• What academic area of interest do you want to study?
• Do you have multiple areas of degree interests? Can the school accommodate all of them if you change your mind on what degree you will pursue?
• What environment do you need? Large, small, rural, urban, close to an airport, public transportation, etc.? Think this through. Differentiate between what is a need, and what would be nice. Think along the lines of a must have. Be certain of what will be a deal breaker.
• What accommodations does your impairment require? Will the institution be able to provide what you must have?
• How far away from home are you willing to go?
• If all the academic pieces fit, then look at the Swimming Program and consider the following:
• NCAA sponsored Teams all have some overlapping rules while some are division specific.
• DI & DII institutions can give athletic and academic scholarships, DIII can only give academic scholarships.

Each division is designed by the NCAA to meet a variety of philosophical points. For each Para-Swimmer, it is important to look at every aspect of the team to help determine which division of NCAA competition best fits your goals and provides you the experience you are looking for.

• What type of team experience are you looking for? To be a part of a varsity team potentially earning a spot on the scoring roster? Or do you just want to be a team member and don’t care if you aren’t going to swim in the away or big meets?
• Where do your times fit into the team and conference? Are you able to be in the range of competitiveness to earn a spot?
• What is the size of the team? Too large (over 48 for both genders) may not give you the opportunities you are looking for.
• Be sure to ask about and understand the try-out policies of all teams.

1. What do you look for in a student athlete? We look for a well rounded student athlete who is motivated and has a true passion for swimming. Their main goals are in the classroom and the pool—in that order.
2. What is your training philosophy? We believe in quality development over putting in a lot of yards. We combine this with effective racing strategy to improve performance. There is an emphasis on IM & stroke swimming. We also make good use of our underwater cameras and the TiVo unit to analyze races after meets.
3. What does a typical week of practice look like? We train 2 mornings and 5 afternoons, as well as Saturday morning if we are not on the road. We also require 2-3 strength training workouts a week that include lifting and are a part of AM’s.
4. How would you describe your training volume? Beginning, Mid/Highest Peak, and Taper? We are a quality driven program, and yes we do volume especially during winter training, but we have our top sprinters top out at around 4000, mid 5000, and distance 6000 during any one practice in the afternoon. Mornings are short 45 minute specific training in the pool.
5. Do you travel on a training trip in the winter? Yes. This past year we traveled to Arizona for a little over a week during the winter break.
6. Do you separate your team into specific training groups? If so, how do you separate them? If mixed genders, do you mix all practices or just some? We separate by sprint, middle 4IM, and distance. Typically, we separate out by training group 2-3 afternoons and both mornings. All practice except Saturday morning is mixed.
7. What accommodations for my impairment are you comfortable making based on what I may need?
8. Do you see this working for you and your staff? For your team? What challenges do you feel we may encounter?
9. Would I get a spot on the team roster? Would I get to swim in dual meets in individual events, or just a spare relay? Will I get to attend invites and Conference Championships?
10. Do you feel about working with me on my full seasonal plan for training and big meets that includes not just the collegiate season, but also for U.S. Paralympics Swimming?