

# **SELECTING A UNIVERSITY**

## **HOW TO BEGIN**

1. **Begin your quest early. The freshman year isn't too soon.**
2. **Obviously colleges want to see good grades.**
3. **Good swimming times will be an asset when applying, but you must work through the swim coach.**
4. **Involvement in other extra-curricular school functions, especially in leadership roles is valuable.**
5. **Take the S.A.T.'s several times to insure a good score.**
6. **Read numerous books during leisure time to strengthen your verbal skills for the S.A.T.**
7. **Letters of recommendation from noteworthy individuals will be of value: (Teachers, principals, counselors & coaches)**
8. **Send your applications for admission in early.**
9. **Colleges come in all shapes and sizes as well as having specific areas of expertise. Start visiting schools as a sophomore and get a feel for what is offered and learn what to expect. Ask lots of questions and don't believe everything you hear.**
10. **Check with your local library when researching various colleges. The high school guidance counselor can be helpful and don't forget to check with your church.**

## **THE COLLEGE VISIT**

1. **You are allowed only 5 official visits – may not exceed 48 hours – so only go to the schools that seem to interest you, take notes and record the pluses and minuses of each program and school.**
2. **NCAA rules do not permit prospective athletes to train with the college team during visits.**
3. **Talk to academic advisors and other students as well as the team and staff.**
4. **Visit all training areas. Tour the campus – classrooms, lectures, dorms, dining halls.**
5. **Ask questions about everything concerning your future – training, financial, if you fit in skill-wise, tradition, health of program (especially men's programs), number of scholarships overall & next year and goals of the program. (Division 1 swimming programs allow 9.9 scholarships for men and 14 for women. In Division 2, the ratio is 8.1 scholarships for both men and women).**
6. **Usually plan to visit in the fall so that you don't feel rushed into a decision. Have a goal date by which you would like to decide.**

## **ACADEMICS**

1. What type of academic reputation does the school possess?
2. Does the school offer a variety of academic majors you might be interested in?
3. What kind of program is there for academic tutoring? Will someone care when I need help in classes?
4. What is the graduation rate for athletes: Do they graduate in 4 years?
5. What are my career choices when I graduate?
6. Will a diploma from this school aid in getting a job? What is the success rate of placing graduates in their prospective fields?
7. Upon graduation from the university, what is the success rate for entrance into professional/graduate schools?

## **ATHLETICS**

1. What is the reputation of the program?
2. Is the program improving?
3. What is the chance of making the travel squad/NCAA qualifying standards?
4. Is the schedule competitive?
5. Is this the appropriate level for you?
6. Do you feel comfortable with the head coach and staff?
7. Do you like the returning athletes and do they work together? Can you fit in socially with the team?
8. Is there a good working relationship between the men's and women's team? Are the programs coed or separate?
9. What are the coaches' strengths and/or weaknesses?
10. Does the coach and the program have a reputation for bringing out an athletes potential?
11. How does your ability and philosophy fit into the teams?
12. What kind of strength training program is expected and provided?
13. Is this the level of training that you are looking for – yardage & types of training?
14. What are the coach's summer training expectations?
15. Are the athletes on the team oriented towards Olympic trial & NCAA Champs?
16. Do they have a Christmas training trip or spring training?
17. How many practices are required? AM or PM? What are the attendance policies?
18. Is there administrative support for the swimming/diving?
19. What is the quality of the existing facilities?
20. Is there an athletic trainer available for each squad?
21. What auxiliary programs are available? (i.e. nutrition, counseling, sports psychology, stress management, career counseling)
22. Is the budget a competitive one?
23. What emphasis is placed on dual meets, do they shave and taper mid-season?
24. Will I be able to get individual attention, or will I just be another number?

## **CAMPUS**

1. Do you enjoy the campus location and atmosphere – urban, metropolitan or college town)?
2. Are there opportunities for cultural, recreational, spiritual, and social growth?
3. Are you comfortable with the distance from home?
4. Are you comfortable with the size of the university – student/faculty ratio?
5. What is the dorm, housing situation for the student athletes?
6. Will you be happy in the area?
7. Would you choose this school if you weren't a swimmer?

## **FINANCIAL**

1. Exactly what does the scholarship cover?
2. If I am injured and can't swim again, what will happen to my scholarship?
3. Are scholarships ever increased or decreased for performance?

## **OTHER**

1. Who do I listen to - the wishes of parents, teachers, coaches or friends?
2. Do you enjoy the approach and style of recruiting of this school?
3. What are your personal feelings?