

ARIZONA  GEAR UP

**COLLEGE VISITS – 8TH GRADE**

**TOOLKIT**



## COLLEGE VISITS – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Year ♦ T O O L K I T

### PURPOSE

This Toolkit provides a checklist, inspiration, and sample documents to help plan and execute a successful college campus visit for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. College visits can help young students develop a college-going identity.

“A seven-year study of a college prep program for middle school students showed that “college visits were an integral part of the program. Students who went on a campus visit had more positive perceptions of college than those who did not.”

Radcliffe & Stephens, 2008

### OBJECTIVE

- Cultivate college-going aspirations and identities in 8<sup>th</sup> grade students
- Provide grade-appropriate information to students to help them prepare for entry to, and success in postsecondary education.
- Help students solidify their postsecondary plans

### STUDENT GRADE-LEVEL

College visits need to be age/developmentally appropriate. This toolkit is most relevant to schools and programs serving 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Generally, middle schools and junior high schools, as well as early intervention college access programs, can benefit from this toolkit.

### TARGET AUDIENCE FOR TOOLKIT

This toolkit is written for GEAR UP Coordinators. However, school counselors, school administrators, parent liaisons and other college access professionals – any one organizing college visits for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students – could potentially benefit from the information.

### TOOLKIT CONTENTS

- A checklist of steps to prepare for a college visit
- Ideas to make college visits engaging for 8<sup>th</sup> graders
- Sample Parent Letters
- Pre-Visit Survey and Student Prep activities
- On Campus Activities
- Post-Visit Survey and Debriefing Guide
- Sample College Tour Itineraries



## College Tour Preparation Checklist

This list attempts to capture the steps needed to prepare for a college visit that meets or exceeds GEAR UP's minimum standards.

### ONE - SIX MONTHS PRIOR TO YOUR EXPECTED COLLEGE VISIT DATE

- ☐ **Review your work plan and budget** related to college visits.
- ☐ **Review the Minimum Standards for College Visits.**  
As you plan your trip, make sure it meets, or exceeds, the standards.
- ☐ **Review this Toolkit** for inspiration and ideas to make your college visit as engaging, informative and effective as possible.
- ☐ **Call the college you plan to visit.**  
Find out their general rules and procedures for setting up a tour / visit, date/time options for 8th grade students, staff to student ratios guidelines, dining choices and payment options for food. If they offer only a "standard" tour and the presentation(s)/activities you want for your students are not included, ask how they can be arranged. (See sample tour agendas in this toolkit for ideas of what you might ask for.)
- ☐ **Meet with your principal/supervisor.**  
Review the workplan requirements and applicable district policies and procedures and discuss your plans. Applicable policies & procedures may include: required district paperwork, such as trip requests and POs, and deadlines, student permission forms/medical release forms, bus reservation procedures, rules for separating males and females on the bus or how chaperones are seated, payment procedures for meals, if applicable (note: some colleges provide free lunch), parent participation, student academic performance requirements for participation in field trips. See sample agenda for meeting with School Admin below.
- ☐ **Decide how many and which students will participate, ensuring equal opportunity, per the Standards.**  
Your Year 2 Workplan and Budget should provide guidance on the expected number of students to participate in each college tour this year, and whether any particular subset of students should be targeted for particular trips. **Tip:** Consider going into classes to talk about this trip or partner with a teacher who will announce this trip and review the goals of this trip so that students understand the expectations before they sign up to participate. A teacher might be willing to distribute and collect permission forms for you.



- ☐ **Ensure a clear and transparent method of selecting students and/or parents** for the trip, as required by the Minimum Standards.

If this is not your first trip, review your participation data, to ensure you are targeting students who have not yet participated in one first, to ensure meeting the minimum standards related to participation. **Tip:** If there are strict course grade requirements for students to participate in field trips, and there is little flexibility consider scheduling the trip early in the quarter when students have a greater chance of having eligible grades.

- ☐ **Set the date.**

Consider what you learned from the University when you spoke with them, review your school's and other calendars to select a date that does not conflict with holidays, religious observances or other major school events (athletics, drama, clubs, celebrations, etc.) Add to school calendar, if applicable. Complete necessary paperwork with the College to get on their calendar.

- ☐ **Reserve school bus(es)** per district policy.

Standard school buses typically fit about 45 passengers; however confirm with your transportation department.

- ☐ **Complete and submit all district paperwork** according to your district's policy and procedures.

- ☐ **Make arrangements for meals**, if needed.

Maximum allowable = \$8 per student for lunch; some colleges provide a free lunch. Depending on length of trip, arrange for water and healthy snacks for participants *en route*. Always save receipts.

- ☐ **Select chaperones** who are supportive of the GEAR UP goals.

Consider your Achieve Team members if available. Alumni of the college you are visiting are also a great option.

- ☐ **Submit event notification** form to the State Office at least one month prior to your tour date.

### ONE MONTH PRIOR TO YOUR COLLEGE VISIT

- ☐ **Inform parents** of the purpose and logistics of the trip and expectations for student behavior and invite their participation.

