

outside the classroom. Colleges will learn about your extracurricular activities, honors, and awards elsewhere in your application. To receive up-to-date guidance, colleges prefer recommendations from either 11th or 12th grade teachers. They also want to hear from teachers in five core academic subjects: English, math, science, social studies, foreign language.

Don't automatically ask for recommendations from the teachers who gave you the best grades. In some cases it may be better to ask a teacher who saw you struggle and respects your determination to master the material. The teacher who gave you an easy "A" may not have much to say about you beyond that. Also, a creative teacher who encourages class discussion may have more to say about you than one who lectures in front of the class.

How can I be sure that the college I choose is the right one? Is there a way to ensure that the school will be a good fit, both academically and socially?

Dr. Michele Hernandez, Hernandez College Consulting, LLC, Weybridge, Vermont and Application Boot Camp, LLC, Boston; former Assistant Director of Admissions, Dartmouth College: The best way to ensure a good fit is to *visit* and *revisit*! Sit in on classes, speak with professors, and talk to students who have majored in your areas of interest.

Janet Rosier: Explore the college online. Does it offer a core curriculum, majors, minors, double majors in your areas of interest? Does it provide research opportunities and assistance in finding internships? Search for clubs and organizations such as Hillel. Focus on the criteria meaningful to you. Also, look at Unigo (unigo.com), where current students talk about their college, to see if what they say appeals to you.

When you visit the school, attend the campus information session and take the tour. Try to arrange an overnight stay with a student to get a better feel for the campus community. ➤

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