GAP YEAR: SUCCESS’S BEST KEPT SECRET

FORGET GREAT SCHOOLS. CHOOSE A SCHOOL THAT’S GREAT FOR YOU

10 MUST-READS FOR THIS YEAR
You’re not casual about your faith.
Neither are we.
Public schooling in the South was not widespread until the Reconstruction Era after the American Civil War.

The first college was founded in Massachusetts in 1636 and is still open to this day.

A university in Michigan has an official Squirrel Club. Every Sunday its 400 members gather to feed peanuts to squirrels.

Nearly 60% of American college students are female; every state but Utah has more women than men in college.
What you stand for matters.

Our world needs future leaders like you!

Go-getters who have the courage to stand up for truth, hold God’s Word up as a treasure, and treat others with kindness.

Make a difference. Participate in Bring Your Bible To School Day at your school this fall.

Sign up and learn how you can join the movement with your friends! If you sign up now, you will be entered to win a trip for four to the Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C.!

COUNT ME IN!

BringYourBible.org
You’re passionate about the gifts God has given you and looking for a college that will allow you to pursue and hone your talents. You want a place that will prepare you for the life to which God has called you. You’ll find it at Union University, where we equip students who don’t want to sacrifice academic quality or Christian community.

At Union University, be transformed.

Begin your journey today at uu.edu

BE PASSIONATE. BE PREPARED. BE TRANSFORMED.
Combing through recruitment brochures and college websites can be overwhelming. The sheer amount of information begins to blend together, forming a blurry, tangled mess. One way to narrow your college search is to figure out not only what makes a school great, but what makes it a great fit for you.

Different students feel drawn to different kinds of campus experiences—and that’s okay. One school may stand out because of its all-nighter events leading up to big games, while another may be experimenting with a new program for boosting graduation rates. Some schools embody the traditional campus experience, and others are more intentional in creating spiritual enrichment opportunities.

One of the first steps in finding a college that suits you is identifying your values. Are community building and activities important to you? Are you primarily focused on career readiness and hoping to move through college as quickly as possible? Do you long for a school that will help you grow spiritually, or one that will provide quality academics with a stellar sports program? Once you begin to answer these questions, your values can act as landmarks that will help you navigate the college landscape.

Ten universities shared with us what they love most about their schools. While the descriptions are by no means comprehensive, we hope these snapshots offer you a glimpse of the schools’ notable points of interest. Who knows? After reading this, you might have a campus visit—or two!—to schedule.

IF YOU’RE WORRIED ABOUT LIFE AFTER GRADUATION

Colleges prioritize professional development through internships, portfolio assistance, resume workshops, and alumni networking events. But taking a serious approach to post-grad success doesn’t have to create a stressful or achievement-driven atmosphere. Recent research suggests that success that avoids the pitfalls of anxiety and burnout is only made possible by balancing ambition with self-care. As a result, some schools have begun bridging the gap between personal growth and professional potential.

“Stunning” is the word many visitors use to describe Pepperdine University. Located in the Santa Monica mountains and an hour from downtown Los Angeles (depending on the notorious SoCal traffic), the Malibu campus features swaying palms and ocean views. Beyond opportunities to commune with nature through “God in the Wilderness” retreats and surfside worship chapels, Pepperdine is piloting a program that aims to increase the mental health of its 8,000 undergrad students.

Pepperdine’s Resilience program was born in the aftermath of a double tragedy—a 2018 mass shooting near campus that killed one student and a wildfire that erupted the next day in the Malibu area. Pepperdine’s holistic mental health services teach students their limitations and abilities, preparing them for life after graduation. Pepperdine hopes students will develop healthy self-perspective that is essential for long-term career advancement.

Career longevity is also front-of-mind for students at Cornerstone University in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Located in one of the fastest-growing cities in the country—with a job market to match—Cornerstone has been expanding its teaching, nursing, and engineering programs to mirror market demand. Undoubtedly this restructuring contributes to Cornerstone’s 94 percent placement rate in a job or graduate school within six months of graduation.

This impressive statistic is also credited to Lightpath, Cornerstone’s four-year vocational track. The program allows students to focus on a different part of career preparation every year. In addition to their regular coursework, students identify their workplace strengths as sophomores and practice interview strategies as seniors.

With student internships available at companies like 3M and NASA, in addition to a 99 percent post-grad placement rate, we couldn’t talk about professional development without mentioning Bethel University in St. Paul, Minnesota. Drawing on its nearly 148-year history, Bethel maximizes professional development opportunities. Of the 2,500 undergraduate population, incoming undergrads are paired with mentors who are juniors or seniors, in addition to
learning the skills required for internships and that first job after graduation.

Bethel’s R.E.A.L. Experience program, Relevant Experiential Applied Learning, helps students create a polished portfolio. And since population and industry growth in the Twin Cities is hitting record highs, Bethel’s campus is an ideal touchpoint for students looking to connect with area employers. While traditional four-year students benefit from these professional development offerings, they aren’t the only ones. Bethel recently launched Build, a two-year certification program featuring a career-oriented curriculum for students with intellectual disabilities.

IF YOU’RE WANTING THE “COLLEGE EXPERIENCE”

Students already excited about decorating their dorm room and making new friends should prioritize campus life. If people are eager to join student government or dive into extracurriculars, they’ll find plenty of schools who share these values. There’s no shortage of campuses where loving, Christ-focused communities seem to be thriving, but some schools have taken extra steps to ensure students and faculty feel right at home. Houghton College in western New York takes great pains in creating a diverse, engaged community. Surrounded by 1,300 acres, students at Houghton are fully immersed in nature and removed from distractions. But don’t mistake isolation with uniformity—Houghton’s idyllic setting draws highly creative, highly relational student body where peers inspire each other academically, spiritually, and socially.

Popular majors at Houghton include health, finance, data science, and the newly added criminal justice program. Houghton students have become experts at making their own fun, and there’s plenty to keep them occupied. A typical Friday night could be a student-led campfire, an art gallery opening, a variety show, or a bit of rock climbing. The school offers many opportunities to explore the outdoors through Epic Trips and Outings, which range from a short hike to identify wildflowers to a whitewater rafting expedition on the Allegheny River. And on top of all that, locals consider Houghton to be a premier dining venue for its fresh food menus and legendary Big AL, an on-campus pizzeria.

A similarly buoyant spirit powers the student experience at Johnson University in Knoxville, Tennessee. With trash-bag water slides adorning the hills behind the university president’s home and a large number of faculty living on campus, a feeling of uncommon community permeates the school.

The Preacher Grand Prix, an annual Johnson tradition, challenges students to build makeshift go-karts to race around an improvised track. (The winner gets a year of bragging rights.) And when a new athletic center called the ARC opened this past spring, Johnson celebrated by having students make a grand entrance, marching in two by two. It’s that sense of fellowship and good humor that make Johnson a place students savor.

In Salem, Oregon, Corban University also offers an empowering community. Corban promotes close faculty relationships and cultivates a distinct creative energy. The 1,200-person student body and the university’s remote setting enhance the intimate, friendly atmosphere, while proximity to Portland provides plenty of opportunities for concerts, cool restaurants, and camaraderie.

Corporate worship at Corban takes place at 10 a.m. every weekday. During this time, all campus buildings and offices are closed and classes are suspended so students, faculty, and staff can come together. Enjoying these shared, quiet gatherings creates a bond that extends into more lively moments, too. Whether students go ice-block sledding on the first day of classes, create woodworking projects in The Barn (an art studio), or grow produce in a community garden to donate to a local food bank, the atmosphere at Corban cradles with the celebration of God’s creation.

IF YOU’RE WANTING TO FOCUS ON YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Please, encourage Bible study and a lifestyle of following Christ, but some universities offer a rich culture of exhortation, questioning, and devotion.

