

OTHER TIPS FOR MAKING A COLLEGE SEARCH A REWARDING EXPERIENCE

Here are some simple, practical tips.

1. **Check out the program website** of the colleges of your choice. Some have photos of the facilities; some list the current team roster showing class rank; some show team practice schedules and times, and competition information.
2. **Contact the program coach** to let him/her know you are interested in applying or that you have applied. Sometimes the coach may be able to give your application 'weight' if your acceptance is in jeopardy.
3. **Speak with fencers** already in the program. Speak with the parents of those fencers to hear their experiences of pre-acceptance 'courtship' and how it compares to the post acceptance reality for both the fencer and the parents.
4. **If the school does not offer scholarships**, contact the Financial Aid office for an appointment to plan the next 4 years.

5. **Visit the school** during regular session. Sit in on some classes - get a feel for the atmosphere of the college/university as a whole. Make sure you can spend the next 4 years in that space. After all, you will be there that long for a very important reason: your college degree.

6. **Monitor your own grades and test scores.** Know what grades/test scores are within the necessary range for acceptance to all of the schools you are interested in. Work hard to "make the grade". Fencing alone may not get you into the school of your dreams!

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

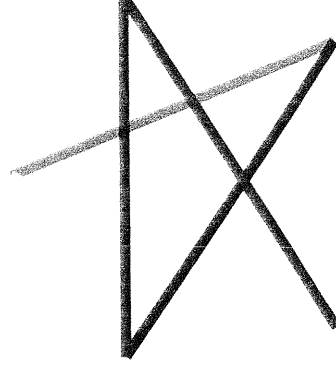
NETWORK: The best thing for you to do is to talk to other fencers and parents who are going through the same process. Share your findings about schools and programs.

- See if your club has a college info file. If not, ask to start one.
- Talk to your club coach(es) about their knowledge or opinion on college programs and coaches.
- Go and watch college dual meets. (Most have schedules on their website). Watch how the team members interact with each other and with the coach. Could you visualize yourself among them? Have your parents talk to the parents that may be there watching their sons or daughters.
- Remember, the interviewing process works both ways. You want to be happy with your choice.

UNITED STATES FENCING ASSOCIATION



QUESTIONS EVERY COLLEGE BOUND FENCER SHOULD ASK



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Many factors play a part in choosing which college a high school senior will apply to and choose to attend. These factors become more complex if the student is an athlete and perhaps even more complex still if that student is an athlete of a sport other than one of the popular mainstream sports.

The best tool to help fencers and their parents navigate some of these complexities is **knowledge**:

- **knowledge of what general NCAA information they need;**
- **knowledge of how to get that information;**
- **knowledge of which questions to ask of each fencing program.**

#1 What Do I Need to Know?

‘WHY DOESN’T THE COACH TALK TO ME?’

Every fencer and their parents should be familiar with the NCAA regulations on pre-acceptance communication between college/university fencing program staff members and the prospective student/fencer.

- At which grade level can a coach contact a prospective fencer?
- How many contacts are allowed?
- Can the coach talk to the fencer on a day he/she is competing?

- Can the fencer ‘initiate’ contact?
- What does the fencer need to know about the NCAA Clearinghouse?
- What is an official visit? an unofficial visit? Are there limits on each?
- What and when is quiet period; dead period?
- Can a fencer be penalized if a coach violates the contact limitations?
- Who may approach the fencer/parent/guardian from the university fencing program?

#2 Where Can I Find Out?

‘BEST SOURCES’

The 3 best sources for current information on NCAA, contact regulations are:

- WWW.NCAA.ORG
- School Counselors
- University NCAA compliance officers

#3 What Do I Ask the Coach?

‘TOP QUESTIONS TO ASK’

Here is a list of the top questions fencers and their parents need to ask of each of the college/university fencing programs they are interested in.

1. Does your school have Early Decision; Early Action; Early Acceptance? What is it? How can it benefit me? Is it binding?
2. When are the deadlines for both the early and regular applications?
3. What is an official visit? Does your school offer them? May I visit on my own? May I request a fencer-host for my visit? Is there a fee?
4. Can an incoming freshman participate on the team right away?
5. What equipment is provided to incoming fencers? Will I have to buy/provide my own gear?
6. Are there any expenses that I will incur as part of being on the fencing team? Will I have to pay for travelling with the team to NCAA meets?
7. Will I be able to go to USFA/FIE meets? At who’s cost?
8. Will I get lessons with the staff? How often?
9. As a Varsity Athlete, am I entitled to free academic tutoring if I need it? What are other benefits of being a Varsity Athlete at your school?
10. What if practice is at the same time as a class I need?
11. Are practices on campus or off-campus? If off-campus, how do I get there?
12. How many hours each week will I need to dedicate to training (running, weights, etc...) and Fencing?
13. How important is my overall grade/test score record in getting me into this school? Can my fencing ability/record be the main emphasis of my acceptance if my grades are not up to the school requirements?