Alumni Representative Committee (ARC) members are Columbia ambassadors all over the United States and the world, and while members hail from different professional backgrounds and graduation years, all have a desire to share their Columbia experience with prospective students. ARC members help support the Office of Undergraduate Admissions by interviewing applicants, representing Columbia at local college fairs and hosting regional programs for admitted students, so that as many students as possible have the opportunity to learn about the unique Columbia experience firsthand.

It is the goal of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions both to make sure that all students have a positive and safe experience in every interaction with alumni and to make sure that our alumni volunteers have a fulfilling and positive experience interacting with students. Keeping these goals in mind, we ask that alumni volunteers follow our Best Practices:

1. **Columbia’s responsibilities towards alumni:**
   a. The Office of Undergraduate Admissions will provide online training for interviewing to all alumni. The training presentation is available on the [ARC site](#), and we request that all ARC members review the training prior to interviewing. The ARC Handbook is also accessible to ARC members online. The Office of Undergraduate Admissions will also host in-person trainings on- and off-campus throughout the year.
   b. The Office of Undergraduate Admissions will encourage alumni to review the [Admissions website](#), specifically the [Frequently Asked Questions](#), so that they are prepared to answer questions posed by prospective students.
   c. The Office of Undergraduate Admissions will provide appropriate contact information for all applicants, including phone numbers and e-mail addresses as provided by students in their applications.
   d. The Director of the ARC will investigate fully any and all complaints by applicants directly with the alumni in question.

2. **Alumni responsibilities towards the interviewees:**
   a. ARC members will abide by the non-discrimination policies established by Columbia University.
   b. ARC members will treat all information provided by Columbia or the applicant as confidential.
   c. ARC members must abide by the best practices established by NACAC and the Ivy League and the best practices, expectations, and terms of use established by Columbia, including the best practices, expectations, and terms of use described in this document.

3. **Alumni Eligibility:**
   a. Conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived, will inform the ARC member’s eligibility. If an ARC member has any of the conflicts listed below, he or she must promptly disclose the conflict to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and take a sabbatical from interviewing until the conflict no longer exists. Such conflicts include:
      i. Employment as an Admissions Officer at any institute of higher education;
      ii. Employment as an Independent College Counselor or as a for-profit college preparation consultant;
      iii. Being the parent of a first-year applicant to Columbia College or Columbia Engineering.
   b. An ARC member who is employed by a secondary school and works with high school students in any teaching or advisory capacity must refrain from interviewing candidates from that high school.
Columbia University’s Alumni Representative Committee
Best Practices, Expectations, and Terms of Use Statement

c. An ARC member whose child is applying to college but NOT to Columbia must refrain from interviewing candidates from that child’s high school.
d. An ARC member whose sibling or immediate family member is applying to Columbia must refrain from interviewing the sibling or immediate family member and all other candidates from that applicant’s high school.
e. An ARC member who has any personal knowledge of a specific student or family member of that student must refrain from interviewing that applicant; alternatively, however, a letter of recommendation sent to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions would be welcome.
f. An ARC member may not conduct undergraduate admission interviews for any other institution.

4. Expectations for ARC member and Applicant interactions:
   a. ARC members should strive to create a safe and mutually respectful environment and interaction.
   b. ARC members should not create any impressions or expectations, positive or negative, about the applicant’s probability of admission.
   c. ARC members should not initiate conversations that may make a candidate uncomfortable or that are excessively personal, whether with regard to the candidate or the interviewer.
   d. ARC members should use appropriate language.
   e. ARC members should not make disparaging comparisons of secondary or post-secondary institutions or ask the student where else he or she is applying.
   f. ARC members should give the student appropriate lead time before an interview and should not schedule the interview one day in advance.
   g. ARC members and applicants should provide each other with appropriate contact information prior to the interview in case of an emergency.

5. Interviewing expectations:
   a. An interview should occur in a safe and accessible location and at a time that is agreed upon by the applicant and the ARC member and that respects both parties’ commitments to school, work, activities and family obligations.
      i. An interview may not take place in an interviewer’s home.
      ii. An interview may not be scheduled during school hours unless being held on school grounds in cooperation with the school’s counseling office.
   b. An interview may be conducted over the phone or via videoconference when both parties agree and circumstances make a face-to-face meeting impracticable.
   c. An interview should last approximately 30-45 minutes and should never be longer than an hour; longer interviews may give false expectations to applicants.
   d. An interview should not cover grades or test scores, as this information is already provided to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. Please refer to the suggested interviewing questions provided in the ARC Training Presentation.
   e. ARC members should submit interview reports shortly after conducting the interview and no later than the posted deadline.

