

Questions on admissions & financial aid process for meeting with Angel Perez, 2015

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Admissions Process at Elite Liberal Arts Colleges:

What are some defining characteristics that you find are in those that you consider the “best and brightest?”

When admitting students, is it difficult to change the demographics of the school? Say a certain school wanted to increase or decrease the amount of students at the school. Will this take a significant amount of time, as in years? -Steve O'Reilly

How does level of interest factor into a decision? If someone lives close by but doesn't take the time to visit, does that put them at a disadvantage compared to someone who may have inferior grades but took the time to visit and maybe even do an interview with the school?

Since the Common Application is so easy to use so many student apply to several institutions. How can you tell if a person is actually interested in a particular college or if they're just adding another school because it's easy to press a button.

B) Trinity admissions and financial aid policies:

Does Trinity still use the 1-9 rating system that Hamilton College used when Stevens wrote his book. If so, why, and have you considered making any change?

Pitzer is a test optional school. Should Trinity become more like Pitzer? At test optional schools, how does this admissions decision? Do you look more at other materials? Is it assumed that test scores are low when not submitted? -Hayley

How do colleges like Trinity address applicants who identify themselves as "multiracial"? Does it differ from those who identify as members of specific racial or ethnic groups?

Also: How do colleges address applicants who do not list their racial background?

Has Trinity been subject to any lawsuits over its admissions decisions? Or have any students or attorneys requested to see the admissions officers' notes of their files.

What happens to the college and its budget if you are under enrolled for the next first year class? Do you lose money for your budget?

How does financial aid affect an applicant's chance of being admitted to a college?

How would attorney's go about actually monitoring if admissions are following these rules of letting people in based on race?

Have you seen the same dedication and emotions in the Trinity admissions officers as Pitzer?

Growing up in such terrible conditions, and now being successful, does that inspire you to go to these troubled schools and try to do what your guidance counselor did for you?

-Will

- which ethnicity does multiracial belong to? do multiracial people get advantages like minorities during college admission process?

- you say” We seem to care more about the numbers we report to our boards, the government, and U.S. News than we do about individual students applying.” in the article “The ‘Best and Brightest’ Aren’t Always Obvious”. why do colleges put so much emphasis over rankings? what effects do you think bringing more potential students with impressive life skills but poorer paper scores is going to have over the college?

--Heric

- Your article “The ‘Best and Brightest’ Aren’t Always Obvious,” displays you as an advocate for “colleges changing current metrics used to define "success" in an effort to create more opportunity”. How has that believe influenced your decisions thus far at trinity?

- Do think it will ever be possible to truly include all the experiences of all Americans in higher education. With the opposing forces such as development office and boards of trustees having such an influence in the admissions. Specifically what is being done in trinity to counteract that?

- The main goal of diversity, in selective college is really in the self interest of the college. Chapter 5 of “Creating a Class” mentioned the “necessity of diversity to maintain legitimacy and prestige amongst peer institutions”. Do the minority student truly gain from this process and how do you as Vice President for Enrollment and Student Success intend to ensure that minority student do succeed and that they aren't just admitted for statistics or politically put “diversity”.

- Samuel OyebeFun

How much of a role do non-admissions officers play in admitting students? If a member of the board of trustees, or a donor who supplies the school with a lot of money, wants a particular student to get admitted, is that a major or minor factor when deciding to admit the student or not?

-Steven S

Are there any current processes that Trinity does/uses to select the “best and brightest” that you disagree with? Why?

“We seem to care more about the numbers we report to our boards, the government, and U.S. News than we do about individual students applying.” The ‘Best and Brightest’ Aren’t Always Obvious. Do you believe that you keep the individual in mind during the application process currently at Trinity? Is this a practice that you try to influence other admissions officers to do as well?

-Joanne Chambers

What if there is a student who is very interested in the school and is passionate about the same issues that the school is but is socially awkward and does not know how to demonstrate his interest?

-Shane Libby

What type of essays on applications have had the strongest effect on you? Are emotional applications more effective?

Being from Puerto Rico, do you often favor international students, as you have seen first hand what kind of struggles some of them go through in everyday life?

-Jack Steverman

How much weight do visits carry to admissions counselors? If they live relatively close and can’t visit, should it be considered a huge red flag?

You discuss the importance of personal interactions with students and admissions officers in “College Admissions’ Wrenching Ins and Outs.” What do students who live thousands of miles away from their dream school do to draw attention to themselves when an interview is nearly impossible?

What can students do to better their chances of being admitted to one of these elite institutions when the applicant pool has become so competitive?

I love what you say about our obsession over statistics in “The ‘Best and Brightest’ Aren’t Always Obvious.” How can more colleges move away from focusing on the numbers and aim to admit students with great potential?

How much of a factor does a student’s financial need play into his or her admission?

-Courtney

Ultimately what is more likely to get a student admitted, an academic record above the college’s standard average or being perceived as a great fit for the school?

You mentioned feeling stressed about the possibility of too many students accepting financial aid awards, does the college often roll the dice by offering more financial aid than it has and what happens if this worry does come to fruition?

Can regulations be implemented that would restrict the specificity of the data schools report to organizations like U.S. News in order to de-emphasize the importance of maintaining high rankings so that schools can take more chances on kids who do not have the makings of the “best and brightest” without being viewed as a lesser institution?

-Caroline

“If higher education does not broaden its scope, we will continue to exclude many students whose stories are not best represented by traditional academic measurement,” What are some changes you would recommend to help broaden its scope?

Would you choose a student who is a better fit to the school and has shown more interest over a student with superior academics who has not shown a great amount of interest over the school?

In smaller colleges such as Pitzer and Trinity, how big of an effect can being recruited for an athletic team have in the student's application?

-Alvaro

What happens to the college and its budget if you are under enrolled for the next first year class? Do you lose money for your budget?

1. What is the most important aspect of an application?
2. How does financial aid affect an applicant's chance of being admitted to a college?
3. How important are alumni connections?

-Taylor