



Lawrence University Alumni Association

ALUMNI AMBASSADOR

Interviewing Guide



LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY

APPLETON, WISCONSIN

Quick Facts



Diversity

69% white • 19% domestic students of color
11% hold non-U.S. passports
1% race/ethnicity unknown



Varsity Sports

NCAA Division III

Baseball • Basketball • Cross Country
Fencing • Football • Ice Hockey • Soccer
Softball • Swimming & Diving • Tennis
Track, Indoor & Outdoor • Volleyball



Residential

98% live on campus all four years in
multiyear/multiclass housing
7 large residence halls • 2 apartments
10+ theme, formal group or Greek houses



Easy to Get Here

Fly United, Delta, Allegiant into Appleton
International Airport, 6 miles from campus
90 miles north of Milwaukee
200 miles north of Chicago
280 miles east of Minneapolis



National | International

Nearly every state • >50 countries
24% from Wisconsin
15% from Illinois
15% from rest of Midwest
15% from outside U.S.
13% from Western U.S.
12% from Northeast U.S.
6% from Southern U.S.

Volunteering and Community Service

Lawrentians provide more than 12,000
service hours to 144 organizations each year.



Music Ensembles

Orchestra • Bands • Choirs • Jazz
Percussions • Opera • A Capella
Gamelan • Baroque • Improvisation
Musical Theatre • Dozens of other groups



150 Student Groups and Activities

Including

Lawrence International • GlobeMed
Model UN • Swing Dance • Slam Poetry Club
Soccer Club • Ultimate Frisbee
International Cabaret
Asia-A • Cultural Food Club

Thank you.

Thank you for helping connect prospective future Lawrentians with your alma mater. We presume you have chosen to serve Lawrence University as a volunteer interviewer because you value your experience and wish to ensure that other deserving students have a chance for the same opportunity. Your personal touch has the potential to make a strong and positive impact on each student's impression of Lawrence.

Thank you for helping the admissions office gather more insights about Lawrence applicants so that we can select students who are well-matched for our university and ready to take full advantage of the Lawrence experience.

Thank you for helping position your alma mater as one of the premier liberal arts institutions in the country.

When new counselors start working in the Office of Admissions, one of the first things we do is introduce them to our mission. It's pretty straightforward, which makes it easy to remember:

We will treat our prospective students—and those who influence them—in a way that makes them feel, regardless of the outcome, that nobody treated them better than Lawrence University.

We trust you will adopt the same approach in your important work as an interviewer.

The following pages provide information that will help you conduct your interviews confidently and effectively. This document is not the last word about all things Lawrence. The university website and of course, members of the admissions office and alumni and constituency engagement will also be resources for you.

With gratitude,
The Lawrence admissions team

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FINDING A FIT

An interview is an essential way for a student and a Lawrence representative to explore together how Lawrence may fit with that student's talents and aspirations—and vice versa. Interviews allow applicants to show Lawrence the kind of person they are beyond the transcripts, essays and recommendation letters they submit with their applications.

RECRUITING STUDENTS WHO ARE WELL-MATCHED FOR LAWRENCE

An interview also serves as a powerful way for students to connect personally—through the interviewer—to Lawrence.

THE VALUE OF ALUMNI INTERVIEWS

Logistics—as well as the laws of physics—prevent the admissions office from meeting with every applicant face-to-face to achieve these goals. Alumni interviewers who come from the same communities where our prospective students live extend the reach of the admissions office and provide meaningful insights that will better inform admission decisions.

Interviewing is a meaningful and important way for alumni to stay engaged with their alma mater.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALUMNI INTERVIEWERS

- Build connections with prospective students
- Conduct informative interviews
- Ensure our information about the applicant is accurate (email, address, etc.)
- Complete and submit interview reports in a timely manner
- Abide by Lawrence's non-discrimination policy (see Appendix B)
- Abide by Lawrence's guidelines for interviewers for interactions with minors (see Appendix C)
- Abide by Lawrence's alumni interview conflict of interest policy (see Appendix D)
- Respect and protect the confidentiality of applicants

Interviewing Logistics: A Step-by-Step Guide

1. SELECT YOUR CANDIDATE(S)

First you will need to select your candidate(s). Log in to the Alumni Ambassador Portal at admissions.lawrence.edu/portal/alumni with your username and password. The first time through it will ask you to change your password. Once you're in, you'll see a list of students within 50 miles of you. Click on students' names to learn a little bit about and to "claim" them.

