

INFORMED CONSENT FOR CAREER COUNSELING (IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL)

Purpose of Career Counseling

Attending a career counseling session is a great step towards pursuing career goals. Goals may include career exploration, choosing a major, job or internship search, salary negotiation, as well as other career-related concerns.

UCS receives an allocation of student fees and provides services such as career counseling appointments at no cost to the student. Additional services are available for a fee and include alumni career services, vocational assessments, suit rental, and certain events, which you can discuss further with your career counselor.

The in-person career counseling session will be no more than 30-60 minutes per session. Students or alumni have the option to schedule a career counseling appointment through Cougar Pathway or utilize drop-in hours offered by University Career Services.

Virtual Appointment Options

30-minute appointments with a career counselor can be conducted via phone using Skype for Business, or virtually using Zoom, depending on the preference of the career counselor and student or alumnus. Students and alumni are encouraged to test their technology and ensure a camera is available on the device used for virtual appointments. Additional guidance and training can be provided if needed for virtual appointments.

Students can also log-on to www.uh.edu/ucs and chat a career counselor using the online chat widget. Chats provide students and alumni with temporary career planning resources and assist the student and alumnus to schedule an in-person appointment with a career counselor. The online session will thus be no more than 15-20 minutes.

These services are available in place of face-to-face counseling to support students and alumni when meeting in-person is not convenient or accessible. Virtual career counseling services may not be appropriate for all situations.

Considerations for Virtual Career Counseling Appointments

- Please share your location when meeting virtually to ensure the career counselor can provide local area-appropriate resources as needed and address time zone differences when scheduling appointment (if applicable)
- As much as possible, please access a private space for the appointment to protect your confidentiality and limit distractions (having others in the room, driving, eating, texting, etc.)
- Please use the offered technology in an appropriate manner

Limits of Virtual Career Counseling

- Differences between face-to-face and electronic communication may affect the career counseling process; for example possible misunderstandings could result due to missed cues that sometimes happen with electronic communication.
- There may also be disruptions in the service or quality of the technology used.
- In case of technology failure, your career counselor will discuss with you alternative options, which may include contacting you via Zoom, phone, or email, or recommending a future face-to-face appointment.
- Due to a 15 minute time limit for the online chat option, not all questions may be answered or not all

needs met. The student or alumnus has the option to schedule a follow up career counseling appointment through Cougar Pathway.

- For an online chat session, there may be a wait time if the career counselor is already assisting other students. There is no estimated wait time and the student will solely wait at their own discretion to chat with a career counselor.

Confidentiality

I understand the University of Houston University Career Services abides by [the National Association of Colleges and Employers\(NACE\) code of ethics](#), [National Career Development Association \(NCDA\) code of ethics](#), and [the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) to protect my welfare as a student. Any disclosure of my information outside of the educational institution will be with my prior consent unless health and/or safety considerations necessitate the dissemination of such information. Career services professionals will exercise sound judgment and fairness in maintaining the confidentiality of my information, regardless of the source, including written records, reports, and computer databases.

Exceptions to Confidentiality

There are some limitations to confidentiality when meeting with a career counselor in order to protect the welfare of the student and the welfare of others. As a general rule, career services professionals will not provide details about discussions in career counseling without the student's written consent. However, career services professionals will be legally and/or ethically required to share information without the student's consent in the following instances:

- If there is reasonable danger of harm to yourself or others
- If you disclose sexual harassment or assault, whether on or off campus
- If you disclose abuse or neglect of children, elderly or disabled persons
- If you are under 18, your legal guardian(s) may have access to your records and may authorize their release
- If required by law

Emergency Procedures: This is **NOT** an emergency service. Career counseling is not appropriate if I am experiencing a crisis or having suicidal or homicidal thoughts. If a life-threatening crisis should occur, the student or alumni must contact a crisis hotline, call 911, or go to a hospital emergency room. If the student or alumni need immediate career counseling assistance, they may call University Career Services front desk at 713-743-5100. For life threatening emergencies, students or alumni must call 911.