

# GUIDE FOR CAMPUS TOURS



# Campus Visits

Although campus visits can be time-consuming and costly, there is no better way to determine if a school feels right for you. It is worth the time to organize your visits and ensure you make the most of them!

Here are a few tips to get you started:

## **Before:**

Check the college website for the following:

- Tour schedules & how to register
- Location of the office where tours begin
- Campus maps & parking
- Academic calendar - it's best to visit when classes are in session
- Special events you might want to attend while on campus
- Suggestions for places to spend the night before or after your tour
- Instructions on how to arrange an interview with an admissions officer, meeting with a department representative for your potential major.
- Virtual tour to get a feel for the campus

## **Also:**

- Make a list of questions that are important in finding a good fit
- Pack your camera and notebook so you can keep a record of your trip

## **During:**

- Walk around to get a feel for the campus.
- Take the campus tour and ask questions.
- Go into the library - does it look like a place where you'd like to study?
- Read the notices on bulletin boards - do any interest you?
- Have lunch or coffee at the student union and talk to students; ask them about student life, traditions and activities on campus.
- Walk through the recreation center and sports complex.
- Attend a class lecture, sporting event, play, or concert.
- Explore the surrounding community and investigate transportation options so you'll know how to get around town and what it has to offer.
- Read the student newspaper and other publications.
- Walk through the dorms to check out décor, cleanliness, and comfort.
- Check out the Career Center and the services it offers to students and graduates.



## After Your Campus Visit:

Complete your Campus Visit Worksheet while your memory is fresh!

Ask family members their opinions — little brothers and sisters can be pretty observant at times!

- Make sure you have the name of the admissions officer you met and send a thank-you note or email. Ask for a business card.
- Review your notes. Compare what the colleges have to offer and your reaction to what you learned while you were there.
- Add, delete, or place the college in a “maybe” category.



BE SURE TO USE YOUR NAME (NOT YOUR PARENT'S OR A FRIEND'S) WHEN SIGNING UP FOR CAMPUS TOURS AND APPOINTMENTS WITH COLLEGE STAFF.

## **DEMONSTRATED INTEREST:**

Throughout the years, advancements in technology have provided colleges with a vast amount of data to utilize in their college admissions decisions. Much like the exercise students go through to explore options and find a “good match” college, colleges are working toward finding “good match” students. Students that actively learn about the campus, academic programs, location, and other factors are typically perceived as students that are more interested in the institution and thus, more likely to accept an offer to attend. This is so important that many schools are now measuring how interested they think students are in their school — this is called Demonstrated Interest.

### **A few examples of ways you can demonstrate interest in colleges include:**

- Visit the campus
- Follow the school on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram - write a few posts or “like” material on the site - actively participate.
- Call the admissions office to ask a question or request a brochure.
- Open email messages that colleges send to you.
- Attend college fairs and visits that college admissions representatives make to your high school.
- Get to know a couple of students that attend the school.
- Send a thank you note or additional questions to college representatives you met.
- Connect with your college admissions representative to communicate your interest!

# College Visit Checklist

Complete a checklist for each college

Name of College  Address:

Phone Number:  Website:

Admissions Contact:  Email Address:

## Before:

Visit college website. *What is the Mission of the College?*

"Follow" or "Like" college on Twitter or Facebook

Find name of local representative:

Email:  Phone:

Schedule a campus tour. Date:

Check out college brochures, Viewbooks, and Facebook pages.

Make an appointment with an academic advisor from your potential major.

Date:  Where:  Bring:

Consider sitting in on a class within your major. Note on your calendar local recruitment events such as visits to your high school, college fairs, and introductory sessions at local venues. Make a list of reasons you want to attend this school. List reasons for the major you would choose. Make a list of questions to ask the Admissions Office, major department or students you encounter. (See our list of questions at the end of this guide.)

