

TIPS FOR COLLEGE VISITS

The college you select will be a place where you live for at least four years. Its students will be your friends, classmates, and roommates. Its academic atmosphere and offerings will determine your intellectual stimulation and growth. The decision you make is indeed an important one. College is also expensive and represents a major investment. Few people would seriously consider buying a home or car without viewing several, making intelligent comparisons, test-driving, etc. It is inconceivable that a student and his/her parents would decide upon a college without that same careful scrutiny, including several campus visits.

Visits give you first-hand (not someone else's) impressions of the student body, social life, facilities, intellectual atmosphere, unique features and programs at each school. They offer an opportunity to compare and contrast schools while aiming to find the "perfect fit" you are seeking in a school. There is no better way to determine what it might be like to attend a particular college than to visit. Tour the campus, attend classes, and spend the night in a residence hall, if possible. Eat the food, attend a social function, and ask about campus issues and events. A campus visit will give you an understanding of the college that you can't possibly gain through view books or talks with admission representatives.

GENERAL TIPS ON VISITING COLLEGES

1. Call now (or as much in advance as possible) to arrange an interview.
2. Leave lots of time between appointments. Scheduling schools too close leaves no room for getting lost, extending a visit where you'd like to see more, etc.
3. Don't try to see more than two colleges in any one day. Seeing too many schools in too little time will not allow you to see everything you should at a school.
4. Take the time to really see a college. Eat in the snack bar, read the newspaper, visit a residence hall, meet a professor. Do not miss the chance to take a guided tour of the campus.
5. Keep notes on your visits. Impressions fade and run together after visiting several schools. Get business cards and remember names of admission people you have seen.
6. Take the time to explore the region in which the college is located. Find shopping areas, restaurants, movies, recreational facilities, etc.
7. Are there alumni with whom you can talk? What about family and friends, did any attend colleges you are considering?
8. Be sure to visit with College Representatives when they come to Gross Catholic.

NOTE: Of students who do make campus visits, the vast majority of them admit that the visit is the most helpful and influential factors when they make the decision of which school to attend.

SOME IMPORTANT QUESTIONS AND FACTORS TO CONSIDER

1. Is the college too close to home? Too far away?
2. Is the college liberal? Conservative?
3. Is the college too large? Too small?
4. Is the campus safe? What type of security do they have?
5. What percentage of students go on to graduate school? Medical School? Law School? MBA?
How many are placed in jobs?
6. What percentage graduate in 4 years? 5 years?
7. Does the college offer the major I am interested in?
8. Are there special academic programs? Study abroad? Exchange programs? Internship opportunities?
9. What percentage of students live in residence halls? Off campus?
10. What is the quality of the health facilities? Student insurance available?
11. How are the recreational facilities? Do they have intramural sports?
12. Do they accept Advanced Placement credit? Do they have an honors program?
13. Are there students job opportunities on campus? Work-Study?
14. Are there campus religious organizations? Facilities?
15. What is the faculty-student ratio? What percentage of faculty hold the highest degree in their field?
Do Graduate students teach?
16. How challenging an academic environment are you seeking?
17. What are the admission criteria? ACT? SAT? To what degree are GPA and class rank considered?
Extra-curricular achievement?
18. What differentiates you from other schools of similar size and type?
19. Are there advisors and guidance counselors available?
20. Are the professors available? Are there posted office hours?
21. Is there a job placement center?
22. What is the ratio of men to women? Are there co-ed as well as single sex residence halls?
23. What does the college do to orient incoming students?
24. What are the college's weaknesses?