



# HCA EAGLES COLLEGE CORNER COLLEGE CAMPUS TOURS

*From the desk of Dr. Stacy Loyd, Academic Dean*

Fall 2016  
College Awareness Issue

## Road Trip Time!

### THE PURPOSE OF CAMPUS VISITS

In the college preparation process, people both young and seasoned often ask the question: “Why make a college campus visit — this is the 21st century, can’t I find out about the college on the internet?” The answer is yes AND no.....

Consider the last movie you might have seen. How did you pick that movie? Did you read the reviews on the web? Did you perhaps watch a “trailer” video to get a flavor of the humor and dialogue? As you assessed the movie, did you ensure that it met your Christian values? When you heard of another friend having seen the movie, did you listen attentively to some of the funniest parts shared or ask questions on if the movie was good, interesting, appropriate (yes, we know your parents ask this), etc.? You like most others probably did all those things — researched, read reviews, and asked questions of others who attended the movie. But, did you ACTUALLY see the movie yourself? To get a “real” feel for the movie and talk about it to your friends, you HAD to see the movie. In fact, you WANTED to see the movie, didn’t you?

A college campus visit is just like your movie selection process — you can research, interview others, ensure the values are Christ-like, hear reviews on a college of interest.....but to make it personal and meaningful or to experience it yourself and make your own judgments and assessments, you must physically visit the campus. Remember, however, that as you enjoyed some movies and not others, you will also enjoy some college visits and not others. The exciting thing is this: The Lord will use information from all visits (good and not-so-good) to provide wisdom, confirmation, and affirmation on the college/university where you will finally settle! So now’s the time to shout to your parents .... “Road Trip” (and the bonus is that you get some hours in for your Driver’s License as well) !

### RECOMMENDED 3 PLANNING STAGES

Phase I: Attend Campus Tours at 2 of these 3 local colleges — CSU/CU/UNC. Local colleges.

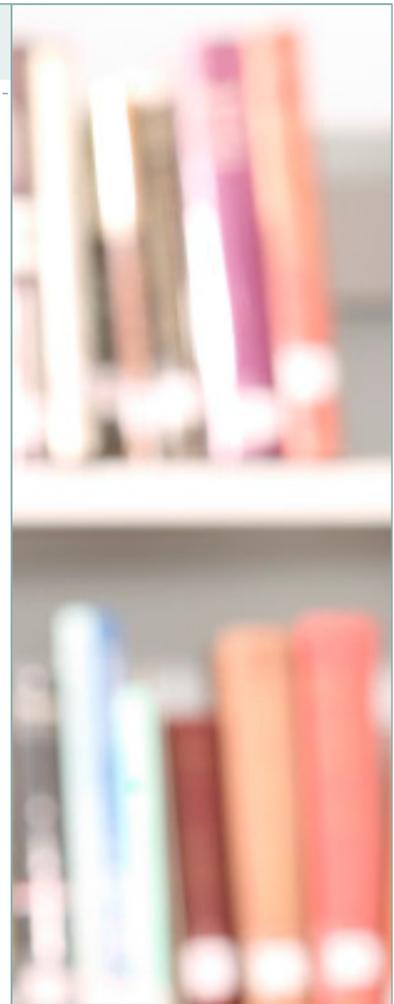
- Assess “how” a campus tour works (how to register, what sessions offered)
- Complete College Selection inventory quiz
- Research what is “usually” covered on website so you can tailor your list of questions
- With these local colleges, practice summarizing the tour highlights to compare colleges at later date
- Attend special days such as the College of Engineering Exploration Day—Oct 15, 2016 OR February 18, 2017

Phase II: Initial College Choices List to “Start the ball rolling” & Internet Research

- Complete Interest Inventory test to “hone” in some possible majors.
- 1st REVISION of College Selection inventory quiz (already taken in Phase I).
- Pick 15 top colleges to conduct “BRIEF (15 minutes or less)” research on internet or through personal local interviews (include different sizes, secular/Christian, and in and out of state).

