

English Transcript for *Building Your School List*

Before you do any actual research, you need to think about how you're going to collect all of this information. There's too much information out there to remember it all. And if you don't write the information down, before long, you're going to be confusing school's details. Which school wanted this requirement and which school had that program? You won't be able to keep track of any of it. You also don't have the time to keep going back and redoing research that you've already done. What you're going to have to do is create a school list document. When I talk about a school list, I'm not just referring to a list of university names. A school list is an actual document where you collect important information you discover throughout the research process. Now, what is important information? Well, important information is anything that relates to those features that you want in a university balanced with information about how realistic that university is for you. Your list can take any form and be in any format. Some students will make a chart. Some students will create a profile page for each university. I've even seen students create lists that give scores for certain things. So that each university gets a, a ranking of its own. When it comes to format, the only thing that matters is that it makes sense to you. You're the one that's going to be using it. But the truly important part of your school list is that it collects the right information. Again, the information that is important to you. When you did your self assessment, you identified features that were important to you and questions that you wanted to ask universities. Those features and questions should be included as information on your school list. For instance, if you decided that going to school in a big city was important to you, you should put space for that on your school list. Now, this type of information will be pretty easy to find. So you have to think about, how are you going to list this information? Let's use Philadelphia as an example. Philadelphia is the fifth biggest city in the U.S., will the size ranking go on your list? Or, maybe, the population of one and a half million people. Or, maybe, the size of 369 square kilometers. Or, maybe, the rankings for walkability and public transit. Or, maybe, how many museums the city has for you to visit. You have to think about why going to a big city is important to you and list that information on your school list. Another example, if you decided that you want a school that has a lot of students from your home country, you should include space for that information on your school list. That type of information is much easier to list, but it's much harder to find. You'll probably have to do a bit more digging to find that information and you might not be able to find it on the Internet. You might actually have to contact universities to get those types of statistics. When creating your school list, remember that not everything is going to be a number. Many of the answers to your questions are going to be descriptive. A great example of this is personal attention. A lot of students will say, I want to go to a university where I'm going to receive a lot of personal attention, one on one work with faculty members, things of that nature. The question is, how do you measure personal attention? Sure. There are numbers out there like student to faculty ratio which is literally how many students are at that university for each individual faculty member. There are numbers out there like average class sizes. And those numbers relate to personal attention, but they don't really capture personal attention. Personal attention is more of a feeling. It's more of a way of doing things. So the question is, how are you going to list information about personal attention on your school list? There's no right or wrong way. It's just about what makes sense to you. As you go through the research process, your list is going to grow and grow and grow. In the end, your school list is going to be the one place that you have gathered qualitative information

about what you want in a school. Quantitative information about the admissions process and getting in. And process information about things like, deadlines, required documents, majors, and other features of that nature. As you can imagine, your school list can get quite large and that's okay. Just be careful about how much information you're adding to your list. Sometimes more is just more. Before adding information to your list, ask yourself two questions. First, how important is this information to me? And second, how is this information going to help me later on? As we go through some of the research together, I will point out some different types of information and explain what it all means. It's up to you whether this information is important to you or not. And so, it is up to you if you want to include this information on your school list or not. Eventually, you should be able to go back to this one document. And look at all of the options that you have found. By collecting this information in one place, you're going to be able to compare and contrast the schools that you've researched, based on the criteria that are important to you. Soon, you're going to start to see how some schools will rise to the top of your list. And other schools are going to sink to the bottom.