

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF A COLLEGE FAIR

Tips for Students

Reasons to Attend:

- Gain exposure to a variety of postsecondary institutions throughout the country
- Ask questions about admissions and financial aid
- Pick up free brochures on colleges that you might want to consider
- Receive answers to specific questions

Before the Fair:

1. Answer the following questions to help you determine what kind of school would best suit you:
 - Do you want to attend a two or four-year institution? Co-ed or single sex?
 - What size school do you want to attend: small (2500 students or less), medium (5000-10,000 students), or large (over 10,000 students)?
 - What programs/majors of study are you considering?
 - How far from home do you want to go?
 - Do you wish to participate in any specific extra-curricular activities or athletics?
 - Do you want to attend a school in an urban, suburban or rural environment?
 - Do you require any special services (tutoring, note takers, readers, TDD or interpreters?)
2. Discuss your college plans with your school counselor, family, teachers and friends.
3. Research your college(s) of interest on the Internet and in your guidance office/library. Complete the National College Fair Worksheet and plan to visit these colleges at the fair.

Bring to Fair:

- A small notebook and pen with a list of colleges and questions you want to ask. After you leave a table, jot down your impressions of the college and answers the admissions representatives gave you. What did you like/dislike?
- A backpack or tote bag to hold all of the college information you will be collecting.

- Students with computers may wish to print up a few sheets of self-stick address labels. Include name, address, phone number, e-mail address, high school, year of graduation and career interest/intended major. This will save you time in filling out the same information over and over.
- Keep a personal profile of your class rank, grade point average, SAT/ACT scores and special talents on hand to give representatives an idea of your educational background.

At the Fair:

Look for a Fair Directory indicating where each college is located. Map out your route. This can be done on the way to the Fair (maps are usually available in the newspaper). Seek out specific schools (especially those that you researched on the National College Fair Worksheet.) Representatives are willing to invest more time in someone who appears to be taking the fair seriously. Ask representatives for their business card and phone numbers. Here is a list of some commonly asked questions.

- What are the two or three most popular majors? How many students take that major? What type of first year courses would you take in that particular major?
- If you are undecided, ask what services and supports are available to help students explore various majors.
- Ask about extracurricular activities (sports, clubs, fraternities, sororities)
- What academic background are you looking for? Does it vary depending on major?
- What percentage of students receive financial aid? What is the average aid package?
- Is your college “need blind” in the admissions process (do you determine admissions without regard to a student’s financial situation?)
- Where do most students live? What is the focus of social life?
- What is unique about your campus?

After the Fair:

- Don’t put the college materials in the back of your closet. Keep them nearby for when you’re ready to review them.
- Look through the materials and your notes within the week.
- Keep everything. Weed out colleges that aren’t a good fit.
- Research colleges that interest you. Explore websites, request more information from admissions offices, and plan to visit.

**LEAVE THE FAIR CONFIDENT THAT YOU HAVE DONE
SOMETHING POSITIVE TO HELP YOUR COLLEGE
DECISION!**