



National Alumni Scholarship

Honoring academic achievement and leadership



INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

You will have 20 minutes to interview each candidate. Ask only interview questions from the list below. You may ask the candidate a follow-up question if you feel further elaboration is needed. You may also change the order of the questions and/or omit questions. We encourage you to pick one question from each section to ask candidates.

NOTE: The questions below are organized in a suggested format that will help you learn more about your student and how they fit the “portrait of a scholar”. However, you are not required to ask a question in each of the categories outlined below. (Depending on the student and the length of their answers, you may not have time to ask a question in each category.) Use your own discretion and prioritize your questions accordingly. Some questions have been removed that were used in prior years and have been included in an appendix. These are for your reference only and should not be asked to candidates.

Introductory Question (choose one of the following)

- What do you look forward to when you come to college?
- Tell us something about yourself that we would not know by reading your application materials, maybe something that might surprise us!
- What fictitious character in literature, theater, television, or film do you relate to and why?

Academic Achievement

- The National Alumni Scholarship focuses on academic excellence. Please share with us one academic experience that you have had that has been the most inspiring or impactful to you. This could be a class, field trip, camp, or other academic experience.
- What did your favorite teacher do to challenge you as a learner?
- Tell us about a time you weren’t very pleased with your academic performance. What did you do about it?

Work Ethic

- Drake University is a community. Beyond academic achievement, what kind of contributions do you hope to make to the Drake community while you're a student?
- Tell us about the last time you went the extra mile to do something because it needed to be done, even though it wasn't your responsibility.
- To help us get to know you, please share two or three of the activities that you have found to be most important during high school and how they impacted you. These can be school-related, community, or work activities.

Initiative & Creativity

- Tell us about a time you identified an opportunity for improvement and acted on it. This could be a process at work, in school, or something in your daily life.
- How can we be better citizens of the world? Tell us about a time when you have made a contribution to your world?
- Tell us about a time you were faced with a difficult decision. How did you decide what to do?

Leadership

- Leadership is a key component of the National Alumni Scholarship. Please share a time when you were a leader, either formally (as in holding a position) or informally (as in leading your peers by example). This could be a moment or experience in a school, community, work, or other context.
- In what ways have you demonstrated leadership? How do you consider yourself an effective leader?
- Tell us about one of your strengths and how you will play to that strength to help you succeed in college.

Passion

- What are you passionate about and why?
- Tell us about your career focus after college. How do you expect your college experience to help you reach your goal?
- Tell us about a meaningful or important experience that has shaped you as a person.

Adversity/Resilience

- What's the biggest challenge you've faced so far? How did you handle it? What did you learn from the experience or what would you do differently the next time when faced with a similar challenge?
- If you could travel back in time and give the younger you one piece of advice, what would it be?
- What challenges do you anticipate in college? How do you plan to navigate through those challenges?

Closing (choose one of the following)

- Why should we recommend you for one of these scholarships?
- Why are you interested in Drake and what will you do to leave your mark on this university?
- Is there anything else that you would like to share with us?

Appendix: Previous Interview Questions

Beginning: Academic Achievement

1. How do you imagine college will differ from your high school?
2. How do you personally define success? Tell us about a time you were successful in or out of school.
3. If you had the opportunity to change anything about your high school experience, what would you change? Why?

Middle: Personal Interests

4. Tell us about a book you have read recently.
5. Tell us something about yourself, such as an interest, hobby, or activity you participate in, that might surprise us.
6. If you had the opportunity to have dinner with anyone, living or dead, who would you choose and why? What would you talk about or ask them?
7. Who has been an inspiration to you, and why?
8. What are three items in your bucket list?
9. If you could travel to another time or place, to what time or place would you travel and why?
10. Tell us about a typical school day and/or weekend day.

Middle: World Perspective

11. How can we be better citizens of the world? Tell us about a time when you have made a contribution to your world?
12. What do you think is a pressing issue facing society today? How might we solve it?
13. It seems our politics--and society in general--are increasingly polarized. What examples come to mind for you? Is this good or bad? And if you feel this is bad, is there anything you would propose to address this?

Middle: Learning About One's Self

14. Tell us about a time where you had to deal with a conflict with others?
15. Describe an activity or event that affected you in an unexpected way. What message did you take from this?

Middle: Facing Challenges

16. If you had one do-over in life, one Mulligan, what would it be?
17. What has been your most notable achievement? Your biggest failure? What lesson(s) did you learn from each?

Middle: Values and Ethics

18. What do you value most about your friends?
19. What quality in others do you have the least tolerance for and why?
20. What is your most treasured possession, and why?

Closing

21. Why should we recommend you for one of these scholarships?