

College Visit Information

Perhaps the most influential factor in college selection is the campus visit. A visit allows you to get a feel for the campus and to see how you might feel living there for the next four years. It is tremendously important to visit the campus and see the students, meet professors, see the residence halls, etc. The best time to visit schools is when classes are in session. If you can't visit during this time, remember that campuses are not the same in the summer or on breaks as they are when students are around, so keep that in mind when you visit. Don't let weather or other such factors impact how your visit goes-remember that it will more than likely rain when you're a student, so that is just a fact of life! To plan a campus visit, you should call the Admissions Office well in advance.

The campus tour is a very important part of every campus visit. Be sure to ask questions about the academic rigor, social environment, extracurricular activities, class sizes, housing situation, etc.

Not all colleges require an interview, but this is a way to be more than just your paper (or electronic) application. This gives you a chance to show off! Read and review the material you have received about the college. Remember, if you've made a decision to visit a college you should have a good base of knowledge about that particular school. Use the interview as a way to supplement the information you already have and get your questions answered. Make sure that you get the name of your interviewer and follow up your visit with a brief thank-you note.

A quick note about dress: be neat and comfortable! Admissions officers do not expect you to wear a dress or a coat and tie-especially if it is 90 degrees outside. One hopes that the interviewer will remember your interview for reasons other than your dress. Don't create an issue with your appearance.

SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUR COLLEGE VISIT

1. Spend the night in the dorm-not in a hotel-and sit in on some classes that interest you.
2. Pick up a copy of the school newspaper.
3. Read the course catalog and check out the list of faculty, their degrees, and the courses they teach.
4. If you are interested in playing a sport, try and set up a meeting with a coach. The same goes with any activity.
5. Find out about the quality of the Career Services Office.

Checklist for a College Campus Visit

- Schedule the visit through the college admissions office
- Bring a note from home to the Main Office at least three (3) days prior to your absence
- Meet with an admissions counselor
- Verify admission requirements
- Determine actual college costs
- Ask about financial aid and scholarships
- Take a campus visit
- Investigate your academic program by meeting professors and attending classes
- Talk with students
- Discuss your chances for success with the admissions counselor
- Be sure to obtain a note from the college verifying your visit

QUESTIONS To ASK YOUR CAMPUS TOUR GUIDE

1. Who teaches your classes? Professors or Teaching Assistants?
2. How adequate is the library? Are you able to get the books you need when you need them?
3. Tell me about housing. Are some dorms much better than others? Do many live off campus?
4. How competitive is the student body?
5. How accessible are professors?
6. What is the biggest issue on campus?
7. Are certain courses harder to get into? If so, which ones in particular?
8. What is the greatest shortcoming of this college? What do students complain about?
9. Why did you choose this particular college? Do you still feel the same way about it?
10. What kinds of students are most happy here? Least happy?

Sample Questions to Ask

During individual interviews and group sessions most admission officers will give you a chance to ask questions. It is important to have some questions in mind to ask. As you formulate questions think about what you have read or heard from others about a particular institution. When admissions officers visit RCHS, listen attentively and don't be afraid to ask questions! Many schools tend to blend together when you are learning about so many. Try to discover the distinctive quality which each school possesses.

What academic programs are most popular?

I'm interested in _____. What does your school offer in that area?

Are classes taught by full professors or do you have teaching assistants?

What is your largest class? What is your average class size?

Are most classes structured as lectures or discussions?

Describe the social life on campus? What do students do for fun?

If you could change something about your school what would it be?

Do you have an honor code? Does it truly work?

What is your retention rate?

How is security on the campus?

What is the nature of academic pressure?

What are the three most common complaints heard from students over the past year and what is being done to address these complaints?

Do most students live on campus?

Describe the residence halls and their different options. Describe the nature of support for students.

What makes _____ distinctive from other schools of its size and caliber!

What was your acceptance rate last year? Please give a profile of the freshman class.

Do you have any merit based scholarships? If so, how do I apply?

How diverse is your campus? What percentage of the students are minority?

Do you have any special traditions or customs on the campus?

Sample Questions to Ask Current Students

Why did you choose _____?

What would you change about the college?

What would you fight to keep unchanged at the college?

What do you think makes your school distinctive!

What are the major campus issues?

Have you been challenged in your course work?

How large were your classes freshman year? How large are they now?

Is this a suitcase school?

How effective is the faculty advising system?

How is the relationship between the students and the surrounding community?

(town and gown relationship)

How important is the Greek system?

Does the student government have a voice in the university?

Have you ever met the president, chancellor, etc.?

If you had to select a college from the start, would you make the same choice?

How many years will it take you to receive your degree?

One of the best tests to see if students are happy with their schools, is to sit in the student union and see if they look like they are happy.

Ask the above sample questions to random students. Students who like their schools will be very happy to talk to prospective students! Be cautious if no one will speak with you. Current students are the best resource you can find at the specific schools.

Academic Considerations

Advising System

*Who will advise you on academic concerns? *How often?

Atmosphere

*Academically rigorous? demanding? relatively easy?

Career Counseling Services

*Interest inventories? Computer searches? Personal counseling?
*Internships? Graduate school placement? Job Placement?
* Alumni network?

Cooperative Programs

*Do they exist? How does time shift between work and school?

Core Requirements

*How many courses are required and what are they? *Will they transfer to another college?
*Will AP credit satisfy core requirements?

Course Offerings

*What courses are available to undergraduates?
*How often are the courses listed actually taught? *How easy is it to change majors and graduate on time?

Faculty

*What percent of the faculty teach full-time? Teach undergrads?
Have tenure?
*How likely are freshmen to be taught by graduate students?
*Do most faculty publish articles regularly? Do they use undergrads to assist in their research?

Honors Program

*Is it for freshmen or upperclassmen?
*What advantages are there to the honors program? *How difficult is it to be selected?

Independent Study

*What options do you have to study on your own in a particular academic area?
*When can you pursue these options?

Study Abroad Programs

*Is there an organized program of study in various locations? *Can you pursue programs outside of the university's offerings?
*How many students participate?
*Do courses transfer easily?

Methods of Instruction

*Are freshman classes likely to be taught as lectures, discussions, or seminars?

Making the Campus Visit Count

1. Plan Ahead
2. Dress Appropriately
3. Ask the Experts (the current students)
4. Dodge the Statistics
5. Relax
6. Don't forget you'll be living there
7. Spend the night on campus
8. Try the food
9. See a dorm room
10. Look at the bulletin boards
11. Disregard the weather and the tour guide (but do be aware of the climate in general)
12. Look around and really observe
13. Visit a class and talk with a professor
14. Reflect and write
15. Spend about 5 minutes walking the campus by yourself to see if you feel at home there