**The College Interview**

**Types of interviews**

“Evaluative” interviews are those for which notes taken during an interview become part of the evaluation of your application.

“Informational” interviews allow students to ask questions about the college, but the conversation never becomes a formal part of the admission process.

“Alumni” interviews can either be evaluative or informational. These interviews enable students to interview with alumni near their home town. It is important that students remember that the alum’s experience of the college may be very different than what the university offers currently.

**Why do colleges offer interviews?**

If you prepare well, interviews can be a very positive experience. It allows the admission reviewer to know you beyond your transcript, and it allows you to know the college better. When possible, interview with an admissions counselor and always interview on campus, in a public place, or at Chandler Prep Academy.

**How should I prepare?**

Know yourself, know the college, know what to ask and what may be asked of you. See list of sample questions below.

Colleges anticipate a certain level of nervousness, but try to relax and be yourself.

Arrive at the interview fifteen minutes before the scheduled appointment.

Talk to your peers who have experienced the interview process to gain valuable tips. College Counselors, Guidance Counselors, and family members can also help you prepare.

Bring a copy of your unofficial transcript and activities resume, if you have one.

Dress neatly and comfortably and maintain appropriate eye contact.

Be yourself! There are very few wrong answers – college representatives want to see how you think on your feet and want to see your personality come through. Remember, though, that interviewers are not your friends, so use appropriate language and manners at all times.

**Who will be my interviewer?**

You will usually meet with an admissions officer, but it may be a student, alum or professional interviewer. Treat each with respect – whether it is the Director of Admission or a student. Be relaxed, but don’t be too informal, even if you are meeting with a student.

**What do I do when I get to the interview site?**

Check in with the receptionist yourself (do not have a sibling or parent do so). Wait to be called. Meet the interviewer with a firm handshake and introduce your parents. Be prepared for an interview that could last as little as fifteen minutes and as long as an hour. Parents are usually asked to wait outside but may have an opportunity at the end of the interview to ask questions.

**How should I answer questions?**

There are no “right” answers – be honest and positive. THINK before answering, take your time—listen carefully.

Speak confidently without boasting. Phrase your comments in terms of accomplishments that mean the most to you. Also be willing to initiate conversation about your achievements if the interviewer fails to do so.

Be an advocate for yourself. If you know that the school is a reach school or if you have determined a weakness in your application, talk honestly and frame your conversation in a positive light.

Watch your language and avoid using too much slang. Use your best vocabulary while still sounding like yourself.

Know that colleges are hoping to find a good fit in you – they want you to succeed!

**What do I say when they ask me if I have questions for them?**

This is a very important part of the interview. It will indicate to the interviewer how much time and preparation you have put into the college selection process.

Don’t ask what is already stated in the literature, unless you need clarification.

Ask questions that allow you to bring up your accomplishments/talents.

**What do I do when the interview is over?**

Thank the interviewer and ask for his/her business card.

Send a thank you note to the interviewer – it can be typed or hand-written.

**Possible Interview Questions**

Describe your high school. What have you liked/disliked about your school?

What has been your most/least favorite academic subject and why?

How would your best friend/favorite teacher/parent describe you?

What are your strengths? What would you like to improve about yourself?

What majors are you considering at this point? What has led to that interest?

What courses are you taking in your Senior year and why?

What other colleges are you considering and why?

What are you looking for in a college and why?

How did you become interested in our university?

Tell me about your co-curricular activities.

What activity has meant the most to you during high school and why?

What is a significant contribution you have made to your school/community?

What can you contribute to our university?

What issues in the news do you care about?

**Questions to Ask College Representatives**

What are your strongest majors?

What are your criteria for admission? How important are grades, strength of curriculum, test scores, personal qualities?

What is the average class size? How accessible are the faculty members?

When do I have to declare a major? How easy is it to change majors? Is it more difficult to gain admission if I apply into a certain major (i.e. engineering, biology, business)?

Does your college have a required core curriculum?

What types of internship opportunities are available?

In your opinion, what are the strengths and weaknesses of your college?

What is diversity like on your campus (ethnic, religious, political, geographic, etc.)?

What other colleges do you cross applications with?

What support services are available (tutoring, career counselors, writing labs, personal counseling, support groups)?

How are Great Hearts Honors courses treated?

How many applications does your college receive? What is the acceptance rate?

What percentage of students comes back for their sophomore year (retention rate)?

Are courses taught by professors or teaching assistants?

What type of housing is available? Is housing guaranteed? What percentage of the student body lives on campus?

Do students stay on campus on the weekends?

What types of activities and sports does your college offer?

How safe is the campus? What are the incidents of crime on campus and in the surrounding community?

What are the current issues on campus?

Can I have a car on campus? Is a car necessary? How do students get around town?

What kind of annual traditions do your students celebrate?

Do you have application deadlines? Financial Aid deadlines?

What type of student does well here?