

COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions that may be asked:

Research/Lab related:

- How does your research fit into the broader scope of your field?
- Who else is in your field/sub-field?
- What is the future of your field? What is the impact of your work on your field?
- What other things do you have planned here that you can do if this doesn't work?
- How do you plan to get your research started here?
- How do you think you're going to manage the people in your lab? What type of managing style are you going to use?
- So you need your students to do experiments in the lab. How do you plan to recruit them? What are your plans for integrating students into your research?
- How do you plan to support your research?
- How will you seek funding to support your research?
- In what journals do you plan to submit your research?
- What do you envision as your ideal lab: # grads, undergrads, postdocs, techs, participation of grads who are not your own students?
- How would you handle an interpersonal conflict in your lab?
- What kind of equipment do you need?
- How much do you want in your start-up package
- Where else are you interviewing?
- What can we do to make your life easier while you are here?
- Can you integrate your research needs with what is currently available at (whatever university you are at)?
- How do you feel about collaborations? (this is a vague question, try to understand their culture a little bit before answering this one).

Teaching related

- What is your teaching philosophy?
- Describe how you'd teach an introductory survey course in your discipline (or an advanced seminar)?
- What courses would you like to teach?
- What course, not currently in our catalogue, would you like to develop?
- How does your research reflect in your teaching?
- What textbook would you use in a particular course?
- What classes have you taught?
- How do you structure your courses?

Other

- Why do you want to work here?
- Why do you want to be a professor?

Questions to ask (appropriate people):

General Overview questions

- What is the future direction of the department/university? (to the Dean/Division chair)
- What are the department's plans for growth and hiring? (to the Dean/Division chair)
- What are you looking for in this new position? (want to know: is there agreement? Or are there opposing ideas?)
- How many undergraduate and graduate students are presently in the department? How are their numbers changing? How many students (undergrad/grad) are admitted each year? What support is available for graduate students during their first year? Are there enough computers/office space? Housing?
- What will be my teaching commitment?
- Is it general practice to have TA's?
- What is the undergraduate student population like? Where do the undergraduate students go after graduation? How many participate in summer/school year research projects (thesis)? What resources are available to initiate undergraduate student research?

Research related

- How would you describe the department/university: strong/unified/interactive? How does this affect your research?
- Are competitive, within-institution seed grants available?
- What are the indirect costs of grants (overhead)?
- How well does the library meet departmental needs? Is there a program like IBID?
- How much equipment sharing is there between faculty/departments (other than centralized facilities)? Collaborations?
- Do professors often write grants together and form research centers (like DARPA/NSF centers)?
- How are graduate students supported throughout their PhD?
- How do graduate students select research advisors? Is it during application process, through rotation program or during first term?

Course related

- How have you seen the courses change during your tenure here?
- What courses are you looking to fill?
- What kinds of financial support are available for courses? TA support only/supplies?