2. SCHEDULE YOUR INTERVIEW(S) WITH CANDIDATE(S)

Once you have selected your candidate(s), you can email, call or text the candidate to schedule the interview, according to your preference. Quite often, you'll have to employ more than one method of communication in order to reach the candidate. Best practice is to start with an email and follow up with a phone call or text message. (See Appendix A: Initial Email Template.)

When you contact the candidate, clearly identify yourself as a Lawrence University graduate, and state that the admissions office has asked that you reach out for an interview. (This will not be a completely foreign concept to the candidate, who will be aware that Lawrence conducts such interviews).

Remember that interviews are **optional** for the applicant. If the applicant does not wish to have an interview, simply note this on the interview report. If you don't hear back from an applicant after reaching out to set up the interview, feel free to try a different mode of communication or a second email, phone call or text message. If, after a second attempt, the student does not respond, please file the report in the Alumni Ambassador Portal to indicate that the candidate did not respond to your invitation and move on to the next candidate.

The candidate may ask questions about the nature of the interview.

Don't get too bogged down in the details of what you'll ask; every interview is different. Just remember this is simply an opportunity for you and the candidate to explore together how Lawrence may fit with the student's talents and aspirations.

Both you and the candidate are busy, so a mutually convenient time and location will go a long way toward a successful interview. Speaking of locations ...

Interviewing Logistics: A Step-by-Step Guide

3. CONSIDER THE INTERVIEW LOCATION

For starters, we strongly recommend holding your interview(s) in a public place. The members of the admissions office do so themselves. It creates a “safe environment” for both you and the candidate. Plus, it makes it easier to protect interviewers against any allegations that may run contrary to the guidelines for interacting with minors (detailed in Appendix C).

Types of places we recommend:

- Coffee shop (can be noisy but cool)
- Library or bookstore/coffee shop (great way to interview the student while parents browse elsewhere)

If you do meet in a public location, please make sure the student will know how to identify you (what you’ll be wearing, for example). If you conduct the interviews in your workplace, the office door should remain open or ajar for the same reasons we mention above.

We probably don’t have to say this, but we’ll suggest it anyway: Do not conduct interviews in your home or the candidate’s home.

4. INTERVIEW DAY: SETTING THE TONE

As a representative of Lawrence University, one of your jobs will be to create a mutually respectful environment:

- Conversational tones work best.
- If you are comfortable and relaxed, it makes it easier for the student to be comfortable and relaxed.
- Applicants should leave interviews feeling good about themselves and about Lawrence.
- Typical interviews last 30–45 minutes, including the time for the applicant to ask questions.
- Some interviewers prefer to have the candidate ask questions at the end. Some prefer to make it an interchange. Find a style that works for you.

Interviewing Logistics: A Step-by-Step Guide

5. FOLLOW A SIMPLE STRUCTURE IN YOUR INTERVIEW

1. Introductions.
2. Remind the candidate about your goal in the interview, which is to learn more about the candidate and explore how his/her/their talents and aspirations fit with Lawrence.
3. Ask your first question. For examples, see Appendix F: Interview Questions.
4. Let the conversation flow.
5. Listen attentively and ask appropriate follow-up questions.
6. Give the candidate time to ask questions.
7. Conclude.

6. SOME THINGS TO DO DURING THE INTERVIEW

- Convey your enthusiasm and professionalism.
- Use appropriate language and ask pertinent questions.
- Ask open-ended questions to promote conversation.
- Maintain respectful eye contact (without staring).
- Recognize the power of silence in an interview after you ask a question. It's a great space to allow candidates ample time to think, respond and expand.
- Recognize the power your affirmative non-verbal and verbal cues have in continuing to make the candidate comfortable.
- Make sure you are conveying accurate information about Lawrence. Keep yourself as informed and updated as possible. Good sources of information include lawrence.edu, especially the web pages for admissions and financial aid.
- Take notes that will help inform your interview report.