A sample, that could be attached to student permission forms, is included in this Toolkit.



## ONE TO TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO YOUR COLLEGE VISIT

- ☐ **Confirm final list of students attending the college visit**, and arrange to meet special needs.  
Collect permission slips and note any additional supplies you may need for the day of the event such as medications, and any special dietary needs or restrictions or handicap accessibility issues. Communicate special needs to the transportation provider, meal provider, and to the college.
- ☐ **Confirm date, logistics, and final participant list with your school/district office.**  
Based on your requests from the school/district consider calling the transportation department to ensure that the bus is reserved and the pick-up time and location is agreed upon, submitting the list of participants to the administration or attendance office, per their process and timelines, and/or confirming the number of school snacks/lunches the cafeteria will prepare.
- ☐ **Confirm date and logistics with the college.**  
Ask about entrances best for school buses, bus parking options, and parking passes; complete college-required documents and/or confirming catering orders.
- ☐ **Create and/or make copies** of any documents you want while on the college visit.  
For example, sign-in sheet, surveys, scorecards, student permission slips which may include emergency contact information, or other items in this toolkit.
- ☐ **Meet with students** who will be participating.  
You may meet with students individually, but preferably as a group, prior to the visit to distribute/ review the day's itinerary / agenda, outline expectations, and to have students complete the Pre-College Visit Survey (See Section 3 for a sample Pre-Visit Survey and Section 4 for a sample Campus Visit Prep Agenda). Note: Depending on the distance to the college, and the form of transportation, these activities could take place on the bus ride to or from the college.
- ☐ **Facilitate activities** with students prior to the campus visit that provide age-appropriate information about postsecondary institutions/degrees etc. (See Section 4). Note: Depending on the distance to the college, and the form of transportation, these activities could take place on the bus ride to or from the college.

## AFTER THE COLLEGE VISIT

- ☐ **Have students complete the Post-College Visit Survey.**  
See Section 3.



☐ **Facilitate a de-briefing.**

See sample post-campus visit de-briefing agenda in this toolkit. Note: Depending on the distance to the college, and the form of transportation, these activities could take place on the bus ride to or from the college.

☐ **Submit sign-in sheet** to the State Office.

☐ **Submit students' pre- and post-visit surveys** to State Office.

**OTHER SITE-SPECIFIC TASKS**

List below any other important steps not mentioned above that are needed at your school/district, or that you want to do, perhaps based on information in this toolkit.

☐☐☐



## Agenda Items for Meeting with School Admin prior to College Visit

- ✓ Remind Principal of Workplan Task related to College Visits and review Minimum Standards (participation and selection standards are particularly important for your principal to know as you start this conversation).
- ✓ Review College visit date options and policies (e.g., student to staff ratio) for the selected college, based on your conversation with the college.
- ✓ Discuss number of students that need to attend to be on track to meet GEAR UP minimum standard of one university trip and one community college trip per student.
- ✓ Discuss school policies regarding participation in field trips (e.g., are signed parent permission slips needed; are there policies about eligibility, based on grades for example or teacher permission, for participating in field trips). Discuss GEAR UP standard that all GEAR UP students participate in two college visits and discuss how this goal can be met if policies restrict student participation. If there are strict grade requirements consider planning one college visit very early in the quarter when students have a better chance of having eligible grades.
- ✓ Select a date and get it added to the school calendar
- ✓ Discuss parent participation as guests / chaperones – Discuss paperwork needed for parents to ride the bus with the students.
- ✓ Review school policies and procedures / required paperwork and deadlines (including, for example, rules for separating males and females on the bus or how chaperones are interspersed throughout the bus and required student travel forms).
- ✓ Review the process to reserve needed school buses.
- ✓ Discuss ways to select chaperones for the college trip who are supportive of the GEAR UP goals. Consider availability of Achieve Team<sup>1</sup> members. School staff who are alumni of the college you are visiting are also a great option.
- ✓ Discuss content of letters, (See samples in Section 1), which could perhaps be sent with permission forms.
- ✓ Resolve the plan for announcing this trip to students, using several different formats to ensure high participation and fairness. Discuss text messages, presenting in classes, school announcements, fliers, all-calls, social media, etc.
- ✓ Establish a fair, clear and transparent method of selecting students and/or parents for the trip in the event more people sign up than you have capacity for. E.g., is it first students to return their permission form (if so make sure they are returned in a manner that is easily recorded).
- ✓ Decide if a second meeting is needed and set a deadline for completing necessary tasks.

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<sup>1</sup> Achieve Teams are school personnel committed to ensuring the successful implementation of the GEAR UP work plan at each GEAR UP Partner school. The School Principal leads the team. For non-GEAR UP schools, Achieve Teams can be formed to work together to create a college- going culture and to improve student academic achievement (the same goals as the GEAR UP work plan).



