

Introduction

Hi, how are you doing today?

I appreciate you taking the time to talk to me today. My name is Margaret Furr, and I am a student with Montclair State University's UX/CX Research certificate program. With a debate in our country and world on the value of a college or university education, I am conducting a research study on the relationship between how people decided what to major in during college or university and their experience in their career journeys. I am hoping to hear from you about your experience deciding on a major and how that relates to your experience in your career.

During the interview, I will ask you ten-fifteen questions, and the interview will last about an hour; there are no right or wrong answers to these questions, and I'd really like to learn from your experiences, thoughts, and reflections. Please keep in mind that your participation in this research study is voluntary, and if at any point you feel uncomfortable, please let me know, and we can discontinue. You have the right to withdraw. Do you have any questions for me before I begin?

Confidentiality Statement

I will treat all information that you provide to me throughout this interview as confidential. I will not disclose your identity in any research reports or publications; I will remove all personally identifying information, and I will analyze and report about data only in the aggregate. My professor will see the data only in the aggregate to grade my research. I will take steps to safeguard your data with passwords when analyzing and reporting on it, and I will delete your data at the end of the research process. Do you have any questions about this?

Informed Consent

I have interest in recording our conversation today. I will use the recording strictly in my analysis. Like with other data, I will keep the file password protected, and I will delete it as soon as I complete the final report. I will not share the recording with anyone else, including my professor. Do I have your permission to record our conversation today?

Start the recording.

Thank you for providing consent to record our conversation.

Do you have any questions about the study or the informed consent process before we begin?

Interview Questions

Introductory Questions

(1) Will you tell me a little about yourself, including what you studied during your time in a university?

The Research Participant's Experience of Deciding on a College/University Major

(2) How did you decide to study this subject? [PROBE: What other subjects did you consider studying? Did you take any classes related to your graduate degree in undergrad?]

(3) Will you tell me about any career goals or aspirations you had going into this university? [PROBE: What led you to have this career goal or aspiration?]

(4) How did your career goals change as you progressed through the university?

(5) Do you consider yourself to be someone who was very decided, endlessly searching, or somewhere in between when deciding what to major in?

The Research Participant's Career Experience

(6) What did you do in your first job out of university? [PROBE: What was the transition from the university to your first job like?]

(7) How has your career changed over the years?

(8) What industry do you currently work in? How long have you worked in your current industry? [DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS]

(9) Describe how you feel about your career. [PROBE: What do you think contributes to your feeling this way about your career? How do you feel like you are or are not applying what you learned at your university? What aspects of your job and career do you most like? What aspects of your job do you most dislike?]

The Research Participant's Reflections on their Experiences

(10) As you reflect on your experiences in the university and in your career, what do you think is the purpose of a college or university education? [PROBE: How do you think the purpose of a college or university education relates to the purpose of a career?]

(11) If you could go back in time and study something else in college, what would you study?

Closing

(12) Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience?

Demographics

(13) What gender do you identify with?

Final

(14) Do you have any questions for me?

Thank you again so much for your time today in answering my questions. I value your perspective and insights. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns later, and you have the right to withdraw at any time.