

UW SOUL ~ Interview Questions

*University of Washington Study of Undergraduate Learning
Office of Educational Assessment*

ENTRY INTERVIEW, FALL 1999

1. Why did you decide to come to the UW?

WRITING

2. As a [high school/community college] student, what seemed to be the most important things to know about writing?

3. What was the hardest paper you wrote in high school or community college? Please describe it to me.

4. Do you think writing was important to your high school or community college? Why/why not?

5. Is writing important to you? Why/why not?

6: How would you define your strengths as a writer right now?

7: How about your weaknesses as a writer? What areas do you hope to improve?

PROBLEM-SOLVING/CRITICAL THINKING

8: Problem-solving and critical thinking are pretty big areas. How would you define problem-solving/critical thinking? When do you think you are doing it?

9. Can you give us an example from high school/community college of an assignment that required you to problem-solve and think critically that you handled well?

10. Can you give an example from high school/community college that you did NOT handle well?

QUANTITATIVE REASONING

11. How comfortable are you with your ability to do math?

12. Were you required to use math or other kinds of quantitative analysis--using charts or graphs, for instance--in your high school/community college classes? If so, which classes, and how did you use quantitative reasoning there?

13: Give us an example of quantitative reasoning that you have done in the past and feel was challenging.

14: What are your strengths in this area?

15: What are your weaknesses; what do you expect to improve on in this area while at the UW?

INFORMATION LITERACY

16: Did you do any projects in high school or community college that asked you to find and use information? Describe the project that was the most difficult for you in this regard. What parts of it were the most challenging and why?

17: Can you talk me through your process for getting and using information for this project? Kind of start at the start and take me through it step-by-step--how did you know you needed to gather information in the first place?

18: What would you say your strengths are in this area?

19: What are your weaknesses; what do you expect to improve on in this area while at the UW?

DIVERSITY

20: At the University, you will be confronted with diversity of all kinds. You will learn about many ideas that are different from your own. You will also meet and interact with students and faculty who are different from you; they will be different in gender, race, nationality, sexual orientation, and in other ways. How do you expect to be affected by these diverse ideas, backgrounds, and people while you are here?

21: How were you affected by diverse ideas, backgrounds, or people while you were in high school/community college?

PERSONAL GROWTH

22: Are there personal abilities or qualities that you hope to develop while you are at the UW?

23: What do you think you need to do to develop those qualities or abilities?

24: What are the most important things you want to learn at the UW?

GENERAL

25: What did you do in high school/community college that you learned the most from and what did you learn?

26: What did you do in high school/community college that you are the most proud of?

27: What was your favorite class in high school/community college and why?

28: Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about yourself or your learning that I haven't asked you?

SPRING 2000 INTERVIEW

Give student a copy of the list of courses she has taken this year. Ask her to look it over for a moment before we begin.

GENERAL

1. Looking over your list of courses, which of the three quarters was the hardest for you academically and why?
2. About how many hours per day did you study during that quarter?
3. What, if anything, in your coursework really challenged you academically or intellectually this year? (Describe the challenge. For what class? What was challenging about it?)
4. Did anything outside the classroom particularly challenge your thinking or contribute to your learning this year? (Describe it. What was challenging about it? How did it contribute to your learning?)
5. Have you chosen a major yet? If so, what? Have you applied to that major and been accepted yet?
6. Did you talk with a professor outside of class last quarter? If so, how many of your professors did you speak with outside class? (Note Y or N and a number.) If so, what did you speak to them about?

WRITING

7. In what courses did you write papers this year and how many papers did you write in each of those classes?
8. Which of those papers was the most difficult? What made it difficult?
Sub-questions--Describe the paper:
What were you assigned to do?
What did you argue?/What was your thesis?
How long was the paper?
Did it require research? If so, what kind(s)
Was there a drafting/feedback process?
Did you impose one on yourself even if one was not required?)
9. Which of those papers were easy to do and why were they easy?
Sub-questions--Describe the paper:
What were you assigned to do?
What did you argue?/What was your thesis?
How long was the paper?
Did it require research? If so, what kind(s)
Was there a drafting/feedback process?
Did you impose one on yourself even if one was not required?)

10. Did you notice any differences between the kinds of writing you had to do here and the writing you did before you came here--or not?