Less than a half-hour’s drive from Dayton, Ohio, Cedarville University serves as a recruitment pipeline for some of the country’s biggest companies. Procter and Gamble and Lockheed Martin seek out Cedarville grads, and it’s not only due to their excellent reputation for academics. Cedarville’s immersion strategy for spiritual life seeps into students’ work ethics.

Students rank the mandatory five-day-a-week chapel as a highlight, and every undergraduate is required to minor in Bible. Overall, Cedarville excels at providing encouragement and exhortation. Its consistent spiritual emphasis, combined with the popularity of overseas mission trips (which nearly two-thirds of students have enjoyed), creates a distinct experience. For students who are engaged in social justice issues and eager to learn more, Eastern University right outside of West Philadelphia offers plenty of opportunity. Eastern’s 3,000-plus undergraduate population aims to work out their faith and examine the world as they weigh disparity, goodness, and grace. There’s even a Faith, Reason, and Justice scholarship, representing the three legs of the school’s education. Eastern is in a traditionally suburban area, flanked by mansions, but it’s a 20-minute drive to an entirely different world in downtown Philadelphia—one where food scarcity and housing instability are the norm. So for some, campus dining options represent not only a mean cheesesteak but also a ministry opportunity; Eastern’s YACHT club (Youth Against Com- placency and Homelessness Today) brings lunches to transient and displaced people in the greater Philadelphia area. Also, first-year students are required to serve twenty hours in underprivileged communities as part of their coursework, and student chaplains are placed in every residence hall.

Spiritual enrichment hinges in part on how it translates to life after college amid practical concerns like student loans and salary. Aware of this reality, Eastern instituted a FastPass program to save undergrads both time and money. By enrolling in remote summer classes, many students at Eastern end up graduating at least a year early. This program reduces total tuition, and it further grounds Eastern in the tangible, nuts-and-bolts world where time is of the essence to reach the world for Christ.

IF YOU’RE ALL ABOUT THAT SCHOOL SPIRIT

Student athletes (and enthusiastic sports fans) may be particularly drawn to schools that support their athletic teams and recre-ational sports through robust funding and campus-wide events. Awards, championships, and athletic facilities are part of this equation, but so are school spirit and intra-mural sports. Naturally, the Division I sports at Lipscomb University are a huge draw for many student athletes. Lipscomb is known for its southern hospitality and charming
C alvin LifeWork, which began at Calvin University in Fall 2017, connects students with a life of purpose and passion. This one-of-a-kind program for career and life readiness equips students in every major with the practical skills they need in today’s world.

**Vocation** Participants discover what God is calling them to do and who he is calling them to be. Students uncover their unique gifts that will transcend a career—gifts that can be used at all times for God’s kingdom.

**Career Readiness** Whether students are planning to go to grad school or get hired right after college, Calvin LifeWork sets participants on meaningful and influential career paths.

**Financial Literacy and Life Skills** Many college students report feeling overwhelmed by responsibilities like budgeting, making a big move, or conflict resolution. Calvin LifeWork equips students to master life skills and thrive through their challenges.

**Leadership Development** Calvin students are prepared as leaders not only in their field of work and study, but also in their churches and communities. Calvin LifeWork helps students realize that their voice matters, and it can be used to lead with conviction.

Throughout the program, career coaches help students to explore their career options and prepare for internship opportunities. Calvin’s coaches are experts in career readiness, networking, and the job search.

Calvin LifeWork is designed to fit around a regular course schedule and is flexible enough to accommodate the scheduling demands of extracurricular activities.

Students complete the program through engaging in-person and online workshops. Participants also have the opportunity to find an internship that offers on-the-ground experience in their field.

Get a glimpse of your future at calvin.edu/lifework.

KATHRYN WATSON writes about education, art, literature, and Christian culture from her home in New York City.
Because you believe your voice matters…

there’s no place like Denver.

Finding your voice and confidently stepping into whatever God has for you can be challenging. That’s why Denver Seminary is committed to supporting every student—male and female—in the pursuit of whatever call God has placed on their lives. We believe there is no better place than Denver Seminary to prepare you to find your voice, speak your truth, and see God change lives through you.

We offer more than 35 Master’s-level (MDiv, MA, and ThM) degrees, majors, concentrations, and certificates delivered on campus or fully online. Our programs are designed to give you maximum flexibility to put together courses that best meet your needs. With our commitment to mentored learning, you will not find a better place to help you pursue your next calling.

Come check us out at DenverSeminary.edu. We think you’ll agree—there is no place like Denver.

Listen to Denver Seminary’s new podcast Engage360 on Spotify, Stitcher, iTunes, or your favorite podcast player app.

DenverSeminary.edu/youbelieve
AT Biola, experience a nationally ranked Christian university like no other. Biola is home to more than 150 faith-infused academic programs, on-campus and online. Founded in 1908, Biola offers biblically centered education, intentional spiritual development, and vocational preparation in a unique environment where all faculty, staff, and students are professing Christians.

Join more than an academic program, join a community of believers dedicated to seeking God in all things, together. With a rich tradition of biblically centered education, Biola’s programs are faith integrated so you’ll learn to think biblically about every discipline. Biola students graduate with a minor in biblical studies and benefit from spiritual development and vocational preparation throughout their time as students.

BECOME A SOURCE OF LIGHT in the world—transformed by faith-integrated knowledge, exceptional professors and a vibrant all-Christian community. biola.edu/allasone

BIOLA’S LEADING ACADEMIC PROGRAMS INCLUDE

- The Torrey Honors Institute, a world-leading classically based honors program.
- The Stewart Science Honors Program, where exceptional STEM students conduct and publish research alongside mentor professors.
- The School of Cinema & Media Arts, a top-ranked film school where students develop in craft and character to tell stories that matter.
- The Crowell School of Business where students can present a business concept in the annual Startup Competition and compete for capital.

Discover how Biola can prepare you to become something new—so you can create a greater impact in the world.

1-800-OK-BIOLA

biola.edu/allasone
PROGRAM FOR Everyone
We help students find their purpose by offering next-generation education with over 200 academic programs, including 150 online programs, across nine distinct colleges.

DISCOVER GCU
Discover GCU is an overnight, all-expenses paid* on-campus experience. Prospective students meet current students and other future Lopes, stay in a suite-style residence hall, tour GCU’s beautiful campus and so much more.

FOR More INFORMATION, VISIT GCU.EDU/CHRISTIANITYTODAY

*Restrictions for travel reimbursement may apply. For more information about the median debt of students who completed the program and other important information, please visit our website at gcu.edu/disclosures. Please note, not all GCU programs are available in all states and in all learning modalities. Program availability is contingent on student enrollment. Grand Canyon University is regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (hlcommission.org). Important policy information is available in the University Policy Handbook at https://www.gcu.edu/academics/academic-policies.php. GCU, while reserving its lawful rights in light of its Christian mission, is committed to maintaining an academic environment that is free from unlawful discrimination. Further detail on GCU’s Non-Discrimination policies can be found at gcu.edu/titleIX. The information printed in this material is accurate as of JULY 2019. For the most up-to-date information about admission requirements, tuition, scholarships and more, visit gcu.edu ©2019 Grand Canyon University 19GTR0582
For over 100 years, NNU has been offering one of the most distinctive and best Christian educations in the Northwest. Through 80+ rigorous academic programs, robust student outcomes, and a complete “college experience,” NNU has created a legacy of preparing its students to change the world for good.

Expect more from NNU.

nnu.edu/ct

LOCATION
Nampa, ID

ENROLLMENT
1,287 | Undergrad

TUITION
$30,550

STUDENT TO FACULTY RATIO
16:1

EXPECT TO BE IN COMMUNITY
Engage in all the fun that college life has to offer as you participate in over 40 clubs and activities offered on campus, cheer on the Nighthawks sports teams, join in on the fun campus traditions, and make a lifetime of memories with forever friends who will be there for you every step of the way.

