Academic Job Interviewing 101: The Campus Interview

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The University of Texas at El Paso
Overview

- Often the top 3 candidates from the phone interview phase of “the Search” process are invited to campus for an interview
  - You may be given short notice to travel (e.g., 1-2 weeks) – try to be flexible
  - Campus interviews are ideally in the Fall for an August/September start-date – but can be later

- The university arranges and pays for the candidate’s travel, hotel, and meals
  - Bringing your spouse may be appropriate, but his/her additional expenses may not be covered – unless it is a position that has been very hard to fill
  - Advise your Search Chair in advance if you have dietary restrictions

- For a tenure-track assistant professor position, expect a 1-2 day campus visit (depending on the university and department)
University’s Goals for the Campus Visit

• Identify the best candidate
  • Gives them the opportunity to really evaluate you in depth and to get input from many individuals across the campus
    » You are being evaluated in many ways – lots of opportunities for you to shine (or fail…)

• And then eventually HIRE the best candidate
  • Allows the university to “sell itself” and its community as a great place to work and a great place to live
    » Keep your eyes and ears open…do your observations support the official messages that you are being given during the interview?
Your Primary Goal

• Demonstrate that you ARE the best candidate
  • First and foremost you should demonstrate that you will be able to be successful in all aspects of the position (typically teaching, research, and service) with reasonable mentoring / support once hired

• It is OK and even good to ask about the type of support available to new faculty (eg, faculty development opportunities related to teaching and research)…BUT do not appear too insecure about your abilities
  » You need to present yourself as a soon-to-be faculty member ready to function relatively independently, not a needy graduate student who still requires a major advisor to guide you
Your Other Goals

- Evaluate if that university is a place where you can be successful if hired
- Evaluate if that community is a place where you want to work and live
Interview Itinerary

• The Search Committee Chair typically will develop a formal campus visit itinerary that you will receive prior to your visit
  • Ask for the cell number of the Search Chair in case of travel delays

• If you have identified possible research collaborators in advance, you may ask the Search Chair if it is possible to include these meetings in the itinerary
  • Look inside and outside of the program/department

• Do some investigating in advance to determine who is who on your itinerary, and try to determine why you have been scheduled to meet with them
  • If it is unclear what the purpose is of a particular meeting, ask the Search Chair prior to the meeting so you are prepared
What Should You Expect?

• To be busy from morning til evening on each day of your visit
  • Including breakfast, lunch, and dinner meetings
    » You may be invited to a meal or event where alcohol is served – drink in *moderation*
    » If you are at a meal and a faculty member asks you if you want an alcoholic drink, it is equally appropriate to accept OR decline; however, realize that likely that faculty member (not the university) is paying out of pocket for the alcohol due to the rules of many universities so keep it to one drink

