

Four High School Visits and a Cloud of Dust: Is the traditional high school visit still worth the time and effort?

Session C7: Friday, May 3, 2019
10:30am - 11:45 am



Presenters

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Agenda & Topics for Discussion

• Introductions & Goals

• High School Visit: Then & Now

• The College Perspective

• The Secondary School Perspective

• Call to Action

• Discussion & Questions

WIDENER UNIVERSITY

- Private University, Founded in 1821
- 14 Miles South of Philadelphia
- 3,800 Undergraduate Students
- Five Academic Schools/Colleges
 - Arts and Sciences
 - Business
 - Engineering
 - Human Service Professions
 - Nursing
- Two Law School Campuses
 - Widener, Delaware School of Law
 - Widener, Commonwealth School of Law



SHIPPENSBURG UNIVERSITY

- Public University PASSHE
- Shippensburg, PA - 40 Miles Southwest of Harrisburg, PA
- 6,500 Undergraduate Students
- Over 100 Academic Programs In Three Academic Schools/Colleges
 - Arts and Sciences
 - School of Engineering and Computer Science
 - Education and Human Services
 - John L. Grove College of Business



WYOMING SEMINARY

- Kingston, PA: 2 hours from both NYC and Philadelphia
- Independent college preparatory private and boarding school
- Toddler - Postgraduate programs on two campuses: 820 students
- Upper School: 485 students, 36 % boarding, 22% international
- 5 counselors
- 21 AP courses, 8 Honors courses, STEM Program
- Class of 2019
 - 139 graduates
 - 1,306 applications to 336 colleges/universities
 - 25% plan to pursue collegiate sports
 - Matriculation to approximately 80 colleges/universities



HATBORO-HORSHAM HIGH SCHOOL

- Horsham, PA Suburban Philadelphia
- Comprehensive Public High School
- Grades 9-12; Approx 1530 students with 6 counselors
- 17 AP Courses, 21 Honors and Accelerated Courses
- Class of 2019
 - 395 Graduates
 - 1795 Applications to 306 colleges/universities
 - 6% plan to pursue DI-III sports
 - Matriculation to -- schools in -- states and - country



EXPECTATIONS & GOALS

Our hope today is that you leave with:

- a nuanced view of the efficacy of the high school visit
- an understanding of how it's viewed by both sides of the desk
- why it is still a useful recruitment tool, but with new expectations and outcomes
- some ideas on how to make the high school visit a new and refreshing part of your recruitment plan



HOW DO YOU DEFINE A HIGH SCHOOL VISIT?

THE HIGH SCHOOL VISIT: THEN & NOW

- Generator of new student interest
- Generator of new applications
- Creator of enrollment
- Very little data and planning involved
- Often the first contact between a school and a student
- Networking opportunity for counselors and college reps
- Occasional source of new student interest
- Rarely a first source of applicants
- Low source of interaction
- Data and research is a large part of recruitment travel planning, or it should be
- Almost never the first point of contact between a school and a student
- Time and staffing constraints prohibit networking

WIDENER Recruitment Visit Data

Year	High School Visit	0	1 - 2	3 - 5	5+
2017	185	117 (63.2%)	37 (20%)	15 (17.6%)	16 (8.6%)
2018	178	109 (61.2%)	33 (18.5%)	22 (12.3%)	14 (7.9%)
2019 (Spring)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Year	College Fair/Mini Fair/ Transfer Fair	0 - 5	6 - 10	11 - 20	21+
2017	49	38 (77.5%)	6 (12.2%)	4 (8.1%)	1 (2.0%)
2018	55	42 (76.3%)	9 (16.3%)	1 (1.8%)	2 (3.6%)
2019 (Spring)	33	25 (75.7%)	4 (12.1%)	1 (3.0%)	1 (3.0%)
Year	Application Workshop/Instant Decision	0-5	5+		
2017	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2018	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2019 (Spring)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

SHIPPENSBURG Visit Data - Fall Only

Year	High School Visit	0	1.-2.	3.-5.	5+
2016	539	202	187	101	49
2017	596	219	165	120	195
2018	661	206	159	128	168
Year	College Fair/Mini Fair/ Transfer Fair	0-5	10+		
2016	250	69	181	90 were 15+	
2017	286	73	213	135 were 15+	
2018	311	73	238	137 were 15+	
Year	Application Workshop/Instant Decision	0-5	5+		
2016	24	14	10	7 were 10+	
2017	38	10	28	12 were 10+	
2018	41	11	30	20 were 10+	

THE COLLEGE PERSPECTIVE

- There is a diminishing return on high schools visits as a reliable source of new inquiries, applicants and enrollees.
- In a rob Peter to pay Paul environment, physical recruitment travel is a drain on the admission office operational budget.
- The recruitment season is no longer aligned with the college search process.
- Half or more of high school visits result in interaction with an administrative assistant, parent, or volunteer rather than a school counselor and/or students.

SECONDARY SCHOOL DATA

Hatboro-Horsham High School

2017-18 College Visits: 100

2017 Fall College Fair: 103

2018 Spring College Fair: 115

College Panels & Financial Aid Nights: 3

Total Applications: 1495

of colleges: 280

Students matriculating: 322

of colleges where students matriculate: 82

Wyoming Seminary

2017-18 College Visits: 116 (9 in Spring)

Partner with PACAC Northeast College Fair

Case Studies & Financial Aid Nights

Total Applications: 1021

of colleges: 311

Students matriculating: 114

of colleges where students matriculate: 81

THE SECONDARY SCHOOL PERSPECTIVE

- School culture and expectations
- Parent involvement
- Student time and school day schedule
- Counselor workload
- Scheduling demands
- Geographic location

ALTERNATIVES

- Application bootcamps
- Counselor breakfasts or lunches
- Recruitment partnerships
- Instant decision days
- Mini college fairs
- Coffee appointments
- Speaking with college prep classes
- CBO partnerships
- Fly-in/Drive-in Programs

INSTANT DECISION DAYS

Hatboro-Horsham High School

Of the 82 colleges –

of colleges neither visited nor attended fair: 30

of colleges only attended fall/planned to attend spring fair:
24

of colleges only visited: 6

of colleges participated in Instant Decision Day: 9

of students participated in Instant Decision Day: 19

of deposits from Instant Decision Day interviews: 14

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Of the 81 colleges –

of colleges visited: 29

of colleges participated in Instant Decision Day: 1

of students participated in Instant Decision Day: 9

of deposits from Instant Decision Day interviews: 5

CALL TO ACTION

- **Begin to shift expectations.**
 - High school visits are no longer generators of new student contacts.
 - Marketing and exposure are the goal.
- **Shift where you visit.**
 - Bulk of high school visitations, especially in out-of-state/out-of-region markets, are to high performing public high schools and to private independent schools where there are dedicated college counseling staff.
- **Explore new ways to reach students.**
 - Partner with other institutions on a consortium of regional information sessions.
 - High schools coordinate in support of college fairs and college reps.
 - More targeted and strategic outreach to specific students or specific schools.
 - Meet students and their families outside of school.
- **Research and Educate**
 - Training employees to be prepared for high school visits.



QUESTIONS?



THANK YOU
for attending this session!

We'd love to hear from you!

Please submit a session evaluation
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