

## English Transcript for *Level 1 Research: Additional Options*

We just looked at a lot of information. But remember something that I mentioned before. You won't find all of the information that you need on just one website. So I want to discuss some other options that you might want to use to explore while doing your research. Students and parents love to research schools by using rankings. There are many, many rankings out there. And a well known example of one is US News and World Report. Which can be found on [usnews.com](http://usnews.com). When you look below the rankings, you can actually find some amazing information. US News actually offers great pie charts about average class sizes. When you look below the rankings, you can see on these charts what percentage of classes have less than 20, 20 to 49, or 50 or more students. When trying to measure personal attention, this information combined with student-faculty to ratio, can be much more helpful than student to faculty ratio alone. US News also offers four-year graduation rates, instead of six-year graduation rates. If graduating in four years is important to you, then you should be looking here instead of some other search sites. Now, you know my feelings about rankings. But using rankings as a piece of research can be helpful. I don't think anyone needs a website to tell them that Princeton, Harvard and Yale are good schools. But what about Wake Forest University? Wake Forest is an amazing school. Ranked in the top 25. But a school that is actually SAT or ACT optional. Now, amazingly only about 3% of the student population at Wake Forest is international. So for some reason, international students don't seem to be looking towards Wake Forest as much as some of the other top ranked schools. My point is, don't use rankings to find schools that you already know. Use rankings to find schools that you may not have ever heard of. This goes for all of the ranking lists. National universities, regional universities. Major based rankings. Anything that you'll find. Personally, the rankings that I find most helpful on US News, are A plus schools for B students. And up and coming schools. Why do I find these most helpful? Because they are filled with fantastic schools, that you might not have heard of. And there're schools where you might be more likely to be accepted. Now, we've looked at a lot of facts and figures and data. But there is a lot more to researching schools than just the numbers. Research should also help you get a sense of the personality at that school. It's hard to get a sense of personality from numerical data. To get that sense of personality, you can use a number of different sources. One of which are, is student review sites. For this, there are websites like [unigo.com](http://unigo.com). Unigo offers student reviews that ask great questions. Questions like, what is the stereotype of students at your school? If this stereotype accurate? What do students complain about most? And what are the most popular student activities or groups? These questions are really helpful in getting to know what a school is like. As well as what the students who attend that school are like. Now there are many sites similar to Unigo. One thing that you have to remember is that these sites are opinion based. What's posted on those sites are the opinions of the people writing them. So keep that in mind when you're reading through the information. A site that's similar to Unigo, is called Cappex. Cappex offers similar features to Unigo, with the addition of something called a scatter gram. A scatter gram is a graph where students indicate their grades and test scores. And whether they were accepted or denied at a specific school. Each student then becomes a dot on the graph. You can look at the graph to see the results that other students have received. It to, and to compare your grades and test scores. Now like Unigo, remember that this is all student reported information. There is no way to verify that what's posted, is accurate or official. So, don't treat the graph as a fact. Use it more as a guideline. Now, getting to know students is great. But you also want to get to know the personality of

the admission officers and professors, at universities that you might be applying to. There are other websites, like College Week Live, that allow you to do this. College Week Live offers you the chance to connect with universities through video chats and presentations. Some of these chats will feature admission officers. And some of these chats will feature current students who attend that university. The nice thing, is that you can ask questions and get answers that help you learn about the personality of the university. It's much more dynamic than just reading this information on a website. Sites like College Week Live even offer virtual college fairs. Where you can explore different universities, by virtually meeting with admission representatives online. Not all schools are on College Week Live, or websites like it. But you might want to use these sites as another option to explore the schools that are on your list. Another option for you to do research is through Coursera. Now, you're taking this class through the amazing Coursera platform. Are you interested in a particular university? Why not see what their professors are like, by taking a Coursera course with them? There are currently over 100 institutions offering classes through Coursera. Why not take these classes, and see what those professors are really like? And how they teach? Additionally, for those of you who might not be sure about what you want to study, Coursera is a great option for you to explore your potential major. Think you want to be an engineer? Take an engineering class. Are you curious about what your humanities courses are going to be like? There are over 100 being offered currently. This is an option. Coursera is an option that students before you never had. Personally, it took me a year of being a business major, before I made the change to become a communication major. Not only was I happier as a communication major, but my grades were better too. Now, if I had the chance to explore being a business major. And to explore being a communication major before I started my university studies, my first year of college may have been very, very different. Remember, as you go through all of this information, make sure you add the important information to your school list. Take advantage of all of these options that you have to really get to know a school. Is it a lot to do? Yes. Is it worth doing? Absolutely. Especially when it comes time to choose one school to attend from all the acceptances you're hopefully going to receive. [BLANK\_AUDIO]