Phase III: narrow your “initial” college list to a “refined” target list & on campus TOURS

- Complete Portfolio binder with checklists, campus visit question list, contacts, etc.
- Refine “initial list” to top 5 colleges to visit. (you can add more later if needed)
- 2nd REVISION of College Selection inventory quiz (1st revision in Phase II) Post-Visits



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### SPECIAL NOTES

- 2 types of Campus visits:
  - [1] General Tour (approximately 90 minutes) and
  - [2] Detailed visit (half a day) - includes: Meeting with Sports or Specific Disciplines (engineering, science, business, etc.), eating at Food Services, sessions on — Financial Aid/Admissions process/Honors Program

## WHAT TO BRING:

- ◆ Camera
- ◆ Campus Visit Checklist (see next page)
- ◆ Portfolio with standard note taking area
- ◆ Campus Map (printed)
- ◆ Working Pens (2)
- ◆ Requested Documents (Jr. and Sr. only)
- ◆ Student ID or Driver's License
- ◆ An OPEN mind

## WHAT NOT TO BRING:

- ◆ Indifferent or Negative Attitude
- ◆ Earbuds/headphones
- ◆ Girlfriend/Boyfriend — unless they are interested in college

## WHAT TO WEAR

- ◆ Professional casual such as kakis, mid-length cotton skirt and polo-type shirt OR
- ◆ If you wear shorts, make sure reach no less than 2 inches above knees and are more dressy casual (not athletic nor denim)
- ◆ Wear comfortable shoes
- ◆ Dress for weather
- ◆ Bring sweater/light jacket as will be inside with air-conditioning
- ◆ Clean, ironed clothing.
- ◆ Only wear a suit IF you are interviewing (this is rare).

## WHAT NOT TO WEAR

- ◆ Clothes from other colleges
- ◆ Clothes with holes, political statements, inappropriate logos
- ◆ Tight (yoga pants) or revealing (muscle t-shirts) or too short (you know!)
- ◆ A suit (unless you are doing an interview)
- ◆ Heavy makeup, colored hair, (OR wild hair) or piercings that speak louder than you do. Remember: you want them remembering YOU, not your "look"



*Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisors they succeed.  
~ Proverbs 15:22*

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR PLANNING A COLLEGE VISIT

### 1. Plan Early. Talk much.

College planning is a “layering” process. A professional work worker will apply numerous and thin layers of stain to raw wood to achieve the highest quality finish. Likewise, you as a student (or a parent) will begin conversations by the Freshman year in high school regarding majors, college selection, and funding of college. These conversations will be built upon and developed through the years of high school to equip you in selecting the best fit in a college or university for you. [FRESHMAN and SOPHOMORE YEARS]

### 2. Take Virtual Tours (on college websites)

Explore the college AND surrounding city/community on line BEFORE you visit and to help you decide where to visit. You will go off campus, so ensure safety and cost-of-living off campus as well as on campus. [SOPHOMORE YEAR]

### 3. Coordinate Campus Visits with Family Vacations

With a small amount of planning, campus visits can integrate EASILY into your schedule. Visit local colleges early in your planning. Visit out-of-state colleges as a quick detour while on family vacations or mission trips. DO NOT visit more than 2 colleges in one day. [SUMMER between SOPHOMORE and JUNIOR YEAR]

### 4. Eat on campus. Stay on campus. Take pictures.

Learn about the school culture through people watching at the school cafeteria. Also, explore a sports camp or summer enrichment program which allow you to stay in the dorms to get a feel for walking distances to other buildings and/or if you enjoy the food and housing on campus. Keeping pictures of your experience is a great tool to organize your thoughts and remember what you saw. [JUNIOR YEAR]

### 5. Seek out school alumni, friends, or faculty recommendations.

Meeting with or communicating via email or social media those that have trod this path before you will enhance your college search. Be sure to ask our Administrators or Academic Dean so that we can put you in contact with alumni or other contacts prior to your visit.