Interviewing Logistics: A Step-by-Step Guide

7. SOME THINGS TO AVOID DURING THE INTERVIEW

- Do not ask about GPA, SAT, class rank or other numerical measures. The admissions office will take care of this in the application process.
- Do not ask whether Lawrence is the candidate's first choice or where else the candidate is applying. (If an applicant volunteers this information, that is fine, but it is not necessary to include it in the report. Consider asking the applicant, "What is important to you in a college?" instead.)
- Do not make disparaging comments about any secondary or post-secondary institutions.
- Do not create any impression or expectation, positive or negative, about the applicant's probability of admission.
- Avoid the personal (i.e., human resources no-no) questions such as, "Do you have a significant other?"

8. WRITE AND SUBMIT YOUR INTERVIEW REPORT

Write your report as soon as possible after the interview has concluded to assure accuracy and thoroughness.

Priority deadlines to submit interview reports:

- Dec. 1 for Early Action 1 candidates
- Jan. 10 for Early Action 2 candidates
- Feb. 15 for Regular Decision candidates

The admissions office will continue to accept reports past priority deadlines. However, submission on or before priority deadlines will ensure interview reports are added to applicants' files in a timely manner during application review.

Here are some other things to keep in mind as you write your report:

- You are the eyes and ears for the admissions office. Your insights provide a context that is usually not available through the application.
- Share insights about the applicant's intellectual/professional interests and the motivation for these interests.
- Highlight impressions or observations about the student and his/her/their potential contributions to the Lawrence community.
- Assess the applicant's personality, maturity and ability to communicate ideas.

Interviewing Logistics: A Step-by-Step Guide

- Do not describe students in physical, racial, religious, sexual or other stereotyping terms.
- While it is fine to write, “This is the best applicant I’ve interviewed this year,” it is otherwise best to avoid making direct comparisons between applicants.

See Appendix G for more—much more—information about writing your report.

Appendices

Appendices

APPENDIX A—INITIAL EMAIL TEMPLATE

To: Student

Subject: Lawrence University Admissions Interview

Body:

Dear (first name),

I am so pleased to learn of your interest in Lawrence University! I am a Lawrence University alumnus/a, Class of 'XX, and I conduct interviews on behalf of the Office of Admissions. I would love an opportunity to talk with you and hear more about your interest in (academic or extracurricular areas of interest if available in the alumni portal) as well as your goals as you consider where you'll spend the next four years. Being a Lawrentian has influenced my life in incredible ways, and I look forward to learning more about you and how Lawrence might fit with your plans.

Please respond to let me know if there is a time next week that works for you to meet. (*Feel free to offer specific times and propose a location—for example, I'll be at Starbucks on College Avenue from 1 to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 15 if you are available during that time.*)

Sincerely,

Your Name and Class year

Lawrence University Alumni Interviewer

Your job title and place of work

APPENDIX B—NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Lawrence University does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, parental or marital status, age or disability in its programs and activities. Furthermore, Lawrence, in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, recognizes that qualified students who have diagnosed disabilities, including specific learning disabilities, are entitled to an equal opportunity to benefit from the educational program of the university and that reasonable academic accommodations may be necessary to provide that opportunity to disabled students.

APPENDIX C—GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEWERS FOR INTERACTIONS WITH MINORS

To ensure that you are providing an environment that is safe and free from any misinterpretations by either party in the interview (the interviewer or the candidate), we have taken some inspiration from other colleges' handbooks and adapted them for Lawrence use (IHRTLUHC).

Do the following:

- Hold your interview in a public location, mutually agreeable to the applicant and interviewer.
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries with an applicant at all times.
- Treat applicants with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity and consideration.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism or comparison when interacting with an applicant.