EXPECT TO EXPERIENCE THE BEST OF THE NORTHWEST
Take advantage of NNU’s ideal location in the heart of the Boise Valley, only minutes away from trendy coffee shops and easily accessible hiking and biking trails or take a short hour drive to the closest ski resort.

EXPECT TO BE TRANSFORMED
At NNU we are invested in helping you transform—spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually—into the person God is creating you to be so that you, in turn, can go out and transform the world.

EXPECT NNU TO BE HERE FOR GOOD . . . AND HERE FOR YOU!

WEST

EXPECT TO BE CHALLENGED
Choose from 80+ rigorous academic programs, including NNU’s nationally recognized programs in engineering, nursing, education, and business.

EXPECT TO BE SUPPORTED
Connect with distinguished faculty in all disciplines who will become your mentors, research partners, connections to internships and future jobs, and spiritual sounding boards.

EXPECT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE
Impact your community through internships, research opportunities, and service projects that bring life to what you are learning in the classroom.

EXPECT TO SUCCEED
Plan on joining other NNU grads who were prepared for their future, with almost 100% job placement prior to graduation in multiple programs and acceptance into numerous renowned graduate schools.

NNU.EDU
YOU'RE EAGER FOR MORE.
And, if you’re given the right tools, cultivated in your gifts, and active in your faith, you can live out the full story God is calling you to.

That’s why Calvin University exists.

You were created by a God who doesn’t want you to settle. He wants you to flourish in his kingdom. In fact, he wants to use you to help the whole world flourish.

Calvin professors, staff, and fellow students are waiting to meet you, to find out just who you are, and to journey with you in discovering your one-of-a-kind calling.

Let’s go.

YOUR HOME BASE
Join us at Calvin University, a world-class Christian liberal arts university that prepares students to pursue truth and inquire with intellect. By exploring the Christian faith and rigorous academics together, you’ll be uniquely equipped to think deeply, act justly, and live wholeheartedly as Christ’s agent of renewal in the world.

WE HAVE YOUR MAJOR
Calvin offers a transformative education tailored to your interests and designed to equip you for service in the world. Check out our 100+ majors and programs, or create a new major aligned with your calling through interdisciplinary studies. Outside the classroom, dive into any of our 80 student organizations as part of a bold, vibrant community.

LIVE WHAT YOU LOVE
Calvin LifeWork is a one-of-a-kind program designed to prepare you for life after graduation, from your career to your relationships to your overall success in this fast-paced, ever-changing world. As you investigate the complexities of God’s world, you’ll grow in understanding, wisdom, and wonder.
FOR THE CHURCH.
FOR THE KINGDOM.

FOR THE CHURCH. FOR THE KINGDOM.  

MIDWESTERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AND SPURGEON COLLEGE exist for the Church and for the Kingdom. We aim to train God-called men and women to fulfill their ministry—whatever it may be—for the glory of God and the good of his people. We offer a wide range of undergraduate, masters, and doctoral degrees.

With both residential and online degrees available students can pursue their gospel-centered, biblically-solid, and theologically-rich education in a manner most convenient for them. So, whether you’re pursuing a business degree, a Bible degree, or something in between, Spurgeon College is equipping students to serve the Kingdom wherever God may take them. Start your journey today and apply for free using promocode: CTSPURGEON
YOUR MAJOR
At Moody in Chicago, you can choose from more than 30 undergraduate majors. With Moody Aviation, you can train to be a missionary pilot mechanic or maintenance specialist and develop technical and spiritual skills to equip you for the rigors of mission work.

YOUR PROFESSORS
Your faculty mentors offer a wealth of academic knowledge and ministry strategies. Learn from professors with years of academic and practical experience that will challenge and support you academically and spiritually.

YOUR FREE TIME
Enjoy many activities at Moody in Chicago, including intercollegiate basketball, volleyball, soccer, and cross-country or join our nationally ranked debate society, a musical ensemble, yearbook staff, or other student groups. Aviation students take advantage of living in the Northwest with many outdoor recreational activities like rock climbing, kayaking, and alpine skiing and have the opportunity to join a variety of student groups.

YOUR FUTURE
Your Future: You can get equipped with the truth of God’s Word to impact the world for Christ. Attend Moody’s undergraduate school in Chicago, Moody’s Aviation school in Spokane, or take classes online to prepare for ministry wherever God takes you.

YOUR SURROUNDINGS
At Moody in Chicago, you’ll live in the River North neighborhood, blocks from Lake Michigan, the Magnificent Mile, and acres of public parks. You can gain urban ministry skills as you serve in churches, rescue missions, inner-city ministries, and more! At Moody Aviation in Spokane, students develop close relationships and gain valuable missionary aviation training in the breathtaking Northwest.

YOUR FREE TUITION
Your full-time undergraduate education at Moody in Chicago is paid for! You’re only responsible for room and board, and textbooks. You can get financial aid from grants, Federal Loans, scholarships, veteran’s benefits, and even payment plans to help you pay as you go.

WHERE GOD TRANSFORMS THE WORLD THROUGH YOU
Take the Next Step
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MOODY.EDU/MBI
OLIVET NAZARENE UNIVERSITY (ONU) is a private, Christian liberal arts university with a strong emphasis on academic excellence and Christ-centered living. Olivet’s 275-acre main campus in Bourbonnais, Illinois, is located 45 miles south of Chicago. The campus atmosphere and world-class facilities support the University’s mission “to provide high-quality academic instruction for the purpose of personal development, career and professional readiness, and the preparation of individuals for lives of service to God and humanity.” The student body of 4,600 — including 2,700 undergraduates — represents more than 40 denominations, most U.S. states and more than 20 countries. The faculty, staff and administration are dedicated to teaching, encouraging and mentoring each student as a whole person — academically, socially and spiritually. Olivet’s high retention, graduation and employment/placement rates demonstrate the University’s commitment to student success.

In addition to traditional undergraduate programs, Olivet’s School of Graduate and Continuing Studies (SGCS) offers more than 20 advanced degree programs, including a Doctor of Education in Ethical Leadership (Ed.D.). Olivet students may participate in more than 90 clubs and organizations including: 20 intramural sports; a variety of musical ensembles including the 195-member marching band or the university orchestra; and multiple theater and ministry groups. ONU has 21 intercollegiate men’s and women’s sports teams and is a member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), the National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA), and the Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference (CCAC). Olivet is home to the Chicago Bears’ summer training camp, which annually draws thousands of fans to campus. The University is also home to Shine. FM, a top-rated contemporary Christian U.S. radio network that broadcasts over the air in the Chicago area; Indianapolis; Northwest Indiana; and Lansing, Michigan.
THE WORLD NEEDS YOU.

We can tell you—or we can show you. When you visit our beautiful campus, we can bring the Trinity experience alive for you. During Visit Days, you can engage in conversations with professors, feel the fellowship that flows during Chapel, visit the dorms that become homes away from home, and talk to our financial aid professionals who are dedicated to making the right education for your life's vocation and a place in the world that needs you as affordable as possible.

Our Admissions team is eager to welcome and get to know you. Schedule your visit online at trnty.edu/visit or call 708-239-4833.

Location Palos Heights, IL
Enrollment 1,192
Tuition $30,175
Student to Faculty Ratio 10:1

ACADEMICS
You want more. More than just classes, more than a degree, more than a job after graduation. You want to explore your potential, to be ready to build a career that makes a difference, to launch into the next part of your life ready to do something for good, for God, and for the world. You've come to the right place.

COMMUNITY
Trinity offers a caring Christian community where students form life-long friendships and grow in their faith while joining together in:

- Worship
- Chapel and student-led Outcry
- Student activities
- Annual talent show, spring formal, and day trips to Chicago
- Leadership
- More than 100 student leadership positions on campus
- Service projects
- From volunteering in local after-school programs to feeding the homeless.

