



Student Leadership Interviews

PREPARING

- Review your application.
- Research the organization.
- Assess how your skills, personality, values, etc. are a fit.
- Be prepared to explain why you want the ‘position’ and what you will bring to the program.
- Schedule a Mock Interview with CPAD or practice with a friend.
- Be prepared with anything you were asked to bring.
- Arrive on-time (5–15 minutes early).
- Dress appropriately (check out Captain’s Closet for free options). Ask about expectations if not in application materials.
- Relax and know you will do your best.
- Follow-up with a thank you note or email.

DURING

- Smile and make eye contact with interviewers as you enter.
- Be enthusiastic but sincere—fake shines through.
- If panel, let them extend hands first or skip shaking hands.
- Let the panel tell you when to sit down.
- Organize your thoughts before you speak; know what you want to tell about yourself.
- Sit on front half of chair, leaning slightly forward. Plant feet on ground in front of or slightly under you.
- Don’t play with hair or jewelry; if you tend to fiddle, then pull your hair back and don’t wear jewelry.
- Keep hands in your lap unless making a gesture.
- Don’t watch clock, check your phone or glance at watch.
- Don’t assume you know the question being asked—listen.
- Maintain natural eye contact; address answers to each person on the panel, not just to the person who asked the question.
- Don’t be afraid to pause a few seconds before answering; gather your thoughts.
- If you don’t understand the question, ask for clarification.
- If you don’t know the answer to a question, say, “I’m sorry, I don’t know. Can we come back to that question?”
- Avoid nervous habits/fillers: um, like, you know, etc.
- Don’t exaggerate your accomplishments.
- Don’t ramble. Make your point and end the thought.
- Don’t mumble. Speak up so that all can hear you.
- Don’t chew gum!
- Don’t take a portfolio unless you were asked for ideas or special information to be brought.
- Always leave the interview panel with “something”—reiterate your interest, ask meaningful questions, etc.
- Thank the panel for their time.

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Tell us about yourself.
- Where do you see yourself in ____ years?
- What are your strengths/weaknesses?
- What one word best describes you?
- What is your favorite UT Martin tradition and why?
- What has being here taught you about people?
- If you were chancellor of UTM for one day, what policies would you initiate?
- What do you see as the biggest problem facing UTM today?
- If you were taking a prospective student on a tour of UTM, where would you take him and why?
- Why did you choose to attend UT Martin?
- What makes UT Martin special?
- How have you changed since being at UT Martin?
- What activities are you involved in and how have they prepared you for the future?
- Do you see yourself as a leader or follower? Why?
- Who has been the most influential person in your life other than your parents?
- If you were a color/tree/kitchen appliance/etc., what would you be and why?
- What has been the proudest moment in your life?
- Tell us about your most embarrassing moment.
- Tell us about a time when you dealt with a difficult person.
- Tell us about a time you balanced multiple responsibilities.
- Tell us about a time with you led a team.
- Why should we choose you over other candidates?
- Is there anything you would like to leave us with?

WHAT DO INTERVIEWERS LOOK FOR?

- **Appearance:** You are neat and well groomed. Check yourself in a mirror before interview to make sure everything is in place.
- **Poise:** You are self-confident. Show that you can handle difficult or awkward situations.
- **Personality:** You are a fit for the organization. Smile and show that you are happy to be there. Make eye contact and show that you are interested. Communicate that you will be a good representative of their organization.
- **Originality:** You are an individual. Give them original and sincere answers. Avoid cookie cutter answers and share specific examples about your experiences.

See additional interview tips and sample questions on the **Interview Tip Sheet**.



OFFICE OF CAREER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

210 University Center | www.utm.edu/career
731.881.7712 | career@utm.edu



@utmcareer

