

Overview - Practice Interviews with SPA Alumni

Goal:

The goal of the program is to provide SPA students with practice interviews in preparation for future college admission interviews or interviews with potential employers or senior project supervisors.

Structure:

The interview should take approximately 45 minutes. 30 minutes of questioning followed by a 15 minute feedback session when you provide comments to the student about their interviewing skills.

Setting up the Interview:

The SPA student will be provided with your name and contact information and will be instructed to contact you to set up an interview time and location. We recommend you conduct these interviews either in your office or a public area like a coffee shop.

Conducting the interview

The interview should be relaxed and conversational. As the interview begins, simply chat with the student.

Introduce yourself, and get to know the candidate. Some students will be very nervous; try to put them at ease. Some will be so composed and bright that they'll make you nervous.

Ask the student questions included on the question sheet. The questions are designed for you to learn more about a student in the following areas:

- personal character,
- motivation,
- academic readiness/intellectual curiosity
- ethical awareness

If students struggle with the conversation, try to avoid difficult questions, but for the best-prepared students, delve deeply into their interests and experiences. Avoid questions that will elicit “yes” and “no” answers, and feel free to ask follow-up questions to help you get to know the student better.

Interview Feedback

Throughout the interview you can take notes on the feedback sheet, however, the primary feedback to the student is verbal through conversation right after the interview. Plan to spend 10 to 15 minutes providing verbal feedback to the student about their interviewing skills. Be sure to include positive feedback, but since this is a practice experience, any helpful and constructive advice will be appreciated. Feedback about the students poise, manners and eye contact can also be very helpful. Time permitting, you could practice a question again that the student had particular difficulty with. The SPA college counselors would appreciate seeing your interview notes and keeping them on file, so please mail them to the college counseling office at your earliest convenience.

Practice Interview Questions

GETTING STARTED

Ask the student what type of interview they would like to practice for – college admission, job application or volunteer work?

PERSONAL CHARACTER

- Tell me a little about yourself.
- Describe your hometown/your school. What do you like most about your community or school? What would you change?

MATURITY

- What are you looking for in a college?
- What do you feel you will bring to the campus you choose to attend?
- What are your expectations for your college experience? How do you want to be challenged?

ACADEMIC READINESS/INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY

- What are you most interested in studying?
- What academic courses throughout high school have most interested you, and why?
- Describe a high school class that you did not particularly enjoy; how did you handle the situation?
- What student organization interests you the most?
- How do you currently manage your academic/extracurricular schedule?

ETHICAL AWARENESS

- What is the most rewarding experience you have had so far in life?
- Describe an occasion where you have done something for another person.
- In what way do you envision diversity will play a part in your college experience?
- What are the most important issues facing our country/the world today? (or facing young people?)

WRAP UP

- Would like to tell me anything else about yourself?
- Final question: Do you have any questions for me as an alumnus/a?

Practice Interview with SPA Alumni - Feedback Form

Interviewer's Full Name: _____

Student's Full Name: _____

Date of Interview: _____ Place of Interview: _____

Please use this sheet to jot down notes from the interview which you can refer to when providing verbal feedback to the student at the end of the interview session:

PERSONAL CHARACTER

MATURITY

ACADEMIC READINESS/INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY

ETHICAL AWARENESS

POISE/CONDUCT/VERBAL SKILLS

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

Please mail or email this feedback sheet to Maria McCorvey mmccorvey@spa.edu in the SPA College Counseling Office. She will pass it on to the student's college counselor who will appreciate learning your feedback on this student's interviewing skills. Thank You!