Questions a Student might ask a Mentor

Try to begin the conversation by talking about the potential mentor’s current research. Communicate your fascination with it.

- What are the various projects in the mentor’s research program?
- What journals are important to read?
- How did you get into this particular area of research?
- What has been your career path and former positions? (Actually you should have a general idea about these from the background research you have done on your potential mentor)
- Who helped you in that process and how did you progress in this field?
- Looking back, is there anything you would change or do differently based on what you have learned over the course of your career?
- What is the best piece of professional advice you’ve ever received and used or implemented?
- What are the things you find personally rewarding in your career?
- What characteristics do you look for in a student?

Questions a Mentor might ask a Student

- What do you want to be when you grow up (What profession do you want to be when you’re older?) and why?
- Why did you choose to attend UC Davis?
- Why did you choose Animal Biology as a Major?
- What classes have you taken? Which one did you enjoy and why?
- What is your motivation for pursuing this (the mentor’s) area of interest?
- What have you learned in your course work that fascinates and interests you enough to engage in a more in depth investigation?
- Tell me the 5 best things about you?
- What skills do you have?
- What skills would you like to develop here at UC Davis?
- What have you done, in school or sports or anywhere that you are most proud of?