

# Interviewing for Academic Positions

*Preparing Future Faculty Conference, September 29, 2014. Facilitated by:*



## Academic Interview Practice Worksheet

### Open Ended Questions

***Tell me about yourself.***

Walk me through your CV.

Tell me about your past experience.

Tell me about what you've done and where you're going.

Tell me about your background.

### Research Questions

***Tell me about your research.***

Tell me about your dissertation.

What direction do you anticipate your research to take in the future?

Who would you like to collaborate with and why?

What are opportunities for undergraduates to do research in your area of study?

How would you describe the significance of your research to someone outside of your field?

What has been the greatest challenge in your research?

What are your plans for publishing?

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?

### Teaching Questions

***What do you want to teach and why?***

How would you describe your teaching style?

How has your research influenced your teaching?

How have your teaching experiences prepared you for a teaching role?

How would you teach an introductory course?

How have you used technology in the classroom?

How do you feel about teaching students who present with different abilities?

## Academic Interview Practice Worksheet (page 2)

What strategies do you use to get students engaged/involved in the classroom?

What is your typical classroom like?

What is your teaching philosophy?

What courses would you like to teach?

What course, not currently in our catalogue, would you like to develop?

### Fit Questions

***How do you see yourself contributing to our department?***

Why do you want to work here?

What is your work style?

What's your ideal work setting?

Why should we hire you?

How do you define \_\_\_\_\_ field?

### Service Questions

What kind of service opportunities are you interested in?

How do you want to contribute to our institutional priorities?

### Personal Experience/Quality Questions

If I were a dean and asked you to do something that you disagreed with, what would you do?

What was the most difficult period in your academic life, and how did you deal with it?

Tell me about a time where you had to deal with conflict with your mentor.

Give me an example of how you manage multiple tasks?

Give me an example of a time that you felt you went above and beyond the call of duty.

Give me an example of your leadership style.

Tell me about a time you led a project?

What is your greatest failure, and what did you learn from it?

What irritates you about other people, and how do you deal with it?

What assignment was too difficult for you, and how did you resolve the issue?

### Listener Guide

*Keep these items in mind when observing your interview partner:*

Non-Verbal Communication	Verbal Communication
Gave good eye contact	Answered question(s) that was asked
Relaxed, yet professional posture ? ?	Expressed ideas clearly and concisely
Friendly demeanor and smile ? ? ?	Structured answer(s) in easy to understand way
Positive and appropriate energy and enthusiasm level ? ? ? ?	Articulated accomplishments ? ? ?
Good vocal clarity, tone, and pitch ? ? ?	Gave examples to illustrate selling points ? ?
Portrayed self-confidence	Answers indicated a positive attitude ? ? ?
	Emphasized strong points, while speaking honestly and constructively about growth areas ?

## Interview Preparation Checklist

Item	Check when Done
Filled out the post-practice Interviewing for Academic Positions <i>summary</i>	
Identified 3-5 main <i>themes</i> for my candidacy (i.e. fit for the position)	
Completed the <i>Interview Preparation Worksheet</i>	
Engaged in a <i>self-evaluation</i> * practice session	
Participated in a <i>peer-evaluation</i> ** practice session	
Conducted a <i>professional videotaped</i> *** practice session	

**\*Self-Evaluation:** Identify key interview questions you anticipate you may be asked based on the type of interview, and the research you've conducted about the institution. Although it may not seem intuitive, writing notes or a short narrative of your responses is incredibly helpful. Writing helps you flesh out content and determine a structure for your answers. Take your self-evaluation a step further by practicing in front of a mirror and/or recording yourself responding. Then, review your performance paying attention to both the *structure* and *content* of your answers.

**\*\*Peer Evaluation:** Seek out the eyes and ears of a trusted friend, significant other, mentor, or peer graduate student who will give you honest and constructive feedback. Role-play the interview by giving your peer-reviewer a specific job posting and a list of questions. Instruct this person to ask the questions randomly, and to even make up some of his or her own. You can also ask your helper to watch your self-made video. Provide a review sheet indicating what interview elements you would like your peer-reviewer to specifically evaluate.

