



NEW MEXICO
SIMON SCHOLARS

Tips for Getting the Most out of College Fairs

A college fair is a large, free event at which admissions representatives from many different colleges and universities gather to represent their schools, meet prospective students, and answer their questions. Each college representative has a table or booth with information about their particular institution. A good example of a college fair that Simon Scholars typically attend and benefit from is the [Colleges That Change Lives \(CTCL\) college fair](#), which comes to Albuquerque every other year. The purpose of a college fair is for you to learn more about schools that may be of interest to you, to meet and begin cultivating relationships with admissions representatives from those schools, and also to sign up for mailings and further information from those schools.

Here are some suggestions to help you get the most out of a college fair:

1. Use your time at the fair effectively:

- Review the "site map" so you know where to find the schools that most interest you
- Visit those schools that interest you most *first*
- Bring something to write on/with so you can jot down notes as you go. You'll be getting a LOT of information and it can be difficult to keep it all straight!
- Leave time to visit with representatives of other schools that seem interesting to you
- You do NOT need to stay for the whole fair: these events are set up for students to "drop in" and stay as long as they wish/find helpful

2. Remember that first impressions matter:

- Introduce yourself to the admissions rep (you may want to mention the high school you go to, as well as being a Simon Scholar)
- Keep in mind that the admissions rep you meet is likely the New Mexico representative for that particular college – *a person who will play a direct role in the review of your application!*
- Ask a question or two!
- If you are certain that you intend to apply to a particular school, let the admissions rep know that, and discuss the possibility of setting up an interview
- Thank the admissions rep for their time!

3. Some potential questions to ask an admissions rep (*this is not an exhaustive list of questions; there are so many great questions you could ask*):

- What would you say makes your college unique?
- How would you describe the community at your college? What kinds of people go there? Where do most of them come from?



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- How many students at your college identify as *first generation*?
- Are there any scholarships or considerations specifically for students from New Mexico?
- What academic programs is your college most known for? What are the most popular majors?
- How would you describe the location of your college? Is it in a big city? Nearby one? In a more rural area? How safe does the surrounding area feel?
- What kinds of study abroad opportunities exist at your college? What proportion of students study abroad?
- Are there internship/work/volunteer opportunities in the local community? Do many students participate in these sorts of activities?
- What are some of the most popular extracurricular activities and/or sports on campus?
- Are freshman required to live on campus? Do many students live off campus?
- What is the total number of students? Are there grad students as well?
- What is the *largest* class offered at your college?
- Is it easy to get around? What is the public transportation like (if any)?
- How would most students describe the academic pressure/workload at your college? How competitive does it feel?
- What support services are available for incoming freshmen?
- What is the faculty like? How accessible are they outside of class?
- Are there any big changes planned at your college that would be good to know about?