TRNTY.EDU

CHICAGO
Located in the beautiful and safe suburb of Palos Heights, Trinity is just 30 minutes from downtown Chicago. The nation’s third largest city is a hub of culture, sports and food that will enhance your time here. Through the Chicago Semester program, you gain professional and life experience while living and working in the city. Trinity is also a University Partner at the world’s top university-affiliated startup incubator, 1871, in downtown Chicago.

ATHLETICS
The DeVos Athletics and Recreation Center includes two gymnasiums, a fitness center with a bouldering wall and human performance lab. The Schaaf Athletics Complex provides fields for soccer, softball and baseball. Trinity’s NAIA programs include men’s and women’s basketball, men’s and women’s golf, men’s and women’s soccer, baseball, softball, men’s and women’s volleyball, track and field (co-ed) and cross-country (co-ed).

WHERE YOU LIVE
Here, students have a home away from home. All our dorms offer suite-style living and new lounge spaces. The Dining Hall provides healthful food options and a choice of meal plans, and the Bootsma Bookstore Café is a favorite gathering space for socializing and studying.
FOR CHRIST AND HIS KINGDOM

FROM WHEATON TO THE WORLD
With over 40 majors in the liberal arts and sciences, including 6 in the Conservatory of Music and a student-faculty ratio of 10:1, students gather from all 50 states and 90+ countries to learn alongside academic peers and caring professors who unite learning and knowledge with the Christian faith as part of our distinctive Christ at the Core curriculum. Wheaton students graduate well-prepared for career, calling, and for all of life. (99 percent of 2018 grads landed within 6 months of graduation!)

LIVING IN INTENTIONAL COMMUNITY
Being a residential College is a pillar of the Wheaton College experience. Our Residence Halls, Apartments, and Houses are extensions of the classrooms which provide students with another place to learn and grow during their college years. Our dining hall is consistently ranked in the top 20, bringing students together at table while providing sustainably grown foods, with recipes from scratch including gluten-free, vegetarian, and plant-based options. Our desire is to not only talk about friendships and solid community, but engage in it and allow it to shape us.

LEARNING IN AND OUT OF THE CLASSROOM
With clubs ranging from academic honor societies, performance, social justice, and special interest groups, there is something for everyone. These student-initiated and managed clubs truly enrich the atmosphere of Wheaton College, providing avenues for students to express their passions and interests, develop leadership and management skills, and have a ton of fun. Our 21 varsity sports teams, eight club teams and multiple intramural opportunities offered each semester foster an environment of healthy competition where students grow as athletes and as followers of Christ.

So, whether you’ve already begun the college search process, or are just getting started, we hope you’ll put Wheaton on your shortlist! WHEATON.EDU/MYJOURNEY-CT

See Yourself at Wheaton

Connect with us online to learn more and begin hearing from us soon.
Plan to visit our beautiful 80-acre campus, just 25 miles west of Chicago.
See yourself among our joyful, residential, Christ-centered community.

We look forward to welcoming prospective students for an individual visit or at one of our fall/spring visit events! wheaton.edu/seeyourself

WHEATON.EDU
Committed to being a leader among teaching universities, Belmont brings together the best of liberal arts and professional education in a Christian community of learning and service in one of the nation’s fastest-growing cities, Nashville, Tennessee. The University’s purpose is to help students explore their passions, strengthen their skills and uniquely develop their talents to meet the world’s needs. With more than 95 areas of undergraduate study, more than 25 master’s programs and five doctoral degrees, there is no limit to the ways Belmont University can expand an individual’s horizon.

Here, your purpose is our purpose.

We believe every student was created by God for a purpose, and that it’s our mission to help develop their unique gifts, talents and passions to engage and transform the world in meaningful ways. Learn more about why Belmont is among the fastest-growing Christian universities at BELMONT.EDU.

Find your fit at Belmont University

Ranked No. 6 in the Regional Universities South category and named as a “Most Innovative” university by U.S. News & World Report, Belmont University consists of more than 8,400 students who come from every state and more than 36 countries.

Location Nashville, TN
Enrollment 8,400
Tuition $48,170
Student to Faculty Ratio 13:1

Fields of Study

Faith-Based Majors

C"
Dallas Theological Seminary is one of the nation’s oldest and most diverse seminaries. With students from over 100 countries and 68 different denominations studying at DTS, the Body of Christ is richly portrayed. When you study at DTS you not only get a solid biblical and theological education that covers all 66 books of the Bible, you are prepared for ministry in the real world.

TEACH TRUTH THROUGH ALL 66 BOOKS

In the ninety-five years since our founding, we have made teaching the Bible our highest priority. We believe that the Spirit of God works through the Word of God, which is why students in every single one of our professional ministry master’s degrees take eight classes that cover all 66 books of the Bible. That’s even more Bible training than most MDiv programs. If you’re serious about studying all 66 books, you’ll love training at DTS!

DTS.EDU/CCG

Since 1924 Dallas Theological Seminary has prioritized teaching all 66 books of the Bible in order to prepare students for whatever ministry God has called them to. And now there are three distinct ways to complete your seminary education: on campus, online, or via weekend and/or week-long intensive courses! This is seminary YOU can do. Learn more at dts.edu/ccg.

TEACH TRUTH. LOVE WELL.

SEMINARY IS FOR YOU!

Did you know that seminary isn’t just for senior pastors? God calls all believers to the work of discipleship. That’s where we come in. Founded in 1924, Dallas Theological Seminary exists “to glorify God by equipping godly servant-leaders for the proclamation of His Word and the building up of the body of Christ worldwide.” In other words, we want to help men and women fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandment, across the globe. “Teach Truth. Love Well.”

With fourteen degrees and one certificate program, chances are, we have something for you. So check out DTS and let us help prepare you for wherever God is calling you to!
TRADITION & TRANSFORMATION

Grounded in a tradition of excellence in scholarship, an emphasis on community, and a dependence on faith. Prepare to transform the world!

SCHOLARSHIP. COMMUNITY. FAITH.

BE THE DIFFERENCE
Milligan College has been dedicated to educating men and women to lead and to serve for over 150 years. Our emphasis on scholarship, community, and faith provides a holistic approach to higher education and prepares students to not only excel in their chosen careers but also make a difference in the world.

NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED
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WORDOFLIFE.EDU

The Word of Life Bible Institute is a collegiate-level program offering both one and two year options that focus on three core areas: study, life and ministry. Through biblical studies coursework, discipleship, community, and hands-on ministry opportunities, the Bible Institute is an immersive experience where students deepen their faith and prepare for the future, whether in a career or full-time ministry.

FIRST YEAR
The first year at the Bible Institute is all about building a strong foundation of faith. First year students spend the majority of their time diving deep into the Bible in order to develop a strong knowledge of the Scriptures explore the roots of the Christian faith, understand prophecy and gain the necessary tools to become effective servants of Christ.

SECOND YEAR
Second Year at the Bible Institute takes students on a more intensive journey into the Word of God. Students focus on more challenging and intricate biblical courses while learning and growing in all of the different areas of missions. Second year students also take part in extensive ministry training complete with real-life opportunities, including a 10-day international missions trip. All of this helps students put the knowledge gained from the classroom into real-life practice.

The Word of Life Bible Institute educates and prepares students to make a difference in their communities and around the world through intensive biblical studies and practical ministry training. It’s a place where students discover their God-given callings.
As I was growing up, my mom and dad sought to create a home that honored God. That’s not to say that my home or my parents were perfect; we had our struggles. My parents had arguments and issues related to finances, their marriage, and the stress of raising kids. Yet through it all, I viewed them as two people who desired to follow the Lord. That desire was the glue that held us together.

“Honor your father and mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.” The fifth commandment—I heard this all the time growing up. If you weren’t raised in the church, I’m sure you had some version of this (even if it was “respect your elders”). Regardless, the implications were always the same: if you want to have a happy childhood (and life!), obey your mom and dad.

