



College Professor Meetings During Your Campus Visits

Many universities offer you the opportunity to have a discussion with a college professor when you visit campus. There are a lot of reasons to take advantage.

- If you are interested in a specific field of study, this meeting could help you make your decision whether the school is right for you.
- A college professor can help you understand how the academic program supports your career goals.
- Should you decide to attend the college, you'll have a contact who can advise you in your future academic pursuits.

Most students want to know whether talking with a college professor will affect the admissions decision. There is no clear answer to this. In some rare instances, a college professor who is impressed by your intellectual curiosity and your qualifications might take steps to assist your application. Still, that should not be the focus of your meeting. The best bet is to approach your talk with the above goals in mind.

Planning for a discussion with a college professor is not that different from preparing for an admissions interview (for more on this, see our "College Advice" section at <http://goseecampus.com/college-advice>.) Namely, you will want to research the academic program and then prepare discussion questions relevant to your goals.

First, Research.

It's important to know about the academic program before you have your talk with the college professor. You would have covered some of this information already when you were making your decision to visit the school.

How much more research is necessary? Well, you don't want to ask questions to which you can easily find the answers for yourself. Instead, take these simple steps:

- Review the department's website.
- Explore the course catalogue for your intended major.
- If you know the college professor who will be hosting your discussion, see if the university website has a faculty directory that lists his / her core interests and classes taught.



If those are the basic steps, you might be asking: how much research is too much? A good rule is to only focus on things that are pertinent to your interests. You don't need to read every journal article the college professor has written or come up with obscure questions related to his / her research. Instead, pay attention to what attracts you to the field and to studying at the school.

Then, Come Up with Your Questions For the College Professor.

Your research will probably lead to questions that fall into one of a few categories.

Your studies: These types of questions help you decide whether you will find the academic enrichment you want at the university. Think about the courses that are available to you, major requirements, and the structure of the program in which you have interest. A college professor will welcome thoughtful, well-researched questions about your high school interests and how you'll be able to pursue them while at the university.

Academic department opportunities and events: As most college students can tell you, a lot of learning takes place outside of the classroom. You might ask whether there are opportunities for work-study, serving as a teaching assistant, or taking part in research with a college professor. These types of opportunities are especially important to those considering graduate school. In addition, you might be interested in learning about events that the department hosts, such as speaking engagements by guest lecturers.

Professional development: College is a brief period of time, and it is important to know how the academic course load will support your post-graduate interests. You may want to know what fields graduates go on to pursue. Also, consider asking whether the department helps to arrange internships, international study courses, and other professional learning opportunities.

During and After Your Discussion with a College Professor

In your meeting, all of the same rules apply as with any other interview. This means you should be on time, come prepared with your questions and other materials you need (like pen and paper), be attentive, and thank him / her for meeting with you.



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After your talk, be sure to get the college professor's contact information. You will want to follow up with a note, again expressing your appreciation for taking the time to speak with you. In your message, recap a few points from the conversation to remind him / her about what you discussed. And yes, it's okay to mention where you are in the admissions process.

Then, it's time to review what you have learned from speaking with the college professor. How did your conversation influence the way you felt about the program? Are the resources and opportunities a good match for your interests? If you've decided that the department offers what you need, you may have found the right school.

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What are some questions you would like to ask a college professor during a visit? Let us know at <http://www.facebook.com/goseecampus>, or start planning your college trip now at <http://goseecampus.com>.