

build your career, shape the future

The Academic Job Search: Interviewing



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Your goals are to:

- Convince the dept that your work is exciting & innovative
- Convince the dept that you can do build a research group and successfully compete in your field
- Convince each member of the dept that you will be a great colleague
- Convince students & other trainees that you will be a great teacher/mentor/role model
- Learn about the institution & department; generalities and specifics in your discipline
- Learn about the area

What you will do

- Meet with individual faculty - in & out of your field
- Meet with members of the search committee
- Meet with students and/or postdocs - often over lunch
- Meet with the Chair of the department/center
- [Meet with deans or other university leaders]
- Give a seminar (45 minutes)
- [Have a chalk talk]
- [Teach a class]
- Eat all meals with potential colleagues
- [Tour facilities - see potential lab space, classrooms, cores]
- [Tour the town & surrounding areas]

Getting ready

- Closely follow instructions regarding your schedule, specific travel plans, hotel, & other logistics
- Read university & department websites
- Learn about the people you will be meeting with
- Make lists of questions you need answered & resources you need to learn about
- Consider personal/professional issues that you would like to discuss with the Chair or head of the search committee
- Get clothes - comfortable, neat, and consistent with the science culture. Do NOT get new shoes!
- Practice your talk MANY TIMES

Things you might be asked for

- An updated CV
 - Publications listed as in preparation or under review
 - Priority scores/outcomes on any submitted grants
- CV for your spouse or partner (if an issue)
- Specific aims for your first grant
- List of major equipment needs

Questions you are likely to hear

- Where is your research going to be in ____ years?
- What's going to be in your first RO1? Where else will you get money?
- What core facilities & equipment do you need?
- How will you distinguish yourself from your mentor?
- Do you like teaching? What do you want to teach?
- Do you currently supervise students? What is your approach to mentoring?
- Why are you excited about this position?
- Who here might you collaborate with?
- What department/school committee work interests you?

What you should be asking about

- The culture of the department/center/institution
- Research themes and areas of focus
- Types and amount of teaching
- Quality and numbers of students/postdocs
- Training grants and other educational resources
- Mentorship of junior faculty
- Shared resources and core facilities
- Grant expectations
- Tenure and salary policies
- Personal views of the department, school, and area
- Anything important to you personally or professionally

Need two jobs?

- Appropriate to bring this up during the first interview
 - Be positive
 - Ask about local consortia/agreements that might help
 - Be clear about types of positions your partner will accept
- Best discussed with dept chair or head of the search committee
- If family-friendly policies matter to you, ask several potential colleagues and students about this

Second interviews

- Is either an interview or a recruiting trip
 - If an interview - expect to present a chalk talk
- Carefully consider all core facilities and resources you need to see
- Bring a list of your major equipment needs
- Will likely meet more faculty in your field
- Will tour facilities and possible lab space
- May include more formal discussion of salary, benefits, funding expectations, and tenure policies
- Your chance to clarify and express your needs [and wants]
- Should not be a full blown negotiation

Giving effective job talks



www.training.nih.gov

Seven simple rules

1. Know your audience
2. Know the rules
3. Understand what the audience is evaluating
4. Tell a story
5. Have crisp, clean data slides
6. Be engaging and personable
7. Start early and practice

The Chalk talk

- Often no slides and very informal
- Shows that you can think on your feet
- Expect many interruptions
- Expect vigorous debate - it can be a very good sign
- Everyone is watching how well you take criticism and when/how you back down
- Tells you a lot about the department

How to prepare for a chalk talk

- Draw a model right away
- Plan and practice how you will start
- Handouts are a distraction
- Practice with colleagues who will give you a hard time, not a pat on the back
- Begin talking about your future work far in advance
- Begin mapping out grant proposals early

The teaching talk

- May be given a specific topic or you may get to choose
- Learn about the students in advance
- Decide formal vs. informal
- Decide high tech vs. low tech
- Talk to the students and not the faculty or administrators sitting at the back
- Not just a lecture

How to prepare for a teaching talk

- Participate in "Scientists Teaching Science"
- Talk to undergraduate faculty at comparable institutions (FELCOM Dec workshop)
- Start practicing with colleagues, but eventually you need to find a group of postbacs (we can help with that)

Itinerary
Nathalie ~ Ph.D.
October 5-8, 2008

Host:
Kim
573-882-8138 (office)
573-443-6338 (home)

Co-Host:
Deborah
573-882-7038 (office)
573-442-6829 (home)
573-355-4516 (cell)

Accommodations:

Hampton Inn
1500 Fellows Pl.
Columbia, MO 65201
573-214-2222

Check-in: October 5, 2008, 4:00 PM or after
Check-out: October 8, 2008, by 11:00 AM
Confirmation # 84051710

Website: www.columbiauniversitysuites.hamptoninn.com

NOTE: Hotel is direct billed. Please do not pay for your stay.

