



08

THINGS TO
CONSIDER

AS A FIRST-GENERATION STUDENT

INDIANA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY



If you're the first person in your family to go to college—congratulations! There's something wonderful and very special about being the first in a family to accomplish this, so be proud of yourself. Very proud! This is a new chapter in your life that will set the stage for a bright future.

The information in the following pages was designed to help you consider a few things as a first-generation college student. We hope that it provides some helpful insight as you embark on this exciting journey.

THE BASICS

01

CONSIDER FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid is the broad term used for the grants, scholarships, and loans that students receive each year to help pay for college. While nearly every student is eligible for financial aid in some form, it's smart to discuss your options with the financial aid department at the schools you're considering.

Some great questions to ask are:

- Can I receive more financial aid depending on my circumstances?
- Will a scholarship affect the amount of financial aid I can receive?
- Do I have a good chance of receiving financial aid with this particular school?

It's also important to know the difference between public and private financial aid. Public colleges are underwritten by tax dollars, and typically look good because of a seemingly low tuition. However, that cost is the final cost. There are no discounts other than scholarships. Private institutions often provide attractive financial aid packages based on things like your grades and activities.

Be sure to get a clear understanding of the financial aid process, including deadlines, separate applications and timelines. The admissions and financial aid departments of the schools you're considering will be invaluable in the process. Remember, in order to understand all of your options, apply for financial aid to each school you're interested in.

AIM HIGH

02

CONSIDER THAT YOU HAVE OPTIONS

For many students, the top concern about going to college is how to pay for it! Don't assume that college is beyond your financial reach. Financial aid is available to nearly every student in some form, and as a first-generation student, you may even qualify for scholarships or grants.

So, don't let the concern about cost stop you. Apply now to all of the schools you are interested in, then enlist the help of the schools' admissions and financial aid departments to explore all available resources. There are many options to help make even a private education more affordable. You may be pleasantly surprised at what you find out!

FIRST GENERATION STUDENTS

AT IWU

21%

PERCENT OF IWU
STUDENTS ARE
FIRST-GENERATION

**MOST POPULAR
MAJORS FOR IWU
FIRST GENERATION
STUDENTS:**

NURSING
EDUCATION
BUSINESS
PSYCHOLOGY
SOCIAL WORK
MINISTRY

DID YOU KNOW?

...that Indiana Wesleyan University is the only college in the country requiring freshmen to fill out the *StrengthsQuest*® assessment to help identify the area where God can use them the most to change the world?

...IWU's Global Engagement Office connects students with countless opportunities to study and serve abroad?

...IWU's School of Life Calling and Integrative Learning offers students access to life coaching, mentoring, resume building, pre-declared student advising and career counseling?



BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

03

CONSIDER LIFE BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

When looking for the college that's the best fit for you, don't simply consider classes – consider life beyond the classroom. Check out the school's campus life, philosophy, atmosphere, support system, mission and vision, reputation, and success rate.

As a first-generation student, you must think about every aspect of the school that is important to you. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Will I receive meaningful guidance and direction for my life and career here?
- Does this school reflect my faith and convictions, and is that important to me?
- Are graduates of this school successful?
- Are there campus activities I am interested in?
- Does this school understand and support first-generation students?
- Is this school committed to my success in the classroom and beyond?

You'll find that a campus visit and conversations with admissions counselors will help answer these questions and others that you may have.



CAMPUS LIFE

04

CONSIDER WHAT CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY LIFE IS LIKE

When you're interested in a school, consider their physical facilities and resources. For instance, if you're interested in being a chemist, does the school have an adequate lab? If you're studying media design, does the school stay on top of the latest equipment and software? Consider whether the college's facilities and resources are sufficient to help you grow in your intended career path.

Also think about whether the structure and approach of the program seems like a good fit for how you learn. If you thrive on collaboration, does this program provide that? If you feel you may need one-on-one guidance from a professor, can you get that here? Will the community at large support you as a whole person? Will they support you academically, socially and spiritually?

And let's be real. You want a vibrant social life on campus, too. Find out about the events and social gatherings the school offers, such as concerts, campus ministries, community service opportunities, movie nights, and sporting events. A vibrant community on campus will enrich your college experience and help you build friendships – and memories -- that will last a lifetime.

ANYTHING BUT BORING

Life on IWU's campus is anything but boring as students get to experience a wide range of traditions and events.

BOWMAN BOAT RACE

Residence halls create cardboard boats that must withstand a race on the University pond.

