

## The College Interview

The interview is a helpful piece of the college application process puzzle. An interview gives the student the opportunity to impress as well as to ask questions. All students are encouraged to seek interviews when they are offered and, of course, when colleges require them as part of the process.

**How important is the interview?** This completely depends on the college. While some use it as part of the application process, other colleges may offer informational meetings simply for the student to gather more information. Some colleges do not offer any sort of interview. Any college that requires an interview or strongly recommends one will regard it as a significant part of the application process.

**Why is the interview important?** An interview allows students to present themselves and share information about their interests, talents, and motivation to continue their education. Rather than merely presenting information on paper, the interview creates an impression from face-to-face discussion.

**How should students prepare for an interview?** It is always important to be honest and forthright. A skilled interviewer would rather hear delayed consideration than an insincere and canned response.

To prepare, students should review all information available on the college web page or in the catalog. It is a waste of time to ask questions about information that is readily available. It is far wiser to ask questions that show you did your homework and are looking for further information.

To prepare for questions from the interviewer, the student should think of what impression you wish to leave the interviewer with. Ask yourself, "As a result of this meeting, what do I want the interviewer to know?"

Review practice questions (see link on webpage). Don't panic if you can't recall the list of books you read in a recent course, or the last movie you saw, or the record of your last athletic team; that is understandable. Don't bluff. Just say you can't recall right now.

**What do I wear?** Dress as though for a job interview or attending an awards program. Girls should wear nice pants or a skirt. Boys should wear dress pants, a shirt with a collar and a tie. It is better to err on the side of looking nice than to dress too casual and nonchalant. Your dress conveys how seriously you are taking this process. Clothes should fit appropriately, not be too revealing, and be comfortable, but not too casual.

**TIP:** Be prepared. The interview is a way for you and the interviewer to determine if you and this college are a good match for one another. Be on time and relaxed.