



Career Connections

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Guide to Transferring:
**Planning
College Visits**

Planning a College Visit

Visiting a college is an essential step in the college search process that will help you determine whether or not to attend or even apply to a potential college. Campus visits provide significantly more information than websites or brochures ever could. A visit can help you answer the most important question when choosing a college: *Can I see myself here?*

Here are the 5 steps you should keep in mind when deciding to plan a college visit:

Step 1: Plan an official visit

Step 2: What to ask visiting college

Step 3: Admissions interview

Step 4: Visiting Disability Services/Academic Support

Step 5: Follow-up

Not all steps may apply to you and they may not follow this exact order, but they are likely things you want to keep in mind to make the most of your college visits. In the following pages we will look at each step in greater depth.

Step 1: Plan an OFFICIAL Visit

All colleges offer tours of their campus, and often they will provide much more than that. It is important that you take an official college tour because you just can't learn much from walking around campus by yourself. Tours, offered by trained student tour guides or professional staff members, will provide you with a context for what you are seeing including college history, campus operations and resources, and most importantly, student stories.

Beyond a campus tour, colleges may offer:

- Individual or group information sessions
- Class visits
- Meetings with faculty
- Lunch with a student
- Admissions interviews (done by admissions counselors, faculty, students or alumni)
- Large and small special campus visit events (e.g. open houses, transfer days, etc.)
- Meeting with Disability or Academic Support Services*

You should sign-up for as much as your time there allows. Check a college's admissions webpage for how to schedule a visit. If you are asking for more than a campus tour (e.g. class, interview), many colleges will want at least 1-2 weeks notice so the proper arrangements can be made. **YOU SHOULD ALWAYS TRY TO SCHEDULE A TOUR IN ADVANCE BECAUSE IF YOU JUST SHOW UP UNANNOUNCED, THERE MAY NOT BE ANYONE AVAILABLE TO SPEAK WITH YOU OR SHOW YOU CAMPUS!** Planning ahead will ensure an optimal visit.

What is the best time to visit? The best time to visit a campus is when classes are in session. This will allow you to see it at its most lively and perhaps engage in things like a class visit or lunch in the dining hall. This can be tough to do when you're a college student yourself so seeing the college whenever you can make it is better than not seeing it at all.

**Note on meeting with Disability Support Services:* You may need to set this up outside of the admissions office by contacting disability support services yourself. We recommend meeting with support services to make sure they will be able to meet your learning needs.

Step 2: What to Ask When Visiting a College

When visiting a prospective college, asking the right questions is critical. You need to get the real scoop on how a place works and whether it is the right place for you.

What to ask a **student tour guide**:

- What is your favorite thing about this college?
- If you could change something about this college, what would it be?
- What has been your favorite class? Why?
- Why did you choose this college?
- What do you think is truly unique about this college?
- What do students do on the weekends? Are there any major “traditions” on campus?
- Can you tell me a story about this college that you think really captures its character?
- What do you like about the residence hall? What do you not like about them?

What to ask a **transfer/admissions counselor**:

- What do you consider when evaluating transfer students for admission?
 - *If this applies to you:* I didn’t do well at my first college but have pulled my grades up at Landmark. How will my application be viewed?
- Will my file be assigned to a specific admissions representative? Can I have the contact information of that person?
- If offered, how much weight is placed on an interview?
- Is the average GPA of accepted students significantly higher than the published minimum?
 - Hidden Question: I meet the minimum GPA requirements, but are most students who apply more qualified than me, and if so, what can I do to enhance my application?
- Are there courses you’d recommend I take in my final semester(s) at Landmark based on my interest in _____ major?
- Is there housing available on campus for upperclassmen students? If so, are spaces often available to transfer students? How early do I need to apply for it? Is it traditional double rooms, suite style, apartments, etc?
- When would I receive an evaluation of my transfer credits? What office is going to make credit transfer decisions?
- What if I can’t commit to this college by May 1 as is often required? Can transfer students receive a deposit extension?
- I know that rolling admissions means you have no set application deadline, but when does the class usually fill up (if applicable)? When is the best time for me to apply?

Step 3: Admissions Interview

You may be given the option to have an admissions interview while visiting a college. This may happen with an admissions counselor, faculty member, alumni or student. You should see this as more of a “conversation” than an interview. While you will be asked questions, you will also have an opportunity to ask questions that will better help you understand the institution and how you might fit into to it.

While it is important to remember that this is a college’s first impression of you and it is important to be professional, you should also be authentic. What does it mean to be authentic? It means, while still being polite and professional, you should be yourself! It’s not a good idea to try and respond to questions by telling the interviewer what you think they want to hear. Just answer questions honestly and to the best of your ability.

Interviews are typically optional, so do not feel like you have to do one if verbal communication is not one of your strengths.