Sunday, October 5, 2008

10:10 am Depart Reagan National
11:15 am Arrive St. Louis, MO
12:30 pm Depart St. Louis, MO on MO-X Shuttle, Confirmation #308398
2:30 pm Arrive in Columbia at Hampton Inn.
7:00 pm Dinner with Kim and Judy. Kim will provide transportation and make dinner arrangements.

Monday, October 6, 2008

7:15-8:15 am Breakfast with Gary at Hampton Inn Hotel. Kim will provide transportation to next meeting.

8:30-9:00 am Meeting with David Director of Graduate Studies. Room M619 Medical Sciences Bldg.

9:00-10:00 am Meeting with Mark, Professor and Chairman of MMI. Room M616 Medical Sciences Bldg.

10:00-10:30 am Introduction to Center for Cellular & Molecular Immunology Faculty and tour of Cell and Immunobiology Core by Emma Teixeira and Bumsuk.

10:30-11:00 am Seminar Preparation with Scott User Support Analyst.

11:00-12:00 pm Seminar: "Secretion and cleavage of EspP, an autotransporter produced by *Escherichia coli* 0157:H7." Room M437 Medical Sciences Bldg. Stefan will escort to lunch.

12:30-1:30 pm Lunch at the Alumni Center with Stefan. Stefan will escort to next meeting.

1:45-2:20 pm Structural Biology Core, Schweitzer Hall
Tom Introduction to Structural Biology Core Group. Room 234A Schweitzer. Tom will escort to next meeting.

2:30-3:00 pm Meeting with Judy Room 214 Schweitzer Hall.
Judy Wall will escort to next meeting.

3:00-4:00 pm Jerry Professor and Chairman of Biochemistry and Linda Stephens Hall.
Donald will escort to next meeting.

4:00-5:30 pm **Christopher S. Bond Life Sciences Center**
Donald I. ... Overview and Tour DNA and Proteomics Core Facilities.
Meet with faculty:
Donald
Stefan
Marc

Mick ... Room 471D

Mick ... will escort to Hampton Inn.

7:00 pm Dinner with Michael ... and Susan ... , Michael ... will provide transportation and make dinner arrangements.

Tuesday, October 7, 2008

7:30-8:15 am Breakfast with Deborah ... at Hampton Inn Hotel. Deborah ... will provide transportation and make breakfast arrangements.

8:30-10:15 am **Dept of Veterinary Pathobiology, Connaway Hall**
Meet with Faculty, Room 309 Connaway Hall:
Brenda
Charles
Daniel
Guoquan

Deborah ... will provide transportation to next meeting and en route will identify the MU Regional Biocontainment Laboratory.

10:30-12:30 pm **Dept of Molecular Microbiology & Immunology, Medical Sciences Building**
Meet with Faculty:
10:30-11:00 am Dongsheng ... Rm M610G
11:00-11:30 am Emma ... Rm NW301C
11:30-12:00 pm Mark ... Rm NW301D
12:00-12:30 pm Deyu ... Rm M618

12:30-1:30 pm Lunch with Graduate Students. Room M615A Medical Sciences Bldg.

1:30-2:00 pm Preparation with Scott ... User Support Analyst.

2:00-3:00 pm **Discussion with Search Committee and Interested Faculty (Research Plans).**
Room M615 Medical Sciences Bldg.

3:30-4:00 pm Meeting with Habib ... Director of Center for Cellular & Molecular Immunology. Room M607A Medical Sciences Bldg.

4:00-5:00 pm Wrap-Up Meeting with Mark ... , Professor and Chairman of MMI. Room M616 Medical Sciences Bldg.

5:00 pm Kim ... to escort to Hampton Inn.

7:00 pm Dinner with Deborah ... Habib ... and Donald ... Deborah ... will make dinner arrangements and provide transportation.

Wednesday, October 8, 2008

7:30-8:00 am Depart Columbia, MO on MO-X Shuttle, Confirmation #308398
10:00 am Arrive St. Louis, MO
11:35 am Depart St. Louis, MO
2:30 pm Arrive Reagan National



ELON UNIVERSITY

Yuko Miyamoto

Visitation Schedule

Biology Department

Wednesday, February 23, 2005

- 8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m. Arrive on Campus McMichael Science Building Room 124E Meeting and Building tour with Dr. Michael [redacted] Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Biology
- 8:45 a.m. - 9:10 a.m. McMichael Science Building Room 108 Meeting with Catherine [redacted] Lab Manager Department of Biology
- 9:20 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. McMichael Science Building Room 224A Meeting and Campus Tour with Dr. Sandra [redacted] Associate Professor Department of Biology
- 10:20 a.m. - 10:50 a.m. McMichael Science Building Room 220 Meeting with Dr. Robert [redacted] Associate Professor Department of Biology
- 10:55 a.m. - 11:25 a.m. McMichael Science Building Room 124D Meeting with Dr. Linda [redacted] Assistant Professor Department of Biology
- 11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. McMichael Science Building Room 224E Meeting with Dr. Herbert [redacted] Professor Department of Biology
- 12:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m. McMichael Science Building Room 122 A Meet for Lunch with Professor Matthew [redacted] Department of Biology, and Students
- 1:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. McEwen Building Room 203 B Meeting with Dr. Nancy [redacted] Associate Provost
- 2:15 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. McMichael Science Building- Room 102 Teaching Biotechnology 348-A Taught by Dr. Linda [redacted] Assistant Professor Department of Biology
- 3:45 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. Alamance Building Room 107D Meeting with Dr. Nancy [redacted] Associate Dean of Elon College, the College of Arts and Sciences
- 4:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. McMichael Science Building Room 124C Meeting with Dr. Jeffrey [redacted] Assistant Professor and Dr. Brant [redacted] Assistant Professor Department of Biology
- 5:15 p.m. Dinner (off campus) with Dr. Lisa [redacted] and Dr. Gregory [redacted] Associate Professors Department of Biology and Students

