

February, 2023

Dear Interview Judge:

Thank you for volunteering your time to judge the interview component of the 2023 Georgia Academic Decathlon. During this competition, you will have the opportunity to judge the best and the brightest students Georgia has to offer!

We will be at a new location this year. Please arrive at Kennesaw State Campus, (Bagwell Education Building) (580 Parliament Garden Way, Kennesaw, GA 30144) on Saturday, February 25th by no later than 7:45AM. Should you encounter any problems or questions, please call me on my cell phone at (706) 499-8909.

When you arrive at Kennesaw State – Central Parking Deck, proceed to Bagwell Education Building (across from Parliament Garden Way). The schedule for Saturday is as follows:

8:00 AM	Check in at the Volunteer Table on the second floor of the Bagwell College of Education building. Breakfast will be provided
8:15 AM	Judges' Training Room BEB130
9:35 AM	Interview Competition begins (bathroom breaks and snacks/water will be provided throughout the morning)
12:45 PM	Interview Competition ends (estimated)

An overview of the interview process is attached to this letter. We are asking all of our judges to bring their smart phones and/or tablets with you to the competition. We will provide wi-fi access so that you can access the internet. Scoring is done on a google doc that will be provided during training. We have a few tablets available if you do not have a device. Detailed criteria on how to judge this event will be provided during the interview judge's training. Also, feel free to refer to the PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon website at www.pageinc.org/gad for additional tips.

Thank you again for your support of this worthwhile activity. **If due to unforeseen circumstances you are unable to serve as a volunteer, please contact me on my cell phone at (706) 499-8909.** If you know of anyone else who might be interested in judging or if you have any questions or concerns, please contact me via email at dholland007@outlook.com. Otherwise, I look forward to seeing you on **February 25th!**

Sincerely,

David Holland

David Holland
Interview Coordinator
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GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEW JUDGES

GENERAL

- Remember that the students are likely to be a little nervous and apprehensive. Create an atmosphere that is as relaxed as possible. The goal is to provide a setting that is conducive to the students performing to the best of their abilities.
- It is the intent to pattern the interview after guidelines that apply to an employment interview situation. Employment inquiries must be job-related, which means judges shall work to make the interview process as “contest-related” as possible.
- The interview experience should assist each student in learning to present himself/herself in a positive manner when interviewing for a job, scholarship, or any competitive position. It should also give them the experience of learning to listen and respond in an appropriate manner.
- The main objective of the interview process is to give students opportunities to develop oral communications skills.

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

- Do not ask any questions regarding **race, creed, gender, age, ethnic groups, national origin, ancestry, political beliefs, affiliations, mutual acquaintances, etc.**
- Be alert to help each student relax and talk if you sense any apprehension.
- **After** the student leaves the Zoom breakout room, **each** judge will independently rate the student on the Google Form using the form link provided to you. You may take notes during the interview, but keep the notetaking to a minimum. The focus should be on engaging with the decathlete.
- Be an “active” listener. Listen not only to what is being said, but observe how it is said (e.g.—tone of voice, vocabulary, facial expression, gestures, etc.).
- Avoid any controversy during the interview. Arguing, interrupting, or displaying a position of authority will put the student on the defensive.
- Ask open-ended questions that generate a response and help the student to talk about himself/herself. Refrain from asking questions that elicit single word answers such as “yes” or “no.”

UNITED STATES ACADEMIC DECATHLON®

2023 OPEN-ENDED INTERVIEW COMPETITION QUESTIONS

OBJECTIVE

Conduct an objective interview by creating the same situation for each student, (i.e.— same judge asking the same set of questions of every student).

DIRECTIONS

1. From the list of **general questions** below, select **six (6)** questions for the first interview period and **six (6)** different questions for the second interview period. Since each judging team will be interviewing decathletes from a different category (Honor, Scholastic, or Varsity) the judging teams do not have to use the same set of questions.
 2. From the student's résumé, construct a minimum of **two (2)** questions directly related to the content of the résumé (i.e., activities in which the student has been engaged, leadership roles in which the student has participated, goals or objectives the student may have stated on the résumé).
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GENERAL QUESTIONS (Samples)

1. What is the most important thing you have learned from your past mistakes?
2. Do you think the town you grew up in has influenced you? Explain why.
3. If you were a teacher, what type of student would you want to teach? Explain why.
4. Which is more important: creativity or efficiency? Explain why.
5. Describe the last time you had to ask for help. Explain what you were doing.
6. Describe how you get to know people when you are new to a group or environment.
7. Discuss one lesson you recently learned from a work experience.
8. Explain what has most shaped you into the person you are today.
9. Give an example of a time in which you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision.
10. In what way do you uniquely contribute to your decathlon team?
11. What is one example of a situation where patience paid off for you?
12. If someone met you for the first time, what is the first thing he or she would notice about you?
13. Describe how you would handle working on three tasks that are all due at the same time.
14. Tell me about a situation where you had to be assertive to put across a point that was important to you.
15. What new skill have you learned in the past year? Why is this an important skill for you today?