## During:

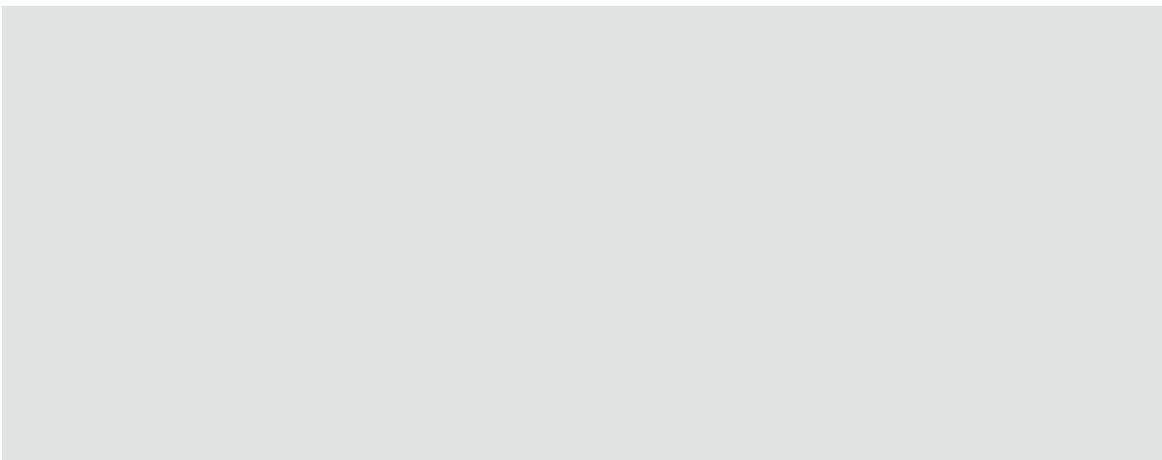
- Take pictures of the campus.
- Attend a Campus Tour.
- Take notes on your visit to review later.
- Complete an admissions interview.
- Check out campus housing options.
- Talk with a representative from your major.
- Talk with a student from your major.
- Check out the area around the campus.
- Write down contact information.
- Visit library, computer labs, and other campus facilities.
- Dine in the dining facility and/or other local eateries.
- Pick up a copy of the school publication.
- Listen to school radio station.
- Explore the campus on your own.

## After:

- Write Thank you notes to everyone you met on your visit.
- Review your notes and compare colleges.
- Rate your school!
- Put the college in the "Yes", "No", or "Maybe" categories.

## Evaluate the school:

Overall Impression:



## Questions to Ask on a College Tour:

### Questions About Admissions:

- Does demonstrated interest play a role in the admission process?
- Are there any exceptions to your test-optional policy?
- Does legacy play a part in admissions and, if so, who is considered legacy?
- Do admissions interviews, if offered, play a role in the process?
- Are interviews conducted by alumni, students or admissions officers?
- Are there any majors for which enrollment is capped?

### Questions About Academics:

- Are classes taught by professors or teaching assistants?
- What is the average class size?
- How/when do incoming freshmen get course selection advising for their first-semester classes?
- Who gets priority in the course registration process – is it by grade level, honors programs, etc.?
- How many classes do students take a semester?
- Are classes more theoretical or hands-on in nature?
- How easy is it to switch majors or schools within the university?
- What is the breakdown of requirements for most majors?
- What percentage of students choose to study abroad?

# Questions to Ask on a College Tour:

## Questions About Academic Support:

- What tutoring services are available?
- Are tutoring services free?
- How often do students meet with academic advisers?
- How accessible are professors outside of the classroom?
- What types of resources are available for students with disabilities?

## Questions About Financial Aid:

- What percentage of students receive financial aid?
- Are merit scholarship estimates built into the school's net price calculator?
- How much financial need does the college typically meet?
- How much extra money should I budget for costs beyond room, board and tuition?
- Do financial aid packages remain the same over time or are they adjusted to reflect tuition increases?
- How do outside scholarships affect a financial aid package?
- Do accepted students receive their financial aid award letter at the same time as their offer of admission or later?

## Questions to Ask on a College Tour:

### Questions to Ask Tour Guides About Student Life:

- When you first came to the school, how did you get involved?
- How did you meet your friends, and what do students do for fun?
- Do many students attend varsity athletic games?
- How does the school build community and foster cultural understanding?
- What are the hot-button issues on campus?
- What are some of the school's main events or traditions?

### Questions About Campus Housing and Community:

- Are students required to live on campus?
- What percentage of students live on campus?
- How do students choose a residence hall and a roommate?
- What do students say about living and dining on campus?
- Do most students choose to live off campus after freshman year?
- What do the campus and community feel like from a safety perspective?
- How would you describe the surrounding community and the relationship the college has with it?

## Questions to Ask on a College Tour:

### Questions About Work and Research Opportunities:

- What types of research opportunities do students have access to outside of the classroom?
- What type of career guidance is offered by this school?
- Are internship or co-op opportunities available through the college?
- What percentage of undergraduates have had an internship or research experience by the time they graduate?
- Is it common for freshmen and sophomores to get research or internship opportunities?

### Questions About Student Outcomes:

- What is the four-year graduation rate?
- What are the requirements to graduate in four years?
- What is the retention rate from freshman to sophomore year?
- What is the average level of student loan debt upon graduation?
- Are career advising services available to alumni or only to enrolled students?