

# MALONE CENTER FOR CAREER ENGAGEMENT

## GRADUATE SCHOOL VISIT GUIDE

### WHY VISIT?

- Great way to learn about the institution and where it is located
- Talk with professors to find out about opportunities for research and mentorship
- Potential to attend a class session and meet or shadow current students
- Learn about the surrounding community- life doesn't just exist on campus

### WHEN SHOULD YOU VISIT?

- Visits can happen before or after you apply or are accepted
- Some programs provide open houses prior to applying which can give you a chance to learn more
- If you are invited for an interview, take advantage of your time there to ask further questions

### GRADUATE SCHOOL VISIT TIPS

- Work with the school to schedule your visit—start with the graduate admissions staff
- Take advantage of tours provided by the institution—but also tour independently to explore
- Prepare a list of questions beforehand and keep a notebook with you (see back for sample questions)
- Try to schedule (or have the school set up) a time to talk with people prior to your visit like faculty, advisors, career services, and current students
- Treat it like an interview—do your research and be prepared. Make sure you know about the institution, faculty, and research areas prior to your visit. Think about your academic, professional and personal goals, where you see yourself in the next five years, and your reasons for pursuing graduate study. Be prepared to discuss these things with faculty and staff that you meet on your visit.

### FOLLOW UP

- Send thank-you notes soon after (24-48 hours) your visit to professors, students and staff you met with. Make sure to get their contact information and/or business cards during the visit
- You can have the thank you notes stamped, addressed, and ready to go when you arrive on campus
- Email thank you notes are great as well.
- Continue to stay in contact throughout the application and acceptance process.

### EVALUATE YOUR CAMPUS VISIT

- What did I learn?
- Could I see myself thriving here?
- In what ways did this visit meet my expectations? In what ways was I disappointed?
- How interested am I in exploring this program further?
- What values, skills, and interests of mine fit—or don't fit—with the degree, department, university, or student culture?
- What are my next steps from here?

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### QUESTIONS TO ASK ON A GRADUATE SCHOOL VISIT:

#### **Basic Questions:**

What do you wish you knew about this school before you enrolled?  
What's your advice for new students?  
What surprised you about campus life here?

#### **About Academics:**

What's the average class size?  
What's the student to faculty ratio?  
Are classes online or on-campus?  
What opportunities are there for research?  
What kind of support does the faculty provide?

#### **About Financial Aid:**

What is the average financial aid package?  
What percentage of students receive scholarships?  
What is the average merit award?  
What percentage of students receive grants?  
Does the school or program provide assistantships?  
What percentage of students receive assistantships?

#### **About Admissions:**

How many students are accepted/waitlisted?  
Are there many students from other states?  
Are there many students from other countries?  
What is your graduation rate?  
What is average graduation time?  
What's the reputation of my program?

#### **About Academic Support:**

How many of the classes are taught by professors and how many are taught by a teaching assistant?  
Do professors hold office hours?  
How can students receive academic support?  
What kind of learning disability resources do you have?

#### **About Student Life:**

Do many grad students live on-campus?  
What percentage of students live in campus provided housing?  
Are there orientation groups for new students?  
How accessible and helpful is health services?  
What are some of the most popular extracurricular activities?  
Is it easy to get around campus without a car?  
What are some security measures to make the campus safe?  
Do most students stay on-campus or go home for weekends?  
What's a typical weekday like for you?

#### **About Outside Opportunities:**

Can students study abroad?  
What are some of the most popular locations?  
Where do students hang out on-campus? What about off-campus?  
What fun things are there to do in the area?

#### **About Career Services:**

What services does the Career Development office provide?  
What is the placement rate for graduates?  
Where do graduates of the program end up? (locations, job titles, sectors, etc.)  
What kinds of internship opportunities are there?  
Does the school host career fairs?  
How easy is it to find summer jobs and other kinds of work through your school?  
How prevalent is the school's alumni association on-campus?