



## WHAT IS THE INTEREST QUOTIENT?

*An applicant's demonstrated interest in attending a particular university*

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

*It's all about the yield! The ratio of actual enrollment to amount of acceptance letters that go out.*

*Colleges want to admit students who genuinely want to attend their specific school and likely to enroll if admitted.*

According to a National Association of College Admissions Counselors study, **about 50%** of colleges claim that a student's demonstrated interest in the school is either highly or moderately important in the admissions process.

## BUT HOW EXACTLY DO WE DEMONSTRATE INTEREST?

*First, have genuine interest in a school!*



## WE MUST ASK OURSELVES

*Why do I want to be a student at this institution?*

*What attracted me to this campus in the first place?*

*How will I contribute to the community while attending this institution?*

*How will this institution help me achieve my own personal goals?*

*Who has attended that can give me first-hand advice and insights?*

*Once you know the answers to these questions, the rest becomes easy—*

1. **DO THOROUGH RESEARCH** – Colleges invest time, money, and effort into making sure their websites are full of information for prospective students. Make sure you read material not only for prospective students, but also for current students. Reviewing course requirements for graduation and freshman year will give you deeper insight into what the college’s educational values are. You can reference this information in #4 below.
2. **CREATE AN ONLINE FOOTPRINT** – When visiting websites, click on links that say “Request More Information” or “Join our Newsletter”. If they don’t exist, send a short email to the admissions office requesting more information. When you receive emails, open them! Even that can be tracked. Create online admissions profiles and log on periodically. Follow your favorite college admissions offices on Instagram, Twitter, Youtube, etc. When doing this, remember to keep ALL of your social media posts Grandma friendly!
3. **VISIT CAMPUS AND REQUEST INFORMATION** – Many campuses keep track of who has made an organized campus visit. If it’s possible, take a guided tour and hear a presentation from an admissions counselor. Fill out a card while on campus to get on the admissions mailing list. If a visit is not possible, head to **youniversitytv.com** to view college marketing videos. Remember – they are made to look fantastic!
4. **ATTEND COLLEGE FAIRS AND COMMUNICATE WITH REPS** – College admissions representatives are usually in charge of a specific regional area and are responsible for both reading applications and in-person applicant recruiting. Chances are, the representative who appears at your college fair is the one who will be reading your application and who will vie for you if your application gets put in the “swim” category. If you have thoughtful questions, reach out to your admissions officers – they are there to help!
5. **WRITE THOUGHTFUL SUPPLEMENTAL ESSAYS** – Many colleges have optional questions related to their institution and want to know why their school is your top choice, why you want to attend, and what about the school attracts you to it. This is a time to address *specific* areas of interest. Is there a program that you like there? Do you match the character of the student body? Are you attracted to a major or social outlet the school offers?
6. **OPT FOR A COLLEGE INTERVIEW** – Many colleges offer optional interviews with alumni, admissions officers, or current students. If it is geographically possible for you to do an in person interview, do it! Even if it is optional, it shows your interest in a college. It also shows that you have taken every opportunity to help admissions officers get to know you beyond your paper application. You also have one more person in your corner!
7. **SEND A THANK YOU NOTE** – If you chatted specifically with a college representative at length during a college fair or an on campus visit, send an email the next day thanking them for their time. Be sure to reference a specific topic you discussed and highlight a feature of the college that appeals to you in the note. It will indicate your true respect for their institution and their time. If you have an on campus or alumni interview, be sure to send an email or handwritten note to the person who conducted your interview.

**Sample Supplemental Prompt:**

*What are the unique qualities of Northwestern — and of the specific undergraduate school to which you are applying — that make you want to attend the University? In what ways do you hope to take advantage of the qualities you have identified?*

Passionate about both science and music, I find Northwestern's exceptional undergraduate engineering and music programs extremely appealing. The unique opportunity for me to combine McCormick and Bienen into one dual-degree program is even more attractive, allowing me to receive certification from two schools both highly regarded in their respective fields.

Chemical engineering, my primary engineering interest, is among McCormick's most renowned departments. The faculty members seem to share my underlying values in science: application and innovation. Their extensive research in new and developing areas such as renewable energy and medicine is a clear indication of this overlap. These pioneers, such as Dr. Kung in environmental chemistry, can give me a glimpse of revolutionary science in the making and offer me experience working in the stellar research facilities Northwestern is famous for. I plan to immerse myself in any research opportunities I can find so as to make the most of this exceptional resource Northwestern offers.

The mere presence of a school of music open to undergraduates is uncommon among colleges of Northwestern's academic standing; having one that matches some of the world's best conservatories is even more rare. Bienen provides numerous resources for music majors, such as solo, chamber, and large ensemble performance opportunities and regular concerts in one of the nation's finest concert halls. The guest speakers who come to Bienen are even more remarkable; all-time jazz great Eddie Daniels recently held a master class there for clarinet, my main instrument. Being able to meet and even receive instruction from musicians of that stature would surely inspire me to work toward something special. Northwestern also features one of the nation's largest music libraries, surely a place where I can continue to fuel my creative passion. To make the most of the exclusive opportunities Bienen can provide me, I plan on partaking in as many events as possible.

Other than the undergraduate schools, Northwestern's prominent sports culture is also inviting. Although I am certainly not qualified for Division I volleyball, I am convinced I can find a place among the popular club and intramural sports communities. I am also an avid football fan, and would welcome a chance to become a part of Northwestern's tradition of strong school spirit.



**KEEP  
CALM**

**AND**

**WRITE  
THE ESSAY**