**\*\*\*Professional Evaluation:** Generally your home career services office (The Career Center for all LSA graduate students) provides videotaped mock interviews. This gives you an opportunity to practice interviewing with a professional career counselor. To find your home career office go to: <http://careercenter.umich.edu/article/phd-students>. For LSA graduate students schedule an appointment at: <http://careercenter.umich.edu/contact/makeappointment>.

## Post-Practice Interviewing for Academic Positions Summary

*Fill out this form when you are done practice interviewing today. It will provide written feedback you can access on your performance, including things you did well and where your growth areas lie.*

**The three things which made my interview practice a *success* were:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**The three things I would *change* about my interview approach include:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**For each of these three things, I am going to do \_\_\_\_\_ to improve for the next interview.**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**The three things my interviewer said that stood out the most to me include:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Which of the interviewer's questions were *difficult* to answer? How would I respond *differently* if asked again? ^**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

# Interview Preparation Worksheet

*Aligning your talking points/work examples with the job requirements.*

Skill/Attribute/Quality in the job description	Best example(s) of where you have actualized the skill	Highlights and outcomes you achieved
<b>Job Description says:</b>  <i>One or more years of teaching experience</i>	<b>Example(s):</b>  <i>Taught three semesters of English 125.  Guest lectured in upper level writing course.  Facilitated creative writing group.</i>	<b>Highlights and outcomes:</b>  <i>Achieved average of 4.9 on teaching evaluations.  Introduced new writing technique to faculty's course.  Helped students edit work; two published in poetry magazine.</i>


*\*This technique is modeled after the STAR formula. The STAR formula is most often used for answering behavioral interview scenarios; however the foundation of this technique i.e. outlining the Situation or Task, Action you took, and Result of your action is*

### Other things to Consider when Preparing

1. Personality traits or values that are job related.
2. 3-5 accomplishments that would be of interest to the person(s) interviewing you.
3. The 3 most important things the interviewer(s) should know about you.
4. Concerns an employer might have about you and what will alleviate those concerns.


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## Resources for Interview Practice - STEM Disciplines

### Academic Interviews (including discipline specific)

<http://careercenter.umich.edu/article/academic-job-search-execution>  
<http://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~jbeebe2/IntvQs.htm>  
<http://www.brandeis.edu/gsas/career/acad-questions.html>  
<http://microbialmodus.wordpress.com/tag/questions-asked-during-a-science-faculty-interview/>  
<http://pubs.acs.org/email/cen/html/101206094042.html>  
<http://matt-welsh.blogspot.com/2012/12/how-to-get-faculty-job-part-2-interview.html>  
[http://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2011/02/14/tips for tenure track interviews in the sciences](http://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2011/02/14/tips_for_tenure_track_interviews_in_the_sciences)  
<http://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2013/06/19/essay-how-do-well-interview-academic-job>

### Behavioral Interviews

[http://www.quintcareers.com/sample\\_behavioral.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/sample_behavioral.html)  
[http://www.quintcareers.com/sample\\_behavioral.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/sample_behavioral.html)

### Case Interviews

<http://www.caseinterview.com/>  
[http://www.quintcareers.com/case\\_interviews.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/case_interviews.html)

### Government Interviews

<http://govcentral.monster.com/benefits/articles/340>  
<http://www.helium.com/items/1132505-interview-questions-and-answers-for-government-jobs>

### Non-Academic (i.e. Standard/Corporate/Org) Interviews

<http://careercenter.umich.edu/article/non-academic-job-search>  
<http://careercenter.umich.edu/article/phd-transferable-skills>

### Not-for-Profit Interviews

<http://www.execsearches.com/non-profit-jobs/non-profit-jobs-candidates-articles/Meeting-the-Nonprofit-Ten-Interviewing-Tips.asp>  
<http://idealistcareers.org/>

### Phone Interviews

<http://jobsearch.about.com/cs/interviews/a/phoneinterview.htm>  
[http://www.quintcareers.com/phone\\_interview\\_etiquette.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/phone_interview_etiquette.html)