

Preparation for Career Chats



Alumni & Career Services

What to Expect

Thank you for signing up for a Career Chat! Career Chats give students the opportunity to learn from Spider alumni and parents about career paths in a variety of industries. You will be joining a small group of fellow students for your one-hour meeting with a Spider alumnus/alumna or parent. All Career Chats will take place in the Interview Suite in the Queally Center. Most Career Chats will occur via Skype from the Queally Center; however, some of the Career Chats may be in-person.

How to Prepare

Think about what you hope to learn from the Career Chat ahead of time, and prepare a list of questions to ask that are related to the topics the alumnus/alumna or parent offered to discuss.

Sample Questions:

Industry/Profession

- Can you describe your career path and how you made decisions about opportunities?
- What is the most rewarding part of your job? How would you describe a typical day at work?
- How would you describe your work environment and organization's culture?
- How do you see careers changing? What are the trends in your field?
- What is the best way to enter this field? What organizations in this field should I target?
- Are there professional associations or other resources specific to this field that I should look into?

General Advice

- What considerations were important to you in choosing a major and field of interest?
- What college courses have been the most helpful in your career?
- What skills are important to employers and how did you build those skills during college?
- What do I need to be prepared for in career or geographic transitions?
- Are performance reviews like getting grades? How can I be successful?
- When will I really know what I can do well?

Appearance & Arrival: Attire for Career Chats is smart casual. Be sure to arrive on time. Although this is not a job interview, it is a networking opportunity so make a positive, professional first impression.

Follow Up & Next Steps

Ask the host if they are willing to share their email address with you so you can follow up with them. After the Career Chat, send an email to thank them for their time and advice. Think about what advice you will act on, and what next steps you want to take.

My Next Steps:

- Talk with my academic advisor, faculty, or peers about classes/majors/areas of interest
- Complete "what if" scenarios on Gradtracker to learn about major requirements
- Schedule a Career Advising appointment through *SpiderConnect*
- Apply for Spider Shadowing to explore a career field
- Apply for jobs or internships. Start with *SpiderConnect*.
- Check out the many career programs offered by Career Services
- Other next steps: _____