11. Do you think your writing has improved this year or not? Explain.

PROBLEM SOLVING/CRITICAL THINKING

12. Did you do any problem-solving and critical thinking in your courses this year?

13. If so, which courses stand out as asking you to do the most challenging problem-solving or critical thinking?

14. Can you describe what you did there? (What did you do? What was challenging about it?)

15. Do you think your ability to think critically and problem solve has improved this year or not? Explain.

INFORMATION LITERACY

16. Did you take any courses that required you to do research this year? If so, what was the research for and what kind did you do?

17. Did you do any research this year that was not required--such as surfing the web for information on a topic or reading about a subject you are interested in on your own?

18. Do you think your ability to find and use information has improved this year or not? Explain.

QUANTITATIVE REASONING

19. Have you taken any classes that required you to use quantitative reasoning this year? If so which ones?

Definition: Quantitative reasoning is the use of numbers to solve problems, make arguments, design or create something new, find answers, or analyze something.

20. Did you notice any differences between the type of quantitative reasoning you did here and that which you did before you came here or not?

21. Did you find any of the quantitative reasoning you did especially challenging this year? (If so, what course(s) did you find challenging? what was the challenge? why was it challenging--what did it call on you to do?)

22. How comfortable are you with your ability to do math? Why do you think you feel that way? Is there something specific that made you feel that way?

23. Do you think your abilities in quantitative reasoning have improved this year or not?

DIVERSITY

24. Did you have any classes that taught you anything about diversity this year or not? If so what? And what did it teach you?

25. Did you have any personal experiences that taught you anything about diversity this year or not? If so what and what did you learn?

PERSONAL GROWTH

26. Did you accomplish what you set out to accomplish this year? Why or why not?
27. Did your beliefs, plans, or sense of yourself change in any way this year or not? If so, what changed and why?
28. Did you learn anything significant from a peer inside or outside of the classroom this year or not?
29. Did you take a class this year that you did not do well in? If so, what happened? How badly did you do and why didn't you do well?
30. Are you planning to return to the UW next fall? (If no, why not and what are your plans?) Are you willing to participate in the study again next year?
31. What are your plans for the summer?
32. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your experience this year at the UW that we have not already asked you?

SPRING 2001 INTERVIEWS

Give student a copy of the list of courses she has taken this year. Ask her to look it over for a moment before we begin.

GENERAL

1. Looking over your list of courses, which one or two would you say you learned the most in so far? And what did you learn there and how did you learn it?
2. Which class did you learn the least in and why?
3. Are you in a major yet? If so, what? If not why not? What made you choose the major that you have settled on?
4. Did you talk with a professor outside of class last quarter (winter)? If so, how many of your professors did you speak with outside class? (Note Y or N and a number.) If so, what did you speak to them about?

WRITING

5. In what courses did you write papers this year, how many papers did you write in each of those classes, and how long was each paper??
6. Which of those papers was the most difficult? What made it difficult?

Sub-questions--Describe the paper:
What were you assigned to do?
What did you argue?/What was your thesis?
How long was the paper?
Did it require research? If so, what kind(s)
Was there a drafting/feedback process?
Did you impose such a process on yourself even if one was not required?

7. Which of those papers were easy to do and why were they easy?

Sub-questions--Describe the paper:
What were you assigned to do?
What did you argue?/What was your thesis?
How long was the paper?
Did it require research? If so, what kind(s)
Was there a drafting/feedback process?
Did you impose such a process on yourself even if one was not required?

8. Would you say that the writing assignments you've had in your classes have become more demanding or complex over time here, have stayed pretty much the same from the first assignments you had at the UW, or have become less demanding over time? Please explain your response.
9. Do you think your writing has improved this year or not? Explain.

PROBLEM SOLVING/CRITICAL THINKING

10. Did you do any critical thinking and problem-solving in your courses this year? If so, which courses stand out as asking you to do the most challenging problem-solving or critical thinking?
11. Can you describe what you did there? (What did you do? What was challenging about it?)
12. Do you think your ability to think critically and problem solve has improved this year or not? How and why has this happened (or not happened)?

INFORMATION LITERACY

13. Did you take any courses that required you to do research this year? If so, what was the research for and what kind did you do?
14. Did you do any research this year that was not required--such as surfing the web for information on a topic or reading about a subject you are interested in on your own?
15. Have you learned to use any new technology at the UW or not? If so, what technology, where did you learn it, and what was it for?
16. Do you think your ability to find and use information has improved this year or not? How and why has this happened (or not happened)?