## Ideas for making your 8th Grade College Visit Engaging and Informative

*The goal of college visits in eighth grade is to help students begin to develop a college-going identity, a sense that they are welcome on a college campus, they fit in and are comfortable there, and that, in fact, they “belong” in college. GEAR UP College visit standards require that all students participate in at least two college visits during the duration of the project. This is to ensure ALL students are provided an opportunity to envision themselves as potential college students. Listed below are some suggestions that can help you keep this purpose at the center of your trip. You know your students best so use these ideas for shaping the trip to meet the needs of your students.*

- 13-year-olds need to move! Expect them to squirm in a classroom and bump into people during a tour. Don't lecture them for more than 15 minutes. Consider incorporating a game as part of your presentations. Scavenger Hunt materials are included in this toolkit.
- 8th graders may not be familiar with college vocabulary. Review terms with them such as admission, financial aid, credit hours, majors, minors, and Greek life. This might be the first time many students hear these words. If your bus ride to the college is long, you can do some of this on the way.
- Read your students' pre-visit surveys before you've finalized all the details of your visit; and read post-visit surveys from prior college visits, if available. These surveys include great information from your students that can help you to ensure that, to the extent possible, student requests and questions are addressed and answered during the college visit.
- Communicate with the 8<sup>th</sup> grade school staff to get them on board with ways they can encourage, promote and connect the trip to curriculum in their classes.
- Have students write down one goal or question that they have for the trip – this will encourage your students to start thinking about the trip and will make sure that their questions are answered. (This is solicited on the Pre-Visit Survey for your convenience). Prompt students throughout the trip to ask their questions.
- Arrange the opportunity to talk to current college students while on your visit; this could be in the form of a student panel, or having students eat lunch with college students, etc. Try to find students who “look” like your students, perhaps former GEAR UP students, or alumni from your high school.
- When possible, arrange for students to observe an engaging college class for 15 minutes or so, and/or participate in a professor-led hands-on activity, to help your students see that college can be interesting and that college professors can be approachable (and even fun!)





- Tour a dorm room, student union, athletic facilities and/or dining hall – there is something for everyone!
- 8<sup>th</sup> grade year might be too soon to explain the FAFSA, but it can be a chance to let students know that there are several ways that students pay for college. Learning about the variety of scholarships available to pay for college – academic/merit, athletic, talent, competition, fun, can help students see how college can be more affordable for them!
- Take pictures and utilize social media to increase excitement about your trip! If you will use this idea, include a photo release in your permission slip packet to ensure you can use those photos on your website or school social media pages to promote future college visits, or to share GEAR UP events. (See sample photo releases in Section 2)
- As much as possible include something for everyone, by showing a variety of majors, by including high rigor academic options, trade programs, and art majors. If the school has ROTC opportunities, include that as part of your tour for interested students.



# SECTION 1

sample parent letters



## Sample Parent Letter 1

Purpose: to increase a parent's understanding of the importance of postsecondary education, to obtain permission for their child to participate in a college visit, and to invite the parent to the visit.

Dear Parent,

On [Date], we will be taking a group of 8th grade students to visit the campus of \_\_\_\_\_ University / College. We are excited to be able to provide this opportunity. **It is predicted that by the time your 8th grader graduates from high school, over 70% of jobs in Arizona will require some sort of post-high school degree or certificate.** Our hope is that this visit will allow students to experience various aspects of a college campus, learn the types of careers for which a college education is needed, and help them begin to imagine themselves going to college after high school. The tour will touch on many aspects of college life, including those listed below.

- **Residence life** – students will tour a dorm room and will hear from a current student about the positive aspects of dorm life.
- **College Academics** - students will get to observe a variety of college classroom settings – large lecture halls, smaller classrooms, laboratories and athletic facilities.
- **Dining Experience** - we will eat lunch on campus, alongside college students.
- **Financial Aid** – representatives from the Financial Aid Office will talk about how much college costs, the types of aid available to pay for it, and how to access that aid.

Please complete and return the attached permission slip no later than [Date] to allow your child to participate in this important event. It can be very powerful for students to have their parents tour the campus with them. If you are interested in attending this trip with your child, please indicate that on the permission form, so we can reserve a seat on the bus for you.

We will send another letter closer to the trip date to provide specific details. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

GEAR UP Coordinator

- Attachments:
    - **Permission Form** including information re: allergies, health needs, medications or accommodations)
    - **Photo Release** (*see Section 2 for sample*)
-

## Sample Parent Letter 2

Purpose: to provide parents with the logistical details of the College Visit their student in which their child is participating.

Dear Parent,

On **date** we will be taking a trip to \_\_\_\_\_ **College**. We will be leaving school at **departure time** and are expected to return to school at about **return time**. We cannot guarantee our arrival time so please be aware that it might change. Students will be able to call when we are nearing campus to arrange for pick up. Please make pick up arrangements for your child. **Please be aware of the following:**

- It will be **hot/cold** so make sure your child has any needed items **hat/sunscreen or jacket**
- Please make sure your child is dressed in casual and comfortable clothing with comfortable walking shoes and that they follow the school dress code
- Lunch will be provided. Your child may bring snacks and a water bottle.
- **Address anything that students need to bring or leave behind – e.g., please bring only a small bag with daily essentials, no heavy backpacks as there will not be room on the bus and we will be walking. Or, students must bring Discover Guide, writing utensil, water bottle, and snacks for the bus.**

Please feel free to call if you have any questions or concerns. We are looking forward to the success of this trip and appreciate your support and cooperation.