Paul reinforces this command in Ephesians 6. He points out it is the first commandment with a promise. But Paul restates the promise: “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” The promise of a life that “goes well” has always jumped out at me when I think about the reason for honoring my parents.

God designed families to operate like this: as parents love God by following God’s commands,
they teach their children to do the same, both by example and instruction. My parents provided a picture of how life was to be lived—seeking to honor God and obey him—and our family was blessed as a result. The discipline and encouragement of my parents laid a foundation for me to live a life that honors God.

This is where that “so that it may go well with you” promise shines brightest to me. The moments of my life that haven’t gone well—that were destructive and tragic—have been times when I stepped outside the boundaries my parents taught me. These boundaries, designed by God, keep us from harm as we learn to avoid sin and obey him.

The command to honor our parents is often misunderstood as youthful obedience. However, later in life, it can involve deciding how to wisely spend an inheritance or taking care of aging parents. Understanding this expanded context helps clarify how to express honor when our parents choose to not obey God. We should seek to make choices that honor God—that is our first and highest calling. Even when doing so stands directly against what our parents may advise, if we’re loving and obeying God, we will honor them.

IT’S NOT BLIND OBEDIENCE

Heading off to college is a time of great change. You’ll find yourself with more responsibilities than you’ve ever had before. What you learn from God’s word—and the boundaries your parents helped build—prepares you to enter this next chapter of life. Still, this transition is challenging. For some, it can be destructive and full of negative consequences. For others, it is a rewarding time of great maturing.

With this independence, your decisions may not always align with your parents’ advice. But you can still honor them through your choices and open communication. For instance, when faced with a big decision, consult with your parents and seek their advice. Bringing them into your decision-making process is helpful to you, and it recognizes them as an influential voice in your life.

Don’t forget to share the little things. Many college students forget to call home as they become enmeshed in classes, work, and school events. Simply by letting them know about your new life at college, you are showing honor to your parents. Tell them about the new project, extracurricular activities you’re enjoying, or what you do on the weekends.

You can also honor your parents by trusting them with information about who you’re becoming. Transparency plays a vital role in any healthy relationship. When they ask questions, answer truthfully, even if you know they’ll probably disagree. I’ve found that this kind of openness creates stronger bonds long term, even if it causes some temporary tension.

As you head to college, your parents will likely be fixated on your career preparation, believing this to be an essential element to your future success. Your academic progress is important to them, and you can respect that (and yourself) by not spending four years only caring about relationships, pizza, and Netflix. Attending extra-credit seminars, studying for tests, and doing the reading for your classes go a long way towards honoring your parents. Plus it couldn’t hurt come grade time.

Behavior can be modified for a time, but a life transformed by Christ will last far beyond graduation day. To be clear, while you can honor your parents as you build a foundation of faith, the motivation to serve God should drive your actions. A desire to please your parents, or even a desire to honor them, is not enough. As you seek to know God and love him more each day, your life will be molded to him and his truth. Embrace these next few years as a catalyst to better understand what it means to love God with your life.

BEN TRUEBLOOD serves as the Director of Student Ministry for LifeWay Christian Resources and has 19 years of student ministry experience. He is the author of A Different College Experience, Within Reach, and Student Ministry That Matters, and he is the host of the LifeWay Student Ministry podcast. In addition to his work and writing, Ben is involved in training, consulting, and speaking to student ministries throughout the U.S.
Confessions is part autobiography, part love letter to an all-knowing God who works in our lives to bring us to himself. Augustine, a North African bishop in the fourth century, reflects on his life in this spiritual classic. His reflections follow a pattern: he’ll tell the story of what happened, describe how he thought of the event as it was happening, and then reflect on how he can now recognize that God was working at each point in his life. As you embark upon your time in college, think about how you have seen God working in your life so far, and how you know he will help your restless heart find rest in him.

10 Books to Read Before College

1. Confessions
   By Saint Augustine
   Confessions is part autobiography, part love letter to an all-knowing God who works in our lives to bring us to himself. Augustine, a North African bishop in the fourth century, reflects on his life in this spiritual classic. His reflections follow a pattern: he’ll tell the story of what happened, describe how he thought of the event as it was happening, and then reflect on how he can now recognize that God was working at each point in his life. As you embark upon your time in college, think about how you have seen God working in your life so far, and how you know he will help your restless heart find rest in him.

2. Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave
   By Frederick Douglass
   The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass is Douglass’s story of enduring and escaping slavery in the antebellum South. Douglass’s writing provides an important history lesson, plunging readers deep into the horrors of slavery. In addition, Douglass points out a temptation that modern Christians are just as subject to as Christians of his time: they interpret the Bible in ways that justify discrimination and help them maintain power over others. Douglass’s Narrative will help you work to cultivate a faith that is, in his words, the “Christianity of Christ” rather than the “Christianity of this land.”

3. Spiritual Friendship: Finding Love in the Church as a Celibate Gay Christian
   By Wesley Hill
   The friendships you forge in college often become the most significant relationships of your life. But in the church, we tend to view friendships as less important than romantic and family relationships. Spiritual Friendship challenges you to value the love of friendship the way Christ does in the Book of John: “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

4. The Color of Compromise
   By Jemar Tisby
   Scripture compels Christians to pursue justice, but it’s difficult to work toward a better future if we don’t have a solid understanding of the injustices of the past—and how they stain the present. Tisby’s book charts the history of compromises white American Christianity has made with racism in order to build and maintain power. The Color of Compromise challenges readers to acknowledge this truth and to work toward real equity and dignity for all people. Tisby’s words will inspire you to fight for answers to one essential question: How will my time in college help me pursue justice and honor the image of God in others?

5. Educated
   By Tara Westover
   What does it mean to be educated? What is an education for? What are its most important lessons, and who teaches them? In her memoir, Westover asks these questions. Raised by isolationist parents in Idaho, Westover didn’t enter a formal classroom until her late teens but ended up at Cambridge University in England. As you begin college, ask yourself: Who am I as I begin this education, and what kind of person can—and can’t—it help me become?

6. Caring for Words in a Culture of Lies
   By Marilyn McEntyre
   You use words when you read, when you speak, and when you text with friends. You use them to pray. You use them to think. Words, according to McEntyre, are a precious resource, one we should care for and tend with love. If we don’t, she says, we risk losing the precision and beauty that language is capable of, and we might also become more easily manipulated by lies. This book will encourage you to value the meaning and beauty of all language, to shrewdly see through manipulative language, and to use words to express truth.

7. The Common Rule: Habits of Purpose for an Age of Distraction
   By Justin Earley
   Everything we do stems from habits. Chances are, many of them are exhausting, expensive, draining, or time-consuming. The Common Rule encourages readers to practice simple daily habits, like “one hour with phone off” and “one meal with others,” and life-giving weekly habits, like “one hour of conversation with a friend” and “Sabbath.” As you enter the often-taxing, over-scheduled season of college, Earley’s book can help you cultivate habits that ease your stress and give order and purpose to your days.

8. Every Good Endeavor
   By Tim Keller
   Soon people will start asking what your major will be, and no matter what you say, they’ll probably ask what you plan to “do with that” after graduation. We all work, but as Christians it’s important to ask what our work is for and how our careers can be interwoven with our faith. Every Good Endeavor discusses how biblical wisdom shapes professional lives. Keller concludes that work begins with serving God and others, rather than ourselves and financial stability.

9. Strong and Weak: Embracing a Life of Love, Risk and True Flourishing
   By Andy Crouch
   What does it mean to truly flourish? Crouch argues that the person who flourishes is both strong and weak. Though this might seem contradictory, it’s the mixture of strength and weakness that characterizes Christ, who took on the weakness of humanity and used his strength by surrendering it, serving others, and suffering for their sake. Strong and Weak will help you follow Christ’s example, teaching you how to use your strengths to serve and how to see your vulnerabilities as openness to love.

