

100 Questions to Ask on a College Visit

When visiting a college campus, you need to stay long enough to ask a lot of questions about the college.

That means that you should NOT rush through your college visits. Be very polite, dress nicely, be polite to your parents.

Parents should let the student do nearly all of the talking. Get the name/contact info of your tour guide so that you can follow up with a thank you.

Some of these questions only can be answered by college admissions and financial aid staff. Current college students will be able to answer many others.

To get you started, here are 100 questions you might ask:

Overall Campus

1. What distinguishes this institution from its peers? What makes it special?
2. What is this college most proud of?
3. How many undergraduate students attend this college?
4. How many graduate students attend?
5. How diverse is this campus?
6. How fiscally fit is this college?
7. What is its bond rating?

Academics

8. What is the average class size of introductory classes?
9. What is the average class size of upper-division courses?
10. How widely are teaching assistants used?
11. How easy or difficult is it to enroll in the courses you need?

12. How much interaction, if any, will the typical undergrad have with tenured professors and will it largely be confined to lecture halls?
13. What are the typical class sizes of my intended major?
14. Is my intended discipline an impacted major (oversubscribed)?
15. Am I guaranteed the major that I'm interested in?
16. Are the admission standards higher for certain majors?
17. When do you have to declare a major?
18. How much time do students typically spend on homework?
19. How much writing and reading are expected?
20. Is it possible to double major?
21. Is the college on a semester, trimester or quarter system?

Academic Benefits

22. Do you have an honors college?
23. What does the honors college have to offer?
24. What are the academic requirements to qualify for the honors college?
25. Do you have a learning community or other freshman learning experiences?
26. Do seniors complete a capstone experience or project?
27. What is your academic advisory system like?
28. Is it possible to get a professor as my advisor?
29. What percentage of students studies abroad?
30. Do students in my intended major tend to study abroad?
31. What opportunities are there for undergraduate research?
32. How many students participate in undergraduate research?

33. What departments offer undergraduate research?

34. If you are exploring transferring to the college ask: how do I know how many academic credits will transfer?

College Graduation Track Record

35. What is your four-year graduation rate?

36. What is your five-year graduation rate?

37. What is your six-year graduation rate?

38. What are the main reasons why students don't graduate on time?

39. What does it take to graduate in four years?

40. Will it take longer to graduate if you double major?

41. What percentage of freshmen return for the sophomore year (freshmen retention rate)?

42. What are the major reasons why students leave prematurely?

Academic Support

43. How do you provide academic advice to students?

44. Do you have a writing center?

45. What type of tutoring services do you have (e.g., study skills)?

46. Do you have an orientation program for freshmen (or transfer students, as appropriate)?

47. What kind of learning disability services do you offer?

48. How recent must a student's disability testing be to qualify for accommodations?

Internships, Jobs and Graduate School

49. What can I expect from your school's career services office?

50. When can I access the career services office?

51. How active is the alumni network?
52. Is the career service office available for alumni?
53. What percentage of students at the college get internships?
54. Is there a co-op program?
55. What is the job placement rate?
56. How is that job placement rate calculated?
57. Are the figures self-reported?
58. What percentage of students go on to graduate school or professional schools?
59. What are your school's feeder institutions for graduate and professional degrees?

Student Life

60. What kind of housing choices are there?
61. What percentage of students lives in campus housing?
62. Are dormitories an option after the freshmen year?
63. How are roommates assigned?
64. What mental health services are available?
65. What are the meal plan options?
66. What percentage of the student body belongs to a sorority or fraternity?
67. How prevalent are drugs and alcohol on campus?
68. Can freshmen bring a car to campus?

Financial Aid and Merit Awards

69. What percentage of a student's financial need does the college typically meet? How much of this is with grants and scholarships?
70. Does the percentage of need that you meet typically shrink after freshman year?

71. What percentage of a student's financial need does the college typically meet with gift aid (grants and scholarships)?
72. What is your average financial aid package?
73. What is the typical breakdown of loans versus grants?
74. What is the average merit award?
75. What are the requirements to receive a merit scholarship?
76. Do the merit scholarships require separate applications?
77. What happens to my financial aid package if I take longer than four years to graduate?
78. What percentage of students receive college grants and/or scholarships?
79. What is the average amount of student loan debt that students accumulate by the time they graduate?
80. What is the average amount of federal PLUS Loan debt borrowed by parents?
81. What are the work-study opportunities?
82. At what rate has the annual tuition rate been rising in recent years?
83. Do you award extra scholarships for such things as specific majors and talents?
84. Where can I learn more about your merit scholarships?
85. Does your net price calculator provide an accurate estimate of what your school will cost me? When did you last update the net price calculator?
86. Does your institution give out athletic scholarships?
87. What is the student loan default rate at your school?
88. Does your institution provide students with financial literacy training?

Questions Specifically for Current Students

Here are a few more questions to ask students during a campus visit or via phone or email:

89. Why did you decide to attend this college?
90. If you had the power to change anything about the school, what would it be?
91. What do you like best about your college?
92. What do you like least about your college?
93. What kinds of students succeed on your campus?
94. What students end up not fitting in?
95. What kind of teenagers would you recommend your college to?

Questions for Recent Graduates

96. What was your experience like at your college?
97. If you could turn back time, would you attend your alma mater again?
98. What would you have changed?
99. Do you feel your alma mater prepared you well for your future life?
100. Do you feel your alma mater prepared you for a career?