

APPLYING AND INTERVIEWING FOR FACULTY POSITIONS

Questions Applicants Should Be Prepared to Answer

Research

- Describe your dissertation research. (Have a short and long version prepared.)
- In what way does your research contribute significantly to your field of study?
- What is the current 'cutting edge' in your field? In what way does your research address it?
- Do you plan to revise your dissertation for publication? What do you need to do to accomplish that?
- Tell us about your mentor(s). Evaluate his/her ideas. (Keep it very positive.)
- What is the most significant piece of research that you have read in the last year?
- Have you had grant writing experience? If so, what was the outcome?

Teaching

- What classes have you taught? What courses would you like to teach?
- What would you include if you taught a course in...? What textbook would you use?
- What concepts would you want the students in (name of course) to understand and apply?
- What is your preferred method of course evaluation?
- How do you structure/organize courses?
- What is your basic teaching philosophy?
- If we could speak to your students, what would they tell us about you?
- How are you able to bring the insights of your research into the classroom?

Role/Commitment

- Why do you want to be a faculty member at our institution? (Do your homework.)
- This is a research institution. What would make you a successful candidate for tenure?
- At our institution, teaching is the first priority and the teaching load is significant. How will you survive/thrive in it?
- To what extent are you willing to participate in departmental committees, outside committees, and extracurricular events?
- What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of this position?
- What kind of commitment are you willing to make to this institution? (i.e., how long do you plan to stay?)
- Are you willing to establish collaborations with local/regional institutions?
- In what ways do you see yourself making professional contributions in the next five years?
- What can you contribute to our faculty? Our students?
- Describe some innovative approaches for increasing our enrollment.

Common/general

- Tell us about yourself. (This one should be memorable but relatively short.)
- Refresh our memory; tell us about your academic preparation and experience (your vita in conversational form).
- Five/ten years from now, where do you see yourself professionally?
- Identify your greatest strengths and weaknesses. What have you done to eliminate the latter?

Questions Applicants Should Be Prepared to Ask

Curriculum

- What graduate and undergraduate courses would likely be my responsibility? (Know the courses taught in the department.)
- What is the average semester/quarter teaching load? How are labs counted?
- How often are course load assignments changed?
- Are there field-based supervisory duties assigned to the position
- By what means are curriculum and program development decisions made?

Related to Duties

- What provisions are made for office space? Research space?
- What is the average number of graduate advisees?
- What is the average number of office hours?
- What is the availability of teaching and/or research assistants?
- What is the average number of hours per week spent on committee work?
- How active are the members of the faculty in local, state, and national professional organizations?
- Describe the ideal candidate for this position.

Promotion and Tenure

- What is the basis for promotion and tenure?
- By what methods are faculty evaluated?
- How many faculty members have become tenured in the last few years in the department, and at what point?
- What have been the rate of and reason for faculty turnover?

Research-related

- How is collaborative research viewed on this campus? (Know the current faculty's research ahead of time.)
- What kind of laboratory facilities are available for my research? (Be prepared with a list of equipment needs and a budget.)
- What in-house support is available for research?
- Describe the travel budget. What support is provided for conference attendance?

Finances

- What salary is anticipated for the position?
- What nonsalary benefits are associated with the position?
- What is the moving expense policy?
- Is there funding for sabbatical leaves?
- What are the possibilities for and /or restrictions on summer school teaching?

School and Community

- Characterize the student population in terms of geographical, economic, ethnic, and scholarship range.
- What is the relationship among the town, the local schools, and the university?
- What cultural opportunities exist in the community?
- What is the cost of living in the community?
- What kind of housing is available? Are there any home loan programs for faculty?