

NSF CCE STEM Student Interview Protocol: Spring 2021

Semi-Structured Student Interview Protocol

This semi-structure interview protocol was administered to Georgia Tech undergraduate students in Spring 2021. It was primarily developed by project graduate research assistant Daniel Schiff along with the project co-PIs Dr. Jason Borenstein and Dr. Ellen Zegura.

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Introduction:

- About two years ago, we had the chance to chat with you about your major, your future profession, and what influences in high school and college have shaped your attitudes.
 - Note: Adjust based on who was prior interviewer. “You had the chance to speak with my colleague...”
- Today, we wanted to see if there any particular influences or experiences in college that stand out to you and have shaped your ideas or views on social responsibility since the last time [we spoke/you spoke with x].
- You may remember from last time, but I just wanted to let you know that we are not looking for any particular answers, so there’s no need to try to fit your answers into our questions. The most important thing for our research is that you share your thoughts and feelings as openly and honestly as possible.
- If any questions that I’m asking aren’t clear to you, or you think there’s another question or topic that we should talk about, please let me know. Feel free to take your time and pause to think about your answers also. Does that all make sense? Sound good? Great.

Professional identity:

- First, just a few background questions. The last time you spoke with [us/me], you mentioned that you were a [...] major [with a minor in [...]]. Have you switched, added, or dropped your major or minor?
 - Probe: [If so,] could you share your reasons for changing plans? Were there aspects of the major/minor you left or joined that led you to make that decision?
- You mentioned last time that you are thinking about going into [profession x]. Is that still what you’re thinking about doing after graduation, or do you have other plans?
 - Note: If student had multiple ideas or no clear idea, note this
 - Probe: [If so,] could you share what led you to change your plans?
- How does your understanding of that profession today compare to your view from the last time we spoke? How would you describe the profession in terms of its roles and responsibilities?
 - Note: If they have a new professional plan, omit the first of the two questions
 - Probe: [If changed views,] what influences led you to change your views: internships, interactions with other students, GT-related courses and activities, etc.?
 - Probe: [If similar views or a new profession,] what influences have most shaped your views of that profession, e.g., internships, friends, coursework, or something else?

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Social responsibility attitudes:

- Now I'd like to talk a little bit about your views on social responsibility, or concern for public welfare or public good, both as an individual and as a future professional. [I/my colleague] asked you some questions about this two years ago. You may not remember exactly what you said then, but that's fine.
- Would you say that your understanding about your social responsibility in your personal life has changed or remained about the same over the last couple of years?
 - Probe: [If it has changed,] in what way has it changed?
 - Probe: [If it has changed,] could you share if there are any influences that led you to change your views, e.g., internships, friends, courses, community service activities, or recent events in the US?
 - Probe: [If remained the same,] could you share if there are any influences that were particularly important in shaping your views, e.g., internships, friends, courses, community service activities, or recent events in the US?
- Now, I'd like you to think of yourself as a future professional. Would you say that your understanding of your social responsibility as a future member of that profession has changed or remained about the same over the last couple of years?
 - Probe: [If it has changed,] in what way has it changed? [Try to assess whether changes are in terms of increased awareness about social issues, in the ability to address them, or in terms of sense of obligation to address them?]
 - Probe: [If it has changed,] could you share if there are any influences that led you to change your views, e.g., internships, friends, courses, community service activities, or recent events in the US?
 - Probe: [If remained the same,] could you share if there are any influences that were particularly important in shaping your views, e.g., internships, friends, courses, community service activities, or recent events in the US?
- Last time, you may remember one of the topics mentioned was community engagement experiences. Were there any courses, service projects, or other activities that involved you engaging with an external community that were particularly influential for you in terms of your views on either personal or professional social responsibility?
- How important is it to you to work in a job that helps the public as compared to other considerations such as earning a good income or working in a good location?
 - Note: Consider asking them to rank/order priorities.
 - Probe: [For everyone] Do you think those priorities have changed or remained the same while you have been in college?
 - Probe: [For everyone] Are there certain types of jobs or employers that you would turn down because of your views on social responsibility?
- How do you think social responsibility will fit into your life after college?
- Overall, would you say your views on social responsibility were pretty much set before college, or that they've changed significantly since you started college?
- Are there any specific factors about you as a person that most strongly shape your views on social responsibility? It could, for example, be your background, your gender or race, or your religious or political beliefs.

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Educational environment:

- As you may know, Georgia Tech's motto is Progress & Service. Looking back, how do you think your experience at Georgia Tech as a whole has shaped your views about your personal or professional social responsibility? To what extent does Georgia Tech's motto speak to your experience on campus?
 - Probe: [Can follow up on progress vs. service if relevant]
- What role did your major in terms of, say, the curriculum, teachers, and the departmental environment, have in terms of your experience at Tech? Do you see your major as having a positive or negative influence, and a big or small influence, on your social responsibility views?
 - Probe: [May wish to follow up about ideas such as 'meritocratic ideology,' 'weeding out,' etc.]
- Knowing what you know now, is there anything that you think your teachers, your department, or Georgia Tech should have been done differently?
- Is there anything else you think we should know?