10. Disruptive Witness: Speaking Truth in a Distracted Age
    By Alan Noble
    As Christians, we are called to bear witness to the gospel. But, Noble argues, this is an especially difficult task in our culture. We’re constantly distracted by the newest post or the next Netflix binge, so we’re less likely to sit and focus on weighty things, including faith. Disruptive Witness will help you explore and understand these problems, and it introduces ways to witness in our full-of-options, distracted age.

Julie Ooms (PhD, Baylor University) is Associate Professor of English at Missouri Baptist University in St. Louis, MO, where she teaches American and world literature and freshmen writers.
PUBLISHER PICKS
7 MORE BOOKS TO READ BEFORE COLLEGE

1. **LIFE + LOVE BIBLE STUDY**
   
   **BEN STUART**
   
   In a society where everyone is supposedly more connected, why do people feel so lonely? Even as marriage rates decline, recent studies find the overwhelming majority of single adults still hope to get married. But how can you navigate life and love in this disconnected culture? *Life + Love Bible Study* will help you chart a course through four relational stages: singleness, dating, engagement, and marriage. Learn to embrace God’s design and live out His purpose for each stage of your life. (6 sessions)

2. **HOW TO HUMAN**
   
   **ALICE CONNER**
   
   Being human is hard. Being a good human is even harder. Practicing kindness, honesty, and self-awareness in the face of doubt, failure, ambiguity, and vulnerability can feel insurmountable. *How to Human* is here to help, providing a tender and irreverent take on one of life’s most fundamental questions: how to be a better human in a world dead set against it. Alice Connor offers sage, no-nonsense realism through real-life examples, encouraging you to embrace the chaos and see life as an experiment—not a quest for the right answers.

3. **WALKING WITH JESUS ON CAMPUS**
   
   **STEPHEN KELLOUGH**
   
   Our time at university is usually a pivoting point, for better or worse. Some go into college seemingly strong in their faith but walk away burnt out and disillusioned. Others come in with spiritual doubts and apathy toward Christ and walk away as passionate Christian leaders. What makes the difference? Stephen Kellough, a college chaplain of 25 years, addresses 10 make-or-break issues for the Christian in college. Issues like doubt and depression, sexuality, the Sabbath, and perfectionism. Prepare well for the future as you learn to walk with Jesus on campus.

4. **101 QUESTIONS YOU NEED TO ASK IN YOUR TWENTIES**
   
   **PAUL ANGONE**
   
   Adulting got you down? Whether you just polished off your college graduation cake, are in your twenties or thirties struggling through a quarter-life crisis, or you’re simply trying to figure out how to become all grown up, 101 Questions You Need to Ask in Your Twenties is the book for you.
   
   If you’re drowning your anxieties in Netflix and ice cream, terrified of failing, feeling like you’re going crazy, grab this book and start thriving in the most “defining decade” of your life.

5. **100 DAYS TO BRAVE**
   
   **ANNIE F. DOWNS**
   
   Whether you’re making a major decision, dealing with a difficult transition, or facing a fear, *100 Days to Brave* will give you courage and confidence to move forward. More than 250,000 people have discovered their courage with *100 Days to Brave*! Now, be inspired with the giftable deluxe cover. Gorgeous faux-leather and copper ribbon make this a perfect gift for yourself or anyone who is facing a new challenge. Dare to spend the next 100 days discovering that you are braver than you know and stronger than you thought possible.

6. **D6 CURRICULUM**
   
   D6 Curriculum connects the church to home, and families to one another. D6 is based on the principles of Deuteronomy 6:5-9: love God, love His Word, and teach your children to do the same. This curriculum aligns church’s small group material so the entire family is studying the same theme at the same time. This one-of-a-kind discipleship curriculum goes beyond Sunday morning and helps parents and grandparents reconnect with kids and teens through the use of devotional study guides and tools for parents and grandparents. Visit D6Curriculum.com.

7. **THE MESSAGE REMIX**
   
   College is a time of connection. As you immerse yourself in the surprise and wisdom of God’s words, transform your Bible into a deeper conversation with help from *The Message // REMIX*.
   
   Unlike any other Bible, the //REMIX’s unique design presents the Bible in stirring clarity, bringing its truths into focus for first-time and long-time readers alike. With its vivid language, *The Message* compels you to pause, reflect, and recognize your life from a new perspective—God’s perspective.
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Garrett, like many out-of-state students at the University of Utah, was drawn to “the U” for academics but stayed to play in the mountains. One day, Bryce, my husband and a campus minister with Reformed University Fellowship (RUF), asked Garrett why he was sticking around the campus ministry. Garrett replied, “I thought your group would be weird, where people would be singing kumbaya. But you offered free food, so I thought I’d check it out. And yeah, singing maybe was weird, but I never knew faith could apply to my real life—like to my driving.” Through relationships with leaders, Christian students, and the local church, Garrett found Jesus. A year later, he was teaching Sunday school to our oldest child in our local church.

The spiritual lives of students aren’t an afterthought to professors, but at most colleges spirituality isn’t tied to any particular faith. And while students seem more interested in spirituality than previous generations, more aren’t necessarily coming to faith in Christ. Pew data shows that many college-educated Christians continue to go to church regularly, but on the whole “college graduates are more likely to describe themselves as atheists or agnostics.”

So how do you not abandon your faith in college? How can you grow...
GROW, REGARDLESS OF WHERE

While each college has particular challenges, leaders, volunteers, researchers and professors have identified several keys that are contribute to spiritual growth and maturity, no matter where a student attends school.

Intergenerational community

College students often live with peers in dorms or off-campus apartments. Having a peer group of those in your same life stage can be fulfilling and sum total, but it creates deficits in the long run. While there are unique programs (like Cleveland’s artist-in-residence program where college students live rent-free in an assisted-living center), the best intergenerational community we’ve been given is the church.

Being a part of a community that’s composed of various generations (as well as races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic brackets) helps students practice empathy by widening their frame of reference. In Brave Souls: Experiencing the Audacious Power of Empathy, Belinda Bauman writes, “Empathy is the only virtue muscular enough to meet the pain and complexity of our times.” Empathy is essential for success not only spiritually but relationally, professionally, and personally. When students experience prolonged intergenerational exposure, they learn how to play a role in the complex organism that is community.

The local church

Despite local churches having the potential to offer a second home and place of solace for many college students, many congregations cater to a youth culture and young families. David Kinnaman, co-author of <i>unChristian</i>, says many are leaving the church due to its inability to adjust: “Most young adults no longer follow the typical path of leaving home, getting an education, finding a job, getting married and having kids—all before the age of 30. These life events are being delayed, reordered, and sometimes pushed completely off the radar among today’s young adults. Consequently, churches are not prepared to handle the ‘new normal.’”

Though the local church offers innumerable challenges, especially for college students, its presence in our lives is vital. When we are involved in a congregation, we have spiritual mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, and cousins to learn from, to be mentored by, to serve, love, lead and care for. In community with other believers, we are able to take the sacraments and break away from the frenetic pace of life. In a local church, we bear one another’s burdens as we find something larger and more important than ourselves to focus on.

Safe places for doubt and disagreement

Wrestling with your faith is inevitable, but the journey to find answers doesn’t have to be inevitably lonely. Jennifer Phipps, who’s served with Cru (formerly Campus Crusade for Christ) for 23 years, says genuine community is different than a gathering of believers: “In my experience, a safe space where students can be brutally honest and ask their hard questions is key to helping them develop faith as their own.”

Student involvement in thoughtful Christian communities is vital to their happiness and success according to Elizabeth LeLievre, the director of Manna, an interdenominational Christian campus ministry at Princeton. “Campus ministries provide a way for students to connect with one another,” LeLievre said. “To critically think about how their faith is tied to every area of life, including the academy.”

