

## The College Fair Guide

### Before the Fair

- Know a little about the fair you are attending. Is it hosted by a private school? A college-access nonprofit? What population will you be talking to? Do they know a lot about the college search process, or will you be explaining more basic concepts?
- Review the materials in the college fair packet. You don't need to memorize all of the information, but know which page in the Portable Viewbook holds the answers.
- Do a quick spin through the Wellesley website. See if there are any new announcements from Wellesley, cool news articles, interesting classes, or changes in policy. Make sure you're familiar with the basics of the admissions process.
- Before heading to the fair, it's a great idea to come up with a brief opening statement to use with students who have little or no knowledge of Wellesley. Here's an example of what one of our counselors says:

Wellesley is a women's liberal arts college in Wellesley, Massachusetts, about half an hour outside of Boston. With about 2,300 undergrads and no graduate students, we offer a small community and amazing access to professors. With famous alums like Madeline Albright and Hilary Clinton, we're known for our strength in political science and international relations, but we also boast amazing departments in the humanities and natural sciences. With no grad students to claim professor's time and lab space, our students are able to find amazing research and internship opportunities. The women who attend Wellesley are diverse and bold and talented – they come from over 80 countries and all 50 states and all walks of life! Being a women's college is a major part of who we are, it informs the community and dynamic on campus, of course, but we also have access to a major city full of college students. I like to think Wellesley offers the best of both worlds: the intimate college experience with small classes and beloved traditions on a beautiful suburban campus, combined with easy access to Boston and all of the experiential opportunities there!

### Setting Up at the Fair

We probably receive more questions about how to set up a table for a college fair than about anything else – you know Wellesley pretty well, after all. Some larger clubs have purchased Wellesley tablecloths, but most alums will be using the white tablecloth and blue paper sign included in this packet. So, using just the materials we send, we created a sample college fair table:



If you have a tablet/laptop and want to play a slideshow of Wellesley pictures, we will make one available on the AAR website. But aside from the tablecloth, this is exactly how our tables look when we travel.

## At the Fair

- As mentioned above, fairs (and the students who attend them) can vary a lot. Some students will have savvy questions prepared, while others are still taking in all the options available. Depending on where you are, you might be fielding questions and interest from families who already know Wellesley, or you might be explaining the concept of “liberal arts” to someone for the first time.
- Smile, look friendly, and have a few opening lines prepared. If a student stops to read the materials on the table, or approaches you, you can say “Hi! What can I tell you about Wellesley?” This can give you a sense of how much they already know, and where to start.
- Let the student know you’re an alumna of the college. Feel free to draw in your own experiences and memories of your time at Wellesley: anecdotes leave a big impression. If the student asks trickier admission questions, feel free to direct them to our office.
- If a student is having trouble engaging, try asking where she is in the search process, what she’s looking for in a college, what she wants to study. Connect with what she’s saying.
- If we’re not a good fit for a student (she wants to study criminal justice or sees herself in a big city) don’t push. Acknowledge Wellesley might not be the best match, and if you know a school that might fit her interests feel free to direct her.
- *Don’t forget to have a student fill out a contact card!* Even if she is on the mailing list already, let her know that we like to know who has attended college fairs and met with representatives.

## Some Common Curveballs

- *A student or parent comments on cost* – this is a great time to show off the **MyIntuition card** and tell them about Wellesley’s need-based financial aid. If they have more detailed questions direct them to us.
- *A student says she’s looking for “business” or “pre-med”* – explain that Wellesley doesn’t offer career-based majors, but many students go into those fields with great success. She could do pre-med and study science or art, or she could major in econ then go for an MBA.
- *You are asked to compare Wellesley to other women’s colleges* – please do not criticize our fellow Sister colleges! You can note that you did not attend and are not familiar with their offerings, and comment on some factual differences (Wellesley is near Boston, Barnard is in NYC).
- *A boy approaches the table* – he might be thinking of Wesleyan, or he might not be familiar with Wellesley. He will likely get embarrassed as soon as you say “women’s college,” so try to keep it light.

## After the Fair

As always, please don’t guess about admissions practices or requirements – direct students to the websites or to contact our office! If there is a common question you are getting, be in touch with us and we can give you guidelines on how to answer.

Once the fair is over, please fill out the feedback form!! This really helps us prioritize/track fairs in your area for the future. We would be very grateful if you would do this right afterwards!