



# Everything You Think You Know About Independent College Consultants is Wrong

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Birmingham, Alabama

# Presenters

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Vice President for Admissions and Financial  
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# In this hour



- Results of latest research about
- IECs
- Their clients
- Their clients' actions

- How colleges can make the most of IECs

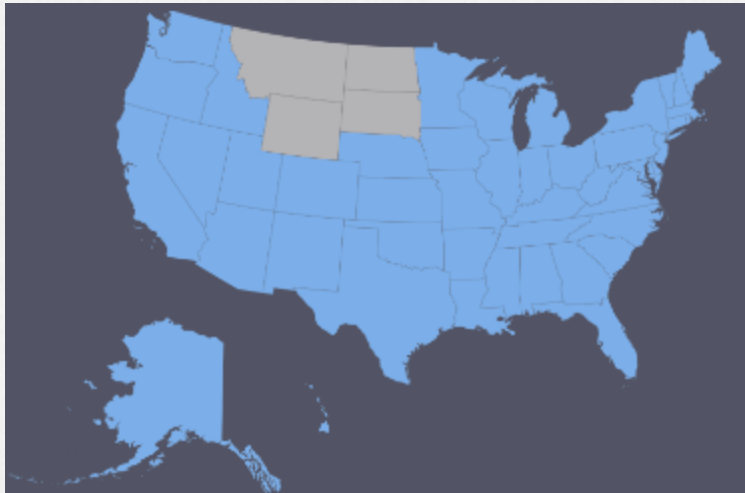


# Perception: Who Are IECs?

- Northeast USA
- Big cities
- Inexperienced
- Wealthy
- Emphasize “getting in”
- Over-promise, and over-state their role
- Hand-holders
- Serve those already well-off: private prep school, wealthy families

# The Reality

Based on an anonymous 2015 survey of over 500 IECA members



IECA members are in 46 states & 23 countries.

We do have lots of members in the Northeast, but 71% are NOT.

# The Reality

The typical client is a **public school** student attending a large suburban school...but clients are diverse: urban, suburban & rural.

28% of client families are wealthy/upper class.

**26% of client families are working class, lower middle class or impoverished.**

# 'Part-Time Dabblers?'

- 76% of IECA Professional members work full time, another 5% are getting close.
- The average IEC works 36 hours/week (same as a school-based counselor)
- 84% see clients late afternoons & evenings
- 60% see clients on **Saturdays**
- 48% see clients on **Sundays**

# Experience?

The average IEC has over 12 years working in private practice as a college consultant.

The average IECA member has nearly 20 years of experience in college admission &/or counseling.





# Emphasis



IECA screens out those in private practice whose websites and materials emphasize 'getting in' over 'great fit'

- 55% advise on career exploration
- 84% advise on academic course selection
- 18% assist with academic tutoring
- 43% advise on financial aid

## Have you heard about the independent counselor that charges \$40,000...

- Most IECs charge  $\frac{1}{10}$  of that for up to 3 years of advising.
- Only 1% charge \$10,000 for a multi-year contract



# IEC Fees

- While most IECs offer a comprehensive package, 90% had less costly options:
  - 28% offer smaller plans
  - 70% offer hourly rates
  - 28% have 'a la carte' services
  - 9% use a sliding scale
  - 97% offer pro bono help



# Public School Students

- New NACAC survey:
  - 69% of private schools have a dedicated college counselor
  - **Only 37% of public schools do**
- 70% of private schools say their counseling department spends over 20% of their time on college selection & application process
- **Only 44% of public schools said so**

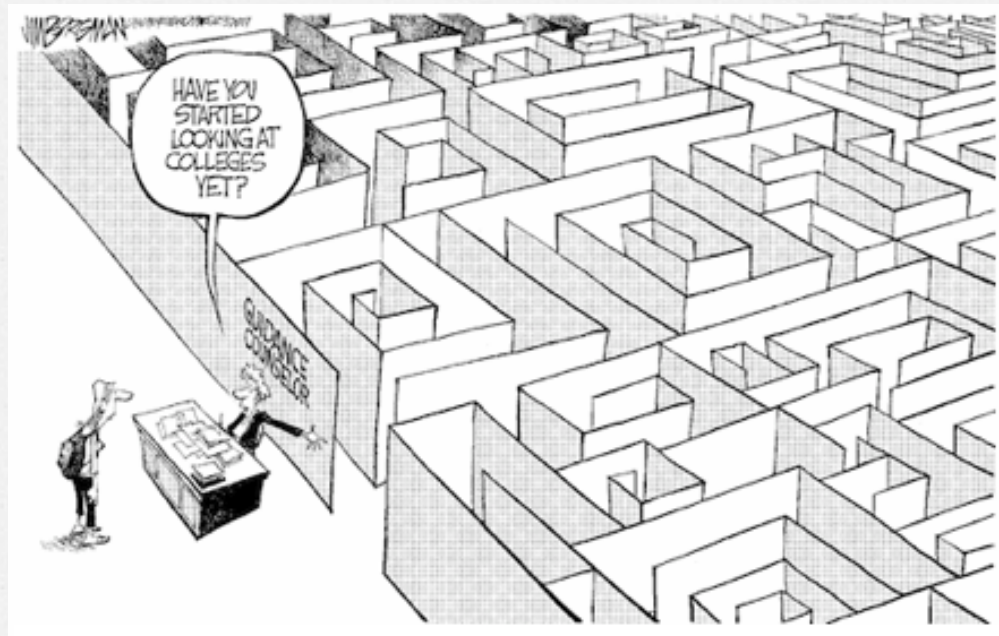
# Public School Students

- According to the U.S. Department of Education the average student receives 38 minutes of personal advising on college admission...that's not per month or per year, that's from 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade inclusive!



