

## Questions to Ask as YOU Consider Colleges

You may want to ask your prospective college coaches the following questions as you consider colleges.

### Athletics

1. What positions will I play on your team? It is not always obvious. Most coaches want to be flexible, so you might not receive a definite answer.
2. What other players may be competing at the same position? The response could give you an idea of when you can expect to be a starter.
3. Will I be redshirted my first year? The school's policy on redshirting may impact you both athletically and academically.
1. What is the cut/no cut policy for freshmen.
2. What expectations do you have for training and conditioning? This will reveal the institution's commitment to a training and conditioning program.
3. How would you best describe your coaching style? Every coach has a particular style that involves different motivational techniques and discipline. You need to know if a coach's teaching style matches your learning style.
4. When does the head coach's contract end? How long does the coach intend to stay? The answer could be helpful. Do not make any assumptions about how long a coach will be at a school. If the coach leaves, does this change your mind about the school/program?
5. What are preferred, invited and uninvited walk-on situations? How many do you expect to compete? How many earn a scholarship? Situations vary from school to school.
6. Who else are you recruiting for my position? Coaches may consider other student-athletes for every position.
7. Is medical insurance required for my participation? Is it provided by the college? You may be required to provide proof of insurance.
8. If I am seriously injured while competing, who is responsible for my medical expenses? Different colleges have different policies in place.
9. What happens if I want to transfer to another school? You may not transfer without the permission of your current school's athletics administration. Ask how often coaches grant this privilege and ask for an example of a situation in which permission was not granted.
10. What other factors should I consider when choosing a college? Be realistic about your athletics ability and the type of athletics experience you would enjoy. Some student-athletes want to be part of a particular athletics program, even if that means little or no playing time. Other considerations include coaching staff and style. Of course, the ideal situation is to choose a college or university that will provide you with both the educational and athletics opportunities you want.

### Academics

1. How good is the department in my major? How many students are in the department? What credentials do faculty members hold? What are graduates of the program doing after school?

2. What percentage of players on scholarship graduate? The response will suggest the school's commitment to academics. You might want to ask two follow-up questions:
  - o What percentage of incoming students eventually graduate?
  - o What is the current team's grade-point average?
3. What academic support programs are available to student-athletes? Study hall, etc. Look for a college that will help you become a better student.
4. If I have a diagnosed and documented disability, what kind of academic services are available? Special academic services may help you achieve your academic goals.
5. How many credit hours should I take in season and out of season? It is important to determine how many credit hours are required for your degree and what pace you will follow to obtain that degree.
6. Are there restrictions in scheduling classes around practice? NCAA rules prevent you from missing class for practice.
7. Is summer school available? If I need to take summer school, will it be paid for by the college? You may need to take summer school to meet academic and/or graduation requirements.

### **College Life**

1. What is a typical day for a student-athlete? The answer will give you a good idea of how much time is spent in class, practice, study and travel. It also will give you a good indication of what coaches expect.
  2. What are the residence halls like? The response should give you a hint of how comfortable you would be in your room, in study areas, in community bathrooms and at the laundry facilities. Also ask about the number of students in a room, co-ed dorms and the rules governing life in the residence halls.
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1. Must student-athletes live on campus? If "yes," ask about exceptions.

### **Financial Aid Information**

From the Renegade home page, select the "College Financial Aid" folder for links to numerous websites discussing important federal and state financial aid resources.

Your financial need is calculated based on information you and your parents report on a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) about your family's income and assets. All colleges require the FAFSA to determine your level of need and eligibility for several major state and federal aid programs.

Applying online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) is the best way to file a FAFSA. You are less likely to make errors because your answers are edited automatically. Another bonus is you will receive your financial aid report up to two weeks faster than if you file a paper FAFSA. You can get a paper FAFSA from high school counselor offices or college financial aid offices. A paper FAFSA is also available by calling the U.S. Department of Education toll free 1-800-433-3243.

The BEST source of information about student financial aid you may qualify for is the financial aid office at the school you plan to attend. Check with a financial aid officer to make sure you've completed all required applications and be sure to meet the school's deadlines.

Don't rule out a school because you think you can't afford it. Depending on financial aid packages offered to you, it's possible for you to pay the same amount to attend a more expensive college as you'd pay to go to a less expensive school. Get up-to-date cost information directly from the school you plan to attend.

**Financial Aid Checklist** (*Print and check things off as you complete them*)

\_\_\_ Urge your parents to complete federal tax forms as early as possible. Financial information from your parents' return and your own income tax return will be used to file the FAFSA. Make sure to keep a copy of each completed tax return. Filing early helps you get in line for any free financial aid grants, typically awarded on a first-come, first-served basis until funds are exhausted.

\_\_\_ File the FAFSA as soon as possible after Jan. 1st. Students who file a FAFSA by March 15th to have the best chance to get all the aid they may qualify for. However, some schools have priority deadlines before March 15th, so be sure to check with your school's financial aid office. Your information will be forwarded to the schools you list on the FAFSA.

\_\_\_ If you file a paper FAFSA, make sure it is filled out completely and legibly. You would hate to miss out on financial aid because someone couldn't read your form!

\_\_\_ Don't limit your options on financial aid. Check that you are interested in student loans and work study options. You can always reject them later, but checking them will ensure you are considered for every type of financial help. If you apply for a Stafford Loan (by checking yes to item 27 on the FAFSA), you will get additional forms and instructions after your FAFSA has been processed.

\_\_\_ Keep a copy of every financial aid form you complete. Put it in a file along with your college applications and catalogs.

\_\_\_ Contact the financial aid offices of schools you are considering for additional financial aid application forms and deadlines.

\_\_\_ Each school you list on the FAFSA will consider you for financial aid and will notify you of its decision in late spring or early summer.

\_\_\_ Financial aid awarded by companies and organizations often requires a special application. Contact them to get the form(s) and any other requirements.

Financial Aid Package Evaluation Chart

College Name College Name College Name

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Need Calculation  
Total Cost of Attendance (varies by school)  
Minus expected family contribution (remains the same)  
Equals Financial Need  
Financial Aid Package  
Federal Pell Grant  
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)  
State Grant  
Other Grants  
Scholarships  
Federal Work-Study  
Federal Perkins Loan  
Federal Subsidized Stafford Loan  
Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loan  
Federal PLUS Loan  
Other Loans  
Other Aid  
Total Financial Package

## Sample Introductory Contact Email

Coach Last Name,

My name is Xxxx Xxxxx. I am in my junior year, class of 200X, at Xxxxxxx High School which is located in Pennsylvania. I play position for XHS and my tournament club team the club team name.

I have recently started my college search and Xxxxxxx University is high on my list of choices. I am a hard working and dedicated student-athlete who wishes to continue playing lacrosse at the college level, and hope to do so at a program like Xxxxxxxx. I have enclosed a brief attachment which outlines my personal, academic and lacrosse information. *(use profile template or summarize info within the email)*

Please send me information regarding the Xxxxxxx lacrosse program, school admissions requirements or any other helpful information. I look forward to learning more about Xxxxxxx University.

Good luck in the upcoming season. Let me know if there is anything else I can provide. Thank you for considering me for your team.

Sincerely,

***Sign Your Name***

Type Your Name

## Sample Follow-up and/or Sample schedule Email

Coach Last Name,

I am writing to inform you of my continued interest in play lacrosse for Xxxxxxx University.

I am enclosing a copy of my (spring or summer) schedule. My coach's contact numbers are also included on the schedule.

Sincerely,

***Sign Your Name***

Type Your Name