Thank you,

GEAR UP Coordinator

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# SECTION 2

sample photo release form



## Program Name or School Name

School/Program Information – address, phone number, email, website

### Photographic Release Form

I hereby give irrevocable permission for photographs and/or videos of my child,

Child's Full Name ↑

to be used by his/her school, the **name of program**, or their legal representatives, now and in the future. I further authorize **program name** to use my child's likeness, name and personal information (limited to age, school, and place of residence) in publications and reproductions (including the program's official website and social media sites), as well as for editorial, trade and advertising purposes. I understand that I will not receive any fee, now or in the future, for the use of my child's likeness. I grant the Photographer the right to alter and copyright the photographs and I release the Photographer and his/her legal representative and assign from all claims and liability relating to them.

Parent/Guardian Signature	
Signature ↑	Date ↑
Print Name ↑	







# SECTION 3

pre-visit and post-visit student surveys





## AZ GEAR UP College Visit Survey – PRE-VISIT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

College Visited Today: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Have you been on a college campus before? \_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_no

If yes, how many colleges have you visited? \_\_\_\_1 \_\_\_\_2 \_\_\_\_3 \_\_\_\_4 \_\_\_\_5 or more

2. Did your mother graduate from college? \_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_no \_\_\_\_don't know

Did your father graduate from college: \_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_no \_\_\_\_don't know

3. How do you feel about going to college?

\_\_\_\_\_ I expect to go to college.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to go to college, but don't know if I will be able to.

\_\_\_\_\_ I don't know how I feel about it.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not want to go to college, but I probably will anyway.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not want to go to college and I do not expect to go.

4. Write down one question you have about college that you want answered today:



## AZ GEAR UP College Visit Survey – POST-VISIT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

College Visited Today: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. After graduation from high school, would you consider attending this college?**

**Circle one: Yes      No**

**Why or Why not?**

**2. What colleges have you thought about attending?**

**3. What additional information do you need about getting into college?**

**4. Did you get an answer to the question you had about college that you wanted answered today?      Circle one: Yes      No**

**If yes, what was the answer?**



# SECTION 4

pre visit student preparation materials



## **SAMPLE Agenda for Pre-Visit Student Preparation**

**The goals of meeting with the students prior to a college campus visit is to:**

1. Generate interest and anticipation for the college visit.
2. Create a context for the visit to a college campus.
3. Clarify expectations for the visit.
4. Establish a connection between the students and staff they would see on campus.
5. Assess attitudes about college learning.

### **Pre-Visit Preparation Agenda**

- I. Overview of campus visit
  - ❖ Schedule for the day—what will happen
  - ❖ What to wear
  - ❖ What to bring or leave at home
  - ❖ Expectations for behavior
  - ❖ Explain use of College Score Card or other On-campus activities students will be doing on day of tour
- II. Play *College Knowledge* Game or College Mascot Game
- III. Distribute “pre-visit assignment if applicable
- IV. Administration of Pre-Visit Survey



## College Knowledge Game

### *Courtesy of the Evergreen State College GEAR UP Project Sample Pre-Campus Activity*

Instructions: *Three staff members (two competitors and one emcee to read the questions) are needed to play the game. The emcee reads the question and each competitor gives one of the two answers, hamming it up to try to get the students to vote for them, and to make it more fun. Students vote on which staff member they think gave the correct answer.*

**1. You will experience a lecture-style class when you visit campus. What can you expect to happen?**

Correct: A lecture is when a professor explains a topic and expects students to listen, take notes, and ask questions.

Incorrect: A lecture is when a college professor scolds a student for not turning in their homework.

**2. When you arrive on campus, you will see undergraduates going to class. What is an undergraduate?**

Correct: A college student who has not yet earned a college degree.

Incorrect: A college student who has graduated but is still attending classes.

**3. Most of the undergraduates you see on campus are studying for a degree that you can get in four or five years from a college or university. What is the name of that degree?**

Correct: Bachelor's degree.

Incorrect: Associate's degree.

**4. Well, that's nice but what's a degree?**

Correct: An academic title earned by a college student who has completed a course of study.

Incorrect: A unit of measurement that tells you how hot or cold it's going to be. Or, an academic title earned by a college student who has done something wrong. Haven't you heard of getting the third degree?

**5. Many (but not all) college professors have earned Ph.D.s. What is a Ph.D?**

Correct: A college degree called a Doctor of Philosophy

Incorrect: A college degree called a Doctor of Phundamentals or a Doctor of Phenomenology or a Physics degree or....?