THE LONG VIEW

It’s tempting to view intergenerational interactions, local churches, and other Christian communities as stepping stones that ensure students become spiritually mature. But spirituality, especially for an entire generation, is impossible to predict and plot so linearly.

Some faith journeys begin with mentors or campus ministers encouraging students to become more self-aware. When students can fill every second with work, studies, and social media, this type of reflection may provide opportunities for spiritual questions. “Living with silence, journaling, and reflecting help them see where they want [and] need to grow and start choosing where to turn to make that growth happen,” says Christopher Phillips, an English professor who teaches a spiritual writing course.

Other journeys may begin and end with the same local congregation a student has attended her entire life. Still others may resemble a more traditional trajectory, with small groups, volunteer opportunities, and prayer before class filling up days at a Christian college.

College is the time for questions, for trying on new denominations, and for seeing the value offered through these encounters. “Christ prays we’d be unified in him. And yet we’re taught at the earliest ages to remain in our Christian silos, our denominational ruts, often missing the beauty of other traditions,” says author Seth Haines. “It’s that beauty that might unify us (or at least make us less dismissive of one another).” Well-formed Christian spirituality is evidenced by caring for the things Christ cared about. Unity is among those most important things.”

No matter where a student goes to college, the soil for their Christian maturity will be the same—as it is for every stage of life. We need new perspectives to teach and guide us. We need vulnerable, truthful, and safe Christian community. And we need to become more comfortable with questions and doubts and less comfortable with the status quo and complacency. At the end of the day, where you go to college won’t determine your spiritual growth—but what you do there and who you invest in very well might.

ASHELEY HALES is a PhD, speaker, host of the Finding Holy Podcast, and author of Finding Holy in the Suburbs. She lives with her church planter husband and four kids in the southern California suburbs.
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As a high school student, thinking about your long-term career goals can be exciting and intimidating. At this point, you may be selecting a school, deciding a major, or even considering graduate school, especially since many professions, like clinical social worker, physician, professor, or speech pathologist, require a graduate degree for an entry-level position.

At Calvin University, where I direct the Career Center, about 25 percent of our students attend graduate school immediately after commencement. Other alumni accrue a few years of professional development before returning for another degree. In fact, several business schools prefer candidates who have work experience before enrolling in an MBA program.

But if you haven’t decided on a career, you’re not falling behind. There’s plenty of time to evaluate your interests, prioritize your values, and speak with those who can walk through this decision with you. Good career centers invest in resources to assist students with every step of this process.

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If you’re one of the lucky high school students with clear plans for the future, it’s not too early to consider if graduate school is needed, the types of programs available, and how to prepare now for the years of schooling ahead.

IS ONE DEGREE ENOUGH?

Your first step to making long-term educational plans is to understand whether pursuing graduate education is the right path.

You should consider a grad degree if:

• It’s necessary to attain your career goal.
• It would broaden your skills in ways that other certification and workshops cannot.
• The cost benefits are worth the financial investment.
• You have had relevant internships.
• You enjoy and perform well in an academic environment.

Despite what you may have heard, graduate school may not be a good idea if:

• You are trying to postpone a career decision or avoid employment.
• You are responding to outside pressures from peers, family, or faculty.
• More education seems like a “safe” alternative to looking for a job.
• You are expecting to make more money or gain job security from a second degree.

TAKING YOUR PASSION TO THE NEXT DEGREE

Graduate school is a rewarding but rigorous experience, so knowing the reasons you want to pursue it will keep you motivated when school gets tough.

The following steps can help you choose your area of graduate study:

Pray diligently. God desires your trust, but he does not orchestrate confusion or chaos. Ask him to open doors of opportunity and provide clarity for your decisions.

Consider your coursework. Identify the most rewarding classes you’ve taken. How could these classes relate to a potential field of study or a career?

Research. Examine the occupational outlook for your field five to ten years from now, the availability of that work in places you’d like to live, and the work/life balance offered in that profession.

Job Shadow. Follow someone doing the work you are interested in. Ask questions about the most rewarding and challenging aspects of the role.
is essential, regardless of your chosen career path. Each year students focus on four primary areas: voca-

tion, career readiness, financial literacy and life skills, and leadership development. Whether through a future-focused program like Calvin LifeWork or tak-

ing initiative on your own, it’s important to complete the following steps:

Pursue academic advising. Work with an advisor to outline your coursework each semester.

Maintain a solid GPA. Take advantage of resources such as tutoring, office hours, writ-

ing centers, and other academic supports.

Connect with professors. Faculty are pas-

sionate about their work and the success of their students. They serve as valuable mentors,

research partners, and recommendation writers for graduate school and employment.

Participate in research. Partner with fac-

ulty and seek out opportunities to research and publish your work.

Secure an internship or job. Work with your institution’s career center to gain

career-readiness skills such as writing a resume and interviewing.

Network. Collaborate with faculty, staff, and alumni in your area of study.

Create a portfolio. Maintain a file of your best coursework, such as artwork, articles, essays, and projects.

As you continue your academic journey, seek God and he will order your every step. Remember Jer-

emiah 29:11 — “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Tarita Johnson is the director of the Career Center at Calvin University in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She is responsible for the center’s overall mission to equip students to succeed on their lifelong vocational path.

The Career Center’s promises program, Calvin LifeWork, prepares students for life after college, from graduate school to careers to building a life that aligns with God’s calling. Learn more at calvin.edu/lifework.

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Three weeks before his senior year of high school, Sam woke up from a four-day coma. His recovery compounded the stressors of a typical senior year, and when a friend asked about his plans after graduation, he had no answer. Sam’s friend explained how he had needed a break between college and the workforce, so he found a program that allowed him to push pause and focus on something else for a year.

As his classmates headed off to various colleges the next fall, Sam took his friend’s advice. He began his dream job in his dream location—maintaining trails and teaching kids about the great Alaskan outdoors with Service Adventure, a one-year program out of the Mennonite Mission Network.

Rebecca had a secret—she was terrified of going to college. So when her parents encouraged her to consider a gap year program through American Field Service, Rebecca was grateful for a delayed transition. Rather than moving into a dorm and registering for classes, Rebecca set out to spend the year working in a Ghanian orphanage.

Jakob spent the year after high school in Sweden, working at an international English-speaking Bible school. Carly participated in the World Race—a discipleship journey where she traveled to three world regions and participated in service and communal living. Grace moved to the Netherlands, where she studied, lived, and ate communally at L’Abri Fellowship, “a place where people might find satisfying answers to their questions and practical demonstration of Christian care.”

Statistics about gap years show what these students shared. Robert Clagett, former dean of admissions at Middlebury College, found that at Middlebury and the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, students who took a gap year performed better than their classmates by up to .04 on a 4.0 scale. According to a 2015 survey from the American Gap Association and Temple University, the overwhelming majority of students who take gap years report satisfaction with their careers. Explaining this phenomenon in *The Gap-Year Advantage*, an independent study conducted by education experts Karl Haigler and Rae Nelson found that gap year students possess a stronger, more nuanced sense of their identity and values.

Despite the clear benefits of gap years, America has been slow to normalize them. Malia Obama’s 2016 announcement that she would take a gap year amplified the conversation and correlates with a slight rise in awareness and participation. Even still, the Gap Year Association reports that only 1.2 percent of 300,000 freshmen waited a year to enter college. Perhaps America’s race-to-success pace predisposes us to resist gap years. We worry people see this time as simply a chance to travel, relax, and put off adulthood. In a culture full of achievers, our fingers ever hovering over play, the choice to push pause can feel like isolation or even failure.

