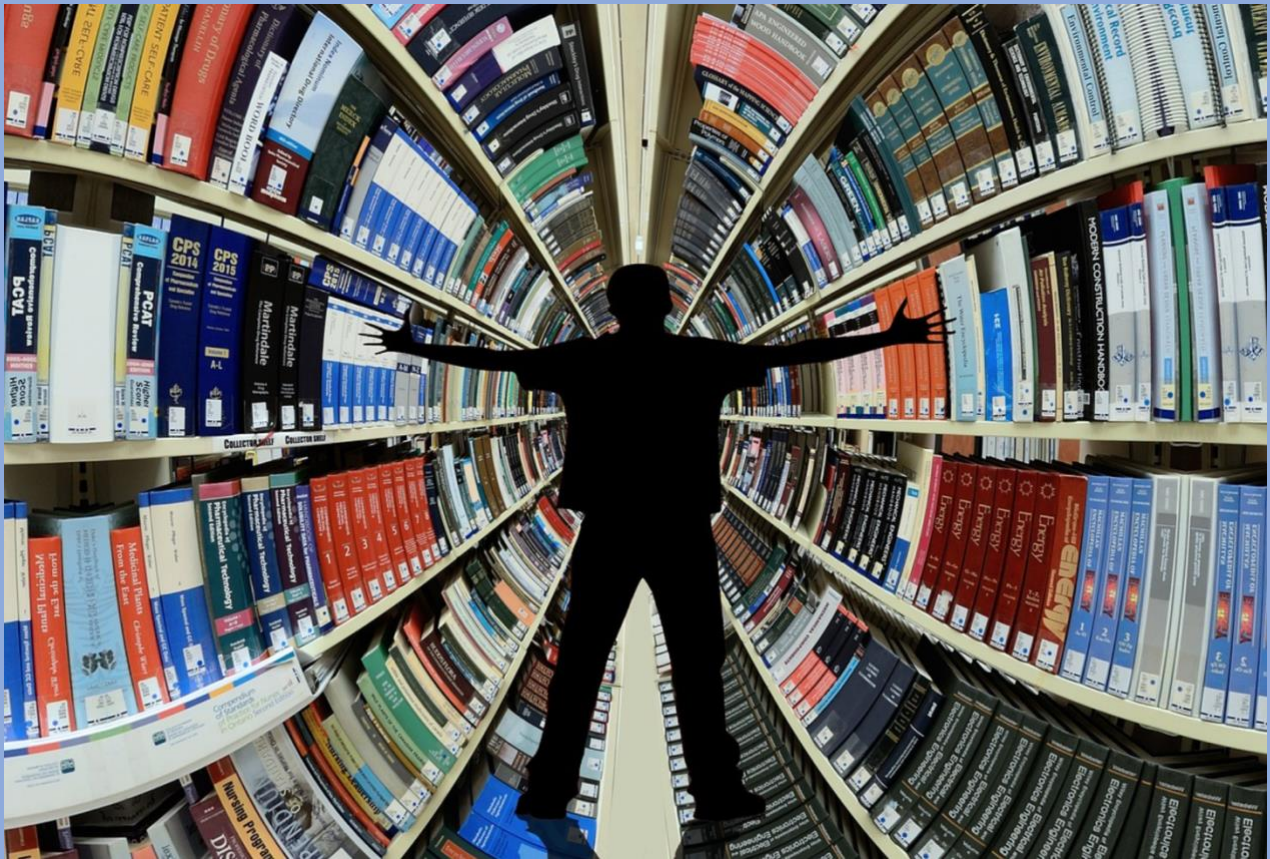


CHOICES

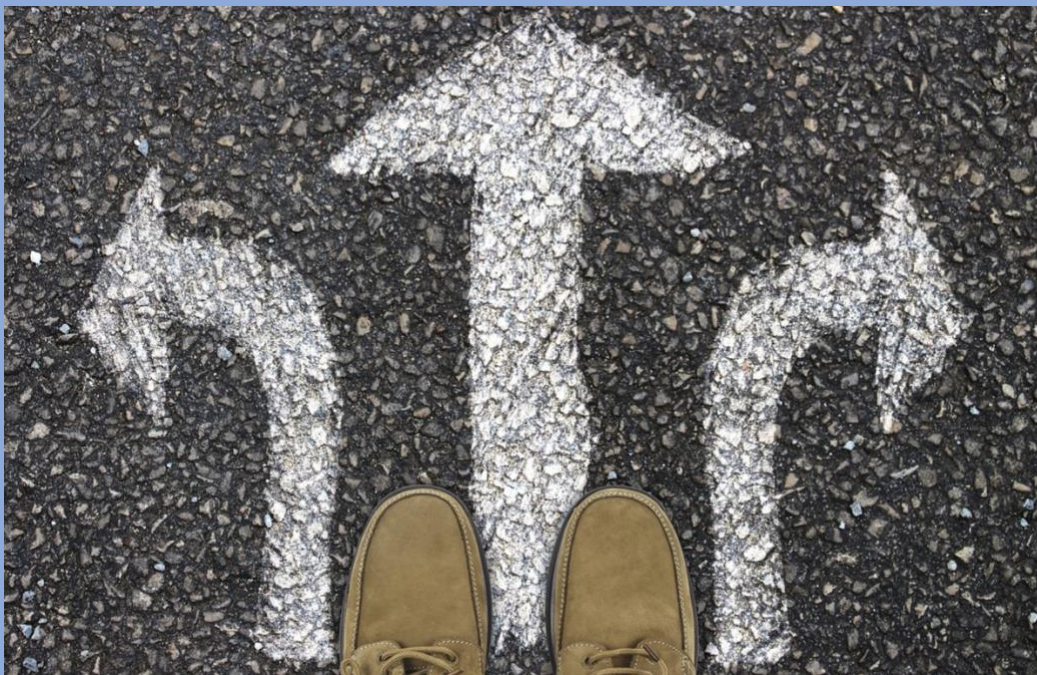


Case Study

CHOICES

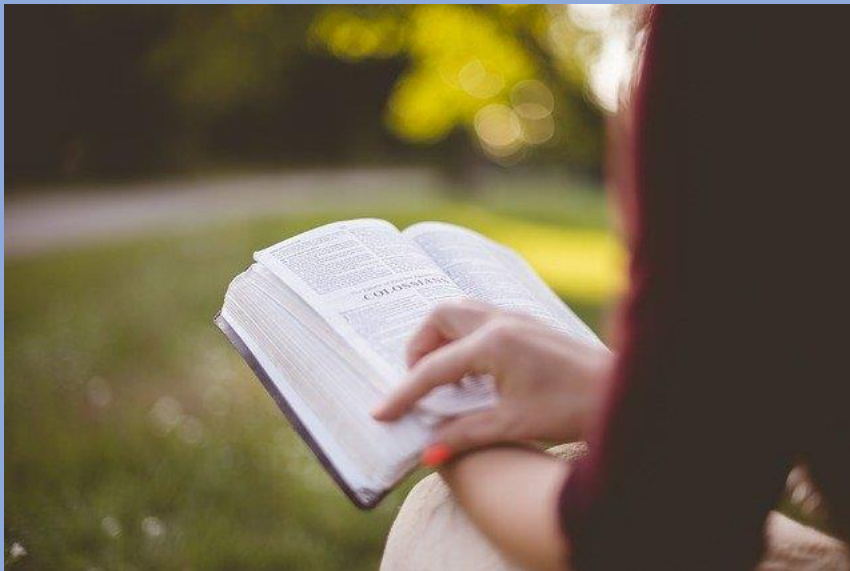


US universities place great stress on what they call “Fit & Match”. The university provides a good “match” for what the student requires of a university and the student is a good “fit” for what that university expects. How do you go about testing this?



Rankings might be a help in getting started and subject rankings are certainly more useful than general rankings. But rankings tell you very little apart from reputation and academic performance. What is more important are the details of the courses or subjects you aim to study.

What to look for are the details of each years programme: generally speaking most first year programmes are likely to be very similiar, they are just introductions to that subject. Later years may vary considerably because of the special interests of staff and the range of options on offer.



What study options are available? Which aspects of our subject interest you the most? Do you have the chance to study at a partner campus overseas or a one year internship? Are there opportunities to work on or off campus? How easy is it to get a work visa once you graduate?

CHOICES



What does the university expect of you? Use evidence such as the makeup of the incoming freshman year – Catholic universities preference students with a strong service record – the nature of college essays (which often take the form of “Why Us?” but may be