



Fitts Chat

(Mar 21 2016, 17:27:43 -05:00 CDT - Mar 21 2016, 19:02:03 -05:00 CDT)

Time	From -> To	Message
Mar 21, 17:27:43	TulaneAdmission -> Everyone	Welcome to tonight's chat! We will get started at 6:00 central time. You can begin submitting questions now. President Fitts will begin answering questions shortly.
Mar 21, 17:59:42	President Fitts -> Everyone	Good evening, everyone and welcome to tonight's chat. This is the first chat I've held as Tulane University's President, and I'm glad to be here. I'm joined by colleagues in Student Affairs, the Newcomb Tulane College and Financial Aid. Let's get going.
Mar 21, 18:01:23	emily97 -> President Fitts	How selective is admission into the residential communities? I particularly like Change Maker and Brain Wave!
	President Fitts -> emily97	This is our first year of offering residential learning communities to Freshmen, so we don't know how many students might be applying. These have been very popular on campus for upper division students, and for good reason. So we encourage everyone who is interested to apply by completing the application you can find on-line.
Mar 21, 18:02:57	green -> President Fitts	what are your main academic initiatives/goals with respects to the business school?
	President Fitts -> green	We will be starting construction this summer on a magnificent new addition to the Business School. Not only will it offer spectacular new classrooms and study spaces, but it supports the expansion in business offerings across the University. I've seen the plans and this building is going to be spectacular.
Mar 21, 18:06:49	Ken -> President Fitts	My son was accepted to several top University of California schools. He is interested in a pre-Med /biology major. With the significant difference in cost between UC and Tulane, what major benefit do you see for him to go to Tulane? Will he receive more personalized attention? Will tutoring help be more readily available? Thank you
	President Fitts -> Ken	Absolutely yes. Tulane offers the benefits of a major research university like you'd find at a UC, but with the intimacy of a small college. Our neuroscience department, for example, was just ranked in the top 10 nationwide, based, in part, on the faculty interaction and ability to research. Generally, our students graduate in four years. We have very robust academic support services, including tutoring and pre-med advisors.
Mar 21, 18:07:46	Andy117 -> President Fitts	What changes have you made since you've been at Tulane?
	President Fitts -> Andy117	I focused intensely on the entire undergraduate experience and that involves expanding the Tides Program, the Honors Program, advising, and the residential experience.
Mar 21, 18:09:20	Karen -> President Fitts	I would like to know that there is a support system in place to keep the students on the path, choosing the right classes, finding internships and ultimately staying focused.
	President Fitts -> Karen	All students are assigned to an academic advisor, whose job is to help with selection of courses, choice of major, etc. Additionally, our Success Center provides support on the transition to college, with issues such as time management and study habits. We have a number of programs geared to helping students think about their career options and internships, which is centered around an academic course which we encourage all undergraduates to take.
Mar 21, 18:12:38	Felipe_C -> President Fitts	What brought you to Tulane?
	President Fitts -> Felipe_C	Not the food-- it's too good. :) It's not the place to test the "Freshman 15." But, in all seriousness, it's the breadth of the entire academic program inside and outside the classroom. At Tulane, we educate the whole student, drawing from the liberal arts, sciences, and professional schools, and engaging our students in extracurricular activities on campus and throughout the city. The opportunities are unmatched.
Mar 21, 18:12:52	SunnySue -> President Fitts	How many applicants did you have this year for incoming Freshman class (Class of 2020)?
	President Fitts -> SunnySue	Just over 32,000.
Mar 21, 18:14:09	Igk -> President Fitts	If a student attended Top Scholars Weekend, would it be repetitive for him to also attend an orientation session in June?
	President Fitts -> Igk	While there may be some overlap, we encourage any participant in a Top Scholars Weekend to also participate in the orientation program. It's an opportunity to meet other members of the Freshman class and learn more about the first year experience at Tulane.