The following are questions *you may be asked during an interview*:

- Tell me about your high school experience or college experience thus far.
- What would you change about your HS or college experience if you could go back in time?
- How did you learn about this college? Why are you applying? What are your criteria for your college search (what's important to you)?
- What other schools are you applying to? Which college is your first choice? (if you don't feel comfortable answering this, don't! Just keep it vague if you want- “I'm applying to a few schools in the northeast...”)
- How would your teachers describe you? How would your best friends describe you?
- What achievement--in or out of school--are you most proud of?
- What do you do in your free time? Are you part of any clubs? Do you have any hobbies?
- What is your favorite book? Why?
- How would you describe your learning style? How do you learn best?
- What's something unique about you that I might not learn in your application?
- What will be your major? Why?
- What are your goals for the future? What do you expect to be doing in five years?
- What do you hope to get out of your college experience?
- What is your favorite subject in school? Least favorite?

Step 4: Visiting Disability Services/Academic Support

If you are taking the time and expense to visit a college, you should definitely consider scheduling an appointment with their academic support services while you are there. The admissions office may do this for you if you request it, but be prepared to contact them separately from the admissions office.

Take the time to write out your questions beforehand. The staff of Disability Services/Academic Support will always do their best to serve you, but it is critical that you inquire as in depth as possible regarding their services to make sure they can meet your needs as a learner.

The following questions should be directed to Disability Services/Academic Support if they apply to you and your learning needs:

- What level of support is offered here? What types of accommodations and services are available? Do you offer only the basic accommodations required by law or do your services go beyond the basics?
- What is the step by step process for receiving accommodations? If they offer a comprehensive support program, make sure to find out if there is an application process.
- When should I begin the process of setting up these services? After I send in my tuition deposit?
- My testing is ____ years old. Will you accept it or do I need to be retested? To whom should my testing be sent?
- Am I responsible for alerting my professors to my learning needs?
 - If I run into trouble with a professor, who at the college should I alert?
 - Can you help me with an uncooperative professor?
- Is there a writing center?
 - Who staffs this center? Professors, peers, writing instructors?
 - Where is it located and what are the hours?
 - What exactly can they help me with there? Punctuation, grammar, structure?
- Is there a math center?
 - Who staffs this center? Professors, peers, math tutors?
 - Where is it located and what are the hours?
 - What exactly can they help me with there? Basic math, algebra, calculus?
- I'd like to meet with a learning specialist weekly (sometimes also called 'academic coaching'). Is this possible? Would this person have specific LD/ADHD training?
- What areas do you see LD/ADHD students having the most difficulty in at this college?
- During registration, can this office review my schedule with me to make sure I am setting myself up for success?
 - *Hidden Question:* Can you steer me away from non-LD friendly faculty?
- What assistive technology programs do you support?
 - What is the process for students that use a text reader to receive texts in an alternative format?
 - If these programs are on a college owned computer, where are they located?
 - Is there anyone here that has expertise in using these programs?

- *Hidden Question:* If I am having trouble with Kurzweil or Dragon can anyone help me or am I on my own?
- Can I get a tutor and/or note taker for all of my classes?
- Do you have a quiet area to take tests in? Do you offer extended test time as an accommodation?
- Do you provide academic monitoring?
 - *Hidden Question:* Is anyone tracking my academic performance? If I am not doing well academically, will you alert me and my parents and intervene or is it up to me to keep track of my performance in each class and alert you when I am having trouble and in need of help?
- Does this college have a math or foreign language requirement?
 - Are there waivers or substitutions for math and foreign languages?
 - What is the process to obtain a waiver or substitution? Do I have to take the class once and fail before a waiver or substitution is granted?
- How many students are you serving through disability services? How many dedicated staff does this office have?
 - *Hidden Question:* Can I establish the personal relationship I need with someone in disability services/academic support or am I just going to be a number?
- Is there an additional fee for any of the support services offered at the college?

Notes:



Step 5: Follow-Up

After visiting a college, it is strongly encouraged for you to follow-up with those who took the time to meet with you in the form of a thank you note or email. This is not required if you were part of a large group tour and didn't speak with any university representatives individually, but if an admissions counselor, faculty member, or disability support staff member took the time to meet with you individually, it is appropriate to follow up with a note expressing your gratitude for the time they gave you. The note/email can say something along the lines of:

Dear _____,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me on DATE OF VISIT. The information you provided me about COLLEGE NAME was very helpful. I especially liked NAME SOMETHING YOU LIKED ABOUT THE COLLEGE THAT THEY MENTIONED. I'm looking forward to applying to COLLEGE NAME.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME

Make sure to get staff and faculty members business cards (or full names) so you can complete this crucial last step!

Making the Most of Your Visit

If you are visiting more than one college, it is easy to start to confuse which college offered what programs and what you really liked and didn't like about each campus. We recommend taking some time to free write or journal immediately after your visit (great way to kill time on a long drive or plane ride!) Spend a few minutes jotting down...

- What stood out to you about the college
- What you didn't like
- How the campus looked
- What your feelings were during the visit (e.g. scared, excited, comfortable, overwhelmed)

You'll appreciate having these notes to look back on when you have to decide where you will ultimately be transferring to!