# QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR MENTOR

#### **University Experience**

- 1. What led you to choosing to attend your university?
- 2. Knowing what you know now, what advice would you give yourself as a student?
- 3. What is your favorite university tradition?
- 4. How did you choose your major?
- 5. What are several of your most meaningful university experiences?
- 6. Who were the mentors in your corner that impacted you personally and/ or professionally?
- 7. What did you do on campus or during your time as a student to stay engaged on campus and prepare for your career path?
- 8. Tell me about the moment that you were accepted into university.
- 9. How did being a first-gen student impact your time at university?
- 10. As a first-gen student, what do you wish you would have known?

#### **Exploring Career Fields**

- 1. How did you get started in this field?
- 2. What is the future outlook for this industry?
- 3. What is the best educational preparation for a career in this field?
- 4. Which classes and experience would be most helpful to obtain while still in college?
- 5. How do your interests, values, and skills match with this career field?
- 6. What does a typical day look like?
- 7. What are your major responsibilities?
- 8. What did you do yesterday?
- 9. What is the most/least rewarding aspect of your career?
- 10. What challenges do you face in your current role? How do you navigate those challenges?
- 11. What is the most common career path to end where you are?
- 12. What about your career is different than you thought it would be?
- 13. Has being first-gen affected your career path?
- 14. What questions should I ask when participating in experiential educational opportunities?
- 15. What recommendations do you have for balancing what my family wants/ expects for me with what I want in a major, career, or work location?

## **Networking/Professional Development**

- 1. Are there informal or formal mentoring opportunities in your organization and/or industry?
- 2. Which professional journals/organizations would be most helpful in evaluating the field?
- 3. Who else do you recommend I talk with, and may I have permission to use your name?
- 4. Can you recommend other types of organizations I should consider researching?
- 5. What podcasts/books/media should I keep up with in the field/industry?
- 6. If I don't have time to do an internship/work experience, or participate in student orgs, how else can I work toward career skills I need to develop?



## Preparation for the Internship/Job Search

- 1. Did you secure an internship? If yes, what advice would you give for a student seeking one?
- 2. What obligations does your work put on you outside of the actual job?
- 3. What are some lifestyle considerations for this career field?
- 4. What are some common entry-level positions (or graduate programs) in the field of \_\_?
- 5. What kind of salary range and benefits could an entry- level position expect to receive?
- 6. What kind of individual (skills/personality) would be best-suited for these entry-level positions?
- 7. What are the most important factors used when hiring?
- 8. How do people find out about open positions in this field?
- 9. How do you see jobs like yours changing in the future?
- 10. Is there a particular location where I would be able to find opportunities in the industry of \_\_\_?
- 11. What other experiences led you to securing internships/jobs?
- 12. Did you conduct any research with a faculty member and/or serve in any student organization leadership positions?
- 13. Did you market yourself as first-gen? If so, how?
- 14. What should I consider in terms of budgeting, finances, or cost of relocation when internship or full-time job searching?

## **Organization/Career Specific**

- 1. How would you describe your work environment/company culture?
- 2. Does your current job align with your long term goals?
- 3. How high is turnover? How does one move within the organization?
- 4. What professional opportunities are available within your organization?
- 5. Does your company's leadership value continuing education? If so, how do they support their employees?
- 6. What sold you on your current position and organization?
- 7. What personal values helped you decide that this position or company was right for you?

