

# **COLLEGE CAMPUS VISITS**

## **An Important Component of the Selection Procedure**

### **Why should I visit?**

People usually test drive a car so test drive a college or university. Before enrolling in a school you should always see it firsthand. Visit classes, talk with current students, see a dormitory, and eat on campus. Admissions offices are frequently open five days a week and many offer daily tours. Most schools require appointments for tours and interviews.

Just relying on information from friends is not the most reliable means to gather information about a school. Remember, everyone is unique and your impressions are likely to be different from the impressions of others.

Prior to making a visit, it is a good idea to speak with an admissions representative at the school or at a college fair. This will give you an opportunity to have your initial questions answered and gather material related to the school. After collecting the information, it gives you the opportunity to review the material before your visit. Ask people you know who have attended the school questions about their experiences.

Determine which schools you plan to visit.

### **Planning Your Visit**

Contact the admissions office to set up a visit. Have several possible dates in mind. It is best to visit on week day when school is in session. This gives you the opportunity to see the school at work. It will also provide you with a realistic view of what it's really like to attend school at that institution. It will provide you with an opportunity to visit a class, the student center, and see a residence hall.

Financial Aid Offices are generally separate from the Admissions Office. If you would like to discuss financial aid while visiting, ask the admissions office if you need to arrange for a visit with the financial aid office.

If you show up at the admissions office without scheduling an appointment will not give you an accurate impression of the school. Admissions offices work like any other office if you've made an appointment, you will receive immediate assistance. If you simply show up, you will probably have to wait, and not be able to visit classes, meet with students, participate in a tour etc...

If an overnight trip is required for the school you plan to visit, you might want to ask the admissions office about overnight accommodations. Sometimes schools have guest rooms on campus or can recommend local accommodations.

Plan to arrive on campus at the designated times of your visit. It's always a good idea to allow extra time for the unexpected. If you are going to be late, be sure to call the admissions office to let them know.

Dress for success. This visit is an important business appointment. Determine what attire is most appropriate for the school you are visiting.

## Questions You Should Ask College Reps



- How has enrollment changed the past 5 years?
- How and where do students fall short?
- What kind of students do you like to attract?
- What is the best way to succeed at their university?
- What is the best way to prepare for attending your university?
- How many students apply each year? How many are accepted?
- What are the average GPA and average ACT Assessment or SAT I score(s) for those accepted?
- How many students in last year's freshman class returned for their sophomore year?
- What is the school's procedure for credit for AP or IB high school courses?
- As a freshman, will I be taught by professors or teaching assistants?
- How many students are there per teacher?
- How does the advising system work?
- Does this college offer study abroad, cooperative programs, or academic honors programs?
- What is the likelihood, due to overcrowding, of getting closed out of the courses I need?
- How effective is career services? What percentage of students graduate with jobs?
- What is the average class size in my area of interest?
- How many students graduate in four years in my area of interest?
- Are students involved in the decision-making process at the college? Do they sit on major committees?
- In what other activities can students get involved?
- What percentage of students receive financial aid based on need?
- What percentage of students receive scholarships based on academic ability?
- What percentage of a typical financial aid offer is in the form of a loan?
- If my family demonstrates financial need on the FAFSA (and PROFILE®, if applicable), what percentage of the established need is generally awarded?
- How much did the college increase the cost of room, board, tuition, and fees from last year?
- Do opportunities for financial aid, scholarships, or work-study increase each year?
- When is the admission application deadline?
- When is the financial aid application deadline?
- When will I be notified of the admission decision?
- What bridge programs do you have in place for students who are not academically sound?
- Are there special programs in place for Freshmen's that set them up for success at your college?
- What tutoring services are made available for students?
- What corporate relationships/partnerships do you have in place that create opportunities for students and graduates?



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### **The Common Application**

Five Hundred plus (500+) colleges and universities have agreed to accept a generic application called the Common Application. This allows students to submit applications to many schools using the same forms. The Common Application is only available online at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org). Note that, in many cases, the school will accept the Common Application but will also require additional information given by way of a supplement to the application (also found on the Common Application website). Check the school's website for the most current information regarding any necessary supplements.

### **The Common Black Application**

The Common Black College Application allows students to apply to any number of 46 HBCUs at the same time for only \$35. On March 17, 2015 the California Community Colleges and nine Historically Black Colleges and Universities, established an agreement that will allow college students who complete certain academic requirements are now guaranteed transfer to a participating HBCU. Available at <http://commonblackcollegeapp.com/>

### **Types of Admissions**

#### **Early Decision (ED) Applications**

An Early Decision agreement means that if a student is admitted, the student will attend that school (in many cases, regardless of the amount of financial aid offered by the school). Most colleges have three options for Early Decision applicants: they will admit you, defer your admission for further review, or deny your admission. Some colleges may not "defer" from the Early Decision applicant pool, meaning that you will be either admitted or denied (check with the individual college if their stated policy is unclear). Submitting an Early Decision application is a commitment to attend that school if you are accepted; therefore, you may only submit one Early Decision Application, and, if accepted, you must withdraw any applications submitted to

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other schools. It is the student's responsibility to know the rules ED applications for the school to which they are applying. Some colleges accept a larger number of students from their early decision pool than their regular decision pool. However, a student should only use this method of application if (1) the applicant is absolutely certain that the college is their first choice, and (2) the applicant is absolutely certain that they can afford the cost of attendance (advance conversations with the college's financial aid office may be very helpful in making this determination).

### **Early Action (EA) Applications**

Early Action plans allow the student to receive the admission decision from a college or university early, but also allows the student to apply to other schools and to wait to make a final decision until May 1. Under this application program, colleges may admit you, defer your admission for further review, or deny your admission. In a few instances, schools accepting EA applications will restrict students from applying to other schools by EA or ED (this sometimes referred to a "Restricted Early Action"). It is the student's responsibility to know the rules of EA applications for the specific school(s) to which they are applying.

### **Rolling Admissions**

Colleges that use Rolling Admissions evaluate and accept or deny students' admission several weeks following the receipt of their applications. Students wishing to attend a school with a rolling admission plan should generally submit applications early in the Fall in order to ensure that a space will still be available for them to attend this institution. Please note that these schools frequently publish deadlines for application in the late spring, but their freshman classes can be full well before that date.

Complete the appropriate online application. Take your time to complete it to the best of your ability. Do not 'submit' until you have completed the essays and thoroughly reviewed all the information. You can save and return to it later to continue working on it.

# College Comparison Sheet

<b>Name of College</b>			
<b>Admission Requirements</b> - deadline - required tests - GPA, rank, range of test scores - special requirements - notification			
<b>Academics</b> - your major offered - special requirements - accreditation - average class size - student-faculty ratio			
<b>Location</b> - city & state - rural, urban, small town - distance from home			
<b>Environment</b> - type of school (2yr., 4yr.) - co-ed, male, female - nearest city - location & size - religious affiliation			
<b>Size</b> - student enrollment - # of male/female students - physical size of campus			
<b>Cost</b> - tuition - room & board - on/off campus - total budget estimate - application fee, deposits			
<b>Financial Aid</b> - deadline - required forms - % of students receiving aid - scholarships			
<b>Housing</b> - requirements for residence halls - availability - types and sizes - food plan			
<b>Athletics</b> - sports - level - scholarships - intramurals			
<b>Activities</b> - clubs, organizations - greek life - other			
<b>Facilities</b> - academic - recreational - other			
<b>Campus Visit</b> - when - special activities			