

Tough Questions to Ask on Your College Visit

By "Making It Count" and "FastWeb"

About Academics:

1. What academic elements are considered in the admissions process, for example: courses, grades, test scores, rank, interest, institutional needs, essays, recommendations, and interviews? How important are each of these factors?
2. Is the college/university accredited?
3. How many students return after their freshman year?
4. What percentage of students graduate in four years or less?
5. Which academic programs on campus are the most popular?
6. Does this college offer the major that interests you?
7. How easy is it to change your majors?
8. Will your AP/previous college credits transfer?
9. What are the largest classes you could have as a freshman or sophomore? How many large classes can you expect?
10. Who teaches the freshman classes? Teaching Assistants? Graduate Assistants? Will you get enough contact with and/or attention from them?
11. How easy is it to get the courses you want at the times that are convenient for you?
12. (If this applies to you) Are there any special support services if you are a special needs student (ADD, ADHD, LD, etc.)? How do these support services function and is there any additional cost charged for these services?
13. Is there an Honor Code? How does it operate?
14. Is there an Honors Program for talented students? How do you qualify?
15. What percentage of students successfully apply to graduate school?
16. What kind of career planning services are available?
17. What does the school do to help graduates find jobs?
18. Does the school provide free job placement services?
19. What percentage of graduates find jobs within a few months after graduating?
20. What percentage of graduates find jobs in the field they studied for?

About Student Life and Social/Recreational Opportunities:

1. What percentages of the student body is male/female?
2. How diverse is the campus/student body?
3. What percentage of the students are commuter students?
4. What portion of the student body lives on campus? What portion of the student body remains on campus for the weekends?
5. What activities do students participate in during their free time both on campus (school sponsored) and in the community?

6. Does the campus have a Greek system of fraternities and sororities? If so, what percent of the student body participates in Greek life? Are parties open? How do students who elect not to participate in the Greek system fit in?
7. What are the most popular extracurricular activities?
8. What student organizations are active on campus?
9. What intramural sports are on campus?
10. Where is the central gathering place for students?
11. What transportation options are available to and from campus, both for trips just outside campus and for treks to transportation centers for trips home?
12. Can freshmen have cars on campus? What is the fee for having a car on campus?
13. Is it easy to get around campus? Can you walk to and from classes?
14. Are there parent or sibling events so your family can be a part of your college experience?

About Auxiliary Services:

1. Where do students go if they have a medical emergency?
2. What tutoring, counseling, and support services are available on campus and how are they accessed?
3. What computer access will you have? Do you need to bring your own computer? Are the dorms wired for Internet/e-mail services?
4. What is the quality of the library and research facilities?
5. What laundry facilities are available and how accessible are they?
6. What recreational facilities does the campus offer?
7. What are the safety issues on campus? How are they addressed? Ask for a crime report. Federal law requires schools to provide safety information to students.
8. Are there on-going construction projects around campus? (This is a good thing as it signals good facilities.)

About Housing/Food Services:

1. Is campus housing guaranteed for all four years? What percent of students live on campus all four years?
2. How much does housing cost? Is it easy to get on-campus housing?
3. What housing options exist? (Honors? Themed? Single sex? Co-ed? Greek?)
4. How hard is it to find off campus housing?
5. What meal plans are available? Are freshmen required to purchase a specific type of meal plan?
6. Do the meal plans provide menus for special diets (vegetarian, kosher, ethnic, etc.)?
7. What hours may students access food services?

About Paying For It:

1. What is the yearly cost of attendance, including books, tuition, fees, housing, and meal plans? In other words, what is the all-inclusive cost?
2. Does your ability to pay the full cost of attendance have any impact on the college's decision to admit you?
3. Which financial aid forms are required? (The most common two are the FAFSA and the CSS PROFILE, but some schools have institutional or school-specific forms and some states have special forms.)
4. What percent of entering freshmen receive aid? What was the average freshman aid package? Is there a way aid is packaged, loans first for example? If you are unhappy with your aid package, is it negotiable?
5. If you demonstrate need, will the school be able to prepare a financial aid package that will meet 100% of your demonstrated need?
6. Will outside scholarships affect the amount of aid the school will offer you?
7. What types of payment plans exist for paying the Estimated Family Contribution?
8. How easy is it to find a job on campus? Are there work study programs available?
9. What kind of refund can you get if you have to suddenly drop out or cancel some of your courses?

Other Questions: