

## Interview questions – academic/faculty job search

### General

- Why are you interested in this particular university/college?
- Why are you pursuing a career at a liberal arts college?
- What are your expectations teaching at a small institution versus a research I level institution?
- What might you say to a prospective student to get them interested in our school?
- What do you consider to be your strengths that qualify you for this position?
- Tell us about any areas you need to improve in.
- Tell us about a conflict or challenge you've had either with teaching, research, or a colleague and how you resolved the issue?
- Tell us what you know about our college.
- How do you fit into the school?
- How would you integrate our mission into your teaching/scholarship?
- Do you have questions about the tenure process?
- What is your brand? [question from actual interview]
- Is there any additional information you would like to share with us?
- What do you think makes a good colleague?
- How do you view this position?
- What would you like to know about us?
- Why do you want to work here?
- How do you envision your new lab at this school?
- What other schools have you applied to?
- If you get more than one job offer how will you decide?
- Who else is interviewing you?
- If we gave you an offer, how much time would you need?
- What are your plans for publishing?
- What course, not currently in our catalogue, would you like to develop?
- What textbook would you use in a particular course?
- Describe how you would teach an introductory survey course in your discipline (or in an advanced seminar)?
- Describe your research. What are you currently working on? What is your five-year plan?
- How do you structure your courses?
- How will you seek funding to support your research?
- What are your plans for integrating students into your research?
- What classes have you taught?
- What courses would you like to teach?
- What is your teaching philosophy?
- How well has your college/university prepared you for the field of teaching?
- Describe the best lesson that you have delivered. Why was it successful?
- How do you deal with an unmotivated student?
- How would you employ technology in the classroom?
- How well organized are you? Why is organization important for a teacher?
- What do you feel are the most important factors in classroom control?

- Why do you want to be a teacher?
- How would you instruct students of varying abilities?
- What are your plans for your continued professional growth?
- Describe your research.
- If you could teach any course you wanted to, what would it be?
- What are your research plans for the next 5-10 years?
- What is your basic teaching philosophy?
- What is your greatest strength? Weakness?
- What motivates you?
- Do you have any questions for us?

## Teaching

- Tell us about your teaching style or philosophy.
- What classes could you see yourself teaching? What new courses would you develop?
- How would you teach the introductory course in your field?
- What do you consider to be important attributes of a good instructor and what strengths do you have that will make you a good instructor?
- What is your approach to advising and mentoring?
- Tell us about your teaching experience.
- Tell us about a lesson in an introductory course that went well and why it went well.
- Tell us about a lesson in a course that did not go well and what you did/would do to improve it.
- If you could teach anything, what would be your ideal course? Lab?
- What challenge in teaching have you faced and how have you overcome this?
- How would you assess the effectiveness of your teaching?
- What would you perceive some of the challenges might be with teaching at our institution?
- Many of the students taking our intro classes are non-majors. What do you want non-majors to get out of your class?
- How have you planned and delivered lessons? How have you involved all students in your lessons?
- What is your overall vision of teaching/research over the next 5 years and eventual goal?
- What do you consider to be important attributes of a good instructor and what strengths do you have that will make you a good instructor?
- How do you feel about textbooks vs. lay publications vs. peer-reviewed publications?
- What textbook would you use for an introduction course in your field, and why?
- In what ways have you been involved in interdisciplinary education and how might you contribute to interdisciplinary education here?
- How will you use technology in the classroom?
- What was largest class size and smallest size that you have taught, and what were challenges of each?
- Would you be comfortable designing web courses (including laboratory)?
- What are 2-3 issues in teaching your discipline today?
- How would you handle a disruptive or difficult student?
- How do you define effective teaching?
- How would you encourage students to major in your field?

- How will you attract grad students?
- What topics would you like to teach for an advanced topics/proseminar course?
- What sorts of things are important in undergraduate teaching?
- What sorts of things are important in graduate teaching?
- Which classes on our list are you willing to teach?
- What would you like to teach?
- What textbook/materials would you use?
- How do you deal with a poor student who just does not care about the material?
- What concepts would you want the students to understand and apply from your course?
- What experience do you have in teaching diverse populations?
- Describe a course you would teach in your discipline.
- How do you structure/organize courses?
- How will you bring the insights of your research into the classroom?
- What classes have you taught and what courses would you like to teach?
- What is your basic teaching philosophy?
- How do you handle classroom discipline?
- How do you use technology in your classroom?
- How important is it for you to be liked by your students?
- Have you had any experience with interactive on-line instruction?
- How do you feel about teaching required courses?
- How do you integrate technology into your teaching and lab activities?
- How do you motivate students?
- How has your experience and training prepared you to teach the courses required?
- If you could teach any course you wanted
- What course(s) would you like to teach and what will be your basic teaching medium/format?
- What courses outside your discipline would you encourage your students to take?
- What do you find most satisfying about teaching?
- What do you think is the optimal balance between teaching and research?
- What is your teaching philosophy?
- What role can you play in developing/team-teaching interdisciplinary courses?
- How would you teach a survey/core course in your discipline?
- What are the key themes or questions you would explore in class?
- How will your understanding of the objects and methods of study in the field inform the assignments you design and the grading criteria you use?
- How will you address current intellectual or pedagogical debates in your field in the classroom?
- What technologies do you anticipate using, and why?
- How will you evaluate student learning both formally and informally throughout the semester?
- What kinds of activities will you use to lead students to understand what constitutes appropriate evidence in your discipline?
- What parts of your research can you teach to undergraduates? What ideas or assumptions are likely to be challenging for them?
- Tell me about your long-range plans and your commitment to this department? (How long do you plan to stay?)
- What role do you think our mission will play in your life as a faculty member
- How would you teach a classroom filled with students who have different levels of academic preparedness?

