ARC Representative Training
Welcome!

The Alumni Representative Committee has worked with the Office of Undergraduate Admissions for over 40 years.

You are joining a group of over 3,000 alumni from all over the United States and the world.
## The role of the ARC

<table>
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<th>ARC Members play a critical role in our application review process and <strong>enrich our holistic evaluation</strong> of applicants.</th>
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<td>You are a vital component in our <strong>outreach to various communities</strong>, especially in areas of the world where admissions officers cannot visit.</td>
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<td>ARC members help Columbia remain one of the <strong>most diverse highly-selective schools</strong> in the country.</td>
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ARC at a glance

Alumni from the Class of 1942 to the Class of 2013

Organized into domestic and international regions
Interview regions

Update your ARC Online preferences to reflect the region(s) you would like to serve in, your preferred high school and the number of interviews that you can conduct this year.

ARC members can interview in any region(s) around the world. You can request interviews from your region or other regions by using ARC Online.
Why interview?

Enrolling students often cite their interviews and connections with alumni as among the main reasons why they chose Columbia over peer institutions.

Applicants who receive an interview and are admitted are more likely to attend Columbia.
Represent Columbia at local college fairs at high schools and community centers. We will supply you with materials.

Host or attend Welcome Receptions or Send-Off events, and re-connect with students you interviewed.

Host or participate in a Super Saturday interviewing event, and interview several students in a single day alongside other ARC members.
ARC Training overview

- Using ARC Online
- Assignment process
- Conducting interviews
- Submitting reports
- Checking admissions decisions
- Other ways to get involved
Using ARC Online

Click on “My Account” to access your interviewing activity.
Receiving interview assignments

- Request an interview
- Accept an interview assignment from an ARC Chair
Managing interview assignments

- Applicants you have requested to interview, pending ARC Chair approval
- Applicants that you have been assigned to interview, pending your approval
- Applicants pending interviews
- Completed interview reports
**Requesting interviews (Preferred Method)**

Click here to request an interview

Type in where you would like to request an interview
Accepting an interview assignment from an ARC Chair

(Alternative Method)

Click to accept the assignment as soon as possible.

Access contact details once you accept the assignment.
Contacting the applicant

Once you have accepted an interview, contact the student as soon as possible.

Please decline the interview if you believe there would be a conflict of interest (family friend, parents are business associates, etc.)
Types of Interviews

**Face-to-Face**
Alumnus/a and student meet at a predetermined date, time and location and have a conversation about the candidate’s interests.

**Skype™ / Video Chat**
This is a great option for interviewing; you have the ease of scheduling plus the added bonus of virtual face-to-face contact.

**Telephone**
Alumni may also arrange phone interviews with applicants as this may ease the scheduling process and eliminate transportation costs or difficulties.
Interviews should:

| be conducted at an interviewer's office or some alternate neutral site (a coffee shop, for example.) | be kept about 45 minutes long. | leave the candidate with a positive impression of Columbia. | cover information that the Office of Undergraduate Admissions could not capture through their application. |
Interviews should **NOT**:

- be conducted at an interviewer's home.
- require more than 90 minutes (one-way) travel for the student.
- assess student’s academic profile (grades, test scores) or financial need.
- discuss other applicants or other college that the student is applying to.
Useful interview questions

What are your interests besides your schoolwork?

To which of your non-academic activities are you most committed? How has this affected your academic coursework?

What do you have in common with your closest friends? How do you differ from them?

How important is diversity in the type of educational environment you seek?

What is appealing to you about Columbia in particular?

What specific book, article or journal have you read in the last year that had a significant impact on your thinking or perspective?
Writing interview reports

The interview report should be entered in ARC Online as soon as possible after the interview (and certainly by the published deadline) and cover the following questions:

- How would the student fare in the Core or in the Engineering curriculum?
- Any sense of the student's character or intellectualism?
- Can s/he learn from others and utilize this information to gain new perspective?
- Do you see a match between this candidate and Columbia or New York City?
### Submitting interview reports

**Requested Assignments (0)**

- No requested assignments.

**New Assignments (0)**

- No new assignments.

**Current Interviews (1)**

| Created: 09/26/2010 | Alexandra Hamilton | Edit Interview Report / Decline applicant information |

Click to access report form.
Enter a numerical recommendation from 1 to 5

Indicate if applicant did not respond to request or is no longer interested in Columbia.

Type your interview report here. Aim for 2-3 paragraphs with a brief summary of the conversation and your overall impression of the student and his or her fit for Columbia.

TIP: You may wish to draft your text in a word processing program first and paste your report into this box.

Be sure to hit “Save and mark interview complete.” You can always go back and edit your comments or your ratings.
ARC timeline

**Summer**
- Online application released and first applications submitted

**Fall**
- **October**: Early Decision Interviews begin
- **November 1**: Early Decision application deadline
- **Late November**: Early Decision reports due

**Winter**
- **Mid-December**: Early Decision results released
- **January 1**: Regular Decision application deadline
- **Mid-February**: Regular Decision reports due

**Spring**
- **Early April**: Regular Decision admission results released
- **May 1**: Deadline for admitted students to submit enrollment forms and deposits
Post-Decision actions

If a student has been admitted:
- Contact the student by phone or by e-mail and offer your congratulations.

If a student has been deferred or waitlisted:
- Do NOT contact the applicant.
- If the student contacts you, please direct him or her to our office.

If a student has been denied:
- Do NOT contact the applicant.
- If the student contacts you, please direct him or her to our office.
Frequently asked questions
“Can I interview?”

