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Email to students with Pre-Work attachment.

Hello MBA600 students.

Welcome to Professional Skills for a Career with Purpose.  This class is all about helping you make the most of your time at Presidio and preparing for your life after school.

During this term – and the whole program really – you will be challenged to clarify your professional goals and direction. We are building this effort around a process called the Arc of Pragmatic inquiry® that will ask you to consider what contribution you want to make in the world and how you will take the steps to achieve it. And we’re going to start this process on day 1!

To prepare for our first class, I’m asking that you review the attached worksheet and give thought to the questions it poses. These are very big questions. You are not expected to have clear answers just yet, but we would like you to give them a first stab.  You will not be asked to turn this worksheet in but do come prepared to engage in conversations about these questions and what they mean to you.

I look forward to seeing you in class on Thursday afternoon, September 5.

Yours

Marsha

Faculty Chair

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BEGIN *Attentively* – Pre-Work

*PathFinder* Arc of Pragmatic Inquiry® [[1]](#footnote-1)

MBA600 “Finding your Calling” – Fall, 2024

What are my Big Ideas to   
“change the world?”

# Purpose

The purpose of your engagement at Presidio is to find effective new ways to understand and address the pressing needs of the market, society, and the environment. You will strategically explore the questions and problems that face you and an organization, now or in the future, to better understand how to build a flourishing future for all.

You may have seen this sentence on the [Presidio Academic Program](https://www.presidio.edu/academics/) website page. It guides our practice leading to the Capstone course.

*We believe that truly transformative ideas can be found by following the path of pragmatic inquiry—experience disciplined by reflection. Our students learn to balance continuous testing of on-the-ground experience against high-level theory*.

This is where you begin your “Arc of Pragmatic Inquiry” at Presidio. The complete practice is presented in the Presidio *Pathfinder* Lab Journal – [HERE](https://www.pragmaticinquiry.org/book-shop/).

# Process:

Your Inquiry begins with defining the situation and challenges you see, the needs you think you can address, and then stating your initial ideas to meet those needs. During your Inquiry, you will test these ideas against the evidence from your experience and learning.

The outcome of your Inquiry will be to decide on the best course of action for you and your organization/community to implement and test these ideas.

# Your Values and Vision

We are also asking you to evaluate your personalValues and why you believe those ideas are important to you. We want you to reflect upon your Vision for the future – your hopes for the world – and see how your project will help shape that vision.

A major weakness of traditional problem-solving approaches is their lack of awareness around the assumptions (unstated contexts, paradigms) underlying the issue — or even what the real issues are.

This lack of awareness is ultimately rooted in a failure to account for a larger context and “world-view.” In your project, you will seek to align competing and diverse views and understand the greater implications.

That’s why we start with the baseline assumptions, Challenge-questions and ideas, as well as a statement of Values and Vision driving the Inquiry.

# Your Career Direction

Think about and “sketch” answers to the following 5 questions. Use the bullet prompts as they are helpful.

This BEGIN work, brief as it is, will be useful during the course of your studies at Presidio to help you reflect on and evaluate your career path and progress so that all life flourishes.

It is a baseline - a hypothesis to be tested. During the program, we will examine these questions again, to see what you are learning about your career direction. We hope that you will be surprised and challenged by what you learn and even change your career direction and project ideas.

This is NOT a formal assignment or essay; it is for you and will not be turned in. But keep it as a foundation data point.

# Note: Write quickly your best thoughts, answers, hunches, guesses, dreams, intuitions to these 5 Questions.

WHAT DOES THE WORLD NEED FOR ALL LIFE TO FLOURISH?

1. What market, society, or environmental need, problem, or opportunity do you see which you might address and solve through your career?

* What specifically do you see happening with regard to this issue that causes you concern?
* Who are the key players in this issue?
* What experience or knowledge do you already bring to it?

WHAT MUST BE OVERCOME - YOUR CHALLENGE

2. What challenge, question, barrier, concern, problem, issue do you face in meeting this need? We call this your Challenge/question [Cq]. Be aware of your own constraints as well as the competitive, social and market pressures, systems, values and beliefs in place now.

•How are the actions of the key players helping or hurting the situation?  
•What policies or human behaviors do you see that affect the issue?  
•What do you need to learn in order to participate in solving the current problem?

YOUR PRELIMINARY CAREER OR PROJECT IDEA

3. What is your best answer to your Challenge/question [Cq] now? What are your initial ideas for career paths to meet those needs? Do you have a specific project you plan to work on, or are working on now?

(This is the heart of strategy development…so that all life flourishes.)

• What is your current program plan for school? Do you want to specialize in any area or follow one of the special pathways in the program?  
• Who are you going to network with (networking plan) to expand your connection to this issue?  
• What extracurricular activities do you intend to pursue (e.g. student clubs, business case competitions, internships, professional association involvement)?  
• What tangible products would demonstrate to you and others that you are equipped to tackle this issue? What would you love to have in your graduating portfolio and how might that inform your choice of class projects?

WHY YOU ARE INTERESTED IN YOUR PROJECT/IDEA?

4. WHAT ARE YOUR VALUES AND VISION: And how are your beliefs, goals, purpose, values and vision (the future you see; your “world-view”) guiding your thinking about your career and project? Note: They are what guided you to choose your project (and indeed to come to Presidio) in the first place.

• What would you list as your core values?  
• What are your existing competencies and capabilities?  
• Where are your most pressing or relevant growth opportunities? What do you most want to learn before graduating?  
• What are the activities or experiences that give you the most juice?  
• What is your vision for the career sweet spot: getting paid to do what you love and what you’re good at that makes a positive contribution to your issue of interest?  
• How would you describe your life’s purpose?

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS

5. What are the next career steps you will take, or are taking now, based on your initial answers?

• What do you want in particular to achieve?   
• Where do you envision spending your energies?   
• How will you know you’ve been successful at getting the most out of your learning journey?

1.  [↑](#footnote-ref-1)