**6. What is the proper way to address a college professor?**

Correct: If you know they have a Ph.D., then you should call them Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ (their last name)

Also correct: Call them Professor. That works whether or not they have a Ph.D.

Also correct: Call them what they ask you to call them. Some professors prefer first names.

**7. You will probably see a residence hall when you come to campus. What's a residence hall?**

Correct: A building that houses students who choose to live on campus in rooms or apartments.

Incorrect: A building on a college campus where faculty or staff live as artists-in-residence.

**Sample Online Scavenger Hunt**  
**Optional Pre-Visit Activity – courtesy of Washington GEAR UP**

Before our visit to: \_\_\_\_\_, you'll need to do some detective work. Start out by going to the college's website and answering the questions below.

1. In what town is the main campus located? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many students attend? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How much are tuition and fees for one year? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do they have on-campus housing (dorms)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. If so, how much does it cost for the year? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What are the school colors? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is the school mascot? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Names of two student clubs that I might be interested in joining:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Do they have fraternities and sororities? ☐ Yes ☐ No
10. What does it take to be admitted into this college?
  - What kinds of grades or GPA do I need to be admitted? \_\_\_\_\_
  - What classes do I need to take? \_\_\_\_\_
  - Do I need a standardized test like SAT or ACT? ☐ Yes ☐ No
  - If yes, which one(s) will the school accept? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Name three different majors offered at this college that are interesting:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_

12. What types of support services are offered?

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13. What kinds of degrees can you earn at this college? Check all that apply:

Associate's

Bachelor's

Master's

Doctorate

14. Is there a career center at this college? ☐ Yes ☐ No

15. If so, what kinds of services do they offer to students?

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Now that you've done your research, think about what you would like to gain from visit to the college. Give three answers for each question below.

What are some questions you'd like to ask students on campus?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

What are some questions you'd like to ask someone that works there?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

What parts of the campus would you most like to see and why?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## College Mascot Match Up

*A fun on-the-bus activity*

Draw lines to connect each school to its mascot / team.

Arizona State University

Aztecs

Arizona Western College

Bears

Central Arizona College

Cougars

Chandler-Gilbert Community College

Coyotes

Eastern Arizona College

Fighting Artichokes

Gateway Community College

Geckos

Northern Arizona University

Gila Monsters

Phoenix College

Lumberjacks

Pima Community College

Matadors

Scottsdale Community College

Roughriders

South Mountain Community College

Sun Devils

University of Arizona

Vaqueros / Vaqueras

Yavapai College

Wildcats

## ANSWER KEY

### College Mascot Match Up

Arizona State University	Sun Devils
Arizona Western College	Matadors
Central Arizona College	The Vaqueros / Vaqueras
Chandler-Gilbert Community College	Coyotes
Eastern Arizona College	Gila Monsters
Gateway Community College	Geckos
Northern Arizona University	Lumberjacks
Phoenix College	Bears
Pima Community College	Aztecs
Scottsdale Community College	Fighting Artichokes
South Mountain Community College	Cougars
University of Arizona	Wildcats
Yavapai College	Roughriders



# SECTION 5

sample on-campus activities



## MY CAMPUS SCORE CARD

**Instructions:** As you tour the college campus, figure out your answers to the following questions, through observing, interacting, and asking questions.

Any campus with 3 or more “No” scores probably isn’t a good fit for you.

**Name of College:** \_\_\_\_\_

Yes      No

☐      ☐

**Is the staff friendly?**

*When you talk with college staff, are they cheerful and helpful or rude and impatient? Do you get the feeling they are interested in you or couldn’t care less? Would you really want to deal with these people on a regular basis?*

Yes      No

☐      ☐

**Is the campus the right size for you?**

*How do you feel about the number of students—too many, too few, or just right? Do you feel energized, lost in space, crowded, or cozy?*

Yes      No

☐      ☐

**Does the campus feel right for you?**

*How extensive are the resources in the library, student center or student union, bookstore, health center, gym, and career placement center? Check out the classrooms. Would you enjoy being on a campus like this?*

Yes      No

☐      ☐

**Do the students feel right for you?**

*What are the students like? Do they seem happy, bored, or stressed? Where do they come from? Are they diverse or all the same? What are they talking about? Do they care more about school or sports? Do you want to hang out with these people for four years?*

Yes      No

☐      ☐

**Are the campus activities a good fit for you?**

*The school newspaper, along with flyers posted around campus and in the student center, will tell you what these students focus on, what activities exist outside class, and which are most popular. Are you OK with the number and variety of activities? Do you see things you would like to do?*

Yes      No

☐      ☐

**Is the surrounding community a good fit for you?**

*What are the people like in the town? Is it too small or too large? What activities are available there (food, movies, malls, concerts, bowling, skiing, etc.)? Would you really like to live in a place like this?*



## **Sample On-Campus Activity**

Give students a list of questions, such as those on the next page, to get answers to as they tour the campus. Consider giving items from that college, such as a t-shirt, a pennant, a cap, etc. for the students who get the most answers right. This will get students to truly engage (ask questions and listen to answers throughout the tour). Of course, you must modify the questions based on the college you are visiting.