Avoid:

- Being alone with an applicant without another responsible adult being notified.
- Touching or speaking to an applicant in a sexual or otherwise inappropriate manner.
- Smoking or using tobacco products, or possessing or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while interacting with an applicant.
- Providing transportation to an applicant.
- Accepting gifts from or giving gifts to an applicant during the interview process.
- Using profanity in the presence of applicants at any time.

Appendices

APPENDIX D—ALUMNI INTERVIEW CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

In order to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest, the admissions office requests that alumni interviewers with children applying to Lawrence withdraw from the interview volunteer list for that child's senior year in high school. In addition, we discourage interviewers from interviewing the children of business partners, supervisors or their own children's close friends. In the latter cases, it is best to have the prospective student meet with an objective interviewer. If you know the student well, we welcome a letter in support of his/her/their application to Lawrence.

Note: Lawrence volunteers are considered representatives of Lawrence University. As such, they are prohibited from using confidential information (such as a parent's occupation, business contacts, etc.) for private purposes.

APPENDIX E—STRATEGIC MESSAGING

To reinforce the research done by the Office of Communications and ensure consistent messaging on and off campus, three themes to reinforce include:

- A rigorous and challenging academic experience
- A welcoming and supportive community
- Preparation to succeed in a rapidly changing world

APPENDIX F—INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Open-ended questions create conversations. Candidates can roam more freely with their answers when you give them questions that start with:

- The two-part “what and why” question:
 - “What ...” which asks the candidate to identify something, followed closely with
 - “Why ...” which asks the candidate to further explain the “what.”
- “How ...”
- “Describe ...” or “Explain ...”
- “Tell me ...” (A powerful follow-up is, “Tell me more about that ...”)

Closed-ended questions (i.e., questions that lead to a simple yes/no response) will leave you with more time and fewer answers than you might like. Avoid opening your interview questions/prompts with “Did ...” or “Is ...” or any type of “Could, would or will ...”

The following groups of questions are merely suggestions, designed to get your inquisitive energy going. You may have variations on these that resonate more with you. The more interviews you conduct, the more you see which questions are best at delivering the best answers. In each group are questions that allow students to reflect on past or current experiences, as well as questions to get them talking about what they might do at Lawrence. Pick some of each. The latter go a long way toward assessing fit.

Note: Nearly every “What” question below should be followed by a “Why,” if the candidate doesn’t offer an explanation.

Questions about academic life *(pick a few go-to questions from this)*

About their past or present

- Tell me about your high school.
 - How would you describe it to another student?
 - What is your favorite class?
 - What is your favorite thing about your school?
 - What would you change about it if you could?
- *If the school is a private school:* “Describe your process of choosing the school you attend.”
- What is a highlight of your high school experience?
 - Is there something that will stand out, something that you will always remember?
- Tell me about the courses you are taking.
 - Is there one course or subject that you are particularly excited about?
- Tell me about a project, paper or lab, etc., that you were especially proud of when you completed it.

About their future

- What are you considering studying in college? What inspired that?
- If you could get a national grant to research something, what would you want to study/research? (A great question if you want to get a sense of how someone might take advantage of what we offer at Lawrence.)
- How did your interest in Lawrence develop? What do you hope to do there?

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Questions about extracurricular life

Students who are engaged in activities outside the classroom become some of our most successful Lawrentians. Look for evidence of engagement beyond the classroom.

About their past or present

- What do you like to do in your spare time?
- Once you learn about their extracurricular life:
 - Describe those activities that you are excited/passionate about.
 - Why do you feel this way about them?
- Describe a time you've had to be in charge. What was it like?

About their future

- What activities—or kinds of activities—would you like to pursue in college?

Questions about the fuzzier, harder-to-define stuff

About their past or present

- Tell me about yourself.
- Tell me about your family.
- What motivates you or really gets you going?
 - *Look for evidence here of drive and self-starting. Not a requirement for admission, but a handy tool for them to be successful.*
- Is there a book you have read or movie you have seen that caused you to reconsider your perspective on something, or may have caused you to act on a concern or belief? Tell me more about it.
- Tell me about a person or an event that has changed or inspired you.
- What qualities would you look for in a friend?
 - *Look for evidence of making connections with others, another key element in successful students.*

About their future

- What would you do with a free day?
- What would you try, if you knew people would never judge you or the thing you tried?