Mar 21, 18:15:57	Andy -> President Fitts	can you address the safety on the streets in the community bordering the campus, not the campus itself?
	President Fitts -> Andy	The Tulane campus and the areas around the Tulane campus are generally very safe. We have the benefit of being located in Uptown New Orleans, which is one of the nicest and safest parts of the City. We also have the benefit of our University Police Force patrolling a mile radius around campus. I've been a student at, taught at, or been involved with a number of urban universities, and Tulane is as safe as any of them.
Mar 21, 18:17:21	emily97 -> President Fitts	I am in love with everything about Tulane, and am so happy to have been accepted! However, I did not receive any merit or financial aid, making it unlikely that my family can afford full tuition in the fall. Is there any way that I can be re-evaluated for merit aid?
	President Fitts -> emily97	At this point, all merit decisions have been delivered to students. The window is still open to apply for Tulane need-based scholarships. You are encouraged to explore outside scholarship opportunities. Information can be find on the Tulane Financial Aid website.
Mar 21, 18:19:44	Carlo -> President Fitts	With regard to financial aid, when will we know how much aid TOPS will be providing?
	President Fitts -> Carlo	At this time, we are waiting on the State legislature. As you know, this is entirely a state-funded program. I will be travelling tomorrow to Baton Rouge to discuss this very issue. I wish I had a direct answer for you now, but this is still up in the air.
Mar 21, 18:19:59	Alen -> President Fitts	Is Every freshman automatically placed in Newcomb-Tulane college regardless of the majors they have chosen during application?
	President Fitts -> Alen	Yes.
Mar 21, 18:20:46	LYNNE -> President Fitts	Given the prominence of the Stone Center, do you see Tulane having a presence as the relations with Cuba begin to change?
	President Fitts -> LYNNE	Tulane University has had a long relationship with Cuba, even before the recent changes. And, yes, we envision having an even stronger relationship with Cuba going forward.
Mar 21, 18:23:02	Cb -> President Fitts	President Fitts, Could you expand a bit more regarding what changes have taken place year over year regarding Honors and Tulane Scholars?
	President Fitts -> Cb	We have been revising the Honors Program to provide a more robust academic curriculum for our Honors students. This year, students who are invited by Admission will have to opt in to the Honors Program. During their four years, they will complete an Honors Colloquium each semester, have the opportunity to live in Wall Residential College their Freshman year, and conclude their studies at Tulane with an Honors thesis project.
Mar 21, 18:25:40	paboo -> President Fitts	My daughter is coming from a diverse city, New York City, and a Diverse High School that had to be deligent in addressing issues of diversity throughout the 12 years she attended. So i would like to know what you have done to address issues of diversity with student body and faculty while you have been President at Tulane
	President Fitts -> paboo	One of the most important strengths of a great university is the diversity of its community. It's central to educating the next generation of leaders, as well as providing them the best educational environment. I am focusing quite intently on increasing the diversity of the student body, as well as supporting greater diversity on the faculty as well as the student body in hiring. To help further this effort, I appointed, last month, a Presidential Commission on Race and Tulane Values, which has been extremely energetic and helpful in charting the progress forward.
Mar 21, 18:28:17	Liam -> President Fitts	What would you say is a typical description of a Tulane student, specifically their focus on academics, their interests and what they do outside the classroom? Also, can you touch on the "party school" aspects that Tulane sometimes receives- are there students who are not extremely focused on partying, but still have other things to do on the weekends?
	President Fitts -> Liam	As somebody who has spent a time at a number of universities, I have found that Tulane students are distinctive in the breadth of their interests, their commitment to the community and their intellectual adventurousness. There are many activities across campus, including both academic and co-curricular, including in the evenings.
Mar 21, 18:29:42	Nicole/Margot -> President Fitts	What do you suggest that a student do to prepare prior to Orientation weekend? Are there any leadership, housing or other opportunities that should be applied to prior to orientation or can I come very new to the Tulane freshman process when I visit at orientation hopefully in June?

	President Fitts -> Nicole/Margot	The only applications that are due prior to your arrival would be for new Residential Learning Communities. I would recommend looking into the Explore program, to become familiar with what's offered, so when registration begins this Summer, you know if you want to participate.
Mar 21, 18:31:53	Lesa13 -> President Fitts	My son visited the Architecture department a year ago, have there been any changes in that area of study for the near future that he might be interested to know?
	President Fitts -> Lesa13	Students studying architecture can select either a four year bachelor's program or a five year master's program. The four year program provides a little more academic flexibility. I would encourage your son to also research the Taylor Center for Design Thinking, which is based in the School of Architecture. Taylor is sponsoring the new Changemaker Residential Learning Community in Paterson Hall.
Mar 21, 18:33:04	Shah -> President Fitts	Are Research Opportunities available to Freshmen? When and how do we apply for Research at Tulane?
	President Fitts -> Shah	Yes. Freshmen can get involved with faculty research. The best way to find out about research opportunities is to either contact the Dean's Office of Newcomb Tulane College or the Honors Program. In fact, our Summer Research Experience is principally geared to students who have completed the Freshman year.
Mar 21, 18:36:31	nstrauber -> President Fitts	First of all, congratulations on your inauguration. Secondly do you foresee capping tuition or holding tuition for freshman thru graduation?
	President Fitts -> nstrauber	Thank you. It was a wonderful experience. A moment of a lifetime. Ensuring the affordability of Tulane University is a high priority. During my Presidency, the tuition increases each year have been the lowest in the last quarter century. But given the uncertainties in higher education, unfortunately, we are not in the position to promise to hold tuition at current levels. By the way, we do hold tuition constant for those individuals who pre-pay all four years.
Mar 21, 18:39:46	SunnySue -> President Fitts	Where do most graduates of Tulane end up after graduation? Can you give us a percentage that go on to Grad school? Also, where do most get jobs? What percentage end up in California/West Coast? East Coast? South? And would you say Tulane helps students with the job search?
	President Fitts -> SunnySue	About a third of the students go directly to graduate school. A greater percentage tend to end up in graduate education a few years after leaving Tulane. Over 50% end up in graduate education. Our students secure employment all over the country, though we find a large majority of the students end up in places like New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and New Orleans. Tulane works hard to help students secure employment after graduating and assigns a Senior Career Coach to those seniors seeking extra personalized assistance with their job search.
Mar 21, 18:43:04	Ric -> President Fitts	We have another child in a University where they offer great programs to help students having trouble, but not until they have nearly failed for three terms. Do you provide assistance for students who are having trouble, but "getting by"?
	President Fitts -> Ric	Yes. Newcomb Tulane College and the Division of Student Affairs provide robust resources to help students succeed at Tulane. We monitor students' academic performance twice a semester and connect the students who might be struggling or just "getting by" at any point during the semester.
Mar 21, 18:44:14	jsmny1017 -> President Fitts	Would you be able to shed light on the systems by which universities and colleges are ranked? As I am sure you are aware, Tulane was recently ranked 41 by one popular publication. What does that mean when comparing schools of higher or lower ranks?
	President Fitts -> jsmny1017	Everybody needs to take all of the rankings with a very large grain of salt. Every school has strengths and values, and you need to be focusing on what's the best fit for you. That having been said, it's always good to be up in the rankings.
Mar 21, 18:45:53	RC -> President Fitts	What opportunities do incoming freshmen have for regular ongoing University-sponsored service to the University or local community (beyond this weeks' Day of Service)?
	President Fitts -> RC	I encourage you to do some research on CACTUS, a/k/a the Community Action Council of Tulane University Students, and to look at, when registering for classes, some of the many different service learning options offered, and the Get Engaged Residential Learning Community.
Mar 21, 18:47:26	Dan -> President Fitts	Is it possible to participate in the Tulane honors program if you are not invited as part of the application process?

