

Face-to-Face Interview Questions

Round 1: Spring 2005

Round 2: Spring 2006

Round 3: Spring 2007

Round 1

- 1 Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?
- 2 How or why did you come to choose your major?
- 3 Why did you choose this specific program at this university?
Did anyone encourage you to choose this major? Why did they do that? (What reasons did they
- 4 give when they told you that this major would be a good fit for you?)
- 5 Do you like it?
- 6 What do you hope to do after completing your degree?
- 7 What made you interested in doing that?
Some of the things we want to discover as a result of this research are some of the factors that
- 8 lead to positive or negative experiences for students in IT related fields. First of all, has your
- 9 experience in your major been more positive or negative?
- 10 What has made it positive (or negative, or a combination)?
Do you feel that your experience is typical, that is, do you think that your peers think of this
- 11 program positively or negatively for similar reasons?
- 12 How do you personally define success for yourself as you pursue your studies?
- 13 And do you feel that you're successful at what you do?
- 14 Why? (or why not?) That is, what are the factors that contribute to that success (or lack thereof)?
- 15 If you could change three things about your program, what would they be?
If you knew the program was going to be completely changed, but you had the opportunity to keep
- 16 three things the same, what would they be?
Can you describe something that happened in your program (a specific instance) that made you
- 17 feel valued?
Can you describe something that happened in your program (a specific instance) that made you
- 18 feel uncomfortable?
Do you know of any students who have left your program (not necessary to mention names)? Why
- 19 did they leave?
- 20 How much do you think your program values people and human needs, in general?
- 21 How good a job do you think your program does of making students feel valued and respected?
What is your social network in your major like? Do you have a lot of friends in your major? Do you
- 22 work/play/study together a lot?
Do you consider yourself more of a social or solitary person? Which type of person do you think is
- 23 more common in your field?
- 24 What are student/faculty relationships like in your program?
- 25 Are you happy with the student/faculty relationships as they are?
- 26 What would the ideal student/faculty relationship be like, in your opinion?
Let me ask about some demographic issues. Do you think that there's anything in your
- 27 demographic profile, your gender, your race, your age, etc. that has worked either against or in
- 28 favor of your having a positive experience in your program?
- 29 If in favor, in what way(s)?
- 30 If against, have you developed strategies in order to compensate? What kinds of strategies?
- 31 Why do you think there are more men than women in IT fields?
- 32 Do men have an easier time in your program, in your opinion? Why or why not?
Could you describe the way the males in your program talk about their experiences and expertise
- 33 with computing?
- 34 Could you describe the way the females in your program talk about their experiences and expertise

with computing?

- 33 There is research that suggests that males start using computers earlier than females and on their own more than females. Is that consistent with your experience? (If so) Why do you think that is? (If not) What has your own experience been? Was that typical for your peer group?
- 34 In your experience, do men and women use computers differently? That is, do they do different things on the computer? (If so) What do men do? What do women do? Why do you think there is this difference? (If not) What are the purposes that the people you know typically use computers for?
- 35 Do you feel that your department is equally supportive of students in all demographic groups? (E.g., age, gender, race, ethnicity)
- 36 Is there anything your department could do to make students feel more supported?
- 37 Is there anything else you'd like to share with me about your experiences, good or bad, in this program?

Round 2

- 1 Major?
- 2 Year in your program?
- 3 Gender?
- 4 Race?
- 5 Country your grew up in?
- 6 Age?
- 7 On a scale of 1 (no skill) to 5 (highly skilled), how would you rate your own computer-related competence?
- 8 How would you compare your academic experience to the last time we talked—would you say that things are better, worse, or basically the same?
- 9 What has changed in your academic life since last we spoke?
- 10 I asked you last time about whether you felt your overall experience in the program was more positive or negative. Let me ask you that question again. What would you say, more positive or more negative?
- 11 What's made it positive (or negative) [if they haven't already answered this in the previous answers]?
- 12 I asked you last time about how you defined success for yourself as a student; again, let me ask you the same question again. At this point in your life, how would you define success for yourself as a student?
- 13 And do you feel that you are a successful student?
- 14 Would you describe yourself as being a person who is professionally Highly Ambitious, Moderately Ambitious, or Not Very Ambitious?
- 15 How confident are you that you will achieve your professional ambitions?
- 16 How "techie" would you say you are, Very Techie, Moderately Techie, or Not Very Techie? What does it mean to you to be "techie"?
- 17 Can you program a computer? If so, in what language(s)?
- 18 How important do you think it is to be able to program in your field?
- 19 What are the major skills of your field?
- 20 How confident are you that you are mastering (or have mastered) those skills?
- 21 How optimistic are you about finding employment after you complete your degree?
- 22 Now I'm going to ask you about a different topic. Do you think you have a good balance between your academic life and your personal life? (work/life balance)
- 23 (If good) What helps you maintain that balance? (If poor) What do you wish it were like? What prevents you from achieving the balance you would prefer?
- 24 What sort of non-academic things do you like to do? (If it hasn't come up spontaneously.)
- 25 Do you use computers during your leisure time? If so, what do you like to do?
- 26 Back to your academic life, do you feel like you have a good support network? Who do you network with (within the dept, outside the dept., outside the univ.)?
- 27 Are there "in" groups and "out" groups in your program? Are you "in"? What is a typical person in the "in" group like?
- 28 In your view, what does it mean for one person to mentor another?
- 29 Is there a person in your program or university you consider to be a mentor?
- 30 Can you give an example of them mentoring you?
- 31 What traits do you look for in someone when you're looking for a mentor, what traits would be most helpful to you?
- 32 Do you think your experiences as regards mentoring are similar to other students in your program?
- 33 Were you recruited to come here? Tell me about that.
- 34 Does your program do anything specifically to recruit women and minorities? What do they do?
- 35 (If "don't know" or similar) Do you think they ought to?
- 36 Does your program do anything specifically to support women and minorities once they're enrolled? What do they do?
- 37 (If "don't know" or similar) Do you think they ought to?

