



South Putnam High School
Home of the Eagles

Questions and Topics to Guide Conversations with College Representatives

Are you wondering how to start a conversation with a college rep? Here are some tips for conversing and getting answers to important questions. It's a good idea to write out a list of things that are important to you before you meet.

Don't feel like you have strange priorities or weird questions if something offbeat is interesting to you. College reps hear the same questions all the time, so they'll be glad to hear something new.

- Be relaxed. College reps *want* to talk with you. You don't need to be nervous.
- Try not to ask vague questions like, "Tell me about your college," since the representative will not know where to start.
- Ask specific questions like, "Tell me about school spirit," or "Can you give me examples of campus traditions?" instead. These types of questions will give you a sense of the school's atmosphere and give the representative something specific to talk about.
- Ask for a list of majors that you can take with you and look over later.
- Ask about enrollment deadlines and recommendations for taking the SAT. Some colleges need scores earlier than others.
- Ask if SAT subject scores (like SAT II Math or History) are required or recommended.
- Feel free to ask if the representative can waive your application fee.
- Ask if there are any scholarship secrets. There are many little-known tricks that differ from college to college, but the conversation doesn't always get around to this in a rushed environment like a college fair.
- You will want to know the admission requirements, of course, but you may also want to ask whether admissions officers make decisions based on numbers, or if they really do consider your activities. Some colleges go by scores and grades and follow a formula. Others really give greater weight to activities, experiences, and interests.
- Ask if a student leader can contact you to give you a student's perspective. Provide an email address for this.
- Ask about the food. Sometimes there are many choices and sometimes there aren't. Remember, you'll have to live with it for four years.

- Find out the safety history of the campus *and the surrounding town*. Sometimes the campus rests in an area where high crime takes place just outside the area considered campus. A representative may not mention this. This is also something you should research on your own. Your safety is a priority.
- Ask how many the students drop out or transfer away. Also ask how many stay and graduate, and in how many years. A low retention rate may be a warning sign.
- Ask about the biggest complaint of current students.
- Ask if tutoring is available should you need it.
- If class size is important to you, ask about it. But remember that class sizes are less important when good individual tutoring is available.
- Find out if tutoring is free.
- Ask for a **direct** phone number for an admission counselor and a financial aid counselor. This may help you avoid getting caught up in an automated phone mess. Smaller colleges will likely be happy to provide this; larger colleges may not. It's worth a try.
- Find out if the administration listens to student concerns. This is one of the things you might want to ask a student leader.
- Ask about the parking situation and if freshmen can have cars on campus. Of if cars are even necessary.
- Ask how the meal plan works.
- Ask about the job placement rate for their graduates.
- Ask about the campus social scene.
- Ask what students do on the weekends.
- Ask about student housing. How are the dorms? Will you have a roommate? Is housing guaranteed for all four years?
- Ask if students are assigned a faculty advisor.
- Ask if students participate in intramural sports or competitions.
- Ask if alumni stay well connected to the school.
- Ask about the political climate on campus.