

# Introduction

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## SUMMARY

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These lessons use the **Future Callings** program at Simon's Rock as a launch pad to further inquiry about what professionalism is and how those in the Early College network navigate between creating meaningful, committed, and sustainable worldmaking work while also maintaining their own sense of self.

## OVERVIEW

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Born during the pandemic, **Future Callings** is a program at Simon's Rock that seeks to answer the following questions: What do Early College students do in this world? How do professions come into being? What worlds await Early College students? How do you carve out meaningful, committed, and sustainable worldmaking work? How did you navigate between expertise, skill, commitment, practice, calling, and making a living? How do students create a consensual relationship with their profession? How do they create professions on their own terms?

Brilliant in its conception and the work they completed, the program created a series of videos featuring Simon's Rock alumni to begin to answer those questions in a form of professional therapy. Alumni shared their professional problems with each other, reflected on points of reverence and interest in a public free-write (what would the early college network be without a free-write), and then freely discussed those points with each other through question and answer.

There was then another layer, a meta analysis, of what transpired during the session in which Simon's Rock faculty and staff reflected on what resonated with them, adding their own stories, reflections, and professional problems.

This program serves as a model for what early colleges in our network should do: invite their alumni to engage in professional therapy, to uncover, reflect,

and discuss their professional problems, how they arrived in the professional world, and how they navigate the professional world.

These lessons are an attempt to put together some of the understandings that can be gained from the **Future Callings** program. These lessons should be seen as a launch pad, a non-exhaustive list of what you can do with the materials created.

You are encouraged to sift, and you will have to sift (being born out of the pandemic you will find not only an archive of what our lives were like during the height of the pandemic, but also lessons we as a world haven't learned) through the videos yourself to find the beautiful nuggets of wisdom that come organically from our own alumni that can still be used even though our world seems far closer to the way we were pre-pandemic instead of the world we should be in, one that has used the lessons learned to create a world truly transformed. You may find we have not learned the lessons of the pandemic from which this project was born, but you can still learn from the insights gained through our alumni's imparting understandings.

## ASYNCHRONOUS WORK

These lessons are intended for asynchronous work. The focused free-writes may be placed in a public discussion board for students to respond to. You may also choose to ask students to respond to their peers after their responses have been posted to the discussion board. Or you may choose to have students keep their responses between them and you.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will begin to understand where their ideas of professionalism come from.
2. Students will begin to think about where they see themselves in their future professions.
3. Students will understand and know what Early College students do in this world.
4. Students will begin to think about how professions come into being.
5. Students will begin to think about how to carve out meaningful, committed, and sustainable worldmaking work.
6. Students will begin to think about expertise, skill, commitment, practice, calling, and making a living.
7. Students will begin to think about how to create a consensual relationship with their profession.
8. Students will begin to think about how to create professions on their own terms .

## LESSON PLANS

### LESSON 1: WHAT IS YOUR IDEA OF PROFESSIONALISM?

Future Callings seeks to help students understand the professional world they may enter into through uncovering the professional problems faced by alumni. But what does it mean to be professional and where do our ideas of professionalism come from? This lesson seeks to answer those two questions.

### LESSON 2: WHAT IS YOUR PROFESSIONAL PROBLEM?

Students may have this preconceived notion that the road to their future profession is a straight path from their undergraduate education to their desired field. The other preconceived idea is that once students get to their desired profession, everything will run smoothly. This lesson is designed to help students understand there is no one path to their desired profession, that they may still have professional problems that will arise when they enter into their desired profession, and that those problems may even emulate the same challenges they experience as a student. This lesson also helps students understand the tension between maintaining a sense of self and the desire to engage in their desired profession fully.

### LESSON 3: WHERE DOES PAIN LIVE IN YOUR BODY?

“Where does your professional problem live in your body” was a question asked of a fellow alumni in Jam #5. This led to a discussion on when your body tells you are at capacity. This question was so impactful that it was further discussed in Convocations #1 of Future Callings. This lesson was designed to help students think about where they hold pain their body when they are stressed as a student and later when they are in the future profession. Its goal is to help students understand when they are at capacity, that it is normal to feel discomfort when you are at capacity, and what to do when you are at capacity. It is important to note that there are many indicators that let us know we are at capacity before pain sits in the body. You may wish to develop ways to get students to determine when they are at capacity that are not related to physical pain. You may also wish to include a list of mental health resources available to students on your campus. Or maybe even include a video presentation from one of your campus’s trainings.

### LESSON 4: SHOWING UP AS AND FOR YOUR AUTHENTIC SELF

Bard College at Simon’s Rock offers a non-traditional entry point into the workforce. A core value of the institution is to encourage students to define and embrace their uniqueness, whilst learning to navigate hegemonic socio-cultural beliefs. Therefore, this lesson seeks to promote a self-reflection on authenticity and how one navigates through self-definition in a system that profits off individualism predicated on adherence to societal normativity.