

APPENDIX A. Areas for Probing Questions

In preparing for an oral history interview that is to become part of the Computing Educators Oral History Project (CEOHP), the interviewer develops an initial set of probing questions. While the goal is to cover core topics consistently across all interviews, supplemental materials such as resumes and curriculum vitae can suggest additional probing questions. Taken together, the list of probing questions provides a structure for the interview. However, the interviewer must be prepared to add questions as interesting topics come up during the interview in order to obtain deeper information. The wording of questions during an interview should always focus on the interviewee, generally with references to the interviewer in a plural form (for example, “we” rather than “I”) to emphasize the broader audience that will eventually read or hear the interview.

This appendix outlines the key areas that an interviewer should consider in preparing for an interview for the CEOHP collection. This list has emerged from the probing questions proposed in the 2005 ITiCSE Working Group report [9] and takes into account the actual probing questions (as opposed to the planned questions) that have been asked during all the interviews completed by the time of this report.

- 1. Parents**
[education, work life, computing-related career]
- 2. Early education**
[where grew up / type of community; type of school (public/private; large/small; mixed/single-gender); kind of student; background courses; favorite courses; outside activities]
- 3. Siblings**
[description; interactions; college education; careers]
- 4. Parental encouragement**
[attitudes and expectations for education; support and encouragement; balance in support for education and career aspirations with siblings]
- 5. Early shaping influences:**
[reason for choosing career; teacher or others in early life as inspiration]
- 6. Undergraduate education**
[why chose institution; description of institution; describe time at institution; major(s) (choice, when selected, how chosen); when started degree; rhythm of studies (continuous flow; full/part-time; synergy with other parts of life); coursework in major and related areas; time to complete degree; research experiences as an undergraduate; senior project; teaching experience as an undergraduate; undergraduate teachers and others of influence; other females; reaction to gender balance in program of study]
- 7. Master’s-level studies**
[if none: why no graduate work; whether studies will come sometime in future]
[institution and how chosen; why a master’s; connection to Ph.D. studies; relationship between undergraduate and graduate fields; coursework; duration; role of research; thesis or other major written work; teaching or employment; special life events during studies; instructors, colleagues, or peers who provided support; shaping influences or significant events]
- 8. Doctoral studies**
[if graduate work but no Ph.D.: why not this path; might it happen in future; effect on career]
[institution and how chosen; field(s) of specialization; program of study (pre-defined vs. customized); onsite vs. remote participation; program structure; research experience; dissertation topic; writing process; time to finish; employment during doctoral work; effect of life events on work; significant professional relationships]
- 9. Interruptions or major changes in direction**
[summer experiences during studies; internships; activities during career gaps; influence of gaps on later career; reasons behind radical career changes; influence on later work]
- 10. Career phase connections**
[what came after university studies; interview process; why chose first job; relationships among phases of career; how various choices led to later career]
- 11. Career in computing education**
[why working in this type of institution; teaching course load; role of research; teaching-related research; atmosphere at institution; professional relationships during career]
- 12. Teaching**
[typical teaching day; role as teacher; types of teaching methods; teaching philosophy; changes in teaching style; favorite course(s); stories about students or classes]
- 13. Career path / advancement**
[senior mentor / sponsor and effect on career; promotion path and associated expectations; non-traditional or administrative positions; experiences with grants and funded projects; publication history and role in career path; differences in career path from peers; differences in career path from peers of opposite gender]
- 14. Professional community roles**
[professional organizations and roles; effect on career]
- 15. Professional service**
[role as supervisor for undergraduate / graduate students and effect on career; volunteering as a professional and effect on career; personal experiences as mentor]
- 16. Challenges**
[work environment / career challenges]
- 17. Compromises**
[compromises during career]
- 18. Outside interests**
[outside interests that provide insights; role of family; career of spouse / partner; how outside interests influenced career]
- 19. Future vision**
[expectations for future; hopes for future career path]
- 20. Wrap-up**
[advice to young person starting out; possible decision changes along career path; a story to be remembered; anything to add]