Overview

- General Advice
- Typical Schedule
- The QUESTIONS
  - What will you BE asked?
  - What should YOU ask?
- Advice based on the Research
Academic Job Interview 3

WOW! YOU HAVE THREE MASTERS DEGREES AND A PHD!

YES, IT'S ALL VERY IMPRESSIVE, BUT INTERESTINGLY, I HAVE NO COMMON SENSE WHATSOEVER.

THAT'S NOT THE SORT OF THING YOU SHOULD SAY DURING A JOB INTERVIEW.

I DON'T SEE WHY NOT.
General Advice

- Attend candidate interviews in your own department
- Want to portray an image of yourself as a colleague
- So, what to do?
  - Show excitement and enthusiasm
  - How invested you are in your work
  - Think of yourself as a faculty member from the time you start applying for jobs
General Advice

❖ Want to be prepared
  – Research the institution
  – Research the program and department
  – Research the people who will interview you

❖ Then you can mention ways you can see yourself contributing to the department
  – Helps you be seen as a colleague
Typical Schedule

- Typically 1.5 to 2 days
- Must give seminar
- 30 min meetings from breakfast through dinner
- Plan to be exhausted, drink lots of caffeine, yet have no time to go to the bathroom
Questions You WILL Be Asked

Part of being prepared is pre-thinking answers to typical interview questions
Top 5 Questions

◆ Describe your research
  – Need a short and long answer for experts and non-experts
  – Corollaries
    ◆ What is the broader significance of your research?
    ◆ What are the limitations of your research?
    ◆ What research will you do next?
Top 5 Questions

◆ How would you teach...
  – A service course in your field
  – Any of the courses on your CV that you say you can teach
  – Corollary
    ◆ What courses would you like to teach and how would you teach them?
Top 5 Questions

Tell us how your research has influenced your teaching? In what ways have you been able to bring the insights of your research to courses at the undergraduate level?

- Try to focus on specific examples
- Using specific examples will ground you, may make you less nervous
Top 5 Questions

- Why do you want to work at **Shall Remain Nameless** College or University?
  - Corollaries
    - How do you see yourself as contributing to our department?
    - What are the top 3 things you are looking for in an academic job?
    - Your degree is from Prestige Research University - what is it about Mediocre U that interests you?
Top 5 Questions

- Do you have any questions?
- Need to have some!!
  - I have some suggestions to get you thinking
Questions that Surprised me

- What will be the first student research project that you supervise?
- How do you evaluate research in your area?
Questions about marital/family status, religion, etc.

- You can answer
- You can answer by saying it won’t interfere with doing the job
  - “I can definitely work the hours required?”
  - "If you're concerned that I won't be able to perform the duties of the job, I'm sure I can."
  - "If you're going to ask next whether or not I'm authorized to work in the USA, I am."
- You can decline to answer and state it makes you uncomfortable
What are the Illegal Questions

- **National origin or descent:**
  - "That's an unusual name. Where is it from?"

- **Citizenship:**
  - "Are you a U.S. citizen?"

- **Marital/family status:**
  - "Are you married? Engaged? Divorced?"
  - "With whom do you live?"
  - "Do you plan to have a family? When?"
  - "Do you have children?"
  - "What are your childcare arrangements?"
What are the Illegal Questions

- **Age:**
  - "How old are you?"
  - "What is your date of birth?"
  - "When did you graduate?"

- **Affiliations:**
  - "What organizations or groups do you belong to?"
Questions about marital/family status, religion, etc.

- If you feel that your partner is an asset, nothing stops you from adding (nothing stops you from volunteering information)
- Similarly, you can reference family, friends, and other links to the area
Questions You SHOULD Ask

❖ To Search Committee Chair
  – Are there any “surprises” on my itinerary?
    ❖ Touchy topics, difficult people, faculty with different expectations from those of the search committee
  – What, in particular, are you looking for in filling this position?
Questions You SHOULD Ask

❖ To College Dean
  – What research funds are available at different levels of the university?
  – How would you describe the *Shall Remain Nameless* department to a fellow dean?
    ❖ Trying to assess his/her evaluation of the department
Questions You SHOULD Ask

❖ To Department Chair and Senior Faculty
  – What, in particular, are you looking for in filling this position?
    ❖ let’s you assess whether different faculty have different agendas
  – What type of summer support is available?
  – Pre-tenure teaching release?
Questions You SHOULD Ask

❖ To Junior Faculty
  – What classes did you teach in the last year? How much influence did you have regarding: number of students? how many preps? which classes taught and when?
  – What support do you receive for your research?
  – What is your greatest frustration with your job?
Questions You SHOULD Ask

 To Graduate Students
  – Why did you choose to get your graduate degree at this school?
  – Do graduate students get travel funds?
Questions You SHOULD Ask

- Exit interview with Chair
  - Will you be interviewing other candidates?
  - Who makes the decision regarding whom to hire?
  - What is your timetable for filling this position?
  - If you are asked about salary… know the range for the position, aim a bit high and have a good rationale
Questions You SHOULD Ask

- Exit interview with Chair
  - Need to be prepared with start up package with justification
Research on Interviewing and Gender Differences

- Much interview advice involves the use of impression management tactics

- Self-promotion
  - Speaking with pride about your accomplishments
  - Speaking directly about your strengths and talents
  - Taking responsibility for your accomplishments
Research on Interviewing and Gender Differences

- Research shows women are perceived as less competent and competitive than men
  - Self-promotion seen as a way of counteracting gender schemas and stereotypes
- Women who self-promote are given higher competence ratings
  - But, lower interpersonal skills ratings
Research on Interviewing and Gender Differences

- This result is stronger when
  - the interviewer has less vested interest
  - when the job requires good listening skills and being sensitive to others
Research on Interviewing and Gender Differences

- So, what to do...
- Most common advice is to stress the characteristics associated with competence
  - independent, ambitious
- downplay those characteristics associated with dominance
  - aggressive
Conclusions

- To help you self-promote, try the following
- Think about your grad school/post doc experience in terms of accomplishments NOT responsibilities
- Rework vitae as much as possible in terms of accomplishments
- Keep a file with letters, emails, notes, etc