

GUIDELINES FOR COLLEGE VISITS

Visiting the college is probably the most important factor in this entire process. The purpose of visiting a campus is to see the real life version of the institution and gauge whether or not you could “see” yourself there. Colleges are looking for qualified students who “fit” their institutional priorities. As a student, you need to find a college that matches your personal and academic priorities. A visit provides a reality check.

We have developed this guideline to help you remember all the qualities and characteristics of a campus which may impact whether or not it could be an eventual fit for you. Remember that just as a school is reviewing your qualities for admission, you are reviewing the college’s qualities for applying and possibly enrollment. It is highly recommended that you limit the number of schools you visit within the same day. Be sure to allocate enough time to absorb all of the aspects necessary to make a sound and insightful decision.

Do some preparation work. Consider doing a virtual tour prior to your visit and make note of the specific areas which you would like to see. Make sure to read the college website FAQ’s. Avoid asking questions which you should have already researched and know the answer to. Some schools will request that you bring an unofficial transcript with you to the college visit. Unofficial transcripts are available in the Counseling Center. Decide what you want to learn about and put together a list of questions.

For example:

- ✓ What majors are offered and what are the course selection requirements?
- ✓ What is the average class size?
- ✓ Are there freshman orientation programs?
- ✓ What is the role and availability of academic advisors?
- ✓ Does the college have up-to-date technology and facilities? (For example: science labs, theatres, smart classrooms?)
- ✓ What are the operating hours of important places such as the library and computer labs?

HOW TO SCHEDULE A VISIT: Many colleges and universities have available days to visit listed on their Admissions website. Students can often schedule a visit directly on the college website, or by contacting the college directly.

THE ACTUAL VISIT: When on campus, there are several formal and informal ways to evaluate the college.

Formal

Take a campus tour

Have an interview with admission officer

Participate in a group information session at the admission office

Sit in on a class (or two!)

Talk to a coach in your chosen sport

Talk to a student or counselor in the career center

Spend the night in the dorm with a current student

Attend an event on campus

Talk to a professor (or two) in your prospective major(s)

Informal

Eat in the cafeteria

Ask a student why he/she chose this college

Walk around the campus by yourself

- Search for your favorite book in the library
- Walk or drive around the community surrounding the campus
- Ask a student what he/she does on weekends
- Browse in the college bookstore
- Listen to the college's radio station
- Try to see a dorm that you didn't see on the tour
- See if you can imagine yourself at this college

PLACES TO SEE & QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Dorm Room Options
- Financial Aid Office
- Student Union Center
- Athletic Facilities
- Health Center (hours and services)
- Counseling and Disability Services Office
- Bookstore
- Off campus stores
- Places of Worship
- Fraternity/Sorority houses

- ✓ Read the student newspaper- even the ads. Try to find other student publications, department newsletters, alternative newspapers, or literary reviews. What interests the student body? What is the climate of the community?
- ✓ Read the bulletin boards in the student union. What is the “talk” on campus? Read the bulletin boards in the academic department you're interested in. Is it useful and relevant? Anything exciting or resourceful?
- ✓ Check out the Student Event Calendar, what type of entertainment do they bring to campus?
- ✓ Library- What are the hours and resources available to students?
- ✓ Classrooms- are they up to date and user friendly?
- ✓ Dining facilities- can I eat here?
- ✓ Dorms- can I live here?
- ✓ Career placement office- what services are provided for students before and after graduation?
- ✓ The local community- is there a positive relationship between the school and community?
- ✓ Does the college offer an application fee waiver for students who have visited the campus?

POST VISIT FOLLOW- UP:

- ✓ Take notes on what you saw or what you didn't see
- ✓ Make a pro and con list
- ✓ Send a handwritten thank you note to a specific person (for example, the admissions tour guide, coach, admissions officer).

PRE-VISIT CHECKLIST	
COLLEGE	

ONLINE ACCOUNT INFO	
DATE OF VISIT	
CONTACT INFO	
ARRIVAL TIME & LOCATION	
TOUR START TIME	
PARKING DIRECTIONS	
ADDITIONAL DIRECTIONS	