QUANTITATIVE REASONING

17. Have you taken any classes that required you to use quantitative reasoning this year? If so which ones?
Definition: Quantitative reasoning is the use of numbers to solve problems, make arguments, design or create something new, find answers, or analyze something.
18. Did you find any of the quantitative reasoning you did especially challenging this year? (If so, what course(s) did you find challenging? what was the challenge? why was it challenging-what did it call on you to do?)
19. Do you think your abilities in quantitative reasoning have improved this year or not? How and why has this happened (or not happened)?

DIVERSITY

20. Did you learn anything about diversity in any of the classes you took this year or not? If so what?
21. Did you have any personal experiences that taught you anything about diversity this year or not? If so what and what did you learn?
22. Have your attitudes about diversity changed since you came to the UW or not? How and why has this happened (or not happened)?

PERSONAL GROWTH

23. Did your beliefs, plans, or sense of yourself change in any way this year or not? If so, what changed and why?
24. Do you have goals for next year? If so, what are they?
25. Did you learn something this year that you consider important and that came from outside your classes? If so, what did you learn and how did you learn it?
26. Are you planning to return to the UW next fall? (If no, why not and what are your plans? If you are a senior, what do you plan to do next?)
27. Are you willing to participate in the study again next year?
28. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your experience this year at the UW that we have not already asked you?

SPRING 2002

Give student a copy of the list of courses she has taken this year. Ask her to look it over for a moment before we begin.

GENERAL

1. Looking over your list of courses, which one or two would you say you learned the most in so far? And what did you learn there and how did you learn it?
2. Which class did you learn the least in and why?
3. What's your major? How are you liking it? What's good about it; what's not so good?
4. What things do your professors do that lead you to think they care about your learning? (Prompt: Give me a full range—what their expectations are, what kinds of assignments they give, how they behave in class—and so on.)
5. Have you made a meaningful connection with a faculty member at the UW? If so, please describe.
6. Did you talk with a professor outside of class last quarter (winter)? If so, how many of your professors did you speak with outside class? (Note Y or N and a number.) If so, what did you speak to them about?

WRITING

7. In what courses did you write papers this year, how many papers did you write in each of those classes, and how long was each paper??
8. Which of those papers was the most difficult or challenging? What made it difficult/challenging?
Sub-questions--Describe the paper:
What were you assigned to do?
What did you argue?/What was your thesis?
How long was the paper?
Did it require research? If so, what kind(s)
Was there a drafting/feedback process?
Did you impose such a process on yourself even if one was not required?
9. Which of those papers were easy to do and why were they easy?
Sub-questions--Describe the paper:
What were you assigned to do?
What did you argue?/What was your thesis?
How long was the paper?
Did it require research? If so, what kind(s)
Was there a drafting/feedback process?
Did you impose such a process on yourself even if one was not required?

10. Would you say that the writing assignments you've had in your classes have become more demanding or complex over time here, have stayed pretty much the same from the first assignments you had at the UW, or have become less demanding over time? Please explain your response. What about writing in the classes in your major? Would you say that they have become more complex over time or not?
11. What about writing in the classes in your major? Would you say that they have become more complex over time or not?
12. What class have you taken at the UW that's taught you the most about writing?
13. Do you think your writing has improved this year or not? Explain.

PROBLEM SOLVING/CRITICAL THINKING

14. Did you do any critical thinking and problem-solving in your courses this year? If so, which courses stand out as asking you to do the most challenging problem-solving or critical thinking?
15. Can you describe what you did there? (What did you do? What was challenging about it?)
16. Do you think your ability to think critically and problem solve has improved this year or not? How and why has this happened (or not happened)?

INFORMATION LITERACY

17. Did you take any courses that required you to do research this year? If so, what was the research for and what kind did you do?
18. Did you do any research this year that was not required--such as surfing the web for information on a topic or reading about a subject you are interested in on your own?
19. This year did you do any hands-on, reflective, or exploratory work that furthered your understanding of your field or of some area outside your field?
20. Have you learned to use any new technology at the UW or not? If so, what technology, where did you learn it, and what was it for?
21. Do you think your ability to find and use information has improved this year or not? How and why has this happened (or not happened)?

QUANTITATIVE REASONING

22. Have you taken any classes that required you to use quantitative reasoning this year? If so which ones?
Definition: Quantitative reasoning is the use of numbers to solve problems, make arguments, design or create something new, find answers, or analyze something.
23. Did you find any of the quantitative reasoning you did especially challenging this year? (If so, what course(s) did you find challenging? what was the challenge? why was it challenging--what did it call on you to do?)

24. Do you think your abilities in quantitative reasoning have improved this year or not? How and why has this happened (or not happened)?

