

Suggestions for Interviewing

As an Alumni Interviewer, you play an important role. Any contact you have with students may affect their opinions about Union. Showing enthusiasm for the College and creating a comfortable environment ensures they will have a favorable impression.

To set the stage for an outstanding interview, you need to find a place where you will not be interrupted for 45-60 minutes. After greeting the student, if parents are present, please tell them you would like to spend some time alone with the student. Invite them to join your conversation once you have finished the interview.

Interview Objectives

1. To give the student a favorable impression of Union.
2. To gather as much information on the student as possible.
3. To get an overall impression of the student.
4. To help the student recognize why Union might be a good match for him/her.

DO

- Make the student feel comfortable as quickly as possible.
- Try to make the interview a conversation rather than a question and answer session.
- Give the student the opportunity to explain any unusual circumstances which may have affected his/her academic performance.
- Try to give the student a question or two which will really push them to think before they answer.
- Remember that students are often nervous in interviews, so don't hesitate to ask general questions about academic, extracurricular, and hobby interests in order to 'break the ice.'

DON'T

- Overpower the student with information about your experience at Union, but do share brief accounts of your experience when appropriate throughout the conversation.
- Worry about grades and test scores..it's most important to learn about the student's courses of study, extracurricular involvement, and interests. However, it's OK if a student offers his/her GPA, test results, transcript, and/or resume (please mail these materials to the Admissions Office).
- Get too bogged down in details (e.g., grades and test scores) that the Admissions Office has or will eventually have on file.
- Ask questions about a student's/family's financial situation. If it is clear that financial aid will be an issue, encourage the student and/or parents to contact our Financial Aid Office at (518) 388-6123.

Some Suggested Areas of Information to Cover

College Search Process

- Find out how the student heard about Union.
- What other schools and/or types of schools is the student considering?

Academic Life

- What are the unique aspects of the student's school: strongest departments, strongest sports teams, arts or music programs, etc.?
- What would the student change about his/her high school?
- What courses is the student taking? What courses did the student take last year? What courses will the student be taking in his/her senior year (if interviewing in the summer)?
- Which courses has the student found most enjoyable? Why?
- Which courses has the student found most challenging? Why?
- What kind of books/literature does the student most enjoy reading? Are there any particular books/subject matters that the student most enjoys reading/studying?
- Which teacher is the student's favorite and/or most inspiring? Why?
- What would a teacher write about the student in a recommendation?
- What would the student's best friend say about him/her?
- Has the student had an opportunity to take the SAT I, the SAT II subject tests, or the ACT? If so, is the student pleased with his/her performance? This is a good opportunity to discuss Union's admissions policy on standardized testing - most applicants have the option of submitting test scores (they are **not** required to do so), and they can include results from any or all of the following: the SAT I (verbal, math and writing), two SAT II tests, and/or the ACT. Students applying to the six-year law and eight-year medical programs **are required** to submit the SAT I and two SAT II tests (math and science for the accelerated medical program applicants). Also, home-schooled applicants **are required** to submit at least one of the three aforementioned standardized tests.
- What motivates the student to do well in school?
- How would the student like to be remembered by his/her high school?

Family

Please note that family can sometimes be a sensitive issue. If you ask a family-related question and the student does not seem comfortable, please respect the student's feelings and pursue another topic of conversation.

- Who are the other members of the student's family?
- Who in the student's family is most inspirational to him/her? Why?
- What has the student learned from his/her family? What has the student's family learned from him/her?

Extracurricular/Communities Activities

- What activities is the student involved with outside of class?
- Is the student involved with any type of community service?
- What activity is most important to the student? Why?
- What hobbies does the student have?
- How does/did the student spend his/her summer?
- Does the student have a part-time job?
- What activities does the student want to continue or start in college?

In questioning a student about his or her activities, please try to gauge where you see them contributing on Union's campus. Do they have leadership potential? Would they be involved in performing groups? Athletics? Etc.

Travel

- Where has the student traveled?
- Is the student interested in studying abroad while in college?*

*This is a wonderful opportunity to discuss Union's term abroad offerings and our commitment to providing international experiences.

Additional Questions

- What would the student ask/tell the President (or another notable figure) if he/she were given an hour alone with him/her?
- If the student were handed \$100 million, how would he/she want to spend it?
- Does the student have any heroes/heroines? Why are they important?
- What is the student's proudest moment?
- What does the student like to do in his/her spare time?

Concluding the interview

- Ask the student if there is anything he/she would like to discuss or ask before concluding the conversation.
- Please provide the student with your phone number and/or email address, and encourage follow-up questions if they arise. Thank the student for coming and for his/her interest in Union, and ask accompanying parents if they have questions before departing.

Evaluation

- Please provide specific examples about the student to make your points.
- Give overall impressions - great/average/confident/weak.
- How do you see this student fitting in on Union's campus? Where would he/she find a niche?

- **Please complete the evaluation form soon after the interview to avoid forgetting information.**