### 6. Explore Disciplines & Majors

As you are deciding on a major and once you have chosen a major, speaking with the individual professors, sitting in on a lecture, or meeting with students in the major desires are all excellent opportunities to understand the program and explore options in majors and careers. NOTE: Don't just plan a meeting with the “Dean” of the college — get into the actual “class” and meet with the professors (they LOVE to share about the college!) [JUNIOR YEAR]

### 7. Speak with Admissions and/or Financial Aid Department

As students are assessing if a college is right for them, they must also grasp another two fold message: [1] College Funding: What is the financial feasibility of attending the college through Scholarships, Grants, Work Study, and/or Loans? [2] Understanding Admissions Criteria: What does the student need to do in his/her high school career to “shine” in the admissions process? [Summer between JUNIOR and SENIOR years]

### 8. Pay attention to campus “clues”.

Read the campus newspaper. Gather brochures to understand the surrounding community — entertainment, shopping, housing/rental market, etc. Spend a few minutes watching the individual monitors at each “college” — for example, Monfort School of Business displays in their foyer and throughout the Kepner business building opportunities for study abroad, top honors programs, specific major dates and events, etc..... [JUNIOR YEAR or if younger sibling, anytime!]

### 9. Post-visit. Nap. Document. Thank.

Naps are always good advice! And yes, you are young and your memory is in tact, but you need to document the highlights of your visit to a campus to preserve the factual data and your overall subjective “feel” of your campus experience. Lastly and highly important — send a thank you note to your tour guide. If you don't have their address, you can send it to the Admissions/Tour Office for them to route. So remember your tour guide's name!

# College Visit Checklist

To help you as you select the right college/university, complete this form for EACH college you visit:



**COLLEGE NAME:**

**CITY:**  **STATE:**  **SIZE:**  **COST:**  **VISIT DATE:**

**ADMISSIONS CONTACT:**

**Name:**  **Email:**  **Phone:**

**TO DO CHECKLIST**

- Talk to professors
- Sit in on a class
- Class type: lecture/discussion
- Talk to Admissions Office
- Talk with Financial Aid Office
- Research Athletics/Music/etc.
- Talk to students
- Visit potential clubs/activities
- Read college newspaper
- Read bulletin boards/monitors
- Assess weather during school year.
- Mode of transportation (bike, car, longboard, etc.)
- Tour campus
- Visit the library
- Eat at Cafeteria
- Visit student housing
- Check out recreational facilities
- Check out computer labs
- Check out Churches
- Speak with Christian Clubs (Campus Cru, etc.)
- If Christian school, Agree w/ Stat of Faith
- Eat at an off-campus restaurant
- Tour city around campus

**RATE IT:**

*On a scale 1-5 (five is best), rate:*

- Academics \_\_\_\_\_
- Acad Perks \_\_\_\_\_
- Acad. Support \_\_\_\_\_
- Admissions \_\_\_\_\_
- Classrooms \_\_\_\_\_
- City/Town \_\_\_\_\_
- Clubs/Organ. \_\_\_\_\_
- Facilities, Dorms \_\_\_\_\_
- Financial Aid \_\_\_\_\_
- People \_\_\_\_\_

**OVERALL:**

Do you picture yourself living here?

Circle one: YES / NO

Why/why not?

**THE BEST PART ABOUT MY VISIT:**

**THE WORST PART ABOUT MY VISIT:**

**PRE-PLANNED TOP QUESTIONS TO ASK:**

[From newsletter list (or your own), list questions to ask:]

**Tour Guide:**

**Admissions/Financial Aid:**

**Academics/Academic Perks/Academic Support:**

**Classrooms & Buildings:**

**Clubs/Organizations:**

**Facilities, Dorms, Food, & Culture:**

**People/Students/Professors:**

Modified from the source: [www.nacacnet.org/steps](http://www.nacacnet.org/steps)

## HOW TO PLAN A VISIT



1. Research the college on line and read about their campus tours.
2. Pick your date to visit.
3. Call the Admissions office at least 2 weeks in advance to schedule your tour.
4. Plan your “itinerary” for the trip — how you will travel. When you will travel. Where will you stay. If multiple school visits, how far is the distance.
5. Reserve 2 to 4 hours, including “extra” time to tour campus on your own, eat lunch/breakfast, and have time to people watch
6. PRINT checklist and questions for each college (from this newsletter) and review the activities you want to do and questions you want to ask each college.
  - Attending a class. Meeting with professor. Speaking with athletic department. Tour. Meeting with Greek organizations or campus religious organizations. Speaking with student government.
7. If possible, assess one or two majors you wish to know about and call the Dean’s office of that specific college (i.e. Engineering or Nursing) to see if you can hear more about the major specific programs.
8. Pack and Enjoy the adventure!

