

# College. What you need **to know** before **you** **go.**

A guide to help you ask  
the right questions on a  
college campus visit.



National Survey of Student Engagement

## How to use this guide.

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icking the right college is a big decision, one of the more important you'll ever make. You will need to ask many questions when making a college choice. In addition, consider taking a campus tour, attending a class or two, eating a meal on campus, and looking through recent issues of the student newspaper.

To get a sense of how much you are likely to learn, grow, and develop at a given institution, there are some key questions to ask of the people you'll meet—the tour guide, admissions staff, an overnight host, faculty members, and currently enrolled students. Some of the most important questions can be found in this guide.

### National Survey of Student Engagement

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he questions listed in this guide are based on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). Each year NSSE collects information directly from students at hundreds of colleges and universities. Responses to the survey provide valuable information about what is actually going on in the lives of students and the quality of their college experience.

Check to see if the college you are considering participates in NSSE. Detailed information on students' experiences may be available from the admissions or institutional research office. For a list of participating NSSE schools or for more information, please visit [www.iub.edu/~nsse](http://www.iub.edu/~nsse).



## Academic Challenge

Seek demanding intellectual and creative academic work.

- What do faculty expect of students?
- In what ways do faculty challenge students to leave their "comfort zone" in order to excel?
- How much time do students spend on homework each week?
- What types of assignments are given (papers, exams, problem sets, rehearsals, research projects, etc.)?
- How much writing is expected?
- How much reading is assigned per class?
- What are exams like?
- In what ways are students given the opportunity to express themselves creatively in assignments?
- What types of tutors or tutoring opportunities exist on campus?



## Active Learning

Become intensely involved in your education.

- How and when are majors selected and can they be self-designed?
- How do students receive help selecting classes?
- How often are things learned in class discussed outside of the classroom?
- In what ways do students work together on solving problems in and out of class?
- How frequently do students make class presentations?
- How many courses require community-service?
- What types of internships are available and are they required to graduate?



## Student-Faculty Interaction

Communicate; the more contact students have with faculty the better.

- How often do faculty meet with students outside of class?
- How many students do research with faculty?
- What does the institution do to promote student-faculty contact?
- What kind and how often do students get feedback on coursework?
- Who do students talk to about career plans?
- In what ways do students, faculty, and staff work together on campus committees?
- How well do students get along with faculty, administrators, and staff?



## Out-of-Class Experience

Discover positive out-of-class activities that will deepen learning.

- What activities are available to help students apply classroom learning to real life?
- What percentage of students study in other countries?
- What percentage of students do community service?
- What types of student organizations are on campus and how active are they?
- What kinds of leadership opportunities are available?
- What kinds of special projects, seminars, or other experiences are offered or required of seniors?



## Campus Environment

Focus on your social and academic development.

- What do students like about this campus?
- What do students dislike or complain about on campus?
- What services are available to help students adjust to or help cope with non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)?
- What do students do on the weekends and what percentage of students commute?
- What do students do for fun?
- What types of public transportation are available on campus or in the area?
- What opportunities are available for spiritual expression and growth?
- What types of support services (academic and non-academic) are available?



## Diversity

Engage in diverse cultural experiences.

- In what ways are students exposed to multiple cultures or diverse perspectives?
- How is diversity incorporated into the curriculum?
- Where are students from and how many are from other countries?



## Technology

Get connected.

- How is technology used in the classroom?
- What types of computers, technology, online information and courses, and support services are available?
- How many students have their own computers?



## Other things to think about

### **Campus activities**

- What kinds of activities are students involved in outside of the classroom?

### **Intercollegiate and intramural athletics**

- What types of athletic and intramural activities are available?

### **Study abroad programs**

- What types of programs are available to study in other countries?

### **Musical, performing and fine arts**

- What kinds of events come to campus?

### **Summer school/summer programs**

- What types of summer classes or summer internship programs are available?

### **Special academic programs**

- What types of honors courses, learning communities, weekend or night programs, or other unique academic offerings are offered?

### **Financial aid/work study**

- What types of financial aid or scholarships are available? What percentage of students work on and off campus?

### **Library services**

- How extensive are the library services, such as books, magazines, reference materials, computers, and other online resources?

### **Security and personal safety**

- What safety services are available to students?

### **Health and counseling services**

- What types of services are available for students on campus?

### **Career planning and job placement**

- What types of services and programs are available? Where are recent graduates employed?

### **Living arrangements**

- Where do students live? Residence halls? Other campus housing? How long does it take to get to class?

### **Food services and dining options**

- Where do students eat and are there flexible meal plans?

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