

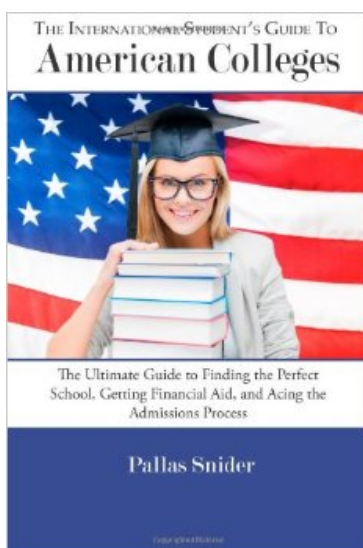
Book Review

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International Student's Guide to American Colleges

Snider, P. (2014). *The International Student's Guide to American Colleges*. Jeffersonville, VT: Palta Books.

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In the opening pages of *The International Student's Guide to American Colleges*, the author lays out in a clear and organized way the purpose of the book, which is to assist international students in figuring out the type of American college or university that is best for them and to provide the tools needed to build their college lists.

The author promises that by the end of the book, prospective international college students will be able to identify the characteristics of the 176 profiled schools that match their preferences and will be able to compile a list of 8 to 12 schools that will meet their future academic needs. The author assists students in cutting through the confusion and anxiety often associated with applying to American colleges and universities and financing an American degree.

The College Match Profile Method instructs prospective students on how to build a list of preferences when selecting schools and how to determine the reasons for attending school in the United States. The author explains that for some students, that means the prestige factor associated with U.S. colleges and universities. For others, it is the academic structure of American schools and for many other students it is the perceived unique educational experience offered by U.S. colleges and universities.

The book is organized into three sections with a useful list of resources and glossary of terms at the end of the publication.

Section 1 focuses on the different aspects of the college experience, including the differences between colleges and universities, public schools vs. private schools, campus structures, location, size, academic philosophies, curriculum type, selectivity, financial aid, prestige and the various aspects of the residential experience. The author lists 31 specific designations that make colleges distinctive.

Section 2 guides the reader through the college admission process, including the nuts and bolts of filing an application. The author lists admission criteria and the importance of high school grades, test scores, awards and honors, extracurricular activities, recommendations and

personal qualities. The author continues, in this section, to define the Common Application and its competitor, the Universal College Application, as well as the differences between early decision, early action, single choice early action and rolling admission. The section on deadlines and timetables is especially useful.

Section 3 instructs the reader to identify the preferences listed in Section 1 and to match those preferences with the 176 schools listed in the book. The reader is guided to go back to the categories listed in Section 1 and review the characteristics that were circled with the College Match Profile Chart and then build a college list of between 8 to 12 schools.

The International Student's Guide to American Colleges is a comprehensive and useful guide for prospective international students to read when considering studying in the United States. The author provides the reader with a step-by-step approach to determine the best schools to consider for application and admission.

However, the author does not take into account other important criteria, including transfer rates for international students for each of the schools listed, international student progression from first to second year and graduation, graduate and professional school acceptances, as well as job placement of after graduation. I believe *The International Student's Guide to American Colleges* will appeal to a specific cohort of prospective international students. One runs the risk of generalizing, but I believe prospective students from wealthy families would be most interested in following the guidelines outlined in the book. International students who apply to community colleges would not, in my opinion, benefit from all of the guidelines and suggestions outlined in the book. Most of the 176 profiled schools are not appropriate for this group of students.

In my opinion, the role of social media was not adequately covered. Few international students, for example, have the financial resources to visit several U.S. colleges and universities. The use of Skype calls and virtual tours is useful to students who cannot visit U.S. colleges and universities, but the author does not include suggestions as to how social media can assist prospective international students and how it should be part of the college application process. If one looks back to the introductory part of the book, it is clear that *The International Student's Guide to American Colleges* accomplishes its goals of helping prospective international students narrow their options and make informed choices of the best schools for application. The book is both informative and instructive. The reader is left with a clear path to discover why an American college degree is valuable and how prospective applicants can successfully navigate the application, admission and financial aid processes.