“I am an independent college counselor, an admissions officer at another institution or a for-profit college preparation consultant.”

or

“I also interview undergraduate applicants from another college/university.”

No, you are not eligible to interview applicants.

“My son or daughter is a senior in high school and is applying to Columbia College or Columbia Engineering this admissions cycle.”

No, you must take a sabbatical this cycle.

“My sibling attends XYZ High School and is applying to Columbia this admissions cycle.”

or

“I am a guidance counselor or teacher at XYZ High School.”

Yes, you may interview, but you should interview students from another high school.
“How does Admissions work?”

- Recruitment
  - Over 40 states and 30 countries
  - Visits to public and private high schools, community-based organizations, college fairs
  - Dozens of on-campus programs

- Application Review
  - Holistic and contextual
  - Interview reports are one of many different factors
“Why didn’t you follow my recommendation?”

One of the unfortunate aspects of our selectivity is that we have to deny so many appealing students. When your comments are enthusiastic, rest assured that your evaluation will weigh heavily in our consideration. However, please keep in mind that the Admissions Committee is often privy to additional information that we must use to form our decisions.

We take into strong consideration negative reports. We appreciate the insights that the interview reports provide in helping us determine the right fit for Columbia. There are situations, however, in which the talents a student demonstrates outweigh the weakness in the interview.
Case Study #1: “John”
Admission Officer’s summary

**Academics**
- Perfect SAT scores.
- Expected to get all 7's on IB exams with the exception of Spanish.
- Presented strongly by the school. Teacher writes he is serious but always ready for a good science joke.

**Extra Curricular Activities**
- Percussion in multiple ensembles, senior editor of economics and business magazine at the school, and student council tutor. Very involved. Made a strong impact on his school’s community.
- Well written short answer about running. Strong essay about playing a Korean instrument. Personality comes through in his writing.

**Columbia Fit**
- Book list hits interesting points, especially in terms of his interest in science and economics.
- “Why Columbia?” essay is a bit lacking, but he understands the Core.

In all, John is a strong performer in the classroom and has the academic strength we look for, but is he the right fit?
Case Study #2: “Megan”
Admission Officer’s summary

Academics
- Trilingual. Perfect testing. All A/A+ student.
- Teacher recommendations are glowing.

Extra Curricular Activities
- Math team, news editor, founding president of a service group, and president of Amnesty International. Attended Columbia and Stanford’s summer high school programs.
- Short answer about passion for service, writes about Girl Scouts experience. Essay is interesting, well written and speaks of desire for travel/educational career.

Columbia Fit
- Great “Why Columbia?” Speaks to interests and work in microfinance.
- Seems very hard working, very driven. Strong passion for mathematical thinking. Terrific potential here.

In all, Megan is a strong performer in the classroom and has the academic strength we look for, but is she the right fit?
Case Study #1: “John”
ARC Report: Recommended with Reservation (2)

Any sense of the student’s character or intellectualism?

- Throughout the interview, John was fairly relaxed and friendly. We started off talking about his interest in Economics and Physics. He said he wanted to pursue those majors mainly because of their ability to explain the way the real world works, such as how a Starbucks store can be successful or how “an understanding of quantum mechanics led to the development of transistors and the creation of modern electronics.”
- The answers were intriguing for me as they showed a natural curiosity to search beyond the what to the how and why, but John never really demonstrated to me any passion for his answers throughout the interview.

How would the student fare in the Core or in the Engineering curriculum?

- He rarely went into more than a couple sentences for each response, despite many instances where there was a natural opening for him to elaborate more on why he felt the way he did. I guess he just didn’t seem to invest much effort into his answers – for example when it came time for him to ask me questions, whatever my response there weren’t any follow up questions.

Did you see a match between this candidate and Columbia?

- ... John gave a lot of the right answers, but he wasn’t able to convince me that he really believed in those answers.
Case Study #2: “Megan”
ARC Report: My Highest Recommendation (5)

Any sense of the student’s character or intellectualism?

- Megan is one of the most forward-thinking, pleasant, mature and intelligent students with whom I have ever interacted.
- Not only is she a member of extraordinary clubs and activities, but for each one, she provided an impressive example of success. Newsweek interviewed her team about a previous article written in the school newspaper. She started as woman’s shelter for battered women. She interned at a bank and brainstormed ways the bank could improve strategy for a targeted market.

How would the student fare in the Core or in the Engineering curriculum?

- During our conversation, she provided countless examples of how science and math have transformed the way she problem solves...
- In every topic which we discussed, she presented a well thought-out, innovative and interesting response that would be expected of a 30+ year old adult. Her curiosity and interest in math, finance, and even Columbia were key themes in each of her responses to my questions.

Did you see a match between this candidate and Columbia?

- The Columbia Core is a differentiator for Megan for applying to the school...
- She is a self-starter, an innovative entrepreneur and has my highest recommendation.
Case Study #1: “John”
Final Decision

John’s application presented a very difficult decision. Based on the comments from the ARC report, the decision was a deny.
Case Study #2: “Megan”
Final Decision

Megan was admitted to Columbia College.
Other resources

• The ARC website contains our entire ARC Handbook, so feel free to review at your leisure.

• ARC Chairs can get more information on making interview assignments in the ARC Handbook

• Check out ARC-on-the-Go in ARC Online for examples of interview reports, an explanation of our ratings system, and information about other ways to get involved in the ARC.
Happy Interviewing!

Contact us at any time at arcinfo@columbia.edu with questions.

ROAR, LION ROAR!