

College questions

Parent and Swimmer look at these questions together. You may have already asked some of these questions of the coach. Talk about other questions that are not here that you want the answers to. When you go on a visit find out as much as you can. Don't be afraid to ask questions and write down the answer. You will be coming into contact with different people, some of these questions can be asked of more than one of them. These are some questions you can ask different people when looking at a school. Some of these will only be answered if you go visit the school. Keep track of what different schools have to say. Remember you will be spending the next four or five years at this institution, it needs to be a place that you feel comfortable.

Things to think about before you begin:

1. What part of the country do you want to go to school in?
2. What kind of climate?
3. What size of school? What size of city?
4. What division do you want to or can you compete at? Be realistic!!

Visits to Campus

You can go on 5 official visits. That means they pay to bring you on campus. This is the best way to find out about the program and team.

Some very important rules you need to know:

1. A college coach may contact you starting July 1 of the year between your Junior and Senior year.
2. They may call only once a week. If your parents talk to them for more than just finding out you aren't there it counts as a call. They may call within the same day however and talk to you and that is ok.
3. On visits they can't give you anything (caps, shirts).
4. On visits you can't workout with the team.

University information:

1. Does this university have my major?
2. How many students are at this university?
3. Is it in a part of the country that I want to spend 4 to 5 years in?

Scholarship information: to ask coach

1. What times do I need to have to be considered for a scholarship? Are there other sources of financial aid I should be looking into?
2. With a partial scholarship what are my out of pocket expenses?
3. If I don't get a scholarship for my freshman year what are the chances that I might be awarded one for my sophomore year? How do I improve my chances?

4. What is the process for annual scholarship renewal (they cannot “guarantee” a 4 or 5 year scholarship)? What is needed to get 5th year aid? How can a scholarship be taken away?
5. Can the amount of my scholarship be increased or decreased through my years at this school?
6. What happens if I am offered a non-athletic scholarship as well?
7. What kinds of grants, etc. are available and how do you get the information on them?

Team and Practice information: to ask coach

1. How many are on the team? How many travel?
2. Is the team Co-ed? If so, do men and women train together? If not, what is the relationship between the two? Do they travel together? Are the conference meets together? How many coaches are there? What coach will I be working mostly with?
3. What is the training like during all phases of the season?
Yardage? Types of training?
4. What is the practice schedule for a typical week, including water and dryland (strength training) workouts?
How many hours a week?
Example workout?
5. How long is the season?
6. What are the attendance requirements? Are they different for scholarship and non-scholarship swimmers?
7. What events do you see me swimming in dual meets?
8. Will I be traveling with the team? What is the travel schedule, how many days of school will be missed?
9. How does the team travel to away meets? Who drives?
10. Do my times fit into to the team? Are you recruiting others with similar times?
11. Is there a Christmas training trip? Am I required to go? How is paid for? How much? Do you train over Thanksgiving?
12. Is there a strength training coach that works specifically with the swim team?

13. Is there a trainer assigned to the swim team like the basketball team or is there a different one at every meet?
14. Do you have a spring training program? How much time do I have off after my last meet and spring training? What are summer training expectations? How many stay on campus to take classes and train over the summer months?
15. Is there any possibility that the swim team will be dropped from the athletic department? (It has happened!) Of what value is the swim program to the athletic department?

Academic information: to ask coach

1. Do you practice or compete during final exams?
2. Are there tutors available? To both scholarship and non-scholarship athletes?
3. Is there an Athletic Academic Counseling department? What is my access to it?
4. What is the team's GPA and graduation rate? What is the graduation rate for the whole school and for the whole athletic department?
5. Is there a study hall available or is it required? Required hours?
6. Can I contact any of the current members of the team? (specifically those that swim my events)

Academic information: to ask Academic counseling

1. Are there professors that a student-athlete should avoid?
2. How can I take advantage of your counseling?
3. Can I come to you with non-academic problems?
4. How many credits do you recommend that I take?

Academic information: to ask department of study

1. What are the program requirements?
2. What type of course work will I be doing?
3. Are there other student-athletes in this program?
4. What is the policy for taking tests when I am gone on team travel?

5. How can I get notes of missed classes?
6. Does this university have a graduate program to fit my interest?
7. Do I have to graduate in 4 years?
8. Can I do this course of study and swim? When are most of the classes?
9. When do I have to declare a major?

Team information: to ask swimmers on the team

1. Is the coach consistent and fair? (Ask upper classman for this)
2. Does the coach play favorites?
3. Does the coaching staff work well together?
4. Is there an alcohol problem on this team?
5. What parts of town should I stay away from?
6. Do you like it on the team? Do the swimmers get along?

Questions to ask yourself:

1. If the coach left, would I stay?
2. Would you choose this school if you were not a swimmer?
3. Are you choosing the appropriate level for yourself as far as athletics and academics are concerned?
4. Do you think the staff and program fits your needs?
5. Do you socially fit in with this group of swimmers? Look particularly at the Freshmen and Sophomores.
6. Are you looking for a metropolitan area or smaller area for your college?
7. If the program is dropped what would I do?
8. How do you tell a coach that you aren't interested? Let the coach know as soon as you have made a decision.