# FIND ANSWERS TO ALL YOUR COLLEGE QUESTIONS

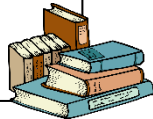


## At the University Health Clinic:

What happens if I get sick at school?  
What does it cost to visit the clinic?

## At the Library:

What are the hours that the library is open?  
Where are the study areas?



## At the Fitness Center/Student Athletic Center:

Do students have to pay extra to use the Fitness Center?  
What are the hours?  
Are there intramural sports or other athletic clubs?  
What kind of different clubs and organizations are there on campus?  
Do students get football tickets? How?  
What are some major student events that happen on campus?



## At the Food Court/Cafeteria:

How do I pay for my meals?

## At the Admissions Building:

If I were to enroll here, what exactly is included in the cost of tuition?  
Where and how do I pay my tuition and fees?  
How do students register for classes?  
What kind of tutoring and academic support is offered?  
Can students talk to the professors if they need help?  
How do I receive my grades?



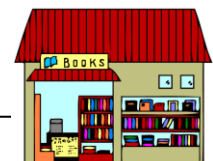
## At the dorms:

What happens if I don't get along with my roommate?  
Can freshmen live off campus?  
What exactly do the resident advisors do?  
Do a lot of students live on campus?  
Where do people hang out?  
Can I have a car on campus?  
Are there shuttles around campus or to off-campus locations? What's the cost?  
What do students usually do on the weekend?  
What do I need to bring for my dorm room?



## At the University Bookstore:

How much do books cost?  
What other services are available at the bookstore, other than books?  
Do they offer electronic books?







# SECTION 6

## Sample post-visit activities



## Sample Agenda for Post-Campus Visit De-Briefing with Students

**The goal of debriefing with the students after a college campus visit is to:**

- Maximize what students' "take away" from the tour.
- Reinforce students' enthusiasm for college.
- Address concerns students might have about college.
- Assess attitudes about college, for future use during PEPS.

### Post-Visit Debriefing Agenda

- I. Recognize students for behavior during visit
- II. Facilitate Discussion of students' observations and impressions
  - a. Questions might include: what did you like best?
  - b. What surprised you?
  - c. What did you think when the Student on the panel said X?
  - d. What did you think of the dorm room?
  - e. Can you imagine walking from class to class across campus like that? Do you think when you schedule your classes you have to think about how far apart they are to make sure you can get from one to the next on time?
  - f. What did you think of the lab we observed?
  - g. Were the professors we met what you thought professors would be like?
  - h. Did you notice anything about the college students walking around and sitting around campus? Did they seem happy? Stressed? Did they look friendly?
  - i. Were there questions that came to mind while we were there that you didn't get a chance to ask? Maybe I can answer them.
- III. Review any of the "facts" on the next page that are relevant/seem important based on your experience with the students on the tour
- IV. Facilitate discussion of students' College Score Card results
- IV. Administer Post-Visit Surveys

## GEAR UP College Trip -- Follow Up Facts

Coordinators: Below are a list of “facts” that may have come up during the college visit. Helping students reflect on these may assist them in college planning and preparation.

- Today we visited a {university/community college/technical school}. We use the term “college” to refer to trade school, community college, and university. If this type of school didn’t seem right for you or for what you want to study, it is likely that one of the other types will work for you. So don’t discount or ignore “college information” in the future because you think it doesn’t apply to you.
- Your high school GPA does matter – for both getting into college and getting scholarships to pay for it. Strive to get the highest grades possible. If you need help with classes see your GEAR UP Coordinator for helpful suggestions and tutoring info.
- Attendance matters! If you’re not in school, it’s hard to get good grades, which impacts your GPA, which impacts your chances of both getting into the college of your choice and the availability of scholarships to help pay for it. If you have to miss a day, be sure to talk to your teacher about what you missed, and make up any work.
- If you plan to attend an AZ University make sure to take the “Sweet 16” while in high school.



- Investigate, research, observe, and try – Get involved in middle and high school; try out different clubs, activities, and new skills. This is the best way to find out what you enjoy doing and the areas in which you excel. And that awareness will help you first pick the right college, then succeed in that college and ultimately can lead to great personal satisfaction throughout your career life!
- If the college you visited wasn’t attractive to you, don’t worry as there are thousands of colleges in the U.S. We want you to find the one that best fits you! {I’ll be hosting a College Fit Workshop later this year. In this workshop students will review those things that they are looking for in a college so they can be sure to find one that best fits their needs.}
- If you’re not sure whether college is right for you, talk to me or your counselor about the many options and opportunities for your future



