

TAKING A COLLEGE VISIT

Before

1. Call ahead to make arrangements.
2. Make appointments with the admissions counselor who is familiar with VES
3. Arrange a campus tour and try to sit in on a class (or two).
4. Make an appointment with a professor in your chosen major/a coach in your chosen sport.
5. Arrange to see the college when it's in session and on a weekday. Avoid visiting during mid-term and final exam weeks. Make plans to stay overnight if possible. Many colleges will assist you in making overnight arrangements.
6. Review all of the college materials that you have collected: catalog, student handbook, video, etc.
7. Make sure you take with you:
Directions/campus map
List of questions

During

1. Take a tour---take note of dorm rooms, classrooms, athletic fields.
2. Eat lunch in the student union or cafeteria—listen what campus issues students are talking about—get a sense of the atmosphere on campus.
3. Read bulletin boards to get a sense of what's happening on campus.
4. Browse in the college bookstore and library.
5. Walk around the town/or local community.
6. Make note of public transportation that is available to get students without cars to outlying community areas.

After

1. Write down your impression of your visit-what you liked, what you didn't, other questions you may have thought of after leaving.
2. Write thank you notes to the admissions staff/faculty that you met with (this means you need to get their names and titles before you leave).

THE COLLEGE INTERVIEW

Anticipating an interview with a college admissions officer makes many students nervous. Unsure students may imagine something more like an interrogation, complete with rapid-fire questions.

The truth is, most college interviews are relaxed, informative, and even fun. The interview is as much about you finding out about the college and whether it fits you as it is an opportunity for the admissions officer to get to know you.

Very few colleges use interviews to weed out applicants. A great interview could enhance your application—especially if your interviewer is the same person who will assess your application—but it won't make up for a weak academic record. Just taking the time to visit the college and talking to an admissions officer makes a positive impression, because it shows that you are really interested in the college.

Tips for interviewing

- ◆ **Know your stuff**—Don't spend your interview time just finding out basic facts about the college—do that before you visit.
- ◆ **Know yourself**—and be yourself—Be prepared to discuss your interests, talents, and experiences. Also, think about how your interests fit with what the college offers.
- ◆ **Ask good questions**—Often your questions tell an interviewer more about you than anything else. Asking how many students attend the college, for example, tells the admissions officer that you have not done your homework. On the other hand, insightful questions show that you've thought seriously about the college and your own needs. Jot some questions down beforehand and take the list to the interview—this gives you the advantage of not forgetting your questions, and the admissions office is sure to be impressed by your level of preparation.
- ◆ **Don't ask dumb questions**—There is such a thing as a stupid question—Don't ask what majors the college has (this list will be too long for the admissions officer to rattle off), Don't ask what the dorms are like, and please Don't ask if students have to go to class!
- ◆ **Remember your manners**—First impressions do count. Don't let how you are dressed in the way of connecting with your interviewer. Casual dress is fine—especially if you are planning on taking a tour. Avoid t-shirts and short skirts or shorts. Bishop dress would be great!

QUESTIONS

Be prepared to answer the following questions

1. What are your goals?
2. How does our college fit in with your interests and talents?
3. What majors are you interested in, and why?
4. What are you passionate about?
5. Why do you want to attend college? Why this college?
6. What extracurricular activities are important to you?
7. What academic or intellectual topics interest you?
8. What types of books do you enjoy reading?

Some questions to ask an admissions officer

1. What percentage of students come back after freshman year?
2. Can you tell me some things about _____ major/program?
3. What social options are available? Are there fraternities and sororities? What if I decide not to join one—what else is there to do?
4. What campus issues are students talking about this year?
5. How involved are students in extracurricular activities?
6. Do most students stay on campus during the weekends?
7. Do all students live on campus? Am I guaranteed housing as a freshman?
8. How safe is your campus?
9. How involved are faculty in mentoring students?

Agenda for Session

1. Hand out packets
2. Some of the information might seem elementary, but, you would be surprised how many students DO NOT know to do these things...so, that is what we are trying to do...arm you with the things you SHOULD be doing.
3. You NEED to visit schools...this spring and summer. Try to visit when schools are in session...but, if you can't it is still worth the visit.
4. Don't just visit the school...make it a big deal. Contact the admissions office, set up a tour and information session or interview.
THIS MATTERS SO MUCH AT SOME SCHOOLS. Some schools will use the fact that you showed interest as part of the criteria for admissions. Just the very fact you visited can help you.
5. Know something about the school before you visit...general size, researching the school and knowing a professors name in an area you want to study would be a great thing to talk about in an interview.
6. The visit is a way for you to learn about the school as much as it for the admissions office to learn about you. So, do ask questions.
7. Don't forget to write Thank you notes. All correspondence you have with the school gets placed in your file...and Thank you notes are remembered!
8. Briefly go over packet.
9. If time, show students how to locate admissions offices on specific web site. How to find phone numbers, directions to school, visit information.
10. Remember to read over possible interview questions and be ready to talk about them next Thursday when we do mock interviews and videotape each other!

