

College questions to ask

Parent and Swimmer look at these questions together. They are categorized by scholarship, team/practice, academic and general questions. Talk about other questions that are not here that you want the answers to. You don't have need to ask every question on this list. Pick the questions that are most important to you. 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. It is a good idea to keep a notebook. You will be coming into contact with different people and some of these questions can be asked of more than one of person at the 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!

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

8. How would your swimmers describe the team culture? How would your swimmers describe you?
9. What is your philosophy? What are your goals for the team?
10. How would you differentiate your team from other college teams? What is the profile of the swim team on campus?
11. What is the biggest change you would like to make to the team?
12. What are looking for in a recruit?
13. 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?
14. How many coaches are there? What coach will I be working with the most?

15. How does the coach see you fitting into the team? Could you make the travel team?
16. What is the training like during all phases of the season? Yardage? Types of training?
17. What is the practice schedule for a typical week, including water and Dryland (strength training) workouts? Is it flexible?
18. How many hours a week? Example workout?
19. What are the attendance requirements? Are they different for scholarship and non-scholarship swimmers?
20. What events do you see me swimming in dual meets?
21. Will I be traveling with the team? What is the travel schedule, how many days of school will be missed?
22. How does the team travel to away meets? Who drives?
23. Do my times fit into the team? Are you recruiting others with similar times?
24. Is there a Christmas training trip? Am I required to go? How is it paid for? How much is the cost? Do you train over Thanksgiving?
25. What percentage of the swimmers stay on the team swimming for four years? Why have some swimmers left the team?
26. Is there a strength training coach that works specifically with the swim team?
27. Is there a trainer assigned to the swim team like the basketball team or is there a different one at every meet?
28. Do you have a spring training program? How much time do I have off after my last meet and spring training?
29. What are summer training expectations? How many stay on campus to take classes and train over the summer months?
30. Do swimmers continue to improve over their four years?
31. Is there any possibility that the swim team will be dropped from the athletic department or experience a loss of funding (It has happened!) Of what value is the swim program to the athletic department?
32. Are there any plans for the pool facility?

Academic information: to ask Coach

33. Do you practice or compete during final exams?
34. Are there tutors available? To both scholarship and non-scholarship athletes?
35. Is there an Athletic Academic Counseling department? What is my access to it?
36. What is the team's GPA and graduation rate? What is the graduation rate for the whole school and for the whole athletic department?
37. What percentage of the swimmers graduate in 4 years?
38. Is there a study hall available or is it required? Required hours?
39. Can I contact any of the current members of the team? (specifically those that swim my events)

40. How many PSAs will you invite on recruit trips? Historically, how many of those are admitted to the school and how many accept?

Academic information: to ask Academic Counseling

41. Are there professors that a student-athlete should avoid?
42. How can I take advantage of your counseling?
43. Can I come to you with non-academic problems?
44. How many credits do you recommend that I take?
45. Academic information: to ask department of study
46. What are the program requirements?
47. What type of course work will I be doing?
48. Are there other student-athletes in this program?
49. What is the policy for taking tests when I am gone on team travel?
50. How can I get notes of missed classes?
51. Does this university have a graduate program to fit my interest?
52. Do I have to graduate in 4 years?
53. Can I do this course of study and swim? When are most of the classes?
54. When do I have to declare a major?
55. Are the swimmers allowed to 'go Greek'? Study abroad? Do internships during the school year?
56. What kind of support does the school offer the athletes? Training, meals, tutors, course registration?

Team information: to ask Swimmers on the Team

57. Is the coach consistent and fair? (Ask upperclassman for this)
58. Does the coach play favorites?
59. Does the coaching staff work well together?
60. Is there an alcohol/drug problem on this team?
61. What parts of town should I stay away from?
62. Do you like it on the team? Do the swimmers generally get along?

Questions to ask yourself:

63. If the coach left, would I stay?
64. Would you choose this school if you were not a swimmer?
65. Are you choosing the appropriate level for yourself as far as athletics and academics are concerned?
66. Do you think the staff and program fits your needs?
67. Do you socially fit in with this group of swimmers? Look particularly at the Freshmen and Sophomores.
68. Are you looking for a metropolitan area or smaller area for your college?
69. If the program is dropped what would I do?

70. How do you tell a coach that you aren't interested? Let the coach know as soon as you have made a decision.