**Will I go to college if I take a year off?**

**How will I make—and keep—friends?**

**Does this affect my job prospects?**

The myths surrounding gap years are plentiful, but few are substantiated. Haigler and Nelson found that 90% of gap year students pursued college within a year. And Milkround, the most widely used student and graduate job website in the UK, discovered that 88 percent of gap year students believe their experience “significantly added to their employability.”
HOW TO GAP YEAR WELL

The key to success in embarking on a gap year is finding a structured program that suits your goals and personality. Similar to the cadence of the academic calendar, structure keeps students embedded in rhythms and timelines. It also provides opportunities for new experiences and exploration while learning more about God, yourself, and others. In a culture characterized by burnout, quality gap year programs offer both fulfilling work and true rest.

Of course, as with churches, summer camps, and schools, not all gap year programs—including Christian ones—are created equal. Many can be expensive, though some programs offer scholarships or operate within local communities for students with limited means. Additionally, most gap year programs are not inclusive of marginalized people, such as those with disabilities.

There are also risks that come with these programs. While living in Ghana, Rebecca contracted malaria. She spent almost a week in a local hospital where nurses carrying gas-lit lanterns administered upwards of ten shots a day. And after returning home at the end of her year and starting college, Rebecca was older than many of the residential freshmen, and the reverse culture shock of transitioning from “an orphanage in a developing country to a mostly white, southern college campus was an existential conundrum.” Rebecca confidently says, though, that her gap year experience gave her a better, wider worldview.

Eli’s experience wasn’t without bumps as well. She notes that there were no checks and balances in her cohort’s leadership, and this led to being sexual harassed while serving with her Christian program. Even still, Eli says she gained a great deal of cultural competency that benefits her now as she works in higher education administration.

While the positive outcomes in no way erase the trauma these women experienced during their programs, they do serve as an encouragement to ask good questions, speak with program alumni, and pray continually. They should also prompt those who take gap years to create a plan for processing and reacclimating once they arrive home.

Luckily, you’re not alone in the journey. Other students are exploring gap years and asking these same questions. Even higher education institutions are beginning to endorse and participate in the gap year craze. Princeton University offers “a tuition-free program that allows a select number of incoming first-year students to begin their Princeton experience by engaging in nine months of University-sponsored service at one of five international locations.” Vanguard, hosted by Wheaton College and available to Huntington University students, allows students a year to “explore diverse cultures, navigate life’s big questions, and live in a Christ-centered community.” OneLife Institute out of Southern Wesleyan University is a nine-month program that focuses on growing in faith and serving others. Dozens of schools recommend gap years and offer the choice to defer acceptance to their university for a year. Some even provide scholarships to students who take this opportunity.

When approached wisely and chosen purposefully, gap years can help students take a long, intentional inhale between the shallows of high school and a deep dive into college. As we immerse ourselves in that which God loves—whether it’s studying the Bible, serving others, or appreciating the world around us—we grow in awareness of who God made us to be, and perhaps we even discover the beauty of pressing pause.

ABBY PERRY is the co-author of Unlocking Key Biblical Words and a freelancer with work in Entropy, Sojourners, and Christianity Today. Her recent Prophetic Survivors series at Fathom Mag featured profiles of survivors of #ChurchToo sexual abuse. She lives in Texas with her husband and two sons. Find Abby’s writing at abbyjperry.com and her tweets @abbyjperry.
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ENROLLMENT
- <500
- 500-999
- 1,000-4,000
- >4,000

TUITION
- <$10K
- $10K-$20K
- $20K-$30K
- $>30K

DISTANCE LEARNING
- None
- Courses
- Programs

KEY

ALABAMA
- $ % Faulkner University
- $ % Heritage Christian University
- $ % Huntsville Bible College
- $ % Judson College
- $ % Samford University
- $ % Selma University
- % University of Mobile

ALASKA
- % Alaska Bible College
- % Alaska Christian College
- % Champion Christian College

ARIZONA
- % Arizona Christian University
- % Grand Canyon University
- % International Baptist College and Seminary

ARKANSAS
- % Ecclesia College
- % Harding University
- % John Brown University
- % Shorter College
- % Williams Baptist University

CALIFORNIA
- % American University of Health Sciences
- % Azusa Pacific University
- % Bethesda University
- % Biola University
- % California Baptist University
- % California Christian College
- % California Lutheran University
- % Community Christian College
- % Concordia University Irvine

COLORADO
- % Colorado Christian University
- % Nazarene Bible College

CONNECTICUT
- % Holy Apostles College and Seminary

FLORIDA
- % Barry University
- % Palm Beach Atlantic University
- % Hobie Sound Bible College
- % St. Thomas University
- % Southeastern University
- % Trinity College of Florida
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| Idaho   | $ | Boise Bible College | $ | New Saint Andrews College | $ | Northwest Nazarene University |
| Illinois| $ | Greenville University | $ | Judson University | $ | Lincoln Christian University | $ | Loyola University Chicago | $ | Moody Bible Institute | $ | North Park University | $ | Olivet Nazarene University | $ | Trinity Christian College (Palos Heights, IL) | $ | Trinity International University | $ | Wheaton College |
| Indiana | $ | Anderson University | $ | Bethel College | $ | Crossroads Bible College | $ | Grace Theological Seminary | $ | Horizon University | $ | Huntington University | $ | Indiana Wesleyan University | $ | Oakland City University | $ | Taylor University | $ | Union Bible College | $ | University of Notre Dame | $ | Veritas Baptist College |
| Iowa    | $ | Dordt College | $ | Emmaus Bible College | $ | Faith Baptist Bible College &amp; Theological Seminary | $ | Northwestern College | $ | Shiloh University |
| Kansas  | $ | Barclay College | $ | Central Christian College of Kansas | $ | Friends University | $ | Kansas Christian College | $ | Manhattan Christian College | $ | MidAmerican Nazarene University | $ | Sterling College | $ | Tabor College |
| Kentucky| $ | Asbury University | $ | Campbellsville University | $ | Clear Creek Baptist Bible College | $ | Simmons College of Kentucky | $ | Kentucky Christian University | $ | Kentucky Mountain Bible College | $ | Southern Baptist Theological Seminary |
| Louisiana| $ | Louisiana College | $ | New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary |
| Maryland| $ | Maple Springs Baptist Bible College | $ | Christian Life Seminary | $ | Faith Theological Seminary |
| Massachusetts| $ | Boston Baptist College | $ | Boston College | $ | Eastern Nazarene College | $ | Gordon College | $ | Hellenic College | $ | Northpoint Bible College | $ | St. John's Seminary |
| Michigan| $ | Andrews University | $ | Calvin College | $ | Cornerstone University | $ | Ecumenical Theological Seminary | $ | Grace Christian University |
| Minnesota| $ | Bethany Global University | $ | Bethany Lutheran College | $ | Bethel University | $ | Crown College | $ | North Central University | $ | Oak Hills Christian College | $ | University of Northwestern - St. Paul | $ | University of St. Thomas |
| Missouri| $ | Baptist Bible College | $ | Calvary University | $ | Central Christian College of the Bible | $ | College of the Ozarks | $ | Evangel University | $ | Evangelical Nazarene Seminary | $ | Evangelical Seminary | $ | Lyon College |
| Nebraska| $ | Summit Christian College | $ | York College |
| New Jersey| $ | Pillar College |
| New Mexico| $ | University of the Southwest |
| New York| $ | Davis College | $ | Elm Bible Institute and College | $ | Houghton College | $ | The King's College | $ | Nyack College | $ | Roberts Wesleyan College | $ | Word of Life Bible Institute |
| Oklahoma| $ | Family of Faith Christian University | $ | Oklahoma Baptist University | $ | Oklahoma Christian University | $ | Oral Roberts University | $ | Randall University | $ | Southwestern Christian University | $ | Southern Nazarene University |
| Oregon| $ | Corban University | $ | George Fox University | $ | Mount Angel Seminary | $ | Multnomah University | $ | New Hope Christian College | $ | Northwest Christian University | $ | Pacific Bible College |</p>
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