DIVERSITY

25. Did you learn anything about diversity in any of the classes you took this year or not? If so what?
26. Did you have any personal experiences that taught you anything about diversity this year or not? If so what and what did you learn?
27. What is your gender and ethnicity? Have you personally experienced any discrimination—either subtle or overt—while you've attended the UW? If so, please describe.
Description: What was it? Where did it come from—UW students, UW faculty/TAs, UW staff, off-campus?
Is this kind of experience common or frequent?
Who or what do you think is responsible for this kind of behavior?
Did you do anything in response?
How did this experience affect you?

PERSONAL GROWTH

28. Did your beliefs, plans, or sense of yourself change in any way this year or not? If so, what changed and why?
29. Did you learn something this year that you consider important and that came from outside your classes? If so, what did you learn and how did you learn it?
30. Are you planning to return to the UW next fall? (If no, why not and what are your plans? If you are a senior, what do you plan to do next?)
31. Are you willing to participate in the study again next year?
32. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your experience this year at the UW that we have not already asked you?

SPRING 2003 INTERVIEWS

Give student a copy of the list of courses she has taken this year. Ask her to look it over for a moment before we begin.

GENERAL

1. What's your major?
2. Thinking about your whole four years here at the UW and looking over your transcript, in which of these classes did you learn the most—briefly, what did you learn and why?

3. In which class did you learn the least and why?
4. Would you say that you've had any experience at the UW that you would consider a "turning point"? If so, please describe.
5. What do you plan to do next and how well prepared do you feel academically to take the next step in your life?
6. Are there areas that the UW should have prepared you in but didn't? If yes, explain.

WRITING

7. In what courses did you write papers this year, how many papers did you write in each of those classes, and how long was each paper?
8. Which of those papers was the most difficult or challenging? What made it difficult/challenging?
 Sub-questions--Describe the paper:
 What were you assigned to do?
 What did you argue?/What was your thesis?
 How long was the paper?
 Did it require research? If so, what kind(s)
 Was there a drafting/feedback process?
 Did you impose such a process on yourself even if one was not required?
 What made it challenging?
9. Which of those papers were easy to do and why were they easy?
 Sub-questions--Describe the paper:
 What were you assigned to do?
 What did you argue?/What was your thesis?
 How long was the paper?
 Did it require research? If so, what kind(s)
 Was there a drafting/feedback process?
 Did you impose such a process on yourself even if one was not required?
 What made it easy?
10. Do you think your writing has improved this year or not? Explain.

PROBLEM SOLVING/CRITICAL THINKING

11. Did you do any critical thinking and problem-solving in your courses this year? If so, which courses stand out as asking you to do the most challenging problem-solving or critical thinking?
12. Can you describe what you did there? (What did you do? What was challenging about it?)
13. Thinking about all the challenging thinking that you have done at the UW in your four years here, what assignment/task have you done that you consider the most challenging in your four years here in terms of critical thinking and problem solving?
 (Subquestions: year, course, assignment, length, research, drafting/feedback, why challenging?)

14. Do you think your ability to think critically and problem solve has improved this year or not? How and why has this happened (or not happened)?

15. Has your understanding of critical thinking changed over the last four years or not? If so, please explain?

16. Can you explain to me what it means to think critically in your major?

INFORMATION LITERACY

17. Did you take any courses that required you to do research this year? If so, what was the research for and what kind did you do?

18. Do you think your ability to find and use information has improved this year or not? How and why has this happened (or not happened)?

QUANTITATIVE REASONING

19. Have you taken any classes that required you to use quantitative reasoning this year? If so which ones? Definition: Quantitative reasoning is the use of numbers to solve problems, make arguments, design or create something new, find answers, or analyze something.

20. Did you find any of the quantitative reasoning you did especially challenging this year? (If so, what course(s) did you find challenging? what was the challenge? why was it challenging--what did it call on you to do?)

21. Do you think your abilities in quantitative reasoning have improved this year or not? How and why has this happened (or not happened)?

DIVERSITY

22. Did you learn anything about diversity in any of the classes you took this year or not? If so what?

23. Did you have any personal experiences that taught you anything about diversity this year or not? If so what and what did you learn?

24. How, if in any way, has your viewpoint about diversity changed over the last four years at the UW?

PERSONAL GROWTH

25. Did your beliefs, plans, or sense of yourself change in any way this year or not? If so, what changed and why?

26. Do you regret anything about the choices you made, the courses you took, the friends you made, the experiences you had in your time at the UW? If so, what are your most significant regrets and why?
27. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your experience this year at the UW that we have not already asked you?