

Transcript—Episode 4: The questions UH Ambassadors get asked the most

[Theme music begins]

Lauren: Welcome to the Coogcast: a resource to support your success in college and beyond. UH ambassadors are here to discuss the topics that matter to you. Go Coogs. On this episode, I brought one of my fellow UH ambassadors to help answer some frequently asked questions about the admissions process. Make sure to stay till the end to hear about how you can get some free UH swag. Thanks for being here, Malia!

Malia: Yeah, for sure! Happy to help out.

Lauren: Malia, why don't you tell us a little about yourself? What's it like to be a student ambassador?

Malia: It's very different. You encounter a lot of different people, a lot of different personalities. People who are nervous, people who are excited, everything like that. And then being a part of their college decisions - something that is a BIG thing in their life - is something that's pretty cool and empowering. And it helps you build your own confidence as well, and communication skills.

Lauren: I agree. I feel like that's one of the main reasons I became a student ambassador, was to improve my public speaking. On top of that, yes, we have met tons of people, especially with our virtual tours. We meet people from all over the world, which is really really cool. Okay, so what is your favorite spot on campus and why?

Malia: So my favorite spot on campus is actually the arts district, because it's so spacious over there. So when we were actually giving a tour, we were showing a whole bunch of buildings, and that's where is the close-knit part of campus, and so when you get into the arts district, everything's very

spaced out. There's sculptures, artwork, everything like that. And so its just a breath of fresh air when you're walking across campus.

Lauren: No, that is a really really nice spot. I hardly go over there because the of fact that it is the arts district and I'm a psychology major. However, sometimes when I do like to ride my bike, that place is really spacious and I get to actually appreciate the art that they do have over there. I think it adds a unique touch to our campus. So, getting into the admissions process, starting from the beginning, a common question we get is how to start on that application process. So pulling from your own experience, do you wanna tell us a little bit how you started that?

Malia: So, when I first applied to colleges, I only used Common App and another website called Coalition, but you probably wont use that. But, just for applying to the University of Houston, I used Common App, but you can use Apply Texas, Common App, whatever you wanna use. And then, basically, the main difference is that Common App is used for institutions within Texas and outside of Texas, and then Apply Texas is only for Texas Universities. It really depends on like what suits your fancy, and so, if you know you want to stay in Texas, maybe Apply Texas is for you, but if you wanna apply to some schools outside of Texas, maybe Common App is for you.

Lauren: No, that's great. Because, I feel like when you're given two options, it can get kind confusing, if one has a leverage over the other, which isn't the case I personally used Apply Texas because, as we all know, out of state tuition. (laughs) So, yeah, that was good clarification. So, moving down the timeline, and into the actual submission of the application, another frequency asked question is about the priority deadline that UH has set. Could you tell us a little more about that?

Malia: When I first applied to University of Houston, I actually applied before the priority deadline, so I did get a little bit of money, okay, I'm not gonna lie to you. (laughs) But, when you do apply to U of H, there's rolling admissions, so whenever you apply, they're going to accept whoever applied by that time.

Lauren: Okay, that's great news. Cause that means that, even somebody who applies in November versus someone who applies in March will have the same chance of getting in. Alright, thank you for that clarification. On that note of finding scholarships, have you had any experience with finding scholarships from or through U of H? I know you just mentioned that you did apply before the priority deadline, so can you tell us a little more about that and how you went about that?

Malia: So, I actually got a scholarship from the University of Houston. So that was in my admissions package. And then I have used the scholarship universe portal that we have. So, once you get into the University of Houston, you have this little portal to apply to a bunch of scholarships and everything like that. And it's pretty useful because it'll tell you what qualifications you have for certain scholarships. It's just another scholarship place. So, you can apply to on campus ones, outside of campus, anything like that, whatever suits your fancy. But all the requirements can be found at uh.edu/scholarships website. So, you can get more information about that on there and like more information on Cougar Promise!

Lauren: Oh okay! I know you mentioned two things: one, you mentioned scholarship universe, and I have found that super helpful, especially because I feel like, and I've felt this as well. Coming in, you feel like, 'oh, I'm not eligible for scholarships anymore, cause I'm already at college,' or like I'm already in college. However, having that scholarship universe really did open up the horizon to the amount of scholarships that are still available to me, even though I am a university student already. And then, secondly, you mentioned Cougar Promise. So could you tell us a little more about that?

Malia: Yeah, so, Cougar Promise was first created about two years ago, and its purpose is to provide aid for low income to middle class families. So, through Cougar Promise, tuition, mandatory fees will be covered through grant assistance, which is so good. So, you don't have to worry about going to college and having a whole bunch of money to pay for when you can have your education covered because were always trying to promote people to get into higher education, like yes girl, learn that!

(laughs) And there's other sources for eligible students with certain family incomes, like partial tuition coverage and stuff like that.

Lauren: Okay, nice! So, speaking of aid, a common question we get is what is the difference between FAFSA and TAFSA?

Malia: FAFSA is just federal financial aid, so you can apply for that for many college institutions, anything like that. And then TAFSA is if you really don't meet those specific requirements for FAFSA, this is only targeted for Texas institutions. So if you need to apply for financial aid, only apply to one of those. They always recommend you to apply to FAFSA first, and then only apply to TAFSA if you don't meet the requirements.

Lauren: Thank you for that clarification. Those two would always confuse me, especially when my sister would talk about it, my older sister, when she was going through all of this and I had no idea what the difference was. But that makes so much more sense. So before you go, do you have any tips for those who are going through the application process, maybe something you learned along the way during your application process?

Malia: I say, slow down and go take a bath. If you like baths, if baths are your jig, you can do that. But it can be very stressful trying to navigate where you're going to be living and where you're going to be spending the next four years of your life, and that's a big deal. So take your time and try to choose where you're going to go to.

Lauren: I agree, I'm a sucker for baths. I love bath bombs. I love trying anything bath related, I'm hooked! (laughs) and I agree that it does feel like a big rush, but then it will eventually slow down and then you can enjoy your senior year of high school.

Malia: Yeah!

Lauren: Well, thank you so much for answering all of these questions about the admissions process. We really appreciate it.

Malia: Of course! And to all those listing, if you're interested in seeing the campus, make sure you sign up for an in-person tour through our website and maybe you'll get me as a tour guide or you can also request a call with me as a student ambassador. So, you can do that through our Connect with Current Students webpage as well.

Lauren: Awesome! And speaking of tours, like I said earlier, if you want to win some free UH swag, the first three people to mention the word 'Coogcast' to their in-person campus tour guide will win some Cougar swag. Thank y'all for listening in on this episode of the Coogcast.

[Theme music begins]

Just a reminder that the Fall 2022 application for UH is now open so make sure to get those in! I'll see y'all on the next episode...

Both: Go Coogs!

[Theme music ends]