

**PRIVATE**

**VS**

**PUBLIC**



**WHICH ONE IS  
RIGHT FOR YOU?**



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## INTRODUCTION

Let's start right at the beginning.

Public school isn't better than private school, and private school isn't better than public school. So don't let those terms stress or freak you out. There are big advantages to both, and those advantages only get bigger and better when accessed by the right student.

While what we think may matter to you, what matters more—as with every important decision you'll make in life—is what you think. If you're a public school person, you won't be happy in a private school environment. And nobody wants that.

A personal experience in a tight-knit community, or a bigger-than-life public college experience? We're going to help you figure that out.



## IT'S ALL ABOUT WHO YOU ARE AND YOUR STYLE OF LEARNING.

Probably the defining characteristic of (most) private schools is that they're smaller than public schools. Classrooms are cozier. Professor-student relationships are closer. Access to faculty, services, and benefits is wide open. And public-college campuses are typically much bigger, too, which can be exciting and entertaining as much as they can be overwhelming or disorienting.

That can be a boon to students who thrive in more open, loose environments. Do you like the teacher to know your name? You're probably a private school kind of student. Are you more interested in staying anonymous and flying solo? You might lean public. It's all about who you are and what your style of learning is.





## RESULTS

### MOSTLY A'S

If you answered mostly A's, you might be a small-school learner. Many private schools have student populations in the hundreds.

### MOSTLY B'S

If you answered mostly B's, you might be a big-school learner, with thousands of other students around you.

### TOO CLOSE TO CALL

If you're nearly split, that's OK, too. Keep reading for tiebreakers.

## TAKE OUR QUIZ!

### 1. My favorite classes are ...

- Ⓐ ...lively and spirited, with a lot of conversation and debate.
- Ⓑ ...calm, focused lectures, where the teacher does most of the talking.

### 2. In the classroom, I'm usually ...

- Ⓐ ...raising my hand for most questions
- Ⓑ ...hanging back, taking it all in

### 3. On the weekends, I'm hanging out with ...

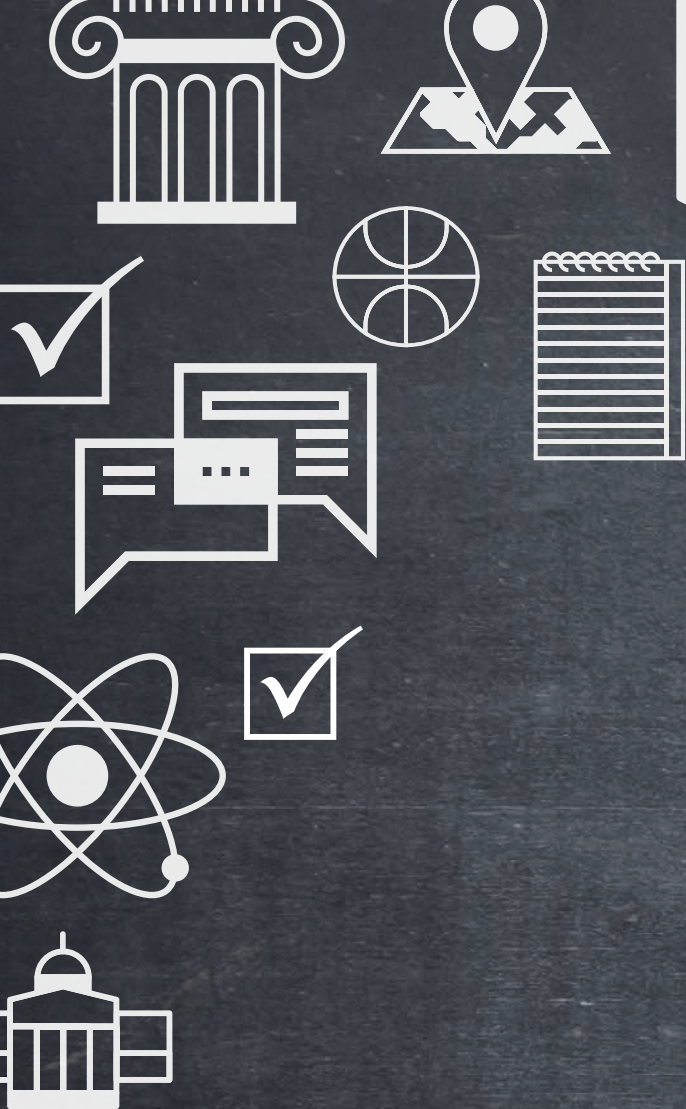
- Ⓐ A steady group of friends
- Ⓑ A totally different set of friends and acquaintances from week to week.

### 4. When I have a whole bunch of work and a lot of open-ended instruction, I ...

- Ⓐ ...struggle a bit. I ask a lot of questions and do better when I've got guidance and support.
- Ⓑ ...thrive. I have a knack for figuring things out and love operating more on my own.

### 5. When I go on trips, I prefer ...

- Ⓐ ...a little town or village, with a robust Main Street, and tons of options for outdoor activities.
- Ⓑ ...big cities with a billion things to do and endless places to go, day or night.



## WHAT KIND OF EDUCATION DO YOU WANT?

Be really honest with yourself: What kind of student are you? Think of all of your favorite teachers, classes and subjects. Make a list of what you liked about those experiences: Were they intimate, collaborative, were you more independent and allowed to work through things by yourself? Did you like lots of space to do your learning, or were you happier in close quarters? Make a list. Check it twice.