# SECTION 8

sample college visit itineraries





## Sample College Visit Itinerary 1

College Visit Itinerary for \_\_\_\_\_ University

Date of Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

8:00am	Meet in front of school for attendance check and bus loading
8:15am-9:15am	Travel Time – If you have a long ride, use the time to review expectations for behavior, schedule for the day and remind students of the questions they want answered, based on their pre-visit surveys.
9:15am	Arrive On Campus
9:15am -11:15am	Tour Campus including all major buildings – library, dorm room, student union, financial aid office, admissions, multicultural /first gen/student services center, athletics, and academic departments (Consider “Scavenger Hunt” format, described later in this toolkit). If you can pre-arrange to have a representative from each building you stop at talk to your students about what they do and why students need to know about their services and location, that would be ideal for 8th graders)
11:15-11:30	Walk to Dining Hall/Restrooms
11:30am-12:30pm	Lunch in Dining Hall
12:30pm-1:30pm	Classroom Observation or Activity (if you can arrange ahead of time for an engaging (energetic) professor to set up an activity for your students, that would be ideal for 8th graders; otherwise, try to arrange to stop into a classroom for 15 minutes or so, a lab for 15 minutes and a PE class for 15 minutes. 8th graders are too young to be expected to sit in a lecture hall for a full 50 minutes or an hour.
1:30pm-2:00pm	Interact with current college students (A panel of students – perhaps alumni from your area; GEAR UP Graduates who served as Guides, etc.
2:00pm	Load Buses for trip home
2:15pm- 3:30pm	Bus ride home – fill out post trip survey. Use the time to debrief with students.

## Sample College Visit Itinerary 2

### College Visit Itinerary for Arizona State University

Date of Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 8:15  | Depart School   |
| 11:00 | Multicultural Center Welcome (15 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What resources do you offer? Why should a GEAR UP student come here?</li></ul>  |
| 11:15 | Center of Campus Tour led by Phi Sigma Nu members, a Native American Fraternity-include Memorial Union & Library (30 min.)  |
| 11:45 | Visit a Dormitory with Mary C. (CHHS GEAR UP Grad) (15 min.)  |
| 12:00 | Lunch with GEAR UP Grads attending ASU (45 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Initial introduction/story, followed by interactive small group discussions</li><li>- Sponsored by the Office of Dr. Zah, Special Advisor to the President on American Indian Affairs</li></ul>             |
| 12:45 | Walk to class in small groups from lunch w/ ASU students / GU Grads   |
| 1:00  | Classroom Experience- (45 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Engineering, Humanities &amp; Social Science Options <i>(Note: these are special presentations arranged for in advance, with each department, just for our students; not sitting in on actual college classes)</i></li></ul> |
| 2:00  | Walk to Athletic Center Tour (15 minutes)   |
| 2:15  | Presentation by Admissions (10 min. + 10 min. for questions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Interactive (sample essay review/personal transcript review)</li></ul>   |
| 2:35  | Presentation by Financial Aid (10 min. + 10 min. for questions) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Interactive (complete part of FAFSA/review of sample Financial Aid package)</li></ul>   |
| 2:55  | Back to Bus   |

This was the itinerary for an AZ GEAR UP school in 2009 serving primarily Native American students.

## Sample College Visit Itinerary 3

College Visit Itinerary for \_\_\_\_\_ University

Date of Trip: \_\_\_\_\_

9:30	<b>Arrive on College Campus</b>	PARKING LOT X
9:30-10:00	<b>Welcome to College</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> LOCATION
10:15-10:45	<b>Introduction to Ways College Students Learn: Lecture</b> <b>“My Free Speech or Yours?”</b> - José Gómez, J.D., Law	2 <sup>nd</sup> LOCATION
11:00-11:30	<b>Introduction to Ways College Students Learn: Small Group Sessions/Labs</b> <b>“Skeletons in the Closet”</b> Nancy Cordell, Ph.D. Anthropology	LOCATION 3
	<b>“HIStory, HERstory, or WHOSE Story?”</b> Gery Gerst, Ed.D candidate., Education	LOCATION 4
	<b>“Fun with Chemistry”</b> Dharshi Bopegedera, Ph.D., Physical Chemistry	LOCATION 5
	<b>“Art and Politics”</b> Lee Hoemann, B.A., Political Science	LOCATION 6
	<b>“To Write Right, Write Right!”</b> Emily Decker Lardner, Ph.D., English	LOCATION 7
11:30-12:00	<b>Lunch</b>	
12:15-1:30	<b>Introduction to Ways College Students Live: Campus Tour</b>	COLLEGE
1:30-1:40	<b>Return to Bus</b>	PARKING LOT X

*This is a sample agenda from Evergreen State College GEAR UP’s seventh grade campus visits. They hosted 6-7 campus visits each year. Although each agenda followed the same basic structure, individual lecturers and small group presenters were different for each visit (as shown on the Topics list below). A videographer (college student in a related major) shot video footage throughout the morning. While the students ate lunch (12:15 to 12:40), the videographer quickly edited the footage to create a fun, short video montage of the day, including slo-mo’ing and fast-mo’ing some of the scenes, playing short scenes in forward & reverse, etc.*

