

What to Ask When Visiting a College or College Fair

(Adapted from a guide printed by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research and Planning:

http://nsse.iub.edu/pdf/NSSE_PocketGuide.pdf)

Picking the right college is a big decision, one of the most important decisions you'll ever make. When visiting a college or college fair you should get as much information as possible which is why we've listed some very important questions you can ask a college representative. The response you'll receive should provide you with valuable information about what is actually going on in the lives of students and the quality of their college experience.

Student-Faculty Interaction

Communicate: the more contact students have with faculty the better.

- How often does faculty meet with students outside of class?
- Does your faculty actually teach the classes or are they taught by graduate assistants?
- Are there advisors for each student?
- Who do students talk to about career plans?
- In what ways do students, faculty, and staff work together on campus committees?
- How well do students get along with faculty, administrators, and staff?
- What is the average class size? What is the largest?

Active Learning

Become intensely involved in your education.

- How and when are majors selected and can they be self-designed?
- How do students receive help selecting classes?
- How many courses require community service?
- What types of internships are available and are they required to graduate?

Academic Challenge

Seek demanding intellectual and creative academic work.

- In what ways does faculty challenge students to leave their "comfort zone" in order to excel?
- How much time do students spend on homework each week?
- What types of assignments are given (papers, exams, rehearsals, research projects, etc.)?
- In what ways are students given the opportunity to express themselves creatively?
- What types of tutors or tutoring opportunities exist on campus?

Campus Environment

Focus on your social and academic development.

- What do students like and/or dislike about this campus?
- What services are available to help students adjust to or help cope with academic and non-academic responsibilities?
- What do students do for fun after class and on weekends?
- What types of public transportation are available on campus or in the area?
- What opportunities are available for spiritual expression and growth?

Diversity

Engage in diverse cultural experiences.

- In what ways are students exposed to multiple cultures or diverse perspectives?
- How is diversity incorporated into the curriculum?
- Where are students from and how many are from other countries?

Technology

Get connected.

- How is technology used in the classroom?
- What types of computers, technology, online information and courses, and support services are available?

Out-of-Class Experiences

Discover positive out-of-class activities that will deepen learning.

- What activities are available to help students apply classroom learning to real life?
- What percentage of students study in other countries through study abroad programs?
- What types of student organizations are on campus and how active are they?
- What kinds of leadership opportunities are available?
- What kinds of special projects, seminars, or other experiences are offered or required of seniors?

Applying & Enrollment

- What are your standards for acceptance? Do you take a holistic approach to admissions or are you criteria well-defined?
- What is your enrollment deadline?
- Do you offer early acceptance and/or early decision admissions?
- Do you have an appeals process regarding admissions or financial aid decisions?

Academic Programs

- What programs/degrees do you offer? What are the most popular majors at this college?
- What percentage of your students graduate in four years?
- What is the retention rate of your freshman class? What percentage of students graduate within five years of enrollment?
- What types of honors courses, learning communities, weekend or night programs, or other unique academic offerings are offered?

Musical, Performing and Fine Arts

- What kinds of events come to campus?

Summer School/Summer Programs

- What types of summer classes or summer internship programs are available?

Financial Aid/Work Study

- What types of financial aid or scholarships are available?
- What percentage of students work off and on campus?

Library Services

- How extensive are the library services, such as books, reference materials, on-line resources?

Security and Personal Safety

- What safety services are available to students?
- What is the campus' crime rate?

Health and Counseling Services

- What types of services are available for students on campus?

Career Planning & Job Placement

- What types of services and programs are available?
- Where are recent graduates employed?

Living Arrangements

- Where do students live? Residence halls, or other campus housing? Co-ed or single sex? How long does it take to get to class?
- Are there on-campus residential requirements for underclassmen?