

HIGHLY SELECTIVE SCHOOLS

Insights into the Admissions and Application
Process of America's Most Selective
Post-Secondary Institutions



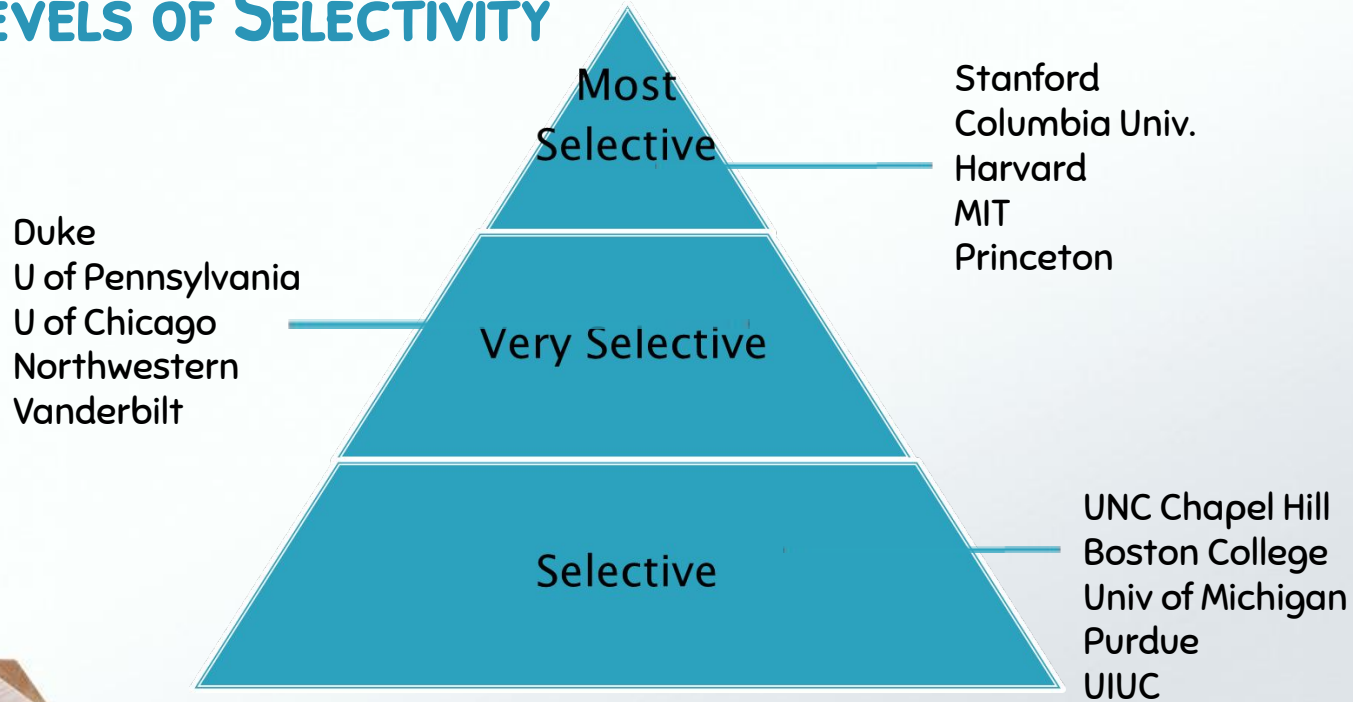


PLAN FOR TONIGHT

- + What does highly selective mean?
- + Typical profile of an applicant
- + Is a highly selective college right for me?
- + From an admissions office perspective...
- + What can I do as an applicant?



LEVELS OF SELECTIVITY



School Name	# of Applicants (Class of 2026)	Acceptance Rate	Average SAT
California Tech	16,626	2.7%	Test Blind
Harvard	56,937	3.4%	1510*
Stanford	56,378	3.7%	1530*
Columbia	57,129	3.9%	1490-1560*
Yale	52,250	4.4%	1540* *test optional

TYPICAL PROFILE OF A SELECTIVE SCHOOL APPLICANT

- + Top 5% of graduating class
 - + Class of 2024 – 4.50 weighted GPA
- + Average SAT 1500+ (if submitting)
- + Has maximized core class rigor in the most challenging curriculum they can handle

SO A 1520 SAT AND A 4.5 GPA GETS ME INTO
STANFORD, RIGHT?