## August 2012 Report from IQS Research:

- ❖ Just 4 in 10 high school students reported receiving ANY college-related information from their public school counselor.



# Public School Students

- Are we prepared to make advising the domain of only wealthy school districts or private academies?
- Independent college consulting for many is the only way to bring quality advising to public school students & homeschoolers.

# Those Who Work with an IEC

- Start out looking at 13 colleges
  - Through student research & visits that typically gets pared down & changed with a total of 6-8 applications, on average.





# Students working with an IEC member are much more likely to go out-of-state!

- Nationwide 20% of students do so
- 69% of those working with an IEC do so!



Students working with an IECA are much more likely to attend a private college!



- Nationwide **16%** of students do so
- **68%** of those working with an IEC do so!

# College Counselors

- Numbers in public schools: declining
- Numbers in private schools: steady
- Numbers in private practice: growing



# Why the Growth?



# What Does All This Mean for the Admissions Office?

Brent Benner

Director of Enrollment Management

The University of Tampa





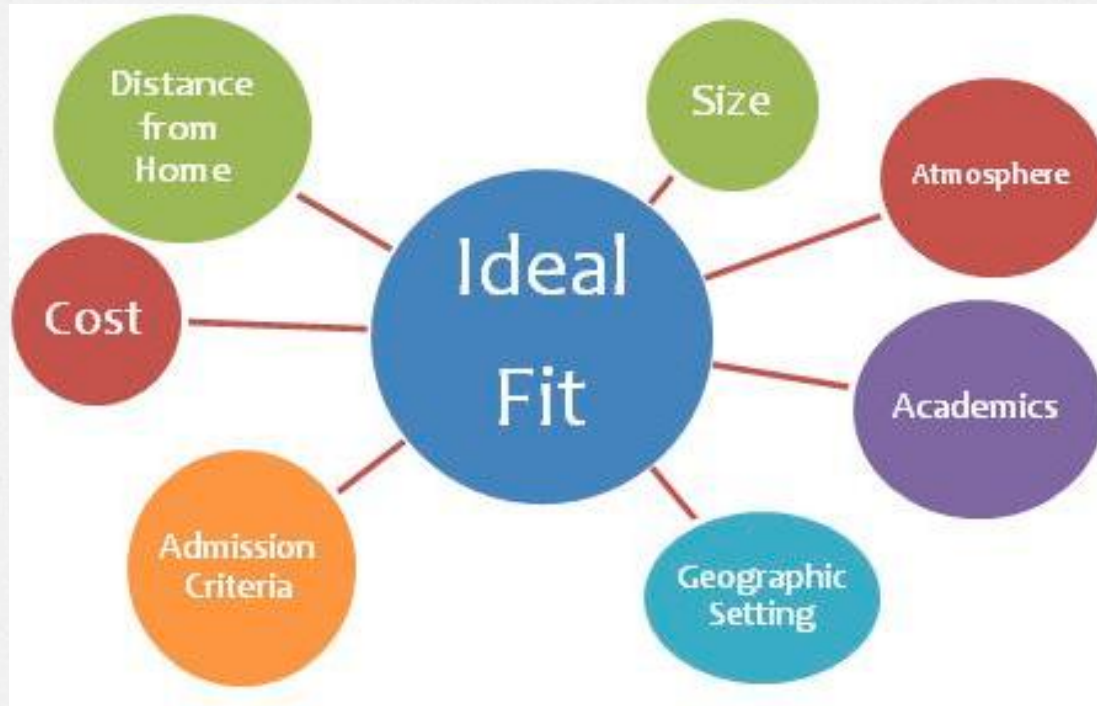
***“A good Independent Educational Consultant should be treated like a good high school.”***

# How IECs Help

Focus on financial fit  
creates more varied  
college choices



# How IECs Help



**Educate on “retention fit” to enhance student success**



# IEC Network

Ideas on working the IEC network:

- Market exposure
- Communicating with IECs
- Working the IEC network practically



# IEC Network



Ideas on working the IEC network

- IECs & staff travel
- Best practices for ongoing relationships
- Learning curve and re-education

# What Does All This Mean for the Admissions Office?

Greg Zaiser

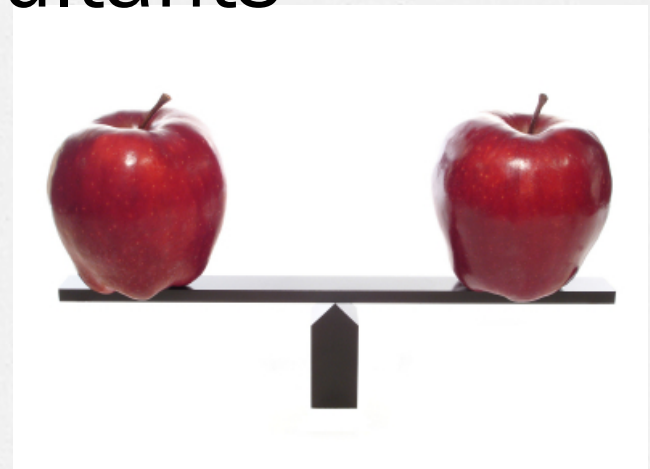
Vice President of Admissions

& Financial Planning

Elon University



Best Practices for  
Admissions Offices &  
Independent  
Educational Consultants



# Working with IECs?

## Benefits to the University



- New Markets
- New Regions
- New Schools
- Diversity

# Thank You!

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