

Appendix F

Sample Faculty Interview Questions

The following are sample questions that are meant to serve as a guide while developing interview questions. Please note that questions need to be developed specific to each open position and should be job related and consistently asked of all candidates being interviewed for the position.

Phone Interviews:

The actual interview process is critical to hiring individuals who will truly be a good fit for the institution.

Phone screening interviews seem to be growing more common as search committees try to make the difficult decision of who to invite for a campus interview. It would be a good practice to arrange short **phone interviews** with the most promising candidates, once the resumes and applications have been screened. These brief conversations can be used to explain the job in more detail, gauge the individual's interest (so that time is not wasted by bringing in potential candidates who are not really interested) and clarify the individual's work history and experience level. Assuming that the candidate still looks interesting, a face-to-face interview could then be scheduled.

When you call the job applicants on the short list to set up an interview, tell each person the salary range for the position, if this information was not part of the job posting in order to verify that they would like to proceed to an interview given the salary you have to offer. This way, you would avoid interviewing people who later refuse a job offer on the basis of salary.

(If a phone-screening interview is not being conducted for a position, these same questions could be asked during a campus interviews.)

- Why are you interested in this position?/ What about this position is particularly attractive to you?
- How do you see yourself contributing to this position and to the University of Massachusetts, Lowell as a whole?
- What is your impression of our institutional mission statement? How are these statements related to your goals?
- What kinds of research projects/ topics could you pursue here?
- How will/have you involved students in your research?
- What is the most useful constructive feedback you have received and how have you applied it?
- Tell me about a project in which you've been involved that was successful and one that was not. Why do you think these were the outcomes?
- How would you describe your interactions with students?
- What questions do you have for us?

On-site/ Campus Interviews:

The following questions are in no particular order and represent examples of interview questions that could be asked of candidates during an on-site or campus interview. Some of these questions could also be used in a phone interview although probably not the more detailed ones. You could also include the earlier sample questions that were not asked during a phone interview.

Teaching/ Advising:

- How would you plan a course in _____? What texts would you use? What topics would you cover? How would you evaluate student learning in the course?
- Describe your familiarity and experience with different teaching methods such as collaborative learning, learning styles adaptation, and classroom assessment.
- What could you contribute to our program?
- What makes a good advisor? Do you think it's important to challenge your students? How would you do that?
- How many MS or PhD students would you try to have in your lab? What about technicians and post-docs?
- What is your approach to advising graduate students?
- Please give us an example of a time when you had to give constructive feedback to a student. What was the situation, and how did you handle it? In retrospect, would you do anything differently now?
- How would you advise a student if s/he were questioning whether or not to major in your discipline?
- It is the third week of your introductory class and you notice that some students really aren't paying attention and some aren't showing up- what would you do to correct this situation?
- How would you encourage students to major in your field?
- In your first semester, you would be responsible for our course in _____ How would you structure it? What textbook would you use?
- Can you provide us with a sample syllabus of a course that you have taught?
- What do you think is the optimal balance between teaching and research?
- Have you had any experience with distance learning or technology in the classroom?
- Have you supervised any undergraduate or graduate students?
- What experience have you had teaching diverse students? (Full-time, part-time, students with full-time jobs and/or family care responsibilities, students representing different ethnic groups and races, religions, ages, and genders?) What teaching methods have proved effective with such students?
- How do you bring diversity into your course planning? Into your day-to-day teaching?
- Share an example of when you may have encouraged a student to work harder in your class?

Research:

- Describe your current research. Will you be continuing in this research track?
- What are your future research plans?
- How would you involve graduate or undergraduate students in your research?
- How does your research relate to your teaching?
- How do your community service and research intersect?
- Where do you plan to be in your teaching and research in five years?

- Why did you choose your dissertation/(post-doc) topic?
- What changes would you have made to your dissertation or your post-doctoral work, based on the experience you may have gained, if you were to begin again?
- What contribution does your dissertation make to the field?
- What are the possible sources of funding to support your research?
- What facilities do you need to carry out your research?
- Who would you collaborate with in your research project?

Institutional/ Departmental issues:

- Can you summarize the contribution you would make to our department?
- Are you willing to become involved in any committee work?
- What is your impression of our institutional mission statement? How are these statements related to your goals?
- What institutional issues particularly interest you?

Career/Personal:

- What do you see as your greatest accomplishment to in your career to date? What shortcomings have you dealt with?
- What kind of feedback works best for you and why?
- What is your concept of an ideal work environment?
- What would you have liked to do more of in your last position? What held you back?
- What are the greatest strengths you think you bring to this job?
- What is the most useful criticism you have received?
- What professional development activities would you be interested in participating?

General:

- What skills do you have that make you the best candidate for this position? Include any special training you have had (on-the-job, college, continuing education, seminars, reading, etc.) and related work experience.
- Tell me anything else you would like us to know about you that will aid us in making our decision.
- If you were a member of this search committee, what is one question you would ask potential candidates?
- Tell us about a project in which you've been involved that was successful and one that was not. Why do you think these were the outcomes?

Acknowledgements/ References:

- Preparing for an Academic Interview- DIALOG VI Symposium participants (Robert W. Campbell, M. Claire Horner-Devine, Julien Lartigue, Gretchen C. Rollwagen Bollens)
- The Academic Job Search: making effective impressions- University of Minnesota