

sit in on some college classes to help you evaluate which approach works best for you. In addition, consider where you would need to be ranked academically in a class in order to be challenged but still feel successful. Beware of choosing a college that is either too rigorous or too easy.

2 *Where will I be most likely to take advantage of opportunities offered in and out of the classroom?* Your ability to tap into the enrichment part of your college experience will help set you apart when looking for a job or applying to grad school. What does the school offer beyond academics that interests you? Search the college's website for internships, leadership programs, and research projects—and when you visit a campus, ask students how easy it is to access these resources, as well as how much time they're able to spend per week on non-academic activities.

3 *Which student culture fits me best?* Those who feel comfortable on campus and have made friends are more likely to try out new things and grow. To figure out if the campus culture is a good match, talk with students in the dining hall, the Hillel office, and/or the student center. Are they friendly? Pick up the college newspaper and see what issues are important to students. Can you relate? And if possible, stay overnight to see what happens when the sun goes down. Is this the "family" you want to spend four years with?

Students who put prestige at the top of their college wish list miss an important truth: Graduate schools and employers seek successful college grads from a variety of colleges. Your job, then, is to investigate which college environment is likely to be most conducive to your success.

Janet Rosier: Being in the bottom of your class at a prestigious university is not going to be as helpful as being in the top of your class at another institution where you have excelled academically, shown leadership, and participated in internships or research. Nowadays, college graduates seeking employment or applying to graduate school are expected to have an impressive résumé. Intern-

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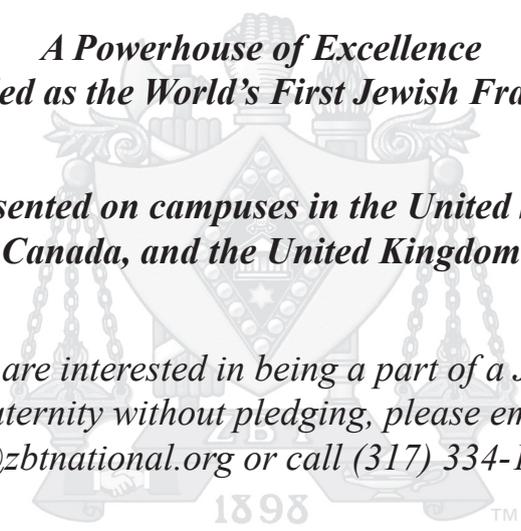
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