- *This explores willingness to stretch and take risks (not willingness to break the law).*
- What would you like your college experience to be like?
- What have you been waiting for me to ask?

The following questions address **resilience**, an important quality in successful Lawrentians. The ability to solve problems alone is fine, but we also want to see how or whether they seek help in solving problems (a good thing to do, by the way). Choose one from this list:

- Tell me about a time you had to bounce back from a failure or setback.
 - How did you feel about it?
 - What did you do?
 - How did you do it?
- If you had a mulligan—a do-over—what would you re-do or change?
- What do you do when you're faced with a difficult problem?

Share the timeless experiences

While some things change over time, many experiences remain the same.

- *Freshman Studies*
- Relationships with professors
- Intellectual inquiry
- Residential campus
- Ability to do a variety of things
- Sense of community
- Tutorials
- Lifelong relationships
- Björklunden
- Influence of music
- Athletics
- Variety of off-campus experiences
- Preparation for life after Lawrence

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APPENDIX G—WRITING AND SUBMITTING YOUR INTERVIEW REPORT

For your interview report, you'll be asked to address a number of attributes. Listed under each attribute are some suggested topics and questions that you may want to keep in mind while conducting the interview.

Intellectual Engagement and Curiosity

Please comment on the candidate's intellectual engagement—i.e., curiosity, academic experiences, love of or interest in learning, creativity, depth of thought, breadth of awareness and articulateness in expression. Please cite specific examples from your conversation (other than class rank, GPA, SAT/ACT scores, etc.) to support your observations.

- Is this a student who will take advantage of Lawrence's focus on the life of the mind?
- How does the candidate demonstrate potential for growth?
- What are the distinguishing features of the candidate's academic accomplishments?
- Would you have wanted to be in the classroom or working on a project with this candidate?

Commitment and Personal Motivation in Activities

Community is very important at Lawrence. Accordingly, we want to ensure our candidates would become full, active, positive participants in the community. In this light, please comment on the candidate's one or two most significant extracurricular activities or other involvements and note any outstanding achievements.

- How does the candidate use free time?
- How has the candidate stood out in extracurricular activities?
- What motivates the candidate to participate in these activities?
- How could the candidate contribute to the Lawrence community?

Character, Drive and Resilience

Success at Lawrence requires students to know what they do well—as well as what they do less well. Our most successful students know how to take initiative, collaborate with others, take responsibility for themselves and seek (or give) help when it's needed. With those qualities in mind:

- How would you describe the candidate's personal qualities?
- How does the candidate perceive him/her/themself or others?
- To what degree is the candidate a self-starter, likely to take advantage of what Lawrence offers?
- How resilient is the candidate?—Is the candidate ready to take risks?

Match Rating

On a scale of 5 to 1, with 5 representing an excellent match and 1 a very poor match, how would you assess this candidate's fit with Lawrence?

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APPENDIX H—FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (AND FREQUENTLY GIVEN ANSWERS)

What is discussed in a typical interview?

Interviews are conversations that help the interviewer and the candidate explore together how well Lawrence fits with the candidate's talents and aspirations. As such, interviews typically cover academics, extracurricular activities and personal qualities—the stuff that goes beyond the facts we get from a student's application, test scores, transcripts and lists of activities.

The interview should provide insight into the student's intellectual curiosity and passion, motivation, commitment, leadership, character, initiative, integrity and maturity.

Appendices G and H describe how the questions we ask get at the things that identify successful Lawrentians.

Should I ask the candidate about SAT scores, GPA and class rank?

The Office of Admissions already has this information, so it is not necessary to waste your time with this.

What are the most important qualities the Office of Admissions is seeking?

The Admissions Committee reviews applications with the goal of admitting bright and engaging young people who will take full advantage of the full Lawrence experience. Our most successful students are:

- Intellectually engaged
- Open-minded
- Community-oriented
- Aware of the nature of a liberal arts college—especially one with a conservatory of music

Lawrence receives many more qualified applicants than can be admitted, so the admissions process requires us to choose few from many qualified applicants. Admissions officers spend a great deal of time reading every component of each candidate's application. Personal information and essays are important. Admissions officers also look for strong faculty recommendations and a high school transcript that shows consistently high achievement. Interviewers should realize Lawrence must turn down many candidates who are fully qualified and would be excellent students.

