

Effective Campus Visit – Finding “Home”

Although virtual tours, catalogs and view books introduce you to a college, nothing compares to the experience of seeing it for yourself! Planning to visit during a school vacation is fine, but the best time to see a college is when students are on campus and classes are in session. Whether you are pursuing earning a high quality degree (i.e. license, certificate, associate’s or bachelor’s) on a small campus or large, finding the right or best fit is not just about “what does this campus option provide me for coursework?”... It’s about finding your HOME. Use these simple guidelines and questions to help you find what works best, feels good and what offers you the opportunity to be YOU!

Before you visit the campus, consider some of the options below. It is important to develop a list of questions and to plan specific activities in order to accomplish your goals.

CONSIDER:

- A tour of the grounds and facilities.
- A meal in a college dining facility.
- A tour of a dorm or two if available.
- The names and locations of popular coffee shops, snack bars or commons where you can meet students.
- Permission to visit a particular class or to meet with a certain professor, mentor or coach.
- An appointment to meet with an admissions officer, a financial aid officer and possibly a representative from the department or trade that offers the major/skill you are interested in.

TYPICAL QUESTIONS YOU MAY WISH TO ASK ON A VISIT ARE:

ADMISSIONS

- What is the grade-point average required for admission?
- Do you require the ACT or SAT? What score is needed for admission?
- How is admission determined?
- Is there an application deadline?
- Is a deposit required? How much? Is it refundable?

GENERAL INFORMATION

- How many students are enrolled?
- How many are from other states or other countries?
- How large is the campus?
- What is the faculty-to-student ratio?
- What is the typical class size?
- How is the academic calendar set up? Is the school on semesters or quarters (terms)?
- What is the surrounding community like?
- What is the average graduation rate?
- What is the persistence rate of freshmen in programs that take longer than one year to complete?
- Will I have a faculty advisor or mentor to go to for help with class selections?

- What is the school’s reputation/rank among institutions of the same size, cost, type, etc.?
- Does the school offer the program(s) I’m interested in?
- What is the background of the faculty in my field of interest?
- What are the types of courses I will have to take? Which ones do students find most difficult?
- Are there internships or work-study programs that I can participate in to help me gain experience in my field?

COST AND FINANCIAL AID

- What amount should I estimate for books and supplies?
- How much should I plan to have for spending money?
- How much is a meal plan per semester/term?
- Are ATMs available on campus?
- What financial aid programs are available?
- How do I apply for financial aid? What forms do I need to fill out?
- What are the deadlines for financial aid?
- Are any special scholarships offered?
- Do you award athletic scholarships?
- Are there jobs for students on campus?



STUDENT LIFE

- Will I live in a residence hall?
- How are residence halls assigned?
- What are the halls like? How many students to a room?
- Are there meal plans? Will they work in areas other than the cafeteria in my residence hall?
- When can I move off campus?
- Do you have alcohol- and tobacco-free areas?
- Do you have quiet halls?
- What is your drinking policy?
- What should I bring with me when I move in?
- Can I have a car on campus my freshman year?
- Where is the student center? What is its purpose?
- Is tutoring or other academic help available? Where?

ACTIVITIES

- What activities are available?
- Are there sororities/fraternities?
- Where can I go to learn more about getting involved on campus?
- What are the things students are most likely to get involved in on campus?

ATHLETICS

- What varsity sports are played?
- What division are you in? What conference? What colleges do you compete with?
- Do you have an intramural program?

ORIENTATION

- When is orientation? What do you do at orientation?
- Do I need to attend?
- Is there a parents-only session?

PLACEMENT

- What is the school's overall job placement rate?
- Where are graduates getting placed and how many get placed?
- What is the job placement rate for students in my major?
- What are the starting salaries for graduates in my major?

OTHER QUESTIONS SPECIFIC TO MY NEEDS

