year (remember this book started off in 1992 with the best 250, where have the years gone!), this year there are 8 new "best" colleges: Assumption College, Coe College, College of St. Benedict, Gordon College, Randolph-Macon College, Siena College, State University of New York-College of Environmental Sciences, and University of Louisville. Seven schools from last year's list were dropped (but if the inflation of "best" colleges continues, it's inevitable we'll get to 400 colleges at some point). There are over 60 fun-to-browse top 20 lists of best/worst, such as "Most Beautiful Campus", "Students Study the Most", "Party Schools", and "Most Politically Active Students" (my daughter's school is the #10 ranked school on that list, it was ranked #4 last year, so yes these rankings change from year to year, although not sure how exactly these rankings come about, a drop from 4 to 10 in a single year seems pretty steep). The best feature of this guide remains the 2 page layout for each of the colleges, with in-depth information on campus life, academic selectivity (the number of applicants, how many were accepted, and of those how many actually decided to attend), up-to-date tuition and room/board costs (I checked the numbers of my daughter's college, and they are accurate), etc. Another aspect that is very helpful is the right page sidebar, in which the essence of the university is distilled, and Princeton Review's final assessment on how tough it really is to gain admission when all is said and done. I again re-read the listings of the various colleges that my daughter and my son considered before making a final choice (she chose a school in DC, he stayed in Ohio), and can only state that all of what is written in here seems very much on point. In the end, the proof is in the pudding: of the many college guides out there, my daughter spent more time with this book (when she was looking at colleges a few years ago) than with any other. This book is not the first place to start the college search, but once your son or daughter has narrowed down his/her colleges of choice, and assuming those colleges are featured in the "best 379", this book clearly is the best resource, the last step before a campus visit, and can be used again following the campus visits. I've looked at a lot of college-search books and if I was forced to recommend only one book among all the college search guides, this book is it, period.

This is a book we have picked up constantly as we think about which colleges are right for my twins, who are currently juniors in HS. It's very cleanly printed and easy on the eyes. Each college gets a

2-page spread, and the sections are consistent, so you know exactly where to look if you have a quick question like "is it a big school?" or "what's the acceptance rate?" or "is the culture mostly preppy or earthy-crunchy?" We love that they talk about the school's "typical" student and that they interview students, too. It gives you more than googling does, and faster, and it's easier to do when there's more than one person. The only thing I would change would be to include a big map of the country on the first page, and on each school's page I would put a little map with an indication where the school is. I know my local area, but I've never heard of some of the schools across the country, and it would be helpful.

Decent coverage of most good/great schools. Where are the Cal State colleges? Only CSU Stanislaus is listed! What??? What about Cal Poly for instance? San Diego State? Bottom line, you can get more comprehensive coverage from online sites.

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