Making the Most of Virtual Campus Tours

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Campus tours and presentations from college staff are familiar activities for most GEAR UP students. With campus visits unlikely in the coming months, here are some ways for students and families to make the most of virtual campus tours and video chats to help them learn about colleges and universities.

Virtual tours give an overview of most Utah campuses with links on how to apply

Prospective students can move through web-based interactive photos and videos

Students should also talk to counselors, students, and financial aid advisors

Colleges are tapping into virtual campus tours to welcome prospective students to their campus. A virtual tour is a useful way to see what a campus looks like and what it has to offer. Prospective students can move through web-based interactive photos and videos designed to be compatible across all devices. Here’s a sampling of Utah colleges and universities that have virtual campus tours:

- Brigham Young University
- Dixie State University
- Salt Lake Community College
- Snow College
- Southern Utah University
- University of Utah
- Utah State University
- Utah State University
- Utah Valley University
- Weber State University
- Westminster College

If your interests lie beyond Utah, sites like Campus Tours offer video tours, interactive campus maps, and mobile walking tours of more than 1,700 colleges and universities. You Visit provides 360-degree virtual tours of colleges worldwide. GEAR UP partner Focus Training adds supplemental content and curriculum to help students better understand what to look for in a college.

Campus officials tell prospective students to use the virtual tour as a jumping-off point and then to weigh academic programs, admissions requirements, and other factors. The advice below will help you make the most of virtual tours and video chats and see if a college or university is right for you.

1. **Talk to professors and counselors.** Set up phone calls and video chats with academic counselors about the degree program that you are interested in.
2. **Review housing and dining options.** If you plan to live on campus, housing and residence life should be a focal point of any virtual college tour.
3. **Reach out to alumni and current students.** Connecting with past or current students to ask about their experience can give you a feel for a school’s culture and social life.
4. **Ask about financial aid and scholarships.** Asking financial aid advisors about tuition and loan options will help you know about important dates and deadlines.

Taking advantage of online resources, like our Best Fit College Navigator, and other available tools can help you get all the right information you need to feel confident in your college choice.
Many schools are also offering interactive sessions that allow you to meet and talk with admissions offices virtually, and get your questions answered. NACAC Virtual College Fair offers events like these for counselors, and students. Parents are invited too. These events give you a chance to choose from hundreds of colleges and universities nearby, across the country, and even around the world. The 2020 fall schedule for these virtual college fairs is Sept 13 (12 - 8 p.m.), Oct 12 (1 - 9 p.m.), Oct 18 (12 - 8 p.m.), and Nov 8 (2 - 10 p.m.).