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## **Campus Tour Questions and Reflection**

# Researching Before the College Visit

*Tutors can use this activity to generate excitement for the upcoming tour for your student.*

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Log onto the website <http://californiacolleges.edu>

Click on “Explore Colleges”

Click on “Campus Facts”

Click on the first letter of the name of your group’s college to find the college

- Look up the following information about your college:
  - Year established
  - Type of school
  - Programs
  - Religious affiliation
  - Campus enrollment
  - Coeducational information
  - Location description
  
- Click on “Student Life”. Find the following information:
  - Total undergraduates
  - Undergraduate demographics (racial breakdown)
  - City or town school is located
  
- Go back to the “Campus Facts” menu and click on “Costs & Financial Aid”. Find the following information:
  - Tuition amount
  - Enrollment requirements
  - Percentage of first-year students who apply for financial aid
  - Percentage of first-year students determined to have financial need
  
- Go back to the “Campus Facts” menu and click on “Academics”. Find the following information:
  - Majors with the highest enrollment
  - Average freshman GPA
  - Percent of full-time freshman students who returned for sophomore year

- Student:Faculty ratio
- Explore the college/university's website to find additional interesting facts about the school that are noteworthy.



## Preparing for the Campus Tour

During your campus tour, you need to ask questions as well as look around. Here are some questions to consider asking. Add your own questions at the end of the list. After each visit, review the list to see if there are any other questions you might want to add.

NOTE: Read as much as you can about each college or university before you visit. Don't spend time asking questions that are answered in the school's catalog or brochures. You are visiting campuses to get a feeling for the atmosphere of each place—something you can't get from its Web site or catalog.

### QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK YOUR TOUR GUIDE

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1. How large are your classes? How large are freshman classes? Do you meet regularly with an advisor?
2. Where do you study? Is the library a good place to work or study? What hours do students have access to libraries, computers, labs, etc.?
3. What academic experiences are available beyond the classroom?
4. What percent of students live in dorms? Is housing guaranteed for all four years?
5. Is this considered a safe campus? Are there regular patrols, escort vans, emergency phones, etc., if needed?
6. Is this an openly competitive campus? How are tests and exams administered?
7. Do you meet with professors informally? Have you ever been invited to a professor's home?
8. How tolerant is this community of independence and diversity?
9. What are the most popular extracurricular activities here?
10. What leadership positions in this community do men hold? Women?
11. What do you like best and least about being a student here?
12. Are there single-sex dormitories? "Quiet" dorms? Any thematic housing? Are there laundry facilities in each dorm?
13. Is there a career guidance service on campus? A placement service? Is the placement service available to alumni?
14. What kinds of internships are available for students?

15. Does social life revolve around the campus, or do most students leave on the weekends? What are the major social activities?
16. What is the role of athletics on campus?
17. What is the biggest campus issue currently?
18. How many of your courses are taught by a big-name professor and how many by a teaching assistant?
19. Is the teaching innovative and project-oriented, or is it mostly lecture-oriented?
20. Do most freshmen class lectures take place in an amphitheater?
21. What are the strong majors? The weak majors?
22. Do fraternities and sororities dominate the social life of the college?
23. What do students do on weekends? Do most go home?
24. How is the advisement system? Do you feel that your professors really care?
25. There are a lot of organizations on campus. Are they dominated by a few groups or is anyone welcome?

# Post Tour Reflection

Pick 5 of the following questions (one from at least each category), and write your thoughts about one of the colleges you just visited.

## Category 1: Student Body

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1. Did most of the students seem to be like you, or are they completely different?
2. Either way, how would you feel being in a classroom full of these students? Sharing a dorm with them?
3. Do the students try to make you feel at home? Are they happy to answer your questions, or do they make you feel like you're intruding? How do they interact with one another?

## Category 2: About the Campus

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1. Does the campus seem too big? Or too small?
2. Do freshmen live in their own dorms? How do I feel about living in a single-sex or coed dorm?
3. Are the dorms quiet or noisy? Do they seem crowded?
4. How large are the rooms? Is there adequate space and light to study?
5. Does each room have access to the Internet?
6. What's advertised on dorm and classroom bulletin boards? What does this tell me about campus life?
7. How good is the lighting around each dorm and around classroom and lab buildings?
8. Do the buildings and grounds look well cared for? Or do they need painting and general repair work?
9. What's the condition of the playing fields and the sports equipment?
10. How is the quality of the food in the cafeteria or dining hall? How are the sizes of the portions? Is it healthy or fast food? Are there meal plans?

## Category 3: About the Nearby Area

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1. Does it look like there is much to do outside of campus?
2. How easy is to get to places off campus? Are there places within walking distance?
3. Do you feel comfortable and safe?
4. Are there places to get extra furniture, like bookcases, for your dorm room?
5. Is there a supermarket nearby to stock up on snacks and soda?
6. If you move out of a dorm after freshman year, what are the options in apartment complexes or buildings?

At the end of your visit, ask *yourself* one very important question:

**“Do I see myself fitting in here?”**