**College Panel Moderator**

* **ALWAYS** repeat the question from the audience
* **ALWAYS** ask the audience if they have any questions before moving on to the next question on the list below
* Your role is to guide the conversation, maintain an appropriate tone, keep people on task, and ensure everyone gets ample time to present his or her point of view. Adding very important pieces of information missed by panelists is okay, but do not give a formal presentation or state your opinion after every question.
* The major role of the panel moderator is to guide the conversation to ensure the quality of information being disseminated and to make sure that the required questions are covered. Moderators will always start with a question for the panel and will then open it up to the audience for their questions. Throughout the course of the panel, the moderator will ask some of the required questions as they relate to the direction of the discussion.
  + Example 1: When answering the question of how difficult college is, a panelist may mention an academic student organization they are involved in as a potential resource to aid in academic success. The moderator could take this opportunity to transition into student life and student engagement opportunities.
    - Lauren just mentioned her involvement in the Jacks Mentoring Program and the fact that this is a resource to help students succeed academically. However, student organizations such as this one also offer an opportunity for students to get involved on campus and to meet new people. With so many student clubs at NAU, there is an opportunity for everyone. Panelists, what student organizations are you a part of and mention any leadership positions that you hold.
  + Example 2: After the curfew question is asked and answered by the panelists, it would be logical to transition to time management.
    - The panelists just described that NAU does not have a curfew and that you are an adult when you come to college. With this increased freedom, is it hard to balance everything? How do you manage your time?
* Practice cut-off phrases. “You have an interesting point there, but we want to know more about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.” Likewise, if someone is dominating the discussion, watch the person’s natural breathing rhythm and then interject between breaths, “Thank you, Julie. Now let’s hear Bob’s perspective on this topic.”
* When you call on someone in the audience who has a question, say "The student in the red shirt…”
* **Do your homework.** You need to really know the issue you are talking about and who your panelists are, so you can focus the discussion and bring out their best points of view. This requires real preparation.
* **Use directed questions ONLY when you are confident the panelist knows the answer and is confident responding. For example, if the audience asks a question about Greek Life and you know only one of the students on the panel is Greek,** you could ask a specific panelist for their point of view directly. After repeating the question, you might say "I know Bill is Greek. Can you tell us about your experience in Greek Life and the options available on campus to the students?" Doing this helps get to some deeper insights and lets you avoid having your panelists all agree with and repeat one another.

Introduction:

(Have the panel introduce themselves or read bios)

Now that we know a little bit more about each of our members, we are going to start with a question about financial aid. After that, we will open up the floor to you for questions that may have been sparked as the members were introducing themselves.

The reason we like to start by discussing financial aid is because paying for college is often one of the most significant concerns for students. What you may not know is that there are many opportunities for financial aid, and you shouldn’t let money hold you back from pursuing your educational goals. Panelists, how are you paying for college?

Panelists to answer the financial aid question.

Thank you. Now we will open up the floor to you to ask any questions you have for our panel of college students.

During the Q&A, the moderator should guide the discussion to include the following questions.

Required Questions for the Panel:

1. With over 1,000 student organizations on some college campuses, there are tons of opportunities for students to get involved on campus. What clubs are you involved with and describe any leadership positions you hold.
2. How are you paying for college?
3. How do you manage your time? How do you balance your school work with other aspects of your life? (Work, student organizations, social)
4. Did you live in a residence hall and, if so, what was it like?
5. Is college difficult? How much time do you spend studying?
6. Was the transition from high school to college difficult? With so many students at NAU, how can you make a big campus feel small?
7. Why did you choose your perspective campus? Does the major you choose make that decision for you?

**Additional Questions if the Students aren’t Asking Questions:**

1. What is the difference between a major and minor?
2. What types of activities are available to you when you are not in class?

* Extracurricular, community involvement, volunteer experience- in high school and college (SEP)

1. How is your class schedule in college different than it was in high school?
2. Who makes sure you get your homework done?

* Time management skills (AB)

1. What is it like to live in the residence halls and can you pick your own roommate?

* Living on campus, doing laundry, cleaning, cooking, grocery shopping, etc.—independence (SEP)

1. Do you have a curfew?
2. What kind of food do you eat?
3. Do you study the same amount as you did in high school?

* Study skills (AB)

1. Are there tutors on campus?

* The best resource I have found on campus—ability to navigate the college environment (SEP)

1. What was your most shocking experience in college?

* Cultural readiness (SEP)

1. What if you don’t know anyone at NAU?

* Importance of making friends—social-emotional support (SEP)

1. What are the benefits of joining Greek Life (fraternity, sorority, multicultural, and paraprofessional)?
2. Do I need a car and/or my own computer?
3. Do you have a locker? Do you have to buy your own books?
4. What is your favorite thing about being a Lumberjack?
5. Is NAU a party school?

Conclusion:

* Five minutes left until the end of the panel

Example:

Alright, we only have time for one more question from the audience before we wrap up (see if anyone raises their hand).

As a final question, let’s see what advice these students wish they had been given when they started the college preparation process. Panelists, what would you tell the ninth grade version of yourself?

Unfortunately, that is all we have time for today. I’m sure many of you have more questions that did not get answered in today’s panel, which is why I want to refer you to the

Thank you, panelists for taking time out of your day to be here. We appreciate your insight into what it is like to be a student at NAU.

You've been a great audience. Let's give the panelists a hand.