INTERVIEW – SAMPLE TOPICS & OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Use the following topics and/or open-ended questions to facilitate the interview process with the decathletes:

SAMPLE TOPICS

- Extracurricular activities
- Selecting a college or university
- Selecting a field of study in college
- Identifying a career/employment goal
- How the individual and/or team became involved in Academic Decathlon
- How the individual and team prepared for Academic Decathlon
- Experiences in Academic Decathlon
- Most difficult event in Academic Decathlon
- Values that have strongly influenced the student's life
- Most influential person in the student's life

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

- Tell me about your involvement in...
- What are some of your most memorable experiences as/in ...?
- How did your involvement in ... influence you?
- What skills are necessary to be on the ... (sports, Model UN, etc.)?
- What factors did you consider in selecting a college?
- Why did you select (college or profession)?
- What are (were) your responsibilities as ...?
- How would you go about choosing a career (college, job, etc.)?
- What made you decide to be on the Academic Decathlon team?
- Tell me about your experiences in ...
- Who is or has been the most influential person in your life and why?
- What was your school's selection process and how were you chosen for Academic Decathlon?

INTERVIEW – RATING CRITERIA

- **VOICE** deals with the auditory qualities of the interview—a student's ability to vary the speed and volume of his/her responses in a way that is consistent with the overall presentation of ideas. Precise articulation of ideas and enthusiasm in responding to the interviewer's questions are keys to ensuring effective voice.
- **LANGUAGE USAGE** considers the efficacy of the student's word choice and its appropriateness for the given audience. This category also evaluates the correctness of grammar and syntax. Maybe most important of all, correctness includes appropriate pronunciation and enunciation. Judges should be able to hear and clearly understand each word of the response. This means that each response must be delivered with the requisite speed and intonation appropriate for responding to the interviewer's questions.
- **INTERPERSONAL SKILLS** refer to an interviewee's ability to relate on a personal level to the interviewers. It is important for each student to develop a rapport with the judges that facilitates the exchange of ideas. A student should be completely engaged in the interview process and demonstrate his/her connection to the interviewers and his/her enthusiasm for the verbal interplay.
- **NON-VERBAL LANGUAGE** rates the student's posture and demeanor, as well as his/her movements and gestures during the interview. Gestures and movements must be consistent with and appropriate for the exchange of ideas.
- **MANNER** signifies the student's comfort level during the interview. Watch for self-assured, enthusiastic, and direct responses. The degree to which the student's answers demonstrate composure and confidence will impact his/her score.
- **LISTENING SKILLS** measure not only a student's attentiveness to the interviewer's questions, but also his/her ability to assess and to respond to "the question behind the question." The best interviewee not only hears the question but also observes the intent and purpose of the question by being in tune with the interviewer's intent.
- **ANSWERING SKILLS** assess a student's directness and completeness in responding to a given question. Answers must be clear and complete without being wordy or self-indulgent. The decathlete must also have a keen sense of appropriateness and decorum in responding to an interviewer. Also included is the appropriateness of the responses for the given audience. Highly charged language, politically incorrect language, and profanity are inappropriate and should be scored accordingly.
- **RESPONSES** weigh the quality of the content of the responses based on the questions asked. The best responses are thoughtful, genuine, informative, and insightful.
- **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS** judges the overall quality of the interview. This includes the degree to which a student is able to interest and engage the audience in his/her presentation of ideas. Each student must have an idea of how to best communicate with the listeners and understand what he/she wants to accomplish in the interview. This category measures the degree to which the student's vision is communicated and the purpose is achieved. Effectiveness is an overall measure of the judges' interests in and appreciation for the student's responses.
- **APPEARANCE** evaluates the dress (...as much as can be seen on camera...) and demeanor of the student in the context of a business or professional interview.