

Deepening the Investigation Into the College Decision-Making Process

# COLLEGE CHOICE STUDY 2022

WHAT FACTORS DRIVE STUDENTS' CHOICES



***Academic Reputation***  
gets its highest ranking since 2016.

Since 2016, “Academic Reputation” has slowly moved its way up the polls, and for the first time ever, landed itself in the top 3 determinants for college choice. The desire to attend graduate school is also increasing. The ability to gain acceptance into graduate school is often influenced by the academic quality of the undergraduate institution.



“Degree Leads to a Good Job” has moved from the 5th most important determinant to the 2nd; it is now a driving factor for incoming students.



Advent, in partnership with Dr. Darin White, the executive director of the Samford University Center for Sports Analytics and Chair of the Entrepreneurship, Management & Marketing Department, has conducted the College Choice Study and Student-Athlete College Choice Study annually since 2016. These are some of the findings from 2022.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT [collegechoicestudy.com](https://collegechoicestudy.com)



**After spending one year ranked #2, “Majors of Interest” is back at the top of the list for all incoming students in 2022.** Healthcare is the most popular major for incoming freshmen, growing from 15.6% in 2019 to 28% in 2022. Psychology and Counseling has tripled in popularity over the last three years and is now the third most popular major, behind Business which has actually declined from 28% in 2019 to 21% in 2022.

### MALE RESULTS

**“Cost of Attendance” is incredibly important to the male demographic.**

Due to the fear of an impending recession and the pressures of inflation, male students forced the “Cost of Attendance” determinant up to the #4 slot. This is congruent with other industry research that indicates the biggest barrier to attracting new students, or luring back those who have left, is cost.

### FEMALE RESULTS

**Healthcare studies are a core selling point of your university.**

“Majors of Interest” ranked #1 for the first time ever for incoming freshmen females. 25% of incoming females plan to major in a healthcare related field which is the highest since 2016. Ensuring the legitimacy of your health-related programs is crucial.

Dr. Darin White, the executive director of the Samford University Center for Sports Analytics and Chair of the Entrepreneurship, Management & Marketing Department, has conducted the College Choice Study and Student-Athlete College Choice Study annually since 2016. During the summer and early fall of 2022, an electronic survey was developed and sent via email to incoming college freshmen in all parts of the United States. The survey contained items measuring the impact of the 20 have been tracked by Advent since 2016. After extensive conversations with Advent staff, 11 additional items were included in the 2021 study. This year’s survey generated 603 total responses.



ADVENT.



**“Commitment to In-Person Teaching” and “Hands-on Learning Opportunities”** were added to the study in 2021 and have moved up and maintained a top 5 position for students since the addition.



**“Quality of Social Life”**

has experienced a significant increase since 2018 for incoming freshmen males and is now ranked as #3. We have noticed that incoming freshmen over the last two years since COVID, particularly males, seem to have struggled to build healthy face-to-face relationships.