	President Fitts -> Dan	Students are always welcome to meet staff in the Honors Office to talk about academic options, and they can petition to be admitted to the Honors Program if they believe they were overlooked during the admission process. Students whose academic performance meet the Honors standard can be formally be admitted at the end of the Freshman year.
Mar 21, 18:50:48	Harry -> President Fitts	We recently visited Tulane and loved the campus and the academic program (and, of course, the city). In the aftermath of Katrina, what plans are in place in the event of another potentially dangerous hurricane?
	President Fitts -> Harry	It is important to recognize that the chances of a hurricane impacting New Orleans are no greater than any other part of the coastal United States. Katrina, of course, was a once in a hundred year storm. But because of Katrina, New Orleans and Tulane are better prepared and protected than many other locations.
Mar 21, 18:51:46	Nancy -> President Fitts	Are the study abroad opportunities typically the same cost as the on campus year at Tulane?
	President Fitts -> Nancy	I'm so glad you've asked about our study abroad options. We have programs all across the globe. The cost of these programs are the same as studying on campus. Your scholarships and financial aid can be applied to study abroad.
Mar 21, 18:55:39	jason -> President Fitts	Good evening President Fitts. What are Tulane's plans/projects/endeavors for the next five years? I.e., what's on the horizon for Tulane?
	President Fitts -> jason	I could do a whole Presidential Chat just about this topic! I would say, to give you a sneak peak, I'd break it into two categories. On the academic front, we want to bring all of the extraordinary academic breadth of opportunities across the undergraduate curriculum accessible and integrated. In terms of the campus, Tulane already has the most attractive urban campus in the country, but we want to expand the energy and engagement through the construction of a new dining commons, a new Center for Academic Success, a new Business School building, and many other projects.
Mar 21, 18:57:00	Igk -> President Fitts	What are your long-term plans regarding the size of the undergraduate college? In other words, will you keep the number of students stable, or do you intend to expand it?
	President Fitts -> Igk	We think we are the perfect size. We are large enough to provide a breadth of academic options and programs and a diverse student body, but small enough to provide personal attention.
Mar 21, 18:58:59	jared -> President Fitts	Hi, I'm curious as to what its like at Tulane with the presidential election taking place. Tulane is a seemingly liberal campus, but lies in a rather conservative state. Can you shed some light on whats going on on campus regarding it?
	President Fitts -> jared	That is a very astute observation. We have students across the political spectrum and view that as a great strength. Universities are meant to be places where people can have dialogue around political ideology and Tulane values that.
Mar 21, 19:00:51	rodeo -> President Fitts	What would you consider the top three or so strengths of Tulane University?
	President Fitts -> rodeo	Academically, it offers the best of a professional university, but the intimacy of a liberal arts college. It has a student body that is international, intellectually and culturally adventurous, with a passion for civic engagement. Lastly, I might be biased, but I think we've got one of the prettiest urban campuses in the world.
Mar 21, 19:02:03	President Fitts -> Everyone	Great questions. Thank you for taking time and for writing. I look forward to welcoming all of you over the summer for orientation, and I hope to see you at convocation in the fall. Roll Wave!

