

Assignment 2: Interview: College, Career, Significance?

Goal: Conduct and write up an interview with someone about their educational and professional journey. To do this, use the readings, skills, and resources materials we have discussed in class. Ask your interviewee about their college experiences, how they identified their professional and civic trajectory, and what they would recommend to their younger self. Interview someone older than you, who is not part of your immediate family, who has had a life experience about which you are interested, who has some professional work or post-graduate experience. Consider interviewing someone who falls outside your usual circle, someone who you would not normally interact with but would like to or someone who has may have had a life experience from which you can learn or with which you identify.

Role: You are a researcher continuing your quest to understand what it means to live a life of significance. You are interested in the relationship between college/school experiences, career selection and career satisfaction, and community contributions.

Audience: Your audience includes those interested in the relationship between living a life of significance and college engagement and professional and civic responsibilities. This audience includes other college students as well educators, parents, and anyone interested in preparing young people or being prepared to get the most from college, find a meaningful and purposeful vocation or calling, contribute to their communities and otherwise live a life of significance.

Situation: The challenge will be to contact and conduct an in-depth interview with one person about their professional journey and how their experiences in college prepared them for their current career and professional identity (or not). You can draw from your extended network, ask a faculty or staff member for a referral, or review the list provided by the Krulak Institute and the BSC Alumni office. In all cases, be sure to identify someone who is older than you and has some professional work or post-graduate experience. The challenge includes reaching out to them via email or telephone, scheduling and conducting the interview, and writing up the findings of that interview.

You will want to ask your interviewees about

- their current or intended professional position and any other jobs they have held
- how and when they identified their current areas of work and time investment
- why they chose to do what they do and what draws them to their work
- how they navigate competing work and other commitments, including health, family, etc.
- who in their life has served as a mentor or support
- how, if at all, their experiences in school prepared them for where they are now
- a time when they experienced a roadblock or a failure and how they navigated that experience
- how their life experiences have shaped where they are today
- what recommendations they have for their younger self when they look back from where they are now

- and, finally, how they would define or describe what it is to live a life of significance

With the permission of your subjects, record your interviews.

Product/Performance: Write up your interview in the form of an interview essay. Your write up will be part of a collection of interviews conducted by the class that explore the theme of college, career, citizenship, and a life of significance.

Standards: An effective product will summarize the main and key subordinate points that emerged from your interview, provide direct quotations and summary of your interviews to support those points, and be formatted like a published interview. Do not organize the product seriatim—instead, use the interviews to contribute to your reader’s understanding of the relationship between college, mentoring, career, and living a life of significance as it is understood by your interviewees. Position your interview in a larger conversation by challenging common assumptions, reinforcing beliefs, or adding nuance to assumptions or perceptions your readers might hold about the relationship between college, career, civic engagement, and living a life of significance.