### PRIVATE SCHOOL PERSON

- values and/or faith are important to you
- you thrive in an intimate classroom
- you're eager to do research
- you like the teacher to know your name
- you want to customize your own major
- you believe in the value of liberal arts

### PUBLIC SCHOOL PERSON

- you like big classrooms
- you enjoy a spacious campus with lots of different buildings to visit
- you're interested in Greek life
- you prefer to fly solo in your academic work
- you want campus to feel more like a city than a town
- you like to have a ton of options for majors
- you want to only study what's relevant in your intended career path

# WHAT CAN I AFFORD?

This is such an important question. And, like so many important questions, it has a complex answer. Education is an investment. When you graduate from college, your degree is the first step to your dream job. It's the key to fulfilling all of your ambitions. So it makes sense to understand the terms and details when it comes to affordability.

Here's a way to break it down.



## **Q: How long will it take me to graduate?**

**A:** Private colleges have consistently higher graduation rates for students. As an example, Siena's 4-year graduation rate is 72%, while the average for its public competitors is just 57.6%. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, a student who graduates in five years instead of four loses out on nearly \$200,000 in salary and retirement earnings, while adding to their college costs. BUT, if a five-year school with a one-year co-op, for example, appeals to you, then here it's a matter of value versus affordability: something to talk about with your parents.

## **Q: Will I get hired after graduation?**

**A:** Graduates of private colleges find employment at higher rates and with higher salaries than graduates of public school programs. Private school graduates earn on average 20% higher annual salaries than public school graduates. Which is a big deal when you're staring down your student loans.

## **Q: What kind of financial aid is available to me?**

**A:** Public schools often charge less than private schools, so that's a really big, undeniable perk. But with bigger student bodies comes higher competition for scholarships and grants and financial aid. At smaller, private schools, students are almost twice as likely to receive grants than students at public schools.



## BEWARE OF THE WORD “FREE.”

Free tuition. Full rides. Whenever you hear “debt-free,” make sure you’re aware of all the red tape. Does “free” include books, housing, a meal plan, and any other fees? Do you have to maintain a specific GPA? Are you required to graduate on a specific schedule? Are there any post-college criteria—for example, do you have to stay in-state for a predetermined period after you graduate? Make sure you’re reading all the fine print and that you’re happy with the conditions.



## DON'T GET STUCK ON THE STICKER PRICE!

It’s easy to get anxious about the cost of tuition. But remember that many students don’t pay the full amount. There are almost always scholarships, aid and awards available to you that will cut that price down. So do your research and find out what you qualify for. That’ll help some of those dollar-sign jitters. Do your research. Fill out the school’s Net Price Calculator and find out what scholarships are available.





## WHAT KIND OF HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES AM I GOING TO GET?

Imagine leaving school having already published a paper. Imagine heading into the “real world” with real experience. Imagine having a resume with important, meaningful experiences and accomplishments that set you apart from others.

Depending on where you go to school, you might have way more—or way less—access to the experiences you want to have. So ask your admissions adviser these questions:

- When will I be able to start interning?
- How much competition will there be for an internship I really want?
- How much interaction will I get to have with faculty and staff?
- Will I be able to lead a club or just be in one?
- Can I do research as early as a first-year year?



## HOW TO MAKE A DECISION

### WHICH COLLEGE AM I MOST EXCITED ABOUT?

This is both the easiest and the hardest part.

You want to pick the school that really sings to you. The campus that feels like you, that's best suited to your interests, ideas, habits, hobbies and ideologies. You want to be able to see yourself in the classrooms.

Look at the classrooms, library, gym, dorms and dining hall. But also be sure to search the area surrounding your school. You'll be here for a few years, so get to know the lay of the land. Can you get Indian food there? Sushi? How's the cafe scene? Are there movie theaters, parks? Can you hike nearby? All of these elements contribute to your whole college experience.

#### 1 Pretend You're Advising a Friend.

You like your friend! You want your friend to be happy and succeed. You want to be able to see yourself there. So what would you want your friend to do?

#### 2 Make it Opposite Day.

Take all of the notions and images of yourself in your ideal college scenario. Now reverse them. Think about why those now-reversed ideas are unattractive to you. What do you absolutely know you don't want? Does that tell you anything about what you do want?

#### 3 Take a Break.

You've been thinking long and hard about this decision. Go over every single thing one more time: Your pros and cons list. The distance from each school to home. Really think hard on all of it. Then? Go take a break. Go out with friends. Go swimming. Go for a drive. Don't think about it at all. You might be surprised when the right decision just ... comes to you.

# ABOUT SIENA COLLEGE

It's true! Siena College happens to be a private institution. Here's a little bit about us.

Our campus is located in Loudonville, New York. We're in the heart of New York's Capital Region, which is recognized nationally as one of the best markets for job creation and growth.

We have 80+ organizations featuring service, student government, Division I athletics and academic/professional clubs; International studies are available in more than 50 countries.

**72%**

Four year graduation rate

**12:1**

Student-faculty ratio

**\$20,800**

A Siena degree costs \$20,800 less on average than its private competitors

**97%**

of our students receive financial aid

**300+**

internships offered

**\$500k**

Saints make \$500,000 more than SUNY alumni in lifetime earnings

# CONTACT US

We hope we've been able to clear up a few things for you. If you're interested in how Siena might suit your ideal college experience, please get in touch! You can come visit us, talk to our students and faculty, see our campuses and check out the surrounding area.

We'll tell you where to get the best ice cream.  
(Ever heard of Stewart's?)

- ▶ **FIND YOUR ADMISSIONS COUNSELOR BY REGION**
- ▶ **CALL US AT 518-783-2423**
- ▶ **EMAIL US AT [ADMISSIONS@SIENA.EDU](mailto:ADMISSIONS@SIENA.EDU)**
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