• To be asked a lot of questions

• To have your questions answered
  • Interviewers cannot ask personal questions such as if you have children, but YOU can seek answers to personal questions related to your family like best school districts to live in, etc.
### Example of 1.5-day / 1-night Visit
College of Liberal Arts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Things-to-Do</th>
<th>Logistic Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4:00 pm – 5:00 pm</td>
<td>Check into Hilton Garden Inn</td>
<td>Pick up by Stacey Sowards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 pm – 6:00 pm</td>
<td>Campus/city tour (optional)</td>
<td>Must at hotel or restaurant (Carlos’s choice)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dinner Participants: Yannick Atouba, Kenneth Yang, María Flores, Richard Pineda</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:00 pm – 8:00 pm</td>
<td>Dinner at P.F. Chang’s (Sunland Park)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, December 3, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Things-to-Do</td>
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<td>Dinner at P.F. Chang’s (Sunland Park)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, December 4, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Things-to-Do</td>
<td>Logistic Details</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00 am – 9:00 am</td>
<td>Breakfast at Crave</td>
<td>Must at Crave: Tarla will pick up Carlos at HGI at 7:45 am</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Breakfast Participants: Tarla Peterson, Frank Pérez</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:15 am – 9:45 am</td>
<td>Center for Civic Engagement, meeting with Azuri Gonzalez (Director)</td>
<td>Escort by Tarla from breakfast, Benedict Hall, 101</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 am – 11:00 am</td>
<td>Meeting with department chair:</td>
<td>Escort by Stacey Sowards, library office (5th floor, 522)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Tenure and promotion; other job issues</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Forensics team</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 am – 11:30 am</td>
<td>UTEP’s Sustainability Committee, Dr. Bill Hargrove, Dir. of the Center for Environmental Resources Management</td>
<td>Escort by Stacey Sowards, Kelly Hall, 201 (Rhonda Dore will pick up Carlos for lunch)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30 am – 1:00 pm</td>
<td>Lunch at Ardovino’s (on Cincinnati)</td>
<td>Lunch Participants: Rhonda Dore, Yoon Hi Sung, Eli García</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:15 pm – 2:15 pm</td>
<td>Research presentation</td>
<td>Escort by Rhonda Dore to Liberal Arts Building, 101</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:30 pm – 3:30 pm</td>
<td>Meeting with interim dean, Dr. Stephen Critics (Psychology)</td>
<td>Liberal Arts Building, 341</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:45 pm – 4:15 pm</td>
<td>Office of Research &amp; Sponsored Programs, Ms. Monica Ávilaár</td>
<td>Administrative Building, 209</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:30 pm – 5:00 pm</td>
<td>Meeting with Dr. Michael Zárate, (Psychology/Associate Dean for Research)</td>
<td>Liberal Arts Building, 343</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:30 pm – 5:30 pm</td>
<td>Dinner at Tabla (downtown)</td>
<td>Dinner Participants: Sarah de los Santos Upton, Kate Gannon, Roberto Armenta-Miller</td>
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<td>8:00 pm</td>
<td>Return home</td>
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<td>Name and Current title</td>
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<tr>
<td>Will be met by Dr. Vanessa Lougheed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dinner with Dr. Vanessa Lougheed and Dr. Craig Tweedie.</td>
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**Monday, xxx**

Breakfast with Dr. Michael Moody, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Biological Sciences; Meet at Hilton Garden Inn (lobby).

- Dr. Elizabeth Walsh, Interim Chair, Dept. of Biological Sciences, BIOSCI 2.118 - Entrance interview
- Dr. Jerry Johnson, Professor, Dept. of Biological Sciences, B205
- Dr. Carl Lieb, Professor, Dept. of Biological Sciences, B210
- Dr. Robert Kirkam, Dean, College of Science, CCISB 3.020B
- Dr. Natalia Villanueva Rosales, Assistant Professor, Computer Science, CCISB 3.050B
- Dr. Ming-Ying Leung, Professor, Mathematical Sciences, Bell Hall 225
- Lunch with Dr. Liang-Jin & Dr. Lin-Ma, Dept. of Geological Sciences (Geology 210A/211A)
- Dr. Janey Phung, Professor, Dept. of Biological Sciences, BIOSCI 2.171
- Dr. Kristin Giauxed, Associate Dean, College of Science, CCISB 3.020B

**Seminar Prep**

SEMINAR - "Title": B2.168
- Dr. Arshad Khan, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Biological Sciences, BIOSCI 2.171
- Dr. Eli Greenbaum, Associate Professor, Dept. of Biological Sciences, B310
- Social at Dr. Lougheed & Dr. Tweedie’s home; Address... (Dr. Moody will drive Dr. Jiang to the social)

**Tuesday, xxx**

Breakfast with Dr. Vladik Kreinin, Professor, Dept. of Computer Science; Meet at Hilton Garden Inn (lobby).

