

RMS Student Interview Questions

Strength-Based Advising Focus

Conversation Starters – Form A

By Lana Low, Ph.D.

Instructions: These questions are designed for advisors who want to use a strengths-based approach to guide the student interview. *Questions 1-3 focus on the strengths the student brings to the interview, based on his/her responses to the CSI items. Question 4 focuses on how to get students to capitalize on their strengths as they engage in their college experience.* Feel free to add your own questions.

Academic Motivation

Study Skills

1. How did you study when you were in high school?
2. How did you develop an approach to studying that worked for you?
3. Can you share some examples of how this approach has helped you keep up with your studies?
4. How will you adapt this approach to help you study effectively in college?

Intellectual Interests

1. What type of reading do you enjoy most?
2. Who influenced you most in developing an interest in reading?
3. Has the Internet increased your interest in seeking out new information? If so, how?
4. How will your interest in reading and “inquiring mind” benefit you in college?

Academic Confidence

1. What were your favorite subjects in high school?
2. How did you develop an interest in these subjects?
3. Which academic interests will you continue to pursue?
4. How important is it for you to engage in co-curricular activities that support your academic interests?

Desire to Finish College

1. When did you start thinking about going to college?
2. What made you decide that going to college was “right” for you?
3. What program(s) or area(s) of study are of greatest interest to you?

4. Have you thought about how you use your strengths in your life after college?

Attitude Toward Educators

1. How would you describe your favorite teacher(s) in high school?
2. How do you think good teachers influence students' attitudes toward school?
3. Did administrators at your school have special ways of showing their support for students?
4. Have these positive experiences made it easier for you to interact with faculty and administrators here?

Social Motivation

Self-Reliance

1. You said earlier that you decided to come to college (early, late, other).
2. What were you looking for in a college?
3. Who influenced your decision to attend this college?
4. What are the things you and your family like most about this college?

Sociability

1. What were your favorite social activities in high school?
2. How many of your friends are here?
3. What did you enjoy most about orientation?
4. What social activities or organizations are you looking forward to this year?

Leadership

1. What is your most memorable leadership experience from high school?
2. What have you learned about yourself from your leadership role(s)?
3. Are there leaders (family, locally, nationally) who have had a special influence on you?
4. Have you thought about how you can continue to use your leadership skills here?

General Coping Scales

Ease of Transition

1. What made you feel comfortable with college from the beginning?

2. What aspects of starting college have been more positive than you expected?
3. Are there new opportunities you have learned about since you enrolled (social, academic, work, other)?
4. Now that you're off to a good start, how will you keep your positive outlook?

Family Emotional Support

1. How would you describe your family's involvement in your education?
2. Do you have family members who attended this college (or another college)? If yes, what helpful advice did they offer?
3. How has your family's support made the transition to college easier?
4. In what ways do you anticipate that your family will be involved in your education now that you're in college?

Openness

1. When you were growing up, did you and your family ever find yourselves on opposite sides of important issues (like politics or religion)?
2. How did your family encourage you to develop your own opinions and thoughts about controversial issues (global warming, capital punishment, abortion, etc.)?
3. How did you handle issues in your classes that challenged your points of view?
4. Are you looking forward to college classes that will lead you to challenge your current views?

Career Planning

1. What academic major or area of interest are you considering?
2. What intrigues you most about this major/area?
3. What kind of career advice have you received thus far (from family, friends, teachers, etc.)?
4. How will you make your decision on major or career?

Sense of Financial Security

1. When you decided to go to college, how important was it to feel financially prepared?
2. Who provided the help you needed to decide how to pay for college?
3. What kind of jobs would you consider if you decide to work while you're in college?

4. Where will you go for help with your questions about personal finances while you're here?

Receptivity Scales

Academic Assistance

1. How did you approach assignments that appeared difficult or "impossible" to complete in high school?
2. How did you go about finding the help you needed at the time?
3. What type of help was most beneficial to you in tackling tough assignments?
4. If you encounter a seemingly "impossible" assignment here, have you determined how to get the help you need?

Personal Counseling

1. How were you able to deal successfully with friend and/or family problems in high school?
2. What types of personal counseling services were available to students in your high school?
3. To what extent did students use these services?
4. How familiar are you with the counseling services available here should you or your friends ever need the services?

Social Enrichment

1. What are some of the opportunities you have had to interact with other students here?
2. How do you stay connected with your friends from home?
3. What types of social activities would you enjoy being a part of while you're here?
4. Are you open to receiving information about opportunities to participate in various social activities in the college community?

Career Counseling

1. Did you have an opportunity to explore your career interests with a high school counselor?
2. Did your counselor(s) use aptitude tests to identify careers you're best suited for?
3. What additional information would you consider helpful as you explore your career options?
4. Would you like to be contacted by our career services office this term?

Initial Impression Scale

1. What were the positive things you heard about this college that made you to want to enroll?
2. Did the positive reactions of your friends help you to make the decision to enroll?
3. In what ways have your impressions become even more favorable since you enrolled?
4. If you were recommending this school to a friend, what would you tell them?