- Describe your experience working with a diverse student body
- Describe one of the most successful teaching activities you have conducted? What did you do? What was your objective? Why did you select the method you did? How did you know that it was successful?
- Describe one of the least successful teaching activities you have conducted? What did you do? What was your objective? What went wrong? Why? How did you know that it did not succeed?
- Describe a difficult encounter you have had with a student? What was the nature of the problem? How did you diagnose the problem? How did you try to resolve the difficulty? What was the outcome?
- What professional development activity has had the greatest impact on your classroom instruction?
- What do you consider to be the most important aspects of working with adult students?
- What are your expectations teaching at a small institution versus a research I level institution?
- How would you assess the effectiveness of your teaching?
- Many of the students taking our intro classes are non-majors. What do you want non-majors to get out of your class?
- How do you feel about textbooks vs. lay publications vs. peer-reviewed publications when it comes to teaching?

## Research

- Tell us about your research.
- Tell me about your dissertation.
- Describe your dissertation to a layperson and convince them it is important.
- Will your dissertation be complete by the start date of this position?
- Tell us how you have/plan to involve undergraduates in your research.
- What resources and space will you need to conduct your proposed research here?
- Given that research with undergraduates is slower, how do you plan to make a scientific impact in your area of research (i.e., how do you plan to do research and not get scooped)?
- What is the relationship of your research to your teaching?
- How could you bring your research into the classroom?
- What will be the next direction of your research?
- What research direction do you think you'll take over the next 5 years?
- Describe your research agenda and how you have developed publications in the past.
- What will be the title/topic of your 1st research proposal and what kind of funding opportunities would you seek?
- What contribution has your research made to your field?
- How would your research be innovative compared to everyone else's in the field?
- What is the most significant piece of research you have read in the last year?
- What journals do you see yourself publishing in?
- What do you envision for creating a research program here?
- Do you plan to apply for research funding?
- What sort of grants are you planning to apply for? What specifically would you use that money for?
- What do you see as the major trends in your field for the next 10 years?

- What is your 5-year plan?
- What do you hope to be doing in 10 years?
- Do you have experience with grants and grant proposals?
- What does it take to equip a lab?
- Do your theoretical interests have practical applications?
- What are some of your other research interests?
- Can you incorporate undergraduates in your research? **OR** How will you incorporate undergraduates in research?
- How does your scholarship/training relate to this position?
- Tell us about your dissertation. Please include your choice of topic
- What are your research plans for the next five years?
- What facilities and critical resources do you need to carry out your research plans?
- What specific research will you pursue if you are selected and how do you anticipate funding it?
- Why did you choose your dissertation topic?
- What skills do you bring to the program? How will you help your mentor in his or her research?
- Given that performing research with undergraduates is slower, how do you plan to make a scientific impact in your area of research?
- What kind of scholarly activity would you pursue outside of the lab as an outreach to the community?
- All of our applicants have strong rationales for studying abroad. What distinguishes your reasons for wanting to conduct research overseas?
- Describe a situation where you were able to have a positive influence on others.
- How well do you take criticism?
- How do you plan to support your research?
- How does your research inform your teaching?
- In what journals do you plan to submit your research?
- What resources will you need for your research? Where are you looking for funding?
- Describe your dissertation research.
- Do you plan to revise your dissertation for publication? What do you need to do to accomplish that?
- How will you use your research to engage your students?
- In what way does your research contribute significantly to your field of study?
- Tell us about your mentor(s).
- What are your future research plans and how will your research shape your field?
- What is the most significant piece of research that you have read in the last year?
- Tell me about your research?
- How does it contribute to the field?
- What direction do you plan to take your dissertation in?
- What other types of research/questions do you intend to pursue?
- Do you have a publisher lined up or in mind?
- How do you see your research complementing or adding to the research currently being done in our department?
- Are you engaged in collaborative work with colleagues from other institutions or is that something you're hoping to do at that institution and have you talked to the faculty in question?

## **Academic Service**

- How will you contribute to the community and distinguish yourself as a teacher?
- Describe committee work you have directed.
- What skills/attributes would you be able to contribute to committee work?
- How are you currently involved or how would you like to be involved in service to the community, professional organizations, and the University?
- What kind of scholarly activity would you pursue outside of the lab as an outreach to the community?
- To what extent are you willing to participate in departmental committees and extracurricular events?
- At our institution, teaching is the first priority and the teaching load is significant. How will you survive/thrive in it?
- Describe some innovative approaches for increasing enrollment in our discipline.
- In what ways do you see yourself making professional contributions in the next five years?
- This is a research institution. What would make you a successful candidate for tenure?
- What can you contribute to our department?
- What experience have you had with diverse student populations?
- Why do you want to be a faculty member at our institution?
- Are you willing to be involved in committee work?
- Can you summarize the contribution you would make to our department?
- How can you contribute to the mission of our school?
- How do you view your role as a faculty advisor?
- What has been your experience with grant writing?
- What institutional issues particularly interest you?
- What interested you in our school?
- Why are you pursuing a career at a liberal arts college?