

What Colleges are Looking for in Academy Graduates

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Background: The Pacific Union College faculty was polled on traits they would most like to see in academy graduates. The responses were collated into a "top ten" list of most desired traits beginning with #1 being the most desired trait.

Top Ten Traits

- 1. *Intellectual curiosity***
 - 2. *Ability to write*** (including good grammar, punctuation, spelling, structure, and clear presentation of thoughts)
 - 3. *Self-motivated learner***
 - 4. *Commitment to life-long spiritual growth***
 - 5. *Reading skills***
 - 6. *Strong concept of self-responsibility, self-management, and self-efficacy***
 - 7. *Mathematical skills above minimal levels***
 - 8. *Desire for and experience of service to others***
 - 9. *Willingness to seek advice and support from faculty, staff, and friends*** (learning, psychological, spiritual)
 - 10. *Time management skills***
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Other traits with high consideration:

- 1. *Strong high school College Prep curriculum and preparation***
 - 2. *Critical thinking skills***
 - 3. *Extra-curricular involvement***
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Other responses:

1. Research skills
2. Legible writing
3. Ability to take notes
4. Willingness to take time to read and follow instructions
5. Understanding of U.S. and world history
6. Understanding of Bible
7. Original and independence of thought
8. Willingness to challenge assumptions
9. Teachable spirit
10. Authentic voice
11. Take seriously college admissions tests
12. Have met the admissions requirements

13. Broad variety of interests
 14. Prior work experience with good work ethic
 15. Sympathetic caring for others
 16. Emotionally healthy
 17. Evidence that have done as much as possible rather than the least amount to get by with
 18. Willingness to stand for something
 19. Know why they are coming to college with strong goals for the future
 20. Students who can be recommended to graduate school or employers “in the blink of an eye” upon graduation
 21. Tolerance of the beliefs of others people
 22. Prefer activism over consumerism
 23. Anxious for international experience
 24. Desire to change the world, not conform to it, and realize they have the ability to do that
 25. Good citizenship
 26. Realistic expectation of academic excellence required for college courses
 27. Understanding of the connection between creativity and academic excellence to spirituality
 28. Understanding and respect for intellectual property and copyright issues
 29. Personal responsibility for meeting deadlines and class requirements
 30. Honesty
 31. Technology skills
 32. Ability to work with others
 33. Appropriate sleep habits
 34. Regular in class attendance
 35. Awareness of information media
 36. Adapt to fast pace of a quarter system
 37. Willingness to commit a significant amount of academic time to their work (more than 40 hours a week)
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One of PUC’s veteran professors shared a particularly meaningful set of traits:

I want students who are **learning how to think** for themselves.

I do not want students who have **only memorized** information in their educational experience.

I want students who have received an **education**.

I do not want students who have been **“trained”**.

I want students who are **motivated** to learn and succeed.

I **do** not want **extremely bright** students, if they are **not motivated**.

I want students who can **speak for themselves**.

I do not want students who come to my office with their parents and their **parents do all the talking**.

I want students who know and use the **“Golden Rule”**.

I do not want students who are **self-centered** and **self-serving**.

I want students with an **inquiring mind**, willing to consider concepts that are foreign to them.

I do not want students who have **memorized** the 27, 28, or 29 points of doctrine, but **do not understand basic Christianity**.

I want students with a **broad variety of interests** or a desire to pursue this in college.

I do not want **“one-dimensional”** people, nerds who are only interested in one thing.

Of course all of the above is part of a maturing process and very few students will have it all when they enter college. Some of them come from very sheltered and “closed” backgrounds. Some have never had to make a really significant decision – decisions were made for them by someone else. Some have never been encouraged to ask “why” of an authority figure or organization. I believe the best question anyone can ask is “why”.