Final Questions

1. Does this profile describe you accurately?
2. Were you surprised by any of the strengths revealed in this report?
3. How can you use these strengths to your advantage?
4. Are there changes you would make in this profile?

Conversation Starters – Form B

Strength-Based Advising Focus

By Lana Low, Ph.D.

Instructions: These questions are designed for advisors who want to use a strengths-based approach to guide the student interview. *Questions 1-3 focus on the strengths the student brings to the interview, based on his/her responses to the CSI items. Question 4 focuses on how to get students to capitalize on their strengths as they engage in their college experience.* Generally it is not necessary to ask all questions. Also, feel free to add your own questions.

Academic Motivation

Study Habits

1. How did you study when you were in high school?
2. How did you develop an approach to studying that worked for you?
3. Can you share some examples of how this approach has helped you keep up with your studies?
4. How will you adapt this approach to help you study effectively in college?

Intellectual Interests

1. What type of reading do you enjoy most?
2. What is your earliest memory of a captivating book?
3. Has the Internet increased your interest in seeking out new information? If so, how?
4. How will your interest in reading and “inquiring mind” benefit you in college?

Verbal Confidence

1. What is your favorite way of writing (poetry, essays, journalism) and do you use different styles for different purposes?
2. What type of feedback have you received from your teachers regarding your writing?
3. Who influenced you most in developing your writing skills?
4. How will you use these skills to your advantage in college?

Math/Science Confidence

1. What were your favorite math and science classes in high school?
2. How did you develop an interest in these subjects?

3. Which of these areas (science and/or math) will you continue to pursue?
4. How important is it for you to engage in co-curricular activities that support your interest in these areas?

Desire to Finish College

1. When did you start thinking about going to college?
2. What made you decide that going to college was “right” for you?
3. What program(s) or area(s) of study are of greatest interest to you?
4. What are your thoughts on what you would like to do after college? What are your plans?

Attitude Toward Educators

1. How would you describe your favorite teachers in high school?
2. How did your teachers influence students’ attitudes toward school?
3. How did administrators at your school show their support for students?
4. Have these positive experiences made it easier for you to interact with faculty and administrators here?

General Coping Scales

Sociability

1. What were your favorite social activities in high school?
2. How many of your friends from high school are here in college?
3. What did you enjoy most about orientation?
4. What social activities or organizations are you looking forward to this year?

Family Emotional Support

1. How would you describe your family’s involvement in your education?
2. Do you have family members who attended this college (or another college)? If yes, what helpful advice did they offer?
3. How has your family’s support made the transition to college easier?
4. In what ways do you anticipate that your family will be involved in your education now that you’re in college?

Opinion Tolerance

1. When you were growing up, did you and your family ever find yourselves on opposite sides of important issues (like politics or religion)?
2. How did your family encourage you to develop your own opinions and thoughts about controversial issues?
3. How did you handle issues in your classes that challenged your points of view?
4. Are you looking forward to college classes that will lead you to more closely scrutinize your current views?

Career Closure

1. What academic major or area of interest are you considering?
2. What intrigues you most about this major/area?
3. What kind of career advice have you received thus far (from family, friends, teachers, etc.)?
4. How will you make your decision on major or career?

Sense of Financial Security

1. When you decided to go to college, how important was it to feel financially prepared?
2. Who provided the help you needed to decide how to pay for college?
3. What kind of jobs would you consider if you decide to work while you're in college?
4. Where will you go for help with your questions about personal finances while you're here?

Receptivity Scales

Academic Assistance

1. How did you approach assignments that seemed “impossible” to complete in high school?
2. How did you go about finding the help you needed at the time?
3. What type of help was most beneficial to you in tackling tough assignments?
4. If you encounter a seemingly “impossible” assignment here, have you determined how to get the help you need?

Personal Counseling

1. How were you able to deal successfully with friend and/or family problems in high school?

2. What types of personal counseling services were available to students in your high school?
3. To what extent did students use these services?
4. How familiar are you with the counseling services available here should you or your friends ever need the services?

Social Enrichment

1. What are some of the opportunities you have had to interact with other students here?
2. How do you stay connected with your friends from home?
3. What types of social activities would you enjoy being a part of while you're here?
4. Are you open to receiving information about opportunities to participate in various social activities in the college community?

Career Counseling

1. Did you have an opportunity to explore your career interests with a high school counselor?
2. Did your counselor(s) use aptitude tests to identify careers you're best suited for?
3. What additional information would you consider helpful as you explore your career options?
4. Would you like to be contacted by our career services office this term?

Financial Guidance

1. What are your greatest money concerns while you're in college?
2. What kind of information on managing your money was presented to you in high school (special courses, speakers, videos, brochures, etc.)?
3. Where have you gone for help in the past when you had questions about your finances?
4. Would you be open to discussing your financial concerns with a financial aid counselor if the need arises while you're here?

Final Questions

1. Does this profile describe you accurately?
2. Were you surprised by any of the strengths revealed in this report?
3. How can you use these strengths to your advantage?
4. Are there changes you would make in this profile?