- (If yes) what do you, personally, think about these efforts? Are they necessary? Do you think they
38 achieve what they set out to do?
- 39 Do (most) other people in your program share your views about this?
- 40 What's your sense of how equal men and women are in your field? (gender equality)
(If unequal) In what way is it unequal? Can you give me an example of how it's unequal? (If they
41 talk solely in terms of a numbers imbalance, ask about how people are treated)
Does it bother you to see that imbalance? (If so) Have you ever tried to do anything about it? How
42 did that go?
- 43 (If equal) Can you give me an example that illustrates that equality?
- 44 How about your program specifically, what's your sense of the gender equality there?
- 45 Again, can you give me an example that illustrates that (in)equality?
- 46 Does your field have core values? What are they?
- 47 Given the way you see your program operate, do the values of your program match the field?
- 48 Do your own personal values match the field?
Would you recommend your program to anyone interested? Would it depend on the type of person
49 they were? (If it depends) Say more about that.
- 50 Do you think most other students in your program would make the same recommendation?
- 51 What are the biggest concerns of the students in your program? What are they worried about?
- 52 How widespread is that concern? A few people, most people, almost everyone?
- 53 Do you share that concern? (if they haven't already indicated this)
Do you consider yourself to be a _____ (Computer Scientist, Instructional
54 Designer, Information Scientist, etc)?
- 55 What do you find most rewarding about being in your field?
- 56 Anything else you'd like to share with me about your program or your experiences in it?

Round 3

- Have you had an experience in the past year that affected your attitude toward your program, either positively or negatively? Can you describe that experience? (It's not necessary to mention any specific names). (If not obvious) Did that experience make you feel more positive, or more negative, towards your program?
- 1a. How do you feel about your program overall: positive, somewhat positive, neutral, somewhat negative, negative?
- 1b. 2 Have you acquired any new skills in the past year? Could you tell me a little about those skills? How would you rate your computer competence on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being most and 1 being least competent? Has this changed since last year (if so, how)?
- 3 In a typical day, how much time do you spend working on a computer? What kinds of things do you do on the computer?
- 4 Do you program computers? (If so,) what kind of programming languages do you use, and what purposes do you use them for?
- 5 [To women not in CS or MIS] Did you or would you ever consider enrolling in a computer science or information systems program? Why or why not? What would be most/least attractive to you about such a program?
- 6a. [To men not in one of the applied fields] Did you or would you ever consider enrolling in a program like library and information science or instructional technology? Why or why not? What would be most/least attractive to you about such a program?
- 6b. 7 Do you feel a sense of belonging in your current program? (a lot, somewhat, not much, not at all) How many close friends do you have in your program? How important are those friendships to your overall level of satisfaction in your program? (very important, somewhat important, not very important, not important at all)
- 8 Do you belong to clubs or organizations in your department or school? (If so,) what kinds? Do you have a leadership role in any of them? Explain.
- 9 Have you sought out help with a problem or mentoring from faculty in your program in the past year? (If so,) what kind? Did you get what you needed? Why or why not?
- 10 As you think back over your experience in your program, are there events, courses, or other training that you wish you had that would have better prepared you to go into the field following graduation?
- 11 Have you taken advantage of the professional opportunities offered in your program, such as job fairs and internships? Do you think that the selection process for such programs is fair?
- 12 What's your sense of the gender equality in your program? Can you give me an example of how it's equal/unequal?
- 13 What about gender equality in the field of [fill in interviewee's discipline] in general? (If they say 'unequal') Can you give me an example of how it's unequal? How do you feel about that inequality?
- 14 Do you consider yourself a feminist? What does the word "feminist" mean to you?
- 15 If you could cause one thing to happen — anything at all, in you, your program, or the world—that would motivate you and insure that you would succeed professionally in your chosen field, what would it be? In other words, what would most help you to succeed?
- 16
- 17 Is there anything else you'd like to add to your comments?