SIXTH MAN CLUB

Students don an IWU hoops t-shirt and help cheer on the 2016 National Championship men's basketball team.

REBASH

Students ring in the New Year (again) on the dance floor after returning from Winter Break.

SPOTTED COW WEEKEND

This annual outdoor spring music festival features a talented lineup of local bands.

CONCERTS

IWU hosts major artists like Lecrae, David Crowder, Switchfoot and NEEDTOBREATHE every year.

DID YOU KNOW?

...Indiana Wesleyan University offers a free Life Coaching program that assist individuals in discovering their unique, God-given design?

...IWU's TRiO Student Support Services Program offers eligible students access to one-on-one tutoring, academic accountability, financial literacy training and more?

...first-generation students who are accepted into IWU's Emerging Leaders Consortium (a leadership development-based cohort experience) receive what amounts to full tuition?



05

CONSIDER THE SUPPORT YOU'LL RECEIVE ON CAMPUS

College is a different level than high school, and that can seem a little overwhelming, especially if no one else in your family has had a college experience. You may need a little extra support along the way. Here are some resources that could be helpful to you on your journey, and you should consider asking about these at schools you're interested in:

- **Tutoring or Other Academic Support:** This can take many forms, but does the school you're considering offer some type of academic assistance when needed? Is tutoring available? Are your professors available and approachable? How does this school support your academic success?
- **Career Resources:** You're not just preparing for a career; you're preparing for life. Most schools will provide services like job placement support, résumé reviews, and interview preparation, but does this school go beyond that? Do they help you figure out how to turn your gifts and talents into a career you're passionate about?
- **Spiritual Resources:** If deepening your faith walk is important to you, what does this school offer that supports that? Is faith integrated into the classroom? Are instructors people of faith who can support your growth? Are the chapel services vibrant and engaging? What opportunities will you have for personal, spiritual growth on campus?



06

CONSIDER MENTORING OPTIONS

An important part of any college community is its faculty. Are the professors at your chosen schools accomplished, intelligent, successful, and passionate individuals whom you respect?

Most colleges allow prospective students to sit in on classes, and you should consider taking advantage of this by sitting in on several classes. You'll get a feel for the academic culture of the school, how and if they truly integrate faith and learning, and more.

Some questions you may ask yourself include:

- Do these professors seem to genuinely care about their students' careers and goals?
- Do these professors seem approachable?
- Do these professors share my core beliefs?
- Do these professors seem to be people whose direction I would trust?
- Would I want these professors as mentors?

As a first-generation college student, it is critical for you to be learning from, and following, professors that you believe in and who believe in you.



"My objectives with the sacred practice of mentoring are to share wisdom, infuse character and fortify courage into the minds and hearts of students."

Ron Mazellan
Professor of Art

INDIANA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY OFFERS A WIDE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS WITH WHICH STUDENTS CAN GET INVOLVED. OPTIONS INCLUDE:

CHORALE

CITE-SOCIETE FRANCAISE
(FRENCH CLUB)

INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

INTRAMURAL SPORTS

IWU ULTIMATE FRISBEE CLUB

LA AMISTAD HISPÁNICA
(SPANISH CLUB)

NURSES CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

ORCHESTRA

PSYCHOLOGY CLUB

SCIENCE CLUB

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

THEATRE GUILD

WIND ENSEMBLE

AND MANY MORE!



07

CONSIDER HOW YOU WILL FEEL CONNECTED

Everyone wants to feel connected – to other people, and to something bigger than themselves. As you visit the colleges you’re interested in attending, keep these questions in mind:

- Do I feel safe here?
- Do I feel included and welcomed, even as a visitor?
- Do I think I could build strong friendships here?
- Is there a sense of mission and purpose here that I think I could be part of and get excited about?

Every college out there approaches “community” in a different way. Look for a school that helps foster personal connections, both inside and out of the classroom. Although your admissions rep is a great resource, ask to talk to other students on campus about how they have connected.

I'M
FIRST!

08

CONSIDER CHECKING OUT [Imfirst.org](https://www.imfirst.org)

I'm First! is an online community for first-generation college students, their families, and their supporters. It's a great place to learn from people who have been there, to find answers to your questions about higher education, and to learn about colleges and organizations that want to help you reach your goals.

Hear inspiring stories and share your own, discover colleges that care about first-generation students, and receive guidance on the road to, and through, college.

Remember, this is a celebration! As a first-generation student, exciting new opportunities are opening up. You've come a long way, and you have an exciting path ahead of you.



START YOUR JOURNEY AS A WILDCAT TODAY!



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