INTERVIEWING FOR ACADEMIC POSITIONS

The key to successful interviewing is effective preparation. It is critical for you to be prepared to talk about yourself and your understanding of an institution/department to convince a hiring committee of your ability to do the job.

ABOUT YOURSELF	PROSPECTIVE INSTITUTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current research• Future research plans• Teaching skills and interests• Accomplishments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• History/mission of the institution• Research interests of the faculty• Knowledge of courses offered, student population• Understanding of the position

Researching Institutions

To prepare for upcoming interviews, collect information on:

- Departmental research strengths and focus
- Department course offerings
- Institutional mission
- Research/teaching ratio
- Student population
- Faculty interests

Sources of institutional information:

- Internet
- Mentors
- Any friends/family/acquaintances with connections to the institution
- Online college/university newspaper
- [College guides]

Preparing for Questions about Yourself

Current research

- Prepare to talk about your postdoctoral research to a variety of people
- Develop two synopses of your research: one for experts, one for non-experts: PRACTICE THESE!
- Think about the impact your work has had on the field
- Think about weaknesses and holes

Teaching

- Prepare to talk about general philosophy as well as classroom methods
- Think about how you might incorporate technology in the classroom
- Be ready to talk about what you *can* teach as well as what you would *like* to teach
- Consider specifics of how you would teach introductory courses (texts, materials, etc.)
- Give concrete examples whenever possible

Future research plans

- Critical to consider your research plans for the next year, 5 years, 10 years
- Give consideration to plans to apply for grant funding
- Be ready to express your plans in a convincing way, even if they are preliminary
- Consider ways your work meshes/synergizes with potential department/institutional colleagues

Additional tips:

- Do not accept campus interviews to “practice” your interviewing skills
- Do your homework to anticipate departmental needs, both in terms of research and teaching
- Review sample questions and practice your answers
- Bring extra CVs/resumes to the interview
- Dress appropriately
- ALWAYS bring a list of questions you have for the interviewers
- Don’t volunteer negative information—even if you have plenty to give
- Address faculty (and all interviewers) as they were introduced (i.e., use first names if this is how one is introduced)
- Listen to the students and postdocs; be ready to sell your candidacy to them
- Exercise good manners and display collegiality at all times
- Send follow-up thank-you letters or emails
- Remember: departments are seeking a **colleague**...so consider the interview a conversation among colleagues!

Sample Questions

Research:

1. Describe your current research.
2. Why did you choose to focus on this area?
3. What is the broader significance of your research?
4. What limitations exist in your current project?
5. What will your next research project be? Are you planning to make changes to your current project?
6. Tell me where your research will be in 5 years.
7. What are your plans for applying for external funding?
8. How will you distinguish yourself from your mentor?

Teaching:

1. Describe your philosophy of teaching.
2. How do you motivate students?
3. Describe a course you have taught in the past and how you evaluated the students' learning.
4. How would you teach this (introductory level, intermediate, advanced level) course? What primary and secondary texts would you choose?
5. How have you used technology in the classroom?
6. How would you increase enrollment in this major?
7. Describe your ideal course. What does the syllabus look like? What texts would you envision using?
8. How do you plan to bring the insights of your research into courses at the undergraduate level?
9. Given your research work at a large, prestigious research university, what attracts you to teaching at a small liberal arts college?

Willingness to participate in the department and school:

1. Can you summarize the contribution you would make to our department?
2. Are you willing to become involved in committee work?
3. Why are you interested in our kind of school?
4. What institutional issues particularly interest you?
5. How would you see yourself contributing to mission of the college and to the campus atmosphere?

Career and personal choices:

1. If you have more than one job offer, how will you decide among offers?
2. How do you feel about living in a small college town like this (in an isolated rural area, etc.)?
3. I understand your spouse is also seeking a tenure-track position. What if you receive job offers in different locations?
4. Where else are you interviewing?
5. What will it take to persuade you to take this job?
6. What kind of salary are you looking for?

Questions you might ask the interviewers:

1. What is the largest single problem facing your department right now?
2. What is the usual promotional time frame?
3. What do you like most about this college/university?
4. What is life like in this city/town?
5. What are the next steps? When can I expect to hear from you?