University Studies: Preparing for Department Meetings

Now that you have identified a department that you want to explore in more detail, the following steps will help you prepare for the meeting.

✅ In most cases, your academic advisor will email a personal referral to the department prior to your meeting and you will be cc’d in the email. You should follow up on the referral within 48 hours.

✅ Contact the department chair/undergraduate coordinator or person noted in your referral.
  - Write a professional email to introduce yourself and reason for contact.
  - Request a meeting. Please provide multiple times when you are not in class (typically between the hours of 8:30-4:30, M-F)
  - Wrap up communication; express thanks, and follow-up on correspondence when necessary

✅ Arrive prepared; bring:
  - Talking points and questions
  - A note pad to take notes
  - Your portfolio of artwork if applicable
  - Any other evidence of strong academic work that you’d like to share

✅ Develop a list of questions to take to your meeting. Take notes with you.
  - Is the program currently accepting internal transfers?
  - What is the timeline for internal transfers?
    - Does the department accept applications on a rolling basis, fall semester entry only, etc?
      Notes:
  - What are the department’s criteria for accepting internal transfers?
    - This may include evidence of success in specific coursework, minimum requirements for GPA, portfolio review, or essay submission
      Notes:

✅ Effectively communicate your interest in the program and ask yourself the following questions:
  - What have you discovered about the program that is appealing?
  - In your opinion, what makes you a good candidate for the program?
  - In this particular program, what courses are most interesting?
  - What have you learned about the co-op opportunities in the program (if applicable)?
  - Notes:

✅ Things to think about following the meeting:
  - What did you learn from your meeting?
  - What were some pros and cons of the discussion?
    - The Pro’s/Con’s worksheet may come in handy!

✅ What are your next steps, outlined either by yourself or by the Department Chair?
  - Examples of next steps: submitting a Change of Program Form into XXX program; identifying an alternate “Plan B”; deciding to stay in your current program; register for a course that was recommended during your meeting…
Hello Prof. Adams,

My name is Katie Dear, and I am a first year student at RIT in the University Studies Program. My advisor (Marty Burris) recently referred me to you for a meeting to discuss a change of major to your college for the Political Science major.

I am currently taking American Politics and love the course. Additionally the research I have done on this major points to this being a good fit for me. I am writing to ask for an appointment on your calendar in the near future to learn more about the major and the resulting careers. Below are the best days and times based on my class schedule. I hope you are able to meet with me during one of these times, but if not, please let me know an alternative option.

Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, or any time Fridays.

My RIT email is ksd2222@rit.edu and my cell phone is 585-585-5555. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank You, Katie Dear