- Tour of Cyber-SHARE Center of Excellence, Dr. Deana Pennington, Associate Director; C401
- Systems Ecology Lab technicians (Cody, Katie, James), B325
- Dr. Craig Tweedie, Associate Professor, Dept. of Biological Sciences, B413
- Aquatic & Systems Ecology PhD students (Anderson, Ramos-Chavez, S. Vargas); B317
- Tour of Biology by Dr. Vanessa Lougheed, Associate Professor, Dept. of Biological Sciences, B316
- Lunch with Graduate Students; B2.154
- Dr. Kyle Johnson, Associate Professor, Dept. of Biological Sciences, B219
- Dr. Bill Mackay, Professor, Dept. of Biological Sciences, B210
- Dr. Shawn Dash, Lecturer, Dept. of Biological Sciences B216
- Dr. Vanessa Mata-Silva, Post-doc, Dept. of Biological Sciences, B446
- Dr. Tom Gil, Associate Professor, Dept. of Geological Sciences, Geology 401A
- Dr. Elizabeth Walsh, Interim Chair, Dept. of Biological Sciences, BIOSCI 2.118 - Exit interview
- Return to hotel
- Dinner with Dr. Jennifer McLaren, Assistant Professor & Dr. Christine Lane, Post-doc.

**Wednesday, xxx**


— Example of 2.5-day / 3-night Visit College of Science —
Example 2.5-day / 3-night Visit College of Health Sciences

**Monday**
1:30-3:30pm: Pick up by Dr Loretta Dillon (Interim Program Director, Physical Therapy) and tour of main campus including Simulation Lab (room 127) in the Health Science and Nursing Building, and Biomechanics lab with Dr Becky Reed-Jones (Assistant Professor, Kinesiology).

3:30-4:00pm: Meet with Florina Barnett to discuss benefit package in Human Resources. Dr Dillon will escort to hotel.

4:00-5:30pm: Rest break in hotel

5:30: Pick up by Dr Celia Pechak (Assistant Professor, Physical Therapy) and Dr Dillon for dinner at Ardovino’s Desert Crossing.

**Tuesday**
8:00am: Meet Dr Connie Summers (Assistant Professor, SLP) in the lobby of the Hilton Garden Inn for breakfast. Dr Dillon will transport Ms Dengler to Campbell Building Room 312 at 9:00am.

9:15-10:20am: Tour of Campbell Building with Dr Dillon; review of materials from neuro courses. Dr Dillon will escort to next meeting.

10:30-11:20: Meet with Dean Kathleen Curtis (Dean, College of Health Sciences) at Campbell Building Room 105.

11:30-12:45pm: Dr Stephanie Capshaw (Program Director, OT) will pick up Ms Dengler in Campbell Building Room 105 for lunch at Magic Pate on Cincinnati for lunch with Ms Dahlia Castillo (Assistant Clinical Professor, OT). Dr Pechak will pick up and escort to next meeting.

1:00-1:45pm: Meet with Dr Kristin Gosselink Biosciences 2.173 [main floor as you enter from the front, all the way down the hall on the left]. Dr Pechak will pick up and escort to next meeting.

2:00-2:30pm: Meet with Dr Kristine (Tina) Garza in Biosciences, 4th floor, office 4.152. Dr Pechak will escort to next meeting.

2:45-3:45pm: Coffee break in library lobby

4:00-4:45pm: Meet with Dr Eddie Casteneda (Psychology) in Psych 109. Dr Pechak will pick up and escort to hotel.

5:00-6:00pm: Break in hotel

8:00pm: Dr Daniel Ferraro will pick up at Hilton Garden Inn and transport to 6:15pm dinner at Pot Au Feu at 307 E Franklin Ave 915-503-8158 with Michelle Gutierrez (local clinician and guest speaker related to vestibular rehab).

**Wednesday**
7:20am: Pick up by Dr Pechak and escort to Campbell Building.

8:00-8:55am: Presentation to students and faculty – "Managing Chronic