NOT NECESSARILY...

- Many applicants have perfect GPAs, strong performance in AP and Honors courses, amazing extracurricular and leadership resumes... And most are turned away by the most selective colleges.
- So even if the Ivy League colleges only admitted valedictorians, they would only have an admit rate of 41%.



WILL A SELECTIVE COLLEGE REALLY GIVE YOU WHAT YOU NEED?

- + Highly selective colleges are NOT for everyone.
- + The competition doesn't end after admission.
 - + Academic pace at these college is blistering. Even as a top student, you may struggle to get noticed and/or get noticed by professors.
 - + Extracurriculars can be just as demanding, competitive, and intense.



GOAL OF THE ADMISSIONS OFFICE

To create the most talented and *balanced* incoming class possible, based on the school's mission and the institution's directives to the Admissions Office.



WHAT CAN I CONTROL?

Challenge Yourself!

- + Most rigorous course load you can handle
- + Get involved and stay involved (depth rather than breadth) – “pointy” rather than well-rounded

Explore College Options

- + Consider your skills, needs, and values
- + Visit colleges
- + Connect with admission reps





Will you make a difference inside and outside the classroom?



Have you demonstrated leadership, achievement, passion, and talent?



Have you shown “demonstrated interest”?



Are you following them on social media?
(Do you know YOU are being followed as well?)

HOW CAN I MAKE MY APPLICATION STAND OUT?

ESSAY

- + Show them who you are aside from GPA and test scores
- + This is an opportunity to show your true, authentic self

APPLY EARLY

- + If it's your TOP CHOICE, consider applying Early Decision (at minimum, Early Action)

PERSONAL FIT

- + College selection is a two-way street.
- + Highlight why the college is a good match for you.
- + Be thoughtful about your application list. It is a selfish decision.



TAKE TIME TO FIGURE OUT YOUR FIT!

College Fit
Assessment
Worksheet



FINAL THOUGHTS

YOUR APPLICATION PROBABLY WON'T INCLUDE ANYTHING THEY HAVEN'T SEEN
BEFORE.

MAKE THEM ROOT FOR YOU!



WAIT, ONE MORE FINAL THOUGHT...


I didn't need to attend my dream school to do well or to be happy at college. I am validated by my name on the dean's list, my work at The Temple News and the friends I've made during my time at Temple; all of which were made possible solely by my own personal qualities and hard work.

I used to think I would never get over the way my college decision played out. For so long I was plagued by disappointment and anger, convinced I was a failure because I didn't end up exactly where I planned. This belief left me stagnant academically, socially and emotionally until I realized my potential was solely up to me. Freeing myself of these constraints allowed me to finally enjoy my college experience and learn to love where I'm at.

I was holding myself back by placing such an emphasis on a dream that didn't truly determine my capabilities, and I now know I'm defined by my actions and accomplishments regardless of where I am. When I graduate I'll receive the same degree, free of colossal student loan debts, and be proud to say I made my mark at Temple.

Excerpt from "Turning Rejection Into Opportunity". Claire Zeffer.
22 October 2023.

<https://temple-news.com/turning-rejection-into-opportunity/>

A decorative background on the left side of the slide. It features a wooden surface at the bottom with a brown geometric object (a dodecahedron) on it. Behind the surface are several books: a red one, a white one, and a blue one. A large white rectangular area with a black border is positioned in the center, containing the text.

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS?

FOLLOW UP WITH YOUR STUDENT'S COUNSELOR!

- + Parent/Teacher Conferences
 - + Thursday, 11/16, 4:30–8 pm
 - + Monday, 11/20, 8 am–3 pm, 4:30–8 pm
- + Email your student's counselor directly to request a conference

THANK YOU!

Cort Graske
Counselor, Tradition House

Cindi Gustafson
Counselor, Pride House

