

Prepare in Advance: Questions to ask Colleges!

Do your homework before you visit. College websites provide numbers, important deadlines, and other data. You can also check College Navigator from the National Center for Education Statistics: <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

On many tours, you will have the opportunity to meet with a representative from admissions. Some of the questions below are better suited for an admissions rep and some are great questions to ask your tour guide as the guide is usually a current student. I have also have some Financial Aid questions in case you have the opportunity to meet with them.

General Questions:

What opportunities are there for undergraduate research? How many students participate in undergraduate research?

Do you have a learning community or other freshman experience programs?

What is the average class size? What is the average class size of introductory classes vs. upper-division courses?

If a large school or university, ask what percentage of classes are taught by graduate students.

What are the strongest - not necessarily most popular - majors at your institution?

What type of high school background are you looking for in an applicant?

What is the college's procedure for class placement in English and Mathematics?

What percentage of a typical freshman class will actually graduate from your college?

Do you have study abroad programs? What percentage of students participate?

How many students get internships? Does the school assist with locating internships?

When must I choose a major?

What procedure is used to assign a faculty advisor when the student is undecided as to the major area of study?

What additional academic services do you offer to students (Tutoring, career counseling)?

What percentage of students from last year's freshman class returned year?

Is there adequate housing for all of your students? If not, what arrangements are made?

Questions (continued)

How are roommates selected?

How many student reside on campus?

Is your school a “suitcase college” on weekends? If not, what are some weekend activities for students on campus?

What type of extra-curricular activities are on campus?

How safe is your school? Where can I obtain statistics about crime on and around campus?

Who is required to live on campus? Only freshman? Other years?

How friendly is the area to students?

How involved is the school in the greater community and vice versa?

How is off campus housing? Available? Expensive? Convenient?

Can freshman have cars on campus?

How is parking? How expensive is parking?

How is public transportation? Are there any benefits for students (free passes, discounts)?

How far away is closest major airport? What is the airport? How does one get to the airport?

Approximately what percentage of students identify as students of color?

What is the largest minority group on campus?

Would you describe your campus environment as more Conservative? Liberal? Somewhere in between?

Is there anything new and exciting happening on campus (i.e. new buildings, new programs, new scholarships)?

What do you (tour guide, admissions rep) like most about your school? What do you want potential students to know?

Financial Aid Questions

What is your average financial aid package?

What is the typical breakdown of loans versus grants?

What percentage of financial need does the school typically meet?

What is the average merit award?

What is the average college debt that students leave with?

What work-study opportunities are there? Are part-time jobs available to students who don't qualify for a work-study job?

Do you offer a tuition payment plan that lets me pay the college bills in monthly installments over the academic year? If so, what fees do you charge for this service?

Does your college practice need-blind admissions? Or will applying for financial aid hurt my chances of being admitted?

Do you practice front-loading of grants? Or can I expect to receive a similar financial aid package all four years, assuming my financial circumstances do not change by much?

If I win a scholarship, do you reduce my financial aid package? If so, does the scholarship replace loans or grants?

If the financial aid is insufficient or my circumstances have changed, how do I appeal for more financial aid?

What financial aid forms do you require in addition to FAFSA? Do you require the CSS Financial Aid Profile? Do you have your own specific financial aid forms?

Don't forget to ask about special circumstances that are specific to your situation, such as divorce/separation or financial aid for study abroad.