Acing the Academic Interview

ACADEMIC INTERVIEWING

Academic interviewing typically involves numerous steps. The process involves multiple interviews and can span over an entire day or longer. You may meet with the search committee, faculty, students, and administrators over the course of your interviews.

The first interview will usually be via phone or video conferencing, or in-person at a conference/convention. There may be a second interview that will also take place over phone or video conferencing. The last interview is the on-campus interview, which may last one or multiple days, where you will interact with a number of people and departments on campus.

Tips for Success:

- Thoroughly research the institution, department and student body
- Manage your nerves as best as possible
- Engage and pay attention to all interviewers
- Answer the questions precisely without being offensive
- Show confidence and avoid self-deprecating remarks
- Frame yourself as potential colleague (not graduate student)
- Bring teaching portfolio and use it as supplement to your answer
- Prepare questions for the committee

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Tell us about yourself.
- Please discuss your dissertation research with the committee.
- Will you have your dissertation completed by the start of the next academic year?
- What direction do you expect to see your research to take in the future?
- Describe your research plan and potential funding sources?
- What are your short-term and long-term professional goals?
- What areas of teaching do you want to work in and what could you handle if you had to?
- What is your teaching philosophy?
- Which of our courses would you be most comfortable teaching?
- Describe a challenging situation with a colleague, professor or student. How did you handle it?
- How interested are you in collaborating with other faculty in other disciplines?
- Do you plan to apply for any funding? Do you have grant writing experience?
- How do you address culture, language, ethnicity, and race in your courses?
- Why are you interested in our school/department?
- Would you be able to take on a student immediately?
- How do you integrate technology in your teaching/lab activities?
- How would you balance research and teaching?
- Do you have any questions for us?

Make sure to have questions prepared! Address the curriculum, research, tenure, and any other questions you have about the position or department.
THE ACADEMIC JOB TALK

The on-campus interview may also include one or multiple presentations. Some departments may ask that you present a class lesson to faculty and students. In addition to the lesson, you will also present a job talk. In the job talk, you will present your research. The most important things to do to prepare for the job talk are to practice, and to find out what to expect. Discover who will be in the audience - faculty, students, staff, or a combination. Confirm the length of the presentation and the topic.

In the job talk you will typically give a brief overview of the research you have conducted, but do not make the mistake of making your talk too technical. There may be members on the search committee that are unfamiliar with your area of expertise and come from other outside departments. This talk is simply designed to showcase your teaching style. Be sure to define technical terminology that may not be familiar to some of your audience members.

(Source: University of Georgia Graduate Student Career Guide)