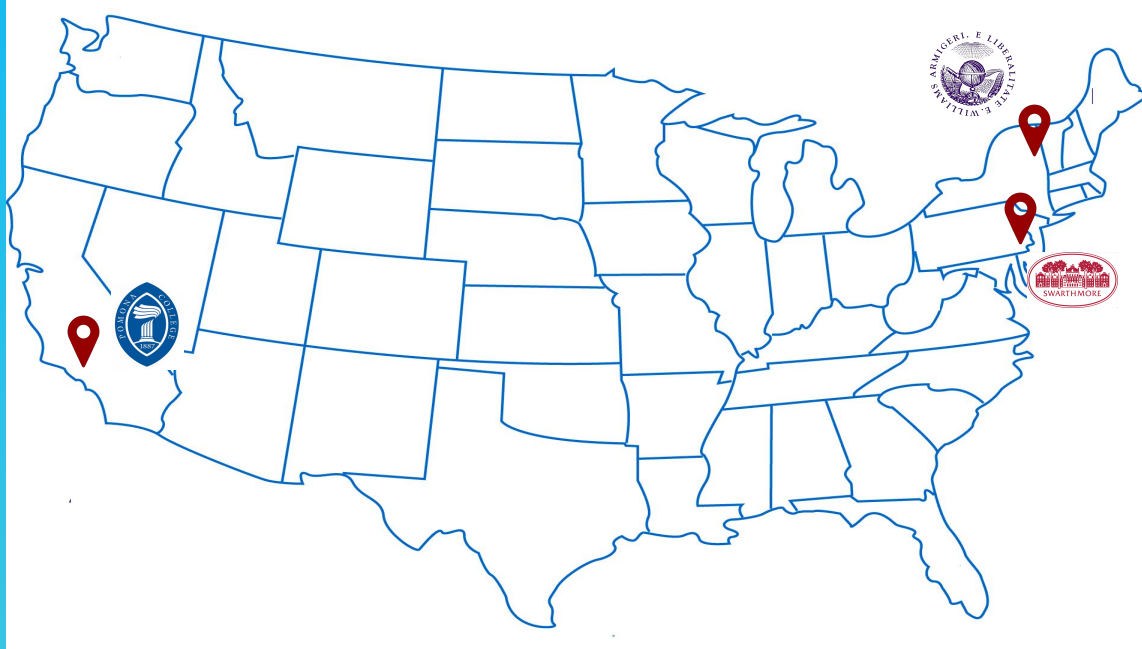


Small is the New Big:

Making the Case for the Liberal Arts



Bruny Alonso
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Pomona College



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Overview:

This presentation provides an insightful comparison between Liberal Arts Colleges and research universities, highlighting the unique benefits of attending a Liberal Arts College. Focusing on institutions like Swarthmore, Pomona, and Williams, we will explore the defining characteristics of both educational paths, helping students determine which environment best aligns with their academic and personal goals.

Additionally, we'll discuss the resources available at each type of institution across the United States, offering a well-rounded perspective for students considering their options.



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Today's Agenda:

- Characteristics & Values
- A College & A Curriculum
- Financial Aid and The Application Process
- National Data and Outcomes
- Busting Myths
- Questions and Conversation



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Characteristics of the Liberal Arts Colleges

- Broad courses of study with an emphasis on exploration
- Small residential populations & class sizes
- Classes taught by professors
- Plentiful undergraduate research
- Discussion-based classes (instead of lecture-based classes)



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Value of a Liberal Arts Curriculum

- Critical Thinking Skills
- Analytical Skills
- Communication Skills
- Strong Writing Skills
- Diversity of Thought
- Preparation for the Unknown



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Financial Aid: The Basics

Types of Financial Aid

- Merit-Based Aid
- Need-Based Aid

Financial Aid Package

- Scholarship/Grant
- Work-Study
- Loans

Financial Aid Application

- CSS Profile or ISFAA
- University-specific application



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Liberal Arts Colleges Apps: Why do we ask for that?

- Academic Preparation
 - Internal Grades/Transcript
 - National Exam Results/Predictions
 - Standardized Tests
 - ACT or SAT
- Letters of Recommendation
- Personal Achievements, Talents, and Activities
- Personal & Supplemental Essays
- Application Plans: Early Decision, Early Action Regular Decision



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Holistic Admissions & Context: Your Authentic Story

- What does holistic admissions mean?
- How do admissions officers at highly selective Liberal Arts Colleges review applications?
- Conveying your voice Personal Statement/College Essay vs. Statement of Purpose
- Conveying why you think the way you do and your perspective



Tips for Telling Your Authentic Story

- Don't copy stories or essays from online, or rely on Chat GPT/AI.
- Don't try to be unique. Be true to the experiences that are important *to you*.
- Share multiple parts of yourself throughout your application.
- Think about which parts of the application would serve best where.
- Supplementary essays
 - They are not intended to be more work for you
 - Colleges are intentional in selecting these questions



TRUE

or



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FALSE

True or False:

I need to know my major before applying

FALSE (sometimes)

It's important to reflect on your interests and strengths, but you don't always need to know your exact path.

Some schools do require you to narrow down your options and apply to a certain school or program.



True or False: I should engage in a college's virtual visit offerings.

TRUE

We want to see that you've done your research, and we're here to help you do that!

Webinars, virtual tours, and Q&A with current students are great ways to find your “fit”.



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