



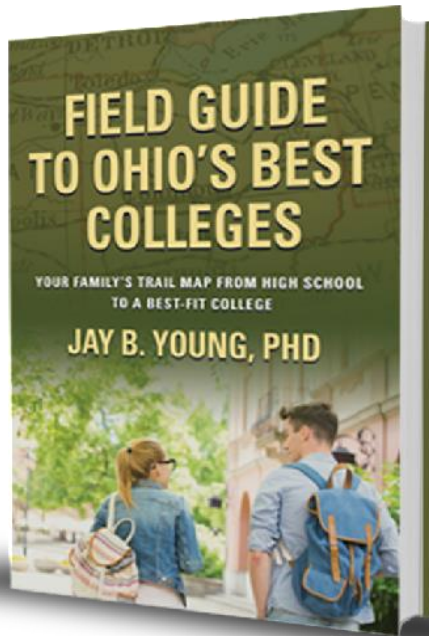
BASE CAMP

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Around the Fire With Dr. Jay

We are also proud to announce that our new book, *Field Guide to Ohio's Best Colleges*, is now available through our website as well as through online booksellers such as Amazon and Barnes & Noble. The book features a deep dive into Ohio's top 30 four-year residential colleges and universities - we call them "Ohio's Sturdy 30." In the book we identify and discuss their best academic majors and co-curricular programs. We also help parents build a plan to clarify everything they want in a college experience and to match that to specific colleges that do everything they want at a price they can afford. This is the only book in existence focusing on Ohio's unique and exceptional colleges and universities - check it out!



In case you haven't noticed, Spring has sprung in Ohio! As public schools prepare to close for the summer, families all over our great state are planning their vacations and....college visits. In this issue of Base Camp, we will take a look at the campus visit and offer a few thoughts on how to get the most out of them. We will

also continue our series discussing the anatomy of a college curriculum and examine a unique learning support program at Muskingum University.

A Unique Learning Support Program at Muskingum University for Students with Learning Challenges



Muskingum's PLUS Program is housed in Walter Hall, the newest building on campus.

Located on a beautiful hilltop in New Concord, Ohio, Muskingum University is one of only a few Ohio colleges to offer a unique support program to students with learning challenges such as Dyslexia, ADD, ADHD, Asperger syndrome, and others.

Nationally recognized, Muskingum University's PLUS Program provides students an average of 2-4 hours per week of structured one-on-one tutorials and instruction with professional learning consultants and learning associates. Their proven model of *Embedded Strategy Instruction* fosters and empowers academic and social success. Each student has a primary assigned learning consultant who acts as a liaison to home and faculty. Students are provided instruction in learning strategies that are embedded in course content. This instruction builds upon the strengths of each student while addressing levels of comprehension and mental organization that are

often difficult for students with learning differences. Embedded Learning Strategy instruction is used to address challenges in such areas as time and materials management, organization, test taking, reading, writing, critical thinking, memory and study skills, among others.

The PLUS Program offers three levels of service depending on the needs of the student and the service does cost in addition to tuition. Fees vary depending on the service level.

Qualified applicants to this unique program must complete a college-prep high school curriculum with four years of English, three years of math, and four years combined of lab and social sciences. They also must have carried a “C+” average or better while in high school, but the average accepted GPA is 3.26. Additionally, first-year freshman need to have scored 18 on the ACT. Extra-curricular experiences, volunteerism, and personal qualities are also considered.

This summer we plan to visit all five of Ohio’s unique learning support programs and really dig into their metrics, student profiles, methods, and cost. If you are interested in knowing more, drop us a note.



