

COLLEGE PLANNING: HOW TO GET STARTED

STEP 1: Get Started

- Assess your strengths, weaknesses, goals passions, learning styles, and social skills. What is most important to you in the college-search process? What do you hope to learn from the process? Visit the MHS or LCHS College & Career website for career exploration resources at <http://schools.misd.org/page/stacylabruyere-home> or <http://schools.misd.org/page/lchs.ccc>

STEP 2: Make Some Basic Decisions

- Where do you want to live?
- Will you go to college full time (at least 12 hours per semester) or part time?
- Do you want to attend a single sex school, a technical school, a public or private college, a large university, a small liberal arts college, or a historically black or religiously affiliated college?
- How important is the cultural/ ideological diversity of the student body?

STEP 3: Enlist Help

- Who do you want to assist you in this process (parents, siblings, relatives, or friends)?

STEP 4: Consult References and Websites

- Look at college directories (College Board's College Handbook, Barron's Peterson's) and use college searches (<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>). Visit the websites of the colleges that interest you. Visit your high school College & Career Center website for available resources.

Step 5: Talk

- Discuss your goals and plans with your parents, teachers, college & career coordinator, and school counselor. They can provide helpful advice.

Step 6: Meet with College Representatives

- Visit college representatives when they come to your high school. Make a list of your important questions to ask the representatives or use the Top 24 Questions on the back of this paper as a guide. Also meet college personnel at area college fairs.

Step 7: Visit Campuses

- Try to go to the college campus and take a tour, meet with admission and financial aid representatives, and ask students what they think about the college. In addition, a junior or senior student's absence of up to two days related to visiting a college or university will be considered an exemption, provided the student follows the campus procedures to verify such a visit, provides the correct documentation, and makes up any work missed. **Once you schedule your visit with the institution, bring back the documentation of your visit and turn it into your campus attendance office the day you return to high school.**
- Can't make the trip? Many colleges provide virtual tours on their websites or register for a 30 minute presentation of your favorite college through the CCC Calendar on through your high school college and career center website.

24 QUESTIONS TO ASK COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVES

1. What makes your college unique?
2. For what academic programs is your college known?
3. How would you describe the students at your college? Where are most of them from?
4. Where do students hang out on campus?
5. What happens on weekends- are there things to do on campus or in town, or do most students go home?
6. Are fraternities and sororities a big part of campus life?
7. What are the housing options for Freshman? Are they required to live on campus?
8. Do many student live off campus? Is there a shuttle service to get to campus easily if you live off campus? What is parking like on campus?
9. Is there a sports complex or student fitness center? Is the price built into tuition fees?
10. What are the most popular clubs and activities? Community service opportunities?
11. What kind of study abroad programs do you offer?
12. What opportunities are there for on-campus employment?
13. What's the security like on campus?
14. What's the surrounding area like? Is it easy to get around?
15. What are the most popular majors?
16. How would you describe the academic pressure & workload?
17. What support services (academic advisors, tutors, etc.) are available? What is your freshman retention rate?
18. Do I need to bring my own computer? Do you offer student discounts on computers/ software?
19. What's the faculty like? Are they accessible outside of class?
20. Are there opportunities for internships? What local companies offer internship opportunities? What percentage lead to job opportunities upon graduation?
21. Is there job placement help for graduates? What percentage of students are admitted to graduate programs/ medical/dental/law school, etc? What percentage of graduates have a job within the first six months of graduating?
22. Are there any big changes in the works that I should know about? Are you adding new facilities or expanding programs?
23. What is the research culture like? When can an undergrad get involved?
24. What percentage of students receive financial aid and what is the average aid amount?