

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. Ask the student questions included on the question sheet. The questions are designed for you to learn more about the student's personal character, motivation, academic interests, and community involvement. Engage as deeply as feels comfortable, but do try to push the student to develop ideas and provide examples.

Interview Feedback

Throughout the interview you can take notes on the feedback sheet; however, the primary feedback to the student is through a conversation right after the interview. Plan to spend 10 to 15 minutes providing 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 student's poise, manners and eye contact can also be very helpful.

Practice Interview Questions

WARM-UP QUESTIONS

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

LOOKING AHEAD TO COLLEGE

- What aspects of college are you most looking forward to?
- How will you contribute to your campus community in college?
- What are your expectations for your college experience? How do you want to be challenged?

ACADEMIC GROWTH, INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY, SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

- 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 extracurricular activities have been most meaningful to you, and why?
- In which areas (academic or otherwise) have you experienced the most growth during high school?

BROADER AWARENESS, LIFE BEYOND SPA

- What is the most rewarding experience you have had so far in life?
- Describe an occasion where you have done something for another person.
- What role do you envision diversity playing in your college experience?
- What are the most important issues facing our country/the world today? (or facing young people?)
- Have you ever changed your mind about an important issue? How and why did you rethink your position?

WRAP-UP

- Would like to tell me anything else about yourself?
- Do you have any questions for me?

Please feel free to stray from these suggested questions—they are intended as a guideline, but you may let the conversation take you in whatever directions make sense.

Practice Interview with SPA Alumni - Feedback Form

Interviewer: _____

Student: _____

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—or a brief summary of the session—to Carey Otto (cotto@spa.edu) in the SPA College Counseling Office. He will pass it on to the student's college counselor who will appreciate learning your feedback on this student's interviewing skills. Thank You!