Source: [www.nacenet.org](http://www.nacenet.org)

## QUESTIONS TO ASK STUDENTS (OF THE COLLEGE YOU DESIRE)

*A “general campus tour” (about 90 minutes) will consist of a College Student who as acting as an Ambassador will point-out the campus “landmarks” and buildings, share University approved statistics and information, and answer general questions admirably. Ask questions specific to the person leading the tour to get “personal” thoughts (rather than questions that can be found on website.) Also, don’t rate the college on the tour guide’s personality — he or she is merely one source of information.*

*Choose 5 to 7 questions below to memorize and have at the forefront of your mind for a campus tour. Then, after the tour, briefly record the answers to the questions. Be careful about taking too many notes DURING the tour — this is about dialogue and interaction, so don’t be typing notes on your phone the entire tour!!!*

*Most important for tour: be curious...be engaged ...be Christ-like*

### **Why they chose this college (use name when asking):**

- Why did your tour guide select this school? What was their other “top choice”?
- Now that they attend the college, what top 5 items surprised them?
- How large were their typical freshman classes? How about now (assuming they are upper classman)?

### **How to form relationships with professors:**

- As a freshman, what access or interaction did you have with professors?
- As an upperclassman, were you able to deepen relationships with professors through office hour visits, assisting with research, class discussions, recruiting, etc.?

### **How to form relationships with other students:**

- What activities are you in? How did you cultivate new friendships (Greek system, Study Groups, Religious Groups, Intramural Sports, etc.....)?
- Are students more collaborative or independent in the classroom and in study groups? *[This may vary based on major within the same college]*

### **What is the overall campus culture like:**

- Are students heavily involved in the university or do most people leave campus after classes or on the weekends?
- Note: As you are touring, review Bulletin Boards and Media in buildings/common areas.

- What sports or drama/music or other activities do the majority of students enjoy most?
- What’s the overall social scene like for an incoming freshman? What about an upper classman?

### **Other questions.....**

- What are your best “study” tips to survive your 1st semester?
- What freshman “orientation” opportunities are there?
- How did you survive or what advice do you have for Final’s Week?
- What is it like to live on campus vs. off campus?
- How did you get involved in Campus Tours?
- What were the 3 most important lessons you learned your first semester (*bring a sweater to college, ask questions in class, don’t procrastinate, etc....*)
- What criteria makes a “Best Class” or “Best Professor”?
- What are the biggest campus traditions?
- Did you ever study aboard? What was that like?
- What’s the favorite campus hangout? Favorite off-campus hangout?
- Where do you think is the best place to study (Library, rented rooms, dorm, etc.)?
- What’s the town surrounding the campus like? What are your favorite stores to shop in around here?

# “RATING A COLLEGE”

## ~ QUESTIONS TO ASK OR RESEARCH

Adapted and modified from [www.usnews.com/education/blogs](http://www.usnews.com/education/blogs)

### ACADEMIC PERKS

- ◆ What opportunities are there for undergraduate research?
- ◆ How many students participate in undergraduate research?
- ◆ Is there a culminating senior year experience?
- ◆ Do you have an honors college?
- ◆ Do you have a learning community or other freshman experience?

### ACADEMIC SUPPORT

- ◆ What type of tutoring program do you have?
- ◆ How do you provide academic advice to students?
- ◆ Do you have a writing center and how do I access it?
- ◆ What kind of learning disability resources do you have?
- ◆ Do you have a “dean of students” department or counselors who can help students if (and when) major life events occur that affect their academics? (ex: Parental death, student hospital stay, violence, etc.)



