WHAT IS THE ALUMNI CAREER ADVISOR NETWORK?

The Alumni Career Advisor Network is an online mentoring platform that connects you with alumni to explore potential careers, job search advice, networking, and more! Whether you want to learn more about a career path, have an interview coming up, or need to give your resume a tune up, alumni are there to help. The platform uses a matching algorithm to connect you to ideal alumni advisors based on information included in your profile. Conversations with alumni can take place via phone, video, chat, or in person.

WHAT VALUE DOES IT OFFER?

The best opportunities don’t always go to the applicants with the best GPA. In many cases they go to candidates who are well connected, whose networks teach them about potential opportunities and how to best articulate their experiences on their resumes and in their interviews. One of the greatest benefits of engaging alumni career advisors is the ability to receive career advice from professionals working in the field. Student advisees who actively engage with alumni for career advice are 18% more likely to graduate with a full time job and receive 22% higher starting salaries than their peers.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Register as a advisee
  - Visit https://geneseo.firsthand.co/
  - Click “Get Advice” and create your profile
  - Enter your contact information and career goals
  - View suggested advisor matches and request a consultation, or view all advisors

- Search and select an advisor
  - Browse advisor profiles to find someone you’re interested in talking to
  - Filter advisors by function, industry, employer, type of consultation, location, field of study, language, and more
  - Once you’ve found an advisor, click on their profile to learn more about them and book a consultation

- Book your consultation
  - Select a time to connect with them under “Book a Consultation”
  - Suggest three meeting times and write a message introducing yourself and outlining what you’d like to get out of the consultation
  - Submit your request and wait for the advisor to accept one of your suggested times

- Connect with your advisor
  - Your consultation homepage allows you to message your advisor and upload files before your session
  - Dial in to the conference line provided to connect with your advisor at the scheduled time

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL CONSULTATION

- What is informational interviewing?
Gathering information about a career, occupation, or organization.
Beginning to develop professional networks.
Helps verify or uncover career objectives.
Clarifies career plans based on input from professionals working in the field.

• Before your consultation:
  ° Write an introductory message and upload any documentation that will be relevant to your call (e.g. resume, cover letter, job description, etc.)
  ° Think about your purpose for talking with a particular advisor. Would you like to learn more about the industry, the company, the career path, etc.?
  ° Do some research on the occupation and background of the advisor.
  ° Respect the advisor’s time commitment by planning and preparing topics of discussion. Prepare specific, intelligent, and productive questions that can guide your discussion. Twelve to fifteen questions should fill a 30-minute interview. Be conversational, flexible, and change questions as needed.

• During your consultation:
  ° Be prepared to briefly introduce yourself professionally.
  ° Remember to keep the conversation professional. Do not ask personal questions or ask an advisor directly for job placement or internship assistance.
  ° Strive to be a receptive and active listener.
  ° Ask the advisor for the names of two more people in that field they feel might chat with you. This is a great way to continue to grow your network!

• After your consultation:
  ° Show appreciation for the time and assistance given by the advisor by sending a follow up thank-you message. Note that unless the advisor provides his/her contact information during the call, you must do this within 24 hours of the consultation, while your consultation homepage is still active.
  ° Provide feedback on your consultation once complete, as this will continue to improve the student experience.
  ° Evaluate the experience:
    ▪ Is this career an option? Why or why not?
    ▪ Is additional information needed to decide on this career path?

• See Career Design’s Informational Interviewing Guide for more information, including sample questions.

CRAFTING A MESSAGE TO AN ADVISOR

• Your message should include:
  1. A brief introduction about yourself
  2. Why you are consulting with this individual, for example to learn more about a type of career, organization, or topic
  3. A brief statement of your interest or experiences in the person’s field or organization

• Sample Message – should be customized based on your interest

Dear ______________________,

I am a first-year student at SUNY Geneseo and considering a major in Psychology. I’m interested in learning more about the field of Mental Health Counseling and the opportunities that are available. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to speak with you for 15-20 minutes to learn more about the work you do.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration,

Your Name

Content from: Firsthand, Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University

Have Questions:

• Attend Quick Chats - visit the Career Design Event Calendar for the schedule and other associated details
• Call Career Design at 585-245-5721 or email careers@geneseo.edu