

MARCH 26, 2020 NEWSBLAST - CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

Coronavirus & College Admissions: Demonstrating Interest without Visiting Campus

With more and more college campuses shutting down due to the spread of COVID-19, many high school students' plans to attend campus tours during spring break are now up in the air. This is disappointing for families who were hoping to get a better sense of locations, settings, and student populations at their prospective schools.

It can also be stress-inducing because some colleges not only highly encourage visiting, but track what's called "demonstrated interest," or whether or not a student has somehow connected with a college to show they are seriously considering it. A campus visit is a powerful way to demonstrate interest, but it's not the only way (and certainly isn't the most affordable, practical, or—given our current situation—the safest). So, what can you do when campus visits aren't an option?

- ❖ **Fill out an interest form on the college's admission website:** this will put you on their email list and show that you want to learn more.
- ❖ **Interact with any emails from the college:** open the email, click a link within it, then spend some time on the school's website. Many colleges use software to track these interactions.
- ❖ **Attend virtual sessions and tours:** many colleges host online campus tours, chats, video presentations, and Q&As. You can find info about these on a school's admissions webpage.
- ❖ **Connect with colleges on social media:** you'll now find colleges, academic departments, and student ambassadors on apps like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube. Follow these accounts to stay informed and to show your interest.
- ❖ **Take advantage of visits to your high school or at regional information sessions** when admission representatives' travel schedules return to normal.
- ❖ **Write a great supplemental essay:** many colleges have extra essay questions within their applications that give you the opportunity to show that you're a great fit with the school and that you've done your research on its offerings.

Even if a college doesn't track demonstrated interest, it's important to replace your cancelled campus tour with some online research. Sites such as [CollegeBoard](#) and [Unigo](#) are great resources for getting a quick take on a school. Reviews on the latter are mostly written from the student's vantage point and lean towards brevity and unvarnished honesty. Once you've narrowed down your list and are ready to take a more focused dive into each school, head to their websites, starting with the admissions page, then move on to the academic pages, which will usually provide a list of majors and links to departments.

Finally, you'll notice that we do NOT suggest emailing admissions counselors with random questions as a form of demonstrating interest. Asking genuine questions that can't be answered on the college's website is fine, but "fluffy" emails have no impact on any part of the application. That's a myth we dispel daily.

We know changes in plans can be disappointing and upsetting, but remember there are plenty of ways to learn about colleges, interact with them, and show your interest without traveling.

[Reprinted and adapted from College Coach](#)

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