### ACADEMICS

- ◆ How much time do students typically spend on homework?
- ◆ How much writing and reading are expected?
- ◆ What is the average class size of introductory classes?
- ◆ How widely used are teaching assistants on your campus?
- ◆ What is the average class size of upper-division courses?
- ◆ What are the course requirements for graduation?
- ◆ How many students continue with their masters or graduate programs?
- ◆ What is the graduation rate? The job placement rate? Percentage of freshman who return?
- ◆ What Study Abroad opportunities are there? When is the best time? What do most students take?
- ◆ Professor questions:
  - ◆ How long have you been teaching in the program?
  - ◆ How did you select post-secondary education as your career?
  - ◆ What three traits do you recognize in the most successful students?
  - ◆ What advice would you give an incoming freshman to ensure a successful academic career and ultimate job placement?

*Make sure to assess the city and community in regards to shopping, entertainments, safety, and places of worship.*

### ADMISSIONS

- ◆ Is there a specific Admissions Counselor that I could contact if I have questions as I am completing forms?
- ◆ What are the deadlines for applications? What is the best way to submit required documentation?
- ◆ How do I choose the best college housing option? Do you have a resource to help pick a roommate?
- ◆ I've seen the general application requirements of the college/university on the website, but can you explain what skills and character traits your Top Candidates have?
- ◆ What can I do now in High School to ensure a successful and smooth application process?

### CLASSROOM & BUILDINGS

- ◆ Are the classes more discussion? Lecture based?
- ◆ Do the students interact before or after class?
- ◆ Does the instructor or professor engage the students and demonstrate preparedness?
- ◆ How large or small are the classrooms? Do they have adequate and working equipment (computers for PowerPoint, internet capabilities for student and instructor), extra plugs for computer use in classroom?
- ◆ Do the individual colleges have eating areas close by? What about couches/chairs for “in-between class times”?

### CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

- ◆ What percentage of the study body belongs to a sorority or fraternity?
- ◆ What religious activities are offered to students?
- ◆ What other type of activities are offered to students?
- ◆ What clubs do you have on campus?
- ◆ What types of intramural sports are available through the university?

### FACILITIES, DORMS, FOOD, & CULTURE

- ◆ How is the food on campus?
- ◆ What kind of dorm choices are there?
- ◆ What percentage of student live on campus?
- ◆ How long are dorm accommodations guaranteed?
- ◆ How many students live on campus?
- ◆ Do most students go home on the weekend?
- ◆ Do students get free email and internet access?
- ◆ Is the library a good place to study? Any other study place recommendations?
- ◆ How safe is it on campus during the day? At night? What about safety off campus?
- ◆ What are the differences in dorms — are some more conducive to a certain major such as engineering or business?

### FINANCIAL AID

- ◆ What is your average financial aid package?
- ◆ What is the typical breakdown of loans versus grants?
- ◆ What percentage of financial need does the school typically meet?
- ◆ What is the average merit award?
- ◆ What percentage of students receive college grants?
- ◆ What is the average college debt that students leave with?
- ◆ What work-study opportunities are there?
- ◆ Where do I locate the financial aid or scholarship forms? What are the deadlines?

### PEOPLE

- ◆ Do people look happy, relaxed, or friendly on campus?
- ◆ Ask or imagine: What it is like to live here?
- ◆ What do people do in their free time? On the weekends?
- ◆ Do the students/professors/community share your values, ideas of entertainment, and academic dreams?

