



Touring Colleges

October 10, 2022

October 13, 2022 (webinar)

An overview of this presentation

- Application guideline
- Planning a trip/college visit
- After the visit – next steps!
- Five important tips

Application/admissions guideline

- For all of our students, let this be your guideline. You apply for admission to a college because you want to go there!
- Focus as much on “going” to the college as you will focus on “getting in.”
- As a counseling staff, we pledge to work with students in the college search process to help them find the best matches!! What places will be a good fit? Or a great fit?

Planning a trip/college visit

- Begin with the question: “Why would I want to attend this college?” The reasons will help you determine whether it’s worth a visit.
- Check out the admission web site for directions and instructions on how to register for a campus visit.
- Put together a trip itinerary, which includes the time of the tour, parking information, and distance from the hotel.
- Remember that “less is more” – no more than two colleges in one day. It’s always better to spend quality time on a campus, rather than trying to fit in an extra college.

Planning a trip/college visit

- If possible, go to the smaller college first. For example, go to Drake in the morning and Iowa State in the afternoon. Or, go to Macalester first and then the University of St. Thomas.
- A weekday is always better than a weekend.
- If cost and affordability are a key factor, do the net price calculator – before you plan the trip to visit a college.
- Consider waiting until the spring for visits – when you will know the outcome of your applications.

Planning a trip/college visit

A sample of college admission websites for visiting the campus:

<https://www.chapman.edu/admission/undergraduate/visit/index.aspx>

<https://www.admissions.iastate.edu/visit/>

<https://gustavus.edu/admission/visit/>

<https://www.luc.edu/undergrad/comevisit/>

<https://admissions.missouri.edu/visit/>

Planning a trip/college visit

A college visit might include:

- An information session
- A campus tour, led by a current student
- Attending a class – arrange this in advance!
- Meeting with a professor, or coach, or program director
- A visit to the career center or study abroad office
- Meeting with an admission officer and/or financial aid officer – but it's not likely that you will have an interview

Planning a trip/college visit

A college visit might include:

- Attending a club meeting or a sports practice or a music lesson
- Eating in the dining hall/cafeteria
- A separate visit to a specific part of the campus/facilities
- Casual conversations with students and college employees
- Touring the neighborhood, in proximity to the college campus

Planning a trip/college visit

- Put together a list of “important things” for each college. Is there something specific you need to know?
- During the tour/visit, take notes. Use your phone, if needed, to capture some thoughts.
- Take stock of your “gut reactions” to the place – can you picture yourself being there as a student?
- Consider the time of the year you are visiting – what will it be like in another season?

After the visit/tour

- Before you leave the college, get something to eat – and talk to at least one person who doesn't work in admissions.
- As soon as possible, write notes about your campus experience. What did you like? Dislike? Devise a rating scale. What would be the top two reasons why you would attend this college/university?
- Use social media to continue your research through videos and blogs.
- If you met with someone in admissions, send a personal email/note to ask any additional questions.

Five important tips

- Figure out the family “politics” as soon as possible. Who’s going on this trip?
- Wear comfortable clothes, and (especially) comfortable shoes.
- Go “off the beaten track” on a campus visit. And then, read blogs about the college/university to see if your impressions are shared by others.
- If needed, always visit the financial aid office – to learn more about how they meet need. And to learn more about student loan indebtedness and financial aid packaging.
- As you leave a campus tour, have you been able to “size up” the culture of the place? That’s a key question!

Bonus round – three more tips

- The best time to visit might be in the spring of your senior year, after you have received all your admission/financial aid outcomes.
- You might benefit from visiting a “like minded college,” in this area, an institution that is similar to the colleges you are really interested in
- Continue your research of the academic and extra-curricular programs at the college – by looking at the academics section (or the campus life section) of the college’s website.

What if you can't visit/tour a college?

- Visit online – many colleges have a virtual tour

<https://www.youvisit.com>

<http://www.ecampustours.com/>

<https://www.youtube.com/>

- Look at the college's web site to view/review videos
- Visit with the college admission rep here at MHS
- Seek out the opinion/analysis of a friend/relative who has visited

A final word

- Our goal in this process – to help each student find the best match possible for their post-secondary experience!
- The in-person presentation included a handout from the College Board – here is the link:

<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/find-colleges/campus-visit-guide/campus-visit-checklist>

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