Graduate and Professional School Questions
Practice Interview Program

Things to remember

✓ Professional Dress – business casual or professional
✓ Professional Behavior
✓ Be on time

Questions to ask:

1) **Tell me about yourself.**
   This is an open-ended question that will serve as an introduction. Keep your response related to the position. Do not ramble on and on. Be specific. A 30-second answer is not long enough, 10 minutes is too long. Aim for 2 minutes.

2) **Why did you choose your major? Why did you choose to attend Gustavus?**
   Here you need to show your PASSION and enthusiasm for the field.
   Some possible follow-up questions:
   - Did you look at a lot of different colleges?
   - What was the deciding factor in choosing Gustavus?
   - How did you select your particular major?

3) **Why are you interested in this university? In this particular program?**
   Here the interviewer wants to know what, specifically, about this program & university drew you to it? Point out specifics. Show that you have done your homework. Explain why the program is a good fit for you. Also describe what you can OFFER the program.

4) **What have you learned from your course study to prepare you for graduate school and/or this profession?**
   Be specific and draw connections. Reference specific skills, courses and research you have engaged in.

5) **Have you had any volunteer, internship, or work experience in this field? What did you learn from the experience?**
   Keep this related to the program you have applied for. Point out specific experiences that connect to the course of study you hope to pursue. Show how you have developed your passion for this area of study/work. Give examples.

6) **What personal characteristics do you feel are necessary for success in this field?**
   The interviewer is looking to see that you know what it takes to be successful in this field. Be specific. You will also want to mention and give examples for how YOU embody these traits.
7) **Tell me about a major setback in your life and how you dealt with it.**
   Don’t share overly personal information here. This is meant to be a POSITIVE question, so put a positive spin on it. Give specific steps for how you dealt with the problem and overcame it. Be sure to share the result!

8) **What do you consider to be the biggest issue facing the profession today? What about in the next 5/10 years?**
   The interviewer is checking to see that you are keeping up with current events related to the profession. Do your homework! If you read professional journals or articles, reference them in relation to the question. Show what you know, and PREPARE ahead of time.

9) **How do you handle frustration and stress?**
   Give specific examples. You want to show that you are resilient and that you have good coping skills when it comes to stress and frustration.

10) **How will you contribute to the diversity of this program?**
    Think about age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity, sexuality, life experience, socioeconomics, and geographic location.
    Diversity questions are likely to be asked. Similar questions: Provide us with an example of how you encountered diversity at Gustavus. How have you participated in diversity events and organizations at Gustavus?

11) **What challenges do you think you might face in this program?**
    Be honest, but be positive too! Show that you are insightful enough to know what some challenges may be, but then describe how you will overcome them. Show that you will succeed regardless of obstacles you may face.

12) **What would your former employers (or professors, references) say about you?**
    Employers are looking to hear that you are easy to work with, get along with others, and a hard worker. Include examples to support your statements.

13) **Why should we select you over other qualified applicants?**
    This is your summary statement. Summarize 3-5 strengths that you want to make sure the employer remembers. Write it out for practice so you can ensure it is articulate.

14) **Before we close, is there anything you would like to add?**
    Here you could ask, “What are the next stages in the selection process?” Reiterate interest in the program and thank the interviewer for his/her time.

Be sure you have some questions for your interviewer!