What are some desirable characteristics I should be looking for in the interview?

- Excitement about learning: How intellectually passionate is the student?
- Serious interest in learning—not just in receiving good grades.
- Independence of thought: Lawrence wants students who don't just recite back what a teacher says, but who demonstrate that they can think on their own.
- Willingness to take intellectual risks, to stretch in terms of course choices.
- Intellectual curiosity: A capacity for intellectual reflection and an interest in ideas.
- Is the student taking rigorous courses just to make a transcript look good to colleges, or for the love of learning? Listen to how the student talks about the academic experience and responses to questions such as “How did you happen to choose to take AP calculus this year?” and “What are you most looking forward to in college?” Students who answer that last one with “getting away from my parents” pale in comparison to those who talk about how excited they are to dive into the college’s curriculum because there are so many interesting courses to take.
- Engagement with the world and with others—a demonstrated commitment to the common good.
- Creativity—both academic and extracurricular: How does the student exhibit originality of thought and/or activities?
- Unique interests and talents to share with others.
- Diversity—in thought, perspective, geography, ethnicity and/or socioeconomic class.
- Demonstrated or potential leadership ability.

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What should I tell a candidate about probability of admission?

Even if the student is playing the marimba with one hand, dribbling a basketball with the other and reciting every digit after the decimal point in pi—while interrupting occasionally to improvise a poem—do not make assurances of admission. Let the admissions office make the decision.

Better to simply say something encouraging like, “I really think you would love Lawrence, and I hope you receive good news from the admissions office.”

How will I find out about the admissions office decisions on applicants I have interviewed?

To see the applicant’s admission decision, log in to the alumni portal and check the “Decision” column for updates.

Is an interview required?

Interviews are not required, but they do provide an important opportunity for the admissions office team to gather more information about the candidates whose applications they are reading.

I have a million other questions ...

For more information about how admissions at Lawrence works—because there is way too much to pack into this interviewers’ guide—please visit our website:

lawrence.edu/admissions/apply

You can also connect with the Office of Admissions at:

admissions@lawrence.edu

800-227-0982

920-832-6500

-OR-

Amanda Bradley

Associate Director of Admissions

Director of Alumni Admissions Engagement

920-832-6916

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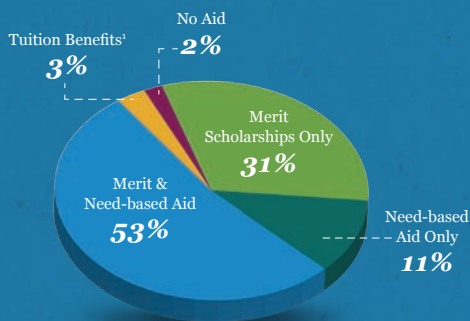
APPLICANT ADMISSION DEADLINES

APPLICATION METHOD	APPLICATION DEADLINE	WE NOTIFY	STUDENTS DECIDE
Early Action I	Nov. 1	Dec. 15	May 1
Early Action II	Dec. 1	Jan. 25	May 1
Regular Decision	Jan. 15	Apr. 1	May 1

Learn more about the admission process at lawrence.edu/admissions/apply.

FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIPS

98% of all Lawrentians receive some form of financial aid.



**For eligible employee children of participating Associated Colleges of the Midwest, National Tuition Exchange and Lawrence University.*

INCOMING FIRST-YEAR CLASS

3.64	Average unweighted GPA
3.91	Average weighted GPA
27%	Top 5% of HS class
42%	Top 10% of HS class
27–32	ACT Composite
570–710	SAT Reading
610–710	SAT Math

Test scores shown reflect the middle 50% of all freshmen. Lawrence does not require standardized tests, nor does it prefer the ACT to SAT (or vice-versa). We will accept the new SAT as we did the old.