interestingly idiosyncratic) or the options available on campus – many US universities are proud of their Liberal Arts core curriculum and expect you to work through this and creatively construct our own degree programme on this basis.

CHOICES

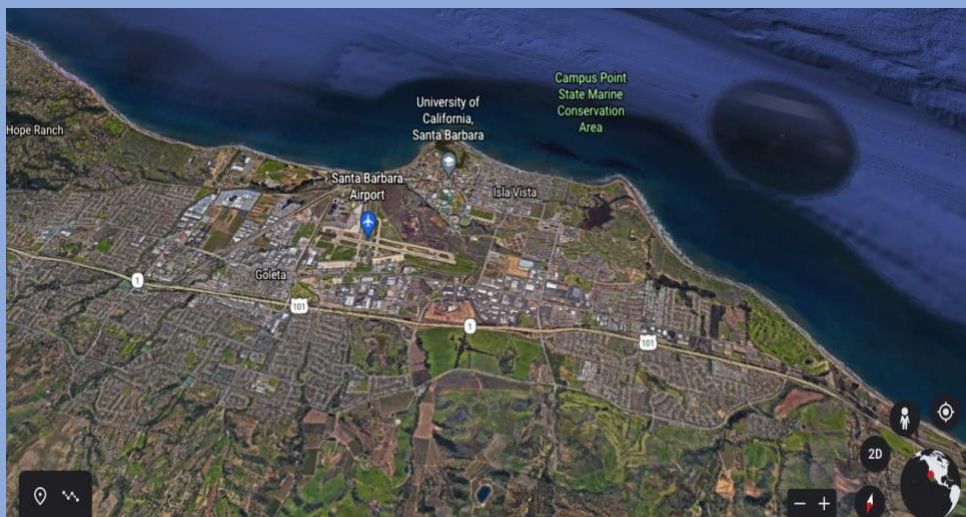
Another factor would be size and location. There is a world of difference between the experience of studying at an enormous city university with multiple campuses or a small college in a semi rural setting or maybe a small historic town – the same range can be found in every country. Climate relates to these geographical features – what is the winter like?



As an international student you are likely to find your friendship group among other international students: international cohorts can vary

between 50% and 5% so this could be a significant variable.

University websites offer an enormous amount of information as to what academic and social options are available on and off campus. There are also virtual open days and summer programmes and opportunities to talk to existing students online. All universities now offer a range of virtual campus tours on Youtube both formal and informal. Google Earth will tell you what the campus looks like from above and what the surrounding area looks like - where is the nearest city for instance?



There is no substitute for visiting a campus and talking to existing students and getting a feel for

a place – however this may be impractical. The above resources can provide an adequate substitute.