

SHOULD YOU CHOOSE A LARGE OR SMALL UNIVERSITY?

Summary: Should you go to a small, focused university or a large one? Find out in this article.



Question: I've been attending community college for about a year and would like to earn a computer science degree. I'd like to transfer to a four-year college, and I'm considering two schools. One is a large institution with a strong reputation; the other is a lesser-known college. I don't know much about the second, but I'm interested because the classes seem to be more focused on the career I'd like to pursue, and I could receive my degree in three years. My concern is that I know so little about this college. Will employers view a degree from this school less favorably?

Answer: To do justice to your decision, launch a full-fledged investigation of the relatively unknown college and compare it to Hot Shot U. If the program seems much more in line with your goals and if everything checks out as far as accreditation, faculty credentials, placement rate and student/alumni feedback, this may be your school. With demand for most computer-trained/information-technology professionals still strong, the college brand isn't as important in some areas.

On the side of caution, consider that high-profile companies—if you're aiming for high-profile companies—often limit their recruiting efforts to prestigious universities. In addition, the courses that you've identified as not relevant may be liberal-arts courses that would help you to round out your education and offer an advantage when it comes to promotion opportunities later in your career.

To verify your conclusions, poll family and friends who work for employers you'd consider in your job search and contact human-resources departments for their viewpoints on the merits of degrees from the two colleges.

See [Returning to School: 11 Common Questions Answered](#) for more information.

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