Five Things You Should Plan to do on Your Next Campus Visit

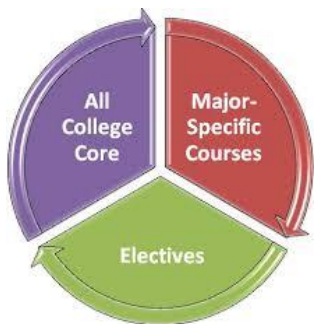
Once you and your student know what you want in a college including cost and majors to explore, and have identified a small set of colleges that are good at what you want, it’s time to schedule your campus visits. Contact an institution through their Admissions Office and ask to schedule a visit to include the following:

1. Take a student-led campus tour and either visit with an admissions counselor or attend an information session. Colleges routinely lead tours and provide families information on their college as well as their programs and offerings
2. Ask to meet with a faculty member in a few of the major areas your student is considering. Most colleges can arrange this during times when classes are in session (during academic terms) but may also be able to find available faculty during the summer as well. You might also see if you can visit with a student in those majors.
3. Ask to meet with a representative from any other co-curricular interest area that is important to you. For example, you might want to visit with a club sport representative or sports coach, band representative, honors program representative, residential learning community representative, study abroad representative, etc.
4. If classes are in session, it may also be possible for your student to sit in on a class. Ask for a class in one of the major areas you are exploring. Not only will this give you a sense of teaching style and an opportunity to meet a faculty member, but your student will meet students majoring in an area of interest and he or she will get some exposure to the material taught in a major course.
5. Ask if you can get a copy of your agenda e-mailed to you at least a day before you arrive. This will give you some time to consider everything you want to accomplish in each meeting or activity.

Remember that your campus visits should help you and your student explore each college as well as majors and organizations they offer. After visiting a small set of colleges that offer everything you are looking for, work to place the colleges in order of preference. Once you apply and receive admission letters and financial packages from each college you will

are able to consider the real tradeoffs and make a solid decision. Enjoy the journey!

Anatomy of a College Curriculum: Free Electives



We previously discussed that a college curriculum is composed of three components including the Core Curriculum, Major Courses, and Free Electives. In our last few issues we looked closely at both the Core Curriculum and the Major courses. In this issue we will proceed down the trail and take a look at free Electives - how to think about them and what to do with them.

Free elective credit hours can be calculated as the difference between the 120 credit hours required for graduation and the number of credit hours not claimed either by your student's major or core curriculum courses. Generally speaking, the more free elective credit hours available, the better. They are like currency that your student can spend on achieving a minor or even a double major. Free electives can also be spent on individual courses that your student can choose to take for fun, interest, or professional development purposes.

Some majors require only 36 to 48 credit hours, leaving plenty of room for free electives while others require 50 to 75 credit hours, which leaves very little room. Your student's goal beyond their core and major requirements is to spend their electives to their greatest advantage. Since your student cannot control their core or major requirements, other than taking advantage of double-dip opportunities, we recommend that they carefully plan the use of their precious free electives. Their academic advisor can help them achieve this, but it is important that they ask about it and consider their options.

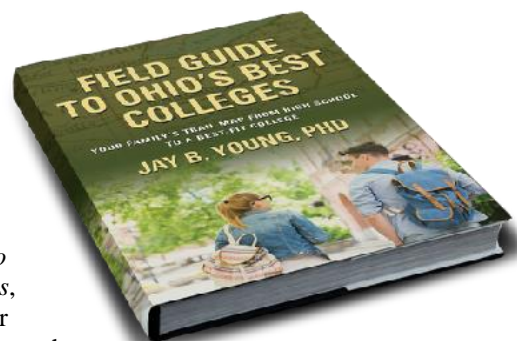
An excellent question when meeting with a faculty member or academic advisor in a particular major is, "How many credit hours in my major degree plan are

free electives?" A good follow-up question would be, "Do many students in this major earn a minor or double major and, if so, which minors or double majors are popular and why?"

Once your student knows how many free elective hours they have, they can begin considering optional minors that either extend an interest they have or offer credentialing that is synergistic with their major or career objectives. For example, many students majoring in Marketing consider minors in areas such as communication, sales, marketing communication, social media, analytics, or public relations. Keep in mind that planning for a minor should occur earlier rather than later. Some courses in a minor may require sequencing or have prerequisites so multiple semesters are required for completion.

Happy Trails

Thanks for joining us and don't forget to pick up our new book, *Field Guide to Ohio's Best Colleges*, now available on our website as well as through all your favorite web book sellers including Amazon and Barnes & Noble.



Well, it's time to re-pack the backpacks and get on down the trail. Thanks for joinin' us for the fun. See you next time!