

Postsecondary Planning Reflection Questions

Asking the right question at the right time can often be the greatest impact a caring adult can have. Helping students reflect on their strengths, interests, hopes, and needs is an important role to play. The following questions are a starting point to choose from. The highlighted questions at the top of each section have been most useful in the past.

ABOUT THE STUDENT

What do you care about most?

What values are most important to you?

Which adjectives would you use to describe yourself?

What brings you joy?

What makes you the most afraid?

If you could live the last ten years again, what if anything would you do differently?

What concerns you the most?

If you had to create a bumper sticker that best spoke to your identity what would it say, and why?

Describe a time or moment when you felt at your best.

What are you grateful for?

What do you wish was different?

What has changed about you?

When have you felt conflicted?

What do you need?

How important are approval and recognition to you?

How do you respond to pressure, competition, or challenge?

How do you react to failure, disappointment, or criticism?

What are your finest qualities?

What are your weaknesses?

How have you grown or changed during your high school years?

How will you describe yourself to your future college roommate?

ABOUT THE STUDENT'S ENVIRONMENT/FAMILY

Describe your family.

Describe your community.

What would you change about your community?

What is your role in your family (i.e.: peacemaker, comic relief, planner, etc.)?

How has your environment shaped you and your interests?

What is the most controversial issue being discussed/debated in your school or community? (How does the issue concern you? What has been your reaction to the controversy? What is your opinion?)

What circumstances or experiences have shaped your growth and way of thinking?

ABOUT THE STUDENT'S "PEOPLE"

Describe the individuals whom you consider your best friends, critics, and advocates

Who challenges you?

What is your role in your friend group?

Who do you hope to be surrounded by in college?

Who holds you to high standards?

What support do you seek from friends?

What frustrates you most about people?

Who do you hope you will meet, connect with, and learn from in college?

Do you often encounter people who think or act differently than you?

What viewpoints challenge you the most? How do you respond? From this, what have you learned about yourself and others?

How would someone who knows you well describe you? Would you agree with their assessment?

How would you describe a perfect roommate for you?

Which relationships are most important to you and why?

How are you influenced by others who are important to you?

What pressures have you felt to conform?

ABOUT THE STUDENT'S LEARNING

What about your high school do you appreciate most?

What would you change about your high school?

Which class/classes do you look forward to the most? Why?

Which classes have been the most challenging? Why?

Describe your favorite teacher. What makes that teacher influential or effective?

How do you learn best?

What is your ideal classroom environment?

What do you like to learn about outside of class?

How well prepared do you feel for college?

What would you miss most if you could not go to school?

What would you eliminate from your school day/experience?

What book(s) or text(s) from your courses have you enjoyed most?

What do you read outside of class?

What websites do you visit most often?

Which podcasts do you listen to?

What YouTube channels, Instagram feeds, etc. do you follow?

If you read newspapers or digital media/publications, which do you regularly read and what stories do you prefer to explore?

What are your academic interests?

What do you choose to learn when you can learn on your own? (Consider interests pursued beyond class assignments such as topics chosen for research projects, lab reports, independent projects, independent reading, school activities, and jobs or volunteer work)

What do your choices show about your interests and the way you like to learn?

How much do you genuinely like to read, discuss issues, and exchange ideas?

What has been your most stimulating intellectual experience?

In what areas of skill or knowledge do you feel confident or inadequately prepared for college study?

Have you worked up to your potential in high school?

Is your academic record an accurate measure of your ability and potential? (If not, why?)

Do you think that your SAT/ACT scores are an accurate measure of your ability and potential? (If not, why?)

Are there any outside circumstances in your recent experience or background that have interfered with your academic achievement? (Think of factors within and outside of your control at school and at home).

ABOUT THE STUDENT'S INTERESTS/INVOLVEMENT

If you had a day to do anything, how would you spend it?

What would you like to do less of?

What have you always wanted to try?

What movies do you enjoy?

What music do you listen to?

What activity are you involved in that fills you?

What do you wish you could do more of?

Of your interests and strengths, which would you most like to develop?

Which activities have meant the most to you?

Which of your activities show a pattern of commitment, competence, and/or contribution? (How so?)

How have your interests been encouraged or limited by your school and home?

ABOUT THE STUDENT'S FUTURE

As a younger child, what if anything did you want to be when you “grew up”?

What opportunities do you want the college experience to provide in the future?

What does success mean to you?

Is there anything you have ever secretly wanted to be?

What kind of person would you like to become?

If you had 6-12 months to go anywhere and do anything you wanted, where would you go and what would you do?

What opportunities do you want the college experience to provide in the future?

Why are you willing to work hard academically beyond high school to earn a particular degree?

What is most important to you as you leave high school and look ahead at your next chapter?

What are some of the potential fields of study (majors, minors, areas of interest) and career options you think about?

Are you considering graduate or professional school?

What does it mean to live a good life?

What obstacles do you face, if any, in living a good life?

What is a problem that you want to solve?