

Undergraduate Major – Focus Group Questions - General

Numbered questions represent the information we wish to gather through the focus groups. Bulleted questions are those that address specific components of the overall topic area or are examples of different ways to word the questions.

1. What do you want to get out of a university education?

- Is a college degree most important to you because it will help you get the job you want or some other reason? Please describe the value of a college degree from CSU.
- Please explain which of the following classroom experience is valuable to you and why?
 - What type of learning environment do you want: lecture or experiential?
 - If our major can offer experiential
 - , problem solving, problem based learning
 - applied experiences (e.g., lab placement, internships, supervised teaching/outreach), would that appeal to you and why?
- Of Which of the following names for an college degree program-undergrad major, would which of the following do you find most appealing and why? If none of these, what other names would you suggest?
 - A. Agricultural Biology
 - B. Sustainable Pest Management
 - C. Integrated Pest Management
 - D. Plant Health
 - E. Plant Protection
 - F. Crop Protection
 - G. Applied Pest Biology
 - H. Food System Protection

Formatted

Commented [B1]: Problem-solving = problem-based
Laboratory and internship experiences are not considered “problem-based” necessarily. Those are applied classes.

Formatted: Font: +Body (Calibri), 11 pt

Frank's suggestions:

Pest Biology
Pest Biology and Management
Applied Pest Biology

- How did you and your peers select your major degree program? (or how will you select it?)
What criteria do you and your colleagues use in deciding on a major?
- - For students on campus: What criteria did you use for choosing your current major?
- For biology/other majors: What would our department's undergrad major degree program need to offer for you to choose it over Biology/Other your current degree program?

Commented [B2]: A high school student (or even college student) would never refer to their peers or classmates as colleagues.

Commented [B3]: A high school student (and even a college student) would never use the word, “colleague,” to describe their peers.

Formatted: List Paragraph, Bulleted + Level: 1 + Aligned at: 0.25" + Indent at: 0.5"

Formatted

2. Would this appeal to you? Do you like what we have to offer?

M(Perhaps mention that most jobs in agriculture do not involve actual farming, and rather they support the production and distribution of food. Much of this work depends on understanding the science behind food production.)

- Knowing that, Would you be interested in a major related to which of the following topics sounds appealing to you?
 - A. Food and food production
 - B. Insects and the roles they play in natural and agricultural systems
 - C. Microbes and the roles they play in natural and agricultural systems
 - D. Sustainable agriculture
 - E. Plant diseases and the roles they play in natural and agricultural systems
 - F. Invasive plants and weeds and how they affect natural, agricultural and urban systems
 - G. Preventing and managing biological invasions
 - H. Reducing food insecurity

- What major would you be interested in if it is not on this list?

3. What sort of science do you want to do? What sort of job would you want in science? How will a degree in science help you meet your professional goals?

Stephen Coen

Cini,

I have one overall comment: I think the questionnaire is too jargon-y for high-school students. In some cases, the language can be simplified to make it clearer. Some examples:

"experiential" - could be "hands-on" or "lab-based"
 "colleagues" - could be "friends" or "other students"
 "reducing food insecurity" - could be "protecting global food supply" or something similar
 "undergrad major" - could be "degree program" or "academic major" (I remember not understanding what "undergrad" meant when I was in high-school)

Hope this helps,

Stephen

Amy Charkowski

Hi Cini -

Thanks for adding me to this (and I promised myself that I would not comment, but here I am already!!!).

The questions look excellent and I think the answers will be relevant to departments beyond our own. I don't think that I mention it to you enough - I really appreciate the thoughtful approach you have taken with this project.

My only comment - perhaps we don't call out Biology specifically in the one question - can we ask instead "What would we need to offer to have you choose this major over your current major."

I'm anticipating some push back from them on our name change as it is, if we specifically target recruiting away from the Biology major in this focus group, I think we might be kicking a hornets nest.

Amy

Formatted: Font: Calibri, 11 pt, Font color: Text 1

Formatted: Font: Calibri, 11 pt, Font color: Text 1

Commented [B4]: Move away from yes/no questions or short answer. You will not get robust responses that are needed in focus groups.

Formatted: Font: Calibri, 11 pt, Font color: Text 1

Commented [B5]: This is redundant. It was asked 3 questions ago

Formatted: Font: +Body (Calibri), 11 pt

Formatted: Font: +Body (Calibri), 11 pt

Formatted: Normal, Indent: Left: 0.25", No bullets or numbering

Commented [B6]: I didn't understand "sort of science" High school students only know about subjects they take in high school. College students only know what little to which they've been exposed (often professional programs).

Amy Charkowski

Professor and Head, Bioagricultural Sciences and Pest Management
C129 Plant Science Building, 307 University Avenue
Colorado State University, Fort Collins CO 80523
<http://bspm.agsci.colostate.edu/>