

ILUMIN EDUCATION

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ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

February has swept in with love in the air, and we're not just talking about matters of the heart. This month's newsletter is a love letter to this stage of your student's academic journey! The college admissions process is a tough and complex one, so it's no wonder that students and families alike seek help navigating this process—but one of the most important parts of seeking help is knowing the right questions to ask.

In this issue, we share with students the basic rundown on B.S./M.D. and 3-2 engineering programs to help them figure out whether these programs are right for them. Check out what questions our ILUMIN team recommends students ask admissions officers at college fairs! Also, look back with us on our journeys with our students and families this past year.

Let us arm your student with the questions that will light their college adventure ahead!

FROM THE ILUMIN TEAM



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B.S./M.D. PROGRAMS

DOCTORS-TO-BE MAY WANT TO CONSIDER B.S./M.D. PROGRAMS, also known as “**direct medical programs**,” which allow students to apply for acceptance to a reputable college and that college’s medical school at the same time.

Acceptance rates of B.S./M.D. and B.A./M.D. programs are extremely low, ranging from 1% to 9%. Direct medical programs are tremendously competitive, even for the most high-achieving students in the nation!

ADVANTAGES

- **combines** the undergraduate and graduate application process
- give pre-med students **flexibility to major in a non-STEM field** as an undergraduate
- sometimes allows students to **finish college in only 2 or 3 years** before the graduate curriculum
- offers opportunities for **clinical experience** (e.g. internships)

[LEARN MORE ABOUT B.S./M.D. PROGRAMS HERE](#)



3-2 ENGINEERING PROGRAMS

ADVANTAGES

- culminates in **two bachelor’s degrees in five years**
- give students **flexibility to first major in a non-engineering field**
- allows students to easily get individual attention from professors when taking **prerequisite classes at the smaller liberal arts school**
- fosters an expansive skillset that **greatly appeals to employers**

IN THESE DUAL-DEGREE PROGRAMS, engineering students split their time between two schools. They spend the first three years at a smaller liberal arts college, graduate early, then move on to a larger university for two years to pursue a second bachelor’s degree, this time in engineering.

Students gain a truly diverse college experience and an expansive skillset encompassing multiple fields and both “soft” and “hard” skills—all of which stand out to employers.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT 3-2 ENGINEERING PROGRAMS HERE](#)

OUR ILUMIN TEAM ANSWERS:

WHAT ARE SOME GOOD QUESTIONS TO ASK ADMISSIONS OFFICERS AT COLLEGE FAIRS?



“Before attending college fairs, make sure to do research for the schools you are interested in so that you can ask specific questions. This is a great opportunity to meet admissions officers who may read your hard-worked applications! In the same way you want them to see you as a holistic individual, you also want to treat them with the same respect by approaching this opportunity with care. As such, **avoid asking questions that are easily searchable**, and rather think deeply about **what you genuinely want to know**. Questions about **what makes that school different from others**, a **common trait** among their notable applicants, **unique school traditions that you can't find online** would be a good way to start your brainstorming.”

— **Anna Lee, Educational Consultant**



“When attending college fairs, I encourage students to think about what's **most important to them as they envision their college experience**, whether it's major options, student organizations, research opportunities, or the campus population. It's also important for students to ask a wide range of questions to get a **full picture of the campus**. Here are a few questions to keep in mind when attending college fairs or tours. 1. What is the **student-to-professor ratio**, and how **interactive** are the classes? 2. How would you describe the **campus and student culture**? 3. Is there a **strong alumni network** for internships and career opportunities? 4. What types of opportunities do students have for **undergraduate research**? Students should also ask questions about majors, minors, double-majoring, student organizations, and available academic and well-being support resources.”

— **Katie Anderson, Educational Consultant**



“Asking **thoughtful and strategic questions** can help students gather crucial information and make more informed decisions about the colleges they are considering.

‘What unique opportunities or experiences does your college provide that set it apart from others?’

This question helps students understand the distinctive aspects of the college and insight into special programs, resources, or opportunities that may align with their academic and personal goals. The answer can help them assess if the college is a good fit for their unique needs and interests.

‘Can you share insights into the admissions criteria and process, and are there any specific qualities or experiences you value in applicants?’

By delving into the admissions criteria, students can tailor their application more effectively. This question is particularly valuable in identifying any prerequisites before applying and understanding which aspects of their background or experiences are pertinent to highlight in their personal statement.

‘What support services does the college offer to help students succeed academically and personally?’

College life involves more than just academics, and support services are crucial for students' overall well-being. This question helps them gauge the level of support available, including tutoring, counseling, and career services. Knowing about these resources can give students confidence in their ability to navigate challenges and thrive during their college experience.

These questions go beyond basic facts and statistics, providing students with insights critical for making well-informed decisions about which college aligns best with their aspirations and needs.”

— Henry Wang, Educational Consultant



ILUMIN 2023

EDUCATION IN REVIEW

OUR STUDENTS SPANNED NOT ONLY CALIFORNIA, BUT ALSO:

- COLORADO
- FLORIDA
- IOWA
- MARYLAND
- MASSACHUSETTS
- MICHIGAN
- NEW JERSEY
- NEW YORK
- NORTH CAROLINA
- PENNSYLVANIA
- TENNESSEE
- TEXAS
- VIRGINIA
- WASHINGTON
- CHINA
- FRANCE
- JAPAN
- RWANDA
- TAIWAN



302 STUDENTS SERVED

19 FRESHMEN

40 SOPHOMORES

72 JUNIORS

171 SENIORS

443 ACCEPTANCE LETTERS FROM 99 SCHOOLS

- **11** IVY LEAGUE ADMITS
- **47** TOP 20 SCHOOL ADMITS
- **23** UC BERKELEY AND UCLA ADMITS
- **169** UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA ADMITS
- **OTHER NOTABLE ADMITS:** CARNEGIE MELLON, MICHIGAN, NORTHEASTERN, NYU, PURDUE, UIUC, USC



INCLUDING:

...JUST TO NAME A FEW