## Evergreen State College GEAR UP College Visit Lectures and Small Group Topics

### Lecture Examples:

- “Toto, I Don’t Think We’re in Kansas Anymore: Sea Monsters of the Niobrara Sea”  
Amy Cook, Ph.D.,\* Biological Sciences
- “Why is it So Hard to Get a War to End?”  
Helena Meyer-Knapp, Ph.D., Interdisciplinary Political Studies
- “What *Krispy Kremes* & Government Have in Common (And Why You Should Care)”  
Cheryl Simrell King, Ph.D., Public Administration
- “Dance as Sustainability” – Kabby Mitchell III, M.F.A., Dance
- “Who Rules: Friends, Family, Teachers, MTV?” – Sonja Wiedenhaupt, Ph.D., Psychology
- “How the Banjo Became White” – Sean Williams, Ph.D., Ethnomusicology
- “Relics and Reliquaries” – Lisa Sweet, M.F.A., Printmaking
- “My Free Speech or Yours?” – José Gómez, J.D., Law
- “Playing With Germs That Kill Germs: Using Bacteriophage As Antibiotics”  
Betty Kutter, Ph.D., Biophysics
- “Matters Close to the Heart: Native Women, the Pen, and the Power of Voice”  
Frances Rain, Ph.D., Curriculum & Instruction/Curriculum Theory/Multicultural Education –  
Elementary Education

### Small Group, Interactive Session Examples:

- “Rainforest Insects: The Little Things That Run the World” – Jack Longino, Ph.D., Zoology
- “And the Password is...Word Fun” – Sandy Yannone, Ph.D., English
- “Fun With Science” – Dharshi Bopegedera, Ph.D., Physical Chemistry
- “Dance Me A Story” – Ratna Roy, Ph.D., English
- “1, 4, 5: Fundamentals of Music & Life” – Les Purce, Ed.D., Counselor Education
- “Fitness for Everyone” – John Barbee, B.S., Human Service Studies
- “What Goes Up, Must Come Down” – Vauhn Wittman-Grahler, M.S., Mathematics
- “Medieval High Tech: Inventions from the Middle Ages” – Susan Preciso, M.A., English
- “Paper, Candy & Firecrackers: Who Gave Them to Europe?” – Steve Niva, Ph.D., Political Science
- “What Do You Know About the Food that You Eat?” – Lori Blewett, Ph.D., Speech Comm.
- “Animation Before Movies” – Ruth Hayes, M.F.A., Experimental Animation
- “So You Think You Speak English? English From The Middle Ages” – Magda Costantino, Ph.D.,  
Curriculum and Instruction
- “To Write Right, Write Right!” – Emily Decker Lardner, Ph.D., English
- “Stinging Cells” – Erik Thuesen, Ph.D., Biological Sciences
- “Skeletons in the Closet” – Nancy Cordell, Ph.D., Anthropology
- “HIStory, HERstory, or WHOSE Story?” – Gery Gerst, M.Ed., Education
- “The Mind’s Eye: Making Images and Words” – Rita Pougiales, Ph.D., Anthropology
- “Right in Front of Your Nose: Looking up Close” – Paul Przybylowicz, Ph.D., Plant Pathology

*\*Academic credentials were deliberately included in the agendas to help teach students about baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral degrees.*

## **8<sup>th</sup> Grade College Campus Scavenger Hunt**

From [educationquest.org](http://educationquest.org)

*With this activity, students will learn more about a college campus and how to navigate finding the right campus when it's time to apply to college.*

### **Instructions for Teachers:**

Make sure you can help students through the scavenger hunt and ensure they are respectful when asking to take pictures. Remember, we want students to learn more about a college campus, so give hints, not the answer!

Shortly after your 8<sup>th</sup> graders complete the campus visit, open a Google doc for students to upload campus visit pictures and explain what is going on in the picture. Or students can create a collage with the different photos they took and explain their experience to the class.

Enjoy and have a great campus visit!

*See student instructions on the next page.*

Get to know the college campus you visit with this fun scavenger hunt!

**A few rules to tame your eager 8<sup>th</sup> graders while on a campus visit:**

- **Do not run in the hallway**
- **Do not scream when classes are in session**
- **Be RESPECTFUL - say thank you and please**
- **If a college student is in a hurry-let them go, there are more students to take pictures with or ask questions**
- **If you need help finding a building, politely ask an adult or student to guide you**

**Instructions:**

When visiting each of these places during the scavenger hunt, take pictures either in front of the building or the person you talked with.

Remember to be respectful, have fun, and learn lots!  
Now ready, set, go!

- A place where you can enjoy variety of food, three times a day- **Dining Hall**
- A place where you can find jobs that fit your career interest- **Career Center**
- A picture with a student (be sure to ask them about their experience at the school)
- A place where books are housed
- Something that made you think, like a quote etched on a building
- A bulletin board with flyers (use this to remember what types of activities are offered)
- Something fun to do on campus, like a game room or indoor rock wall
- Where experts on how to pay for college work **Financial Aid Office**
- A place where you can schedule a campus visit when you are looking at different colleges.  
This can be a group picture of everyone as most tours end where they started, at the **Admissions Office**.