The Alumni Representative Committee and the Office of Undergraduate Admissions reserves the right to remove any ARC member found in violation of the above best practices.
We greatly appreciate the incredible efforts of our ARC members and welcome any questions or concerns! Please feel free to contact us at Arcinfo@columbia.edu. ARC Site Terms of Use

As an ARC member, you will be privy to private and confidential information afforded only to ARC members. ARC members have access to contact information for alumni and for assigned interviewees and to information concerning Columbia admissions.

In accepting these Terms of Use, ARC members agree to keep information that they are privy to by virtue of their position as a member of ARC – information shared on the ARC site and any communications from the admissions office to ARC members – private and confidential. ARC members agree not to share such information with any members of the general public outside of ARC or the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. ARC members should not respond to media inquiries; any media requests should be forwarded to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at Arcinfo@columbia.edu.

In addition, in accepting the Terms of Use, ARC members agree not to engage in any public forum or for profit endeavor where the information gained by their ARC membership is used. ARC members further agree to promptly disclose any possible or actual conflicts of interest to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and to refrain from conducting interviews that may be impacted by the conflict of interest.

The National Association for College Admission Counseling Statement of Principles of Good Practice is a framework that all admissions professionals utilize in their recruitment and evaluation of prospective students. As members of the ARC and as representatives of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, please review these principles to understand our expectations of appropriate student contact.

In agreeing with the terms of use, you are agreeing to adhere to our ARC Best Practices Statement published on the ARC site and to stand by the National Association for College Admission Counseling Statement of Principles of Good Practice reviewed above.

Access

Access is granted only to confirmed alumni of Columbia University. For access to ARC Online, an individual must have a UNI—a series of letters and numbers—and a password that he/she receives from Columbia University Information Technology (CUIT). Information regarding access to the UNI system can be retrieved through the Columbia Alumni Association website. Individuals who are not eligible alumni may not access ARC Online. We ask that you keep your UNI and password information secure and not share it with anyone.

Utilizing Contact Information

The contact information provided, whether alumni or student contact information, should only be utilized for the intended purpose of the ARC. Though we encourage and support forming relationships between alumni, we ask that ARC members exercise discretion in contacting fellow alumni and not utilize the ARC to promote business or personal interests. In the development of the new ARC Online, we have limited student contact information to all relevant information necessary for an ARC member to contact students, learn their fields of interest and carry out interviews.

Agreement of Understanding
As a volunteer and interviewer for the Alumni Representative Committee (ARC), you will have access to nonpublic documents and other information concerning Columbia and its applicants (“Confidential Information”). You understand the importance of and sensitivity required for interviewing applicants. You agree not to share or disseminate Confidential Information (including, but not limited to, application information or information about the application review process), whether inadvertently or intentionally, to others, except to employees or representatives of Columbia who have a legitimate reason to know the Confidential Information for purposes related to their duties at Columbia. You further agree not to discuss, disclose or reproduce any Confidential Information except to carry out your duties while performing services for the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. You agree that the duty of confidentiality with regard to Confidential Information you obtain while representing the Office of Undergraduate Admissions continues even after your volunteer services are concluded.

“Confidential Information” does not include any such information which (a) was or becomes a matter of public information or publicly available through no fault on your part and no fault on anyone else’s part with a duty of confidentiality; or (b) was acquired by you from someone else who was entitled to disclose it to you.

You further agree to abide by the terms of Columbia’s Protection of Minors policy as a volunteer on behalf of Columbia University, and when interacting with prospective students, you will ensure that all interactions between yourself and any minor are safe, appropriate, and respectful.

You fully understand that as an ambassador of the Columbia University Office of Undergraduate Admissions, your compliance with the regulations set forth by the ARC is critical in maintaining the integrity of the interview process. You hereby agree to abide by the ARC Best Practices to the best of your ability, and to adhere to good practices in carrying out your responsibilities as an alumni volunteer.