



Dorm B

Computer Labs

Dining Hall

Dorm A

HOW TO BE A
**CAMPUS
TOURIST**

By Anne Browne



Faculty Building

Library

Gym

If they're not too far away, it's a great idea to visit the campuses of the schools you are thinking of attending before you make your final decision. You'll get a feel for what campus life is like, what the students are like, and whether you feel comfortable there. Most colleges and universities offer orientation days and tours for prospective students and their parents. This is a fantastic way to get to see the entire campus (residences, labs, classrooms, research facilities, etc.). We also recommend touring the campus on your own. Walking around and speaking to random students, reading bulletin boards to see what's going on, and looking into classrooms will give you a sense of whether the campus is a good fit for you. Try to make your visit before classes end at the beginning of April.

BEFORE YOUR VISIT:

- Identify what you really want to know. What type of information will help you make your decision? (For some ideas, see "What do you want to know?" below.)
- Make a list of questions to ask students or professors you meet.
- Review the institution's website. If it has a virtual tour, take it to get familiar with the areas you'd like to see.
- Download and print a campus map so you will be able to find your way around.
- Think about how you would like your parent(s) to participate in the visit. Come to an agreement with them beforehand. For example, do you want to be the one who asks questions during the campus visit? Do you want some time to explore on your own?
- Make sure your digital camera is charged.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

Academics: We're assuming that you know the basics—for example, does the college or university offer a degree program in the

discipline you want to study (Biology, Marketing, History, etc.)? If not, do some research to narrow down your choices.

Questions to ask:

1. How many students would be in a year 1 class? What is the largest level 1 class?
2. Who teaches level 1 classes? How much interaction would I have with the professor?
3. What is the dropout rate for the _____ program? What percentage of students transfer out of the program after year 1?

Student services: The Student Services office can help you adjust to college or university life.

Questions to ask:

1. What types of academic and learning supports are available to students on campus? (This may be an important factor if you have special requirements.)
2. How many libraries are on campus? What hours are they open?
3. Is there a central as well as faculty-specific career centre? What services do you offer graduates to help them find jobs?

Housing: Many institutions recommend that out-of-town students live on campus their first year. Find out what your options are.

Questions to ask:

1. What percentage of level 1 students receive their first choice for housing and live on campus?
2. How difficult is it to get off-campus housing close to the campus?
3. Is there parking on campus? If so, how much does it cost? Is there a student pass for the local transit system?

Student life: Find out what social activities, clubs, sports teams and recreational events are available. Most importantly, ensure that you may move around campus freely without worrying about your safety.

Questions to ask:

1. What kinds of student groups are active on campus? How can I get a list of them?
2. Is there a central meeting place on campus where students hang out?
3. How safe is the campus? If I'm attending classes or events on campus at night, are there "safe walk home" services available? What type of security supports are found on campus?

Don't be afraid to wander around, take pictures, talk to people and take in the school's culture. A good tourist knows how to get a taste of campus life! **CO**

SOME BASIC QUESTIONS:

1.

Where will I live?

2.

How many students will there be in my class?

3.

What types of student supports are available on campus?

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