# WHEN (AND WHEN NOT) TO VISIT

## When not to go?

- Winter and Spring Breaks
- Christmas week/Winter Break
- Thanksgiving Weekend
- Homecoming Weekend
- Summer (unless summer school is in session)
- Holidays (if the college is not in session)

## When to visit a campus:

- Early in Fall Semester (which is usually August/September)
- Summer between Sophomore & Junior year
- Spring of Junior Year — for Specific majors
- Monday through Thursdays (classes in session and



# AFTER THE VISIT

Summarize your thoughts by:

- Completing the “College Visit Checklist” summary (put extra notes on assessment back) for the INDIVIDUAL COLLEGE [page 3 of newsletter]
- Print pictures out and store with notes
- Complete the College Comparison Worksheet to have a place for the SUMMARY information.
- Send a thank you note to the “main” people or those with whom you spoke. A 4 x 6 card will be sufficient and be sure to include a specific thing unique to speaking with them. Sign your full name. If your penmanship is poor, please print it on the computer and then SIGN BY HAND your name where the signature should be.
- For desired colleges, be planning a “follow-up” visit the fall of your Senior year (Sept/Oct/Nov) as early decisions can be made by Dec 1st of your senior year.

| College Comparison Worksheet             |            |                       |            |  |
|--|------------|-----------------------|------------|--|
| College Name (to the right):             | 1st Choice | 2nd Choice            | 3rd Choice |  |
| <b>Location - City, State</b>            |            |                       |            |  |
| Distance from Home                       |            |                       |            |  |
| Admission Counselor Name                 |            |                       |            |  |
| Admission Counselor Phone # Email        |            |                       |            |  |
| <b>Size</b>                              |            |                       |            |  |
| Student Enrollment                       |            |                       |            |  |
| Physical Size of Campus                  |            |                       |            |  |
| Freshman Class Size Upper-class size     |            |                       |            |  |
| <b>Environment</b>                       |            |                       |            |  |
| Setting (city, urban)                    |            | 2 yr 4 yr             |            |  |
| Nearest City Nearest City Size           |            | Religious Affiliation |            |  |
| Co-Ed Liberal or Conserv.                |            |                       |            |  |
| <b>Admission Requirements</b>            |            |                       |            |  |
| Deadline: Early Regular                  |            |                       |            |  |
| Tests Required (SAT, ACT)                |            |                       |            |  |
| Average test scores, GPA, rank           |            |                       |            |  |
| would it be: REACH or ATTAINABLE school? |            |                       |            |  |
| <b>Academics</b>                         |            |                       |            |  |
| Desired Major offered                    |            |                       |            |  |
| Accreditation                            |            |                       |            |  |
| Typical class size                       |            |                       |            |  |
| Job placement rate                       |            |                       |            |  |
| Student-Faculty ratio                    |            |                       |            |  |
| PhD lead or industry adjuncts            |            |                       |            |  |
| <b>College Expenses</b>                  |            |                       |            |  |
| Tuition, room? board, fees               |            |                       |            |  |
| estimated Total Budget                   |            |                       |            |  |
| Application Fee, Deposits                |            |                       |            |  |
| <b>Financial Aid or Scholarships</b>     |            |                       |            |  |
| Deadlines for Financial Aid              |            |                       |            |  |
| Required Forms                           |            |                       |            |  |
| %receiving Aid                           |            |                       |            |  |
| Scholarships                             |            |                       |            |  |
| <b>Housing</b>                           |            |                       |            |  |
| On Campus Housing Requirement            |            |                       |            |  |
| On Campus food plan                      |            |                       |            |  |
| Roommate selection process               |            |                       |            |  |
| <b>Facilities</b>                        |            |                       |            |  |
| Academic (computer lab, classroom equip) |            |                       |            |  |
| Recreational Center                      |            |                       |            |  |
| Adequate Parking Bike storage            |            |                       |            |  |
| Other                                    |            |                       |            |  |
| <b>Activities, Clubs, Churches</b>       |            |                       |            |  |
| Clubs, Organizations                     |            |                       |            |  |
| Greek life                               |            |                       |            |  |
| Athletics, Intramurals                   |            |                       |            |  |
| Other                                    |            |                       |            |  |



## SUMMARIZE COLLEGES ONCE VISITED

- ♦ After your campus visit using the example to the left entitled “College Comparison Worksheet”:
  - ♦ record the information on your “college keeper list” for the colleges you are desiring to attend.
  - ♦ You may have additional sheets with 4th place, etc.....
- ♦ Rate them each time you visit a new college. For example, your #1 college may be “bumped” and move to a #2 position with a recently visited college moving to the #1 place.

