

## SI 501: Sample Interview Protocol

This interview protocol was developed for an 8-10 minute interview with an SI 501 student, asking about their reading quiz experience in the course. It was used for the in-class demonstration interview. Note that there are margin comments that are visible if you open this document in Microsoft Word, or a Word reader.

Things to note:

- This protocol is written with extra space for notes between questions, so that it can be printed out and used in an interview. When you submit your interview protocol assignment for this class, do *not* include the extra space.
- You should have at least *three* sets of questions that each look like the following example, for each of at least three types of interviewees. Each set of questions will be tailored to the type of interviewee, so they will not all be the same though there may be overlap.
- Since your interviews will be longer (60-90 minutes versus 8-10 minutes) you should have more questions).
- There are comments embedded in this PDF file, that provide instructional annotations to some of the questions. You should be able to hover over them to read them.

### Protocol – Student Interviewee

#### [Overarching Question]

**How** do SI 501 students feel about the reading quizzes, and do they think there are ways that the goals of the quizzes could be accomplished in a better way?

#### [Introduction]

Hi, my name is Jane Masters, and this is Jack Student – we’re master’s students at the University of Michigan School of Information. As you hopefully have heard, my class is doing a consulting project with your organization. **I’m here to understand better how students feel about SI 501 quizzes and see if there is some way to improve the situation.** This interview will take about **8 to 10 minutes**, during which time we’ll go through some questions, and I might ask you to show me how you actually conduct your work. Throughout, I’d like you to treat me as if you’re describing the situation to someone who isn’t familiar with SI 501 or even with the University of Michigan. I’m here to learn from you.

A couple of things before we start. To the extent possible, we will take your comments to be **confidential**. We will aggregate all the comments from the five interviews we’re conducting so that your comments are not easily traced to you. If we quote you in our final report, we will do so without identifying your name or specific role. If there’s anything you really don’t want on the record, even if it’s anonymized, please let me know that, too. Also, this interview is entirely **voluntary** on your part – if for any reason you want to stop, please let me know. We can end the interview at that point with no repercussions for you of any kind. If you wish, I can also throw out my notes of what you’ve told me until that point.

Do you have any questions for me? All right, then, let’s proceed.

**[Warm up]**

- **How** many quizzes have you taken so far in SI 501?
- How do you like the quizzes so far?
- [Once the interview gets underway...] Oh, and by the way, do you mind if I take an **audio recording**? This is just so that my team doesn't miss anything – no one at your organization or otherwise will have access to the recording. Thanks.
- How do they work? I understand you do readings to prepare for them. Is that right?

**[Prepping for quiz]**

- **I'd** like you to think back to the most recent quiz you took, and actually to your preparation for them. Can you tell me how you prepared for the most recent quiz?
  - [Follow up, if they don't include in their response]
  - (I understand that most students are very busy.) When did you start your readings?
  - Where did you do your readings? At home? At the library? Somewhere else?
  - How did you go through the readings?
  - Did you take notes, and if so what kind of notes did you take?
  - Wow, you actually did X? Why / how do you do that?
  - Did you work with a classmate? Did you quiz each other?

- Would you say that what you told me applies more generally to how you prepared for the other quizzes?

**[Quiz time]**


- Again, thinking back to the most recent quiz, how did you feel when you actually took the quiz?
  - If it was hard, what made it hard?
  - What do you think of the multiple-choice nature of the quiz?
  - Do you think the questions are fair overall? Are they questions you can easily answer if you've actually done the readings?
  - Do you feel you had enough time to complete the quiz?

**[Observation]**

Here's a blank quiz. Would you mind pretending that you were taking it for the course, and talking through what is going through your mind as you take it? Tell me about what you're thinking, how you're feeling, and so on.

**[How to improve]**

- Why do you think the instructor has you take the quizzes?
- Can you think of any ways in which you would improve the situation?

- Do you think we could replace the quiz with some other form of assessment? If so, what?
  - Assuming we keep the multiple-choice structure, would you prefer to have more multiple-choice questions or fewer?
  - Would you prefer a different format to the quizzes, and if so what kind of format?
  - [Follow up for details.]
- What else can you tell me that is related to the readings or the quizzes?
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- Other interviewees have said “blah blah blah.” Do you agree with that? Why or why not?
- Is there anything else you’d like to let me know?

### [Conclusion]

Those are all the questions I have for you. If anything else occurs to you after I leave, please don't hesitate to let me know by email at [masters@umich.edu](mailto:masters@umich.edu). We may be in touch with you again to ask a few follow-up questions. And, in about 6-8 weeks, after we've concluded all the interviews and our analysis, we will send you our final report, which will also be provided to your organization. We're also scheduled to do a presentation, and I believe you will be invited to that. Thanks again!