# STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY CAREER CENTER

# **Common Interview Questions**

# "Tell me about yourself."

**What are they looking for?** This is your opportunity to give them <u>your elevator pitch</u>. You want to introduce yourself and include your 'highlights' and interest in this position specifically.

# "Why are you interested in this position?"

**What are they looking for?** They are hoping to hear you have researched their organization and have specific interest in them. Avoid using general answers that could be used for any similar experience.

# "What is your biggest strength?" OR "What is an area of improvement for you?"

**What are they looking for?** You can recognize and define your strengths and weaknesses. Give specific examples of how you use your strength or how you acknowledge and are improving a weakness.

## "Tell me about a time..."

**What are they looking for?** They want to be able to picture you in the role they are hiring for by understanding how you used skills in previous experiences. Tell a story with structure (STAR method).

<b>S</b> ituation	Introduce the story by explaining the situation with relevant details to help the interviewer understand the context, who was involved and your role in relation to others
Task	Explain what needed to be done, your specific role in the task
Action	Identify what actions you took to resolve the task, what skills did you use, explain why did you complete it this way
Result	End your story with the results of your action with the outcome

• Tell me about a time you were on a team. What role did you play and what was the outcome?

- Walk me through a time that you could not complete all of your tasks and had to prioritize.
- Give me an example of a time you had to adapt to a new situation in a short amount of time.
- Have you ever tutored, coached or mentored someone? Tell me about that experience.

## How would you...

- How would you approach a problem you don't know how to solve?
- How would you respond to received feedback from a supervisor?
- How would you approach understanding the perspectives of others?

## Do you have any questions for me?

What are they looking for? They want to see if you are interested and curious about them specifically. This is the last conversation with them, so you want to have an engaging question.

**Prepare 3 to 4 questions and ask 1 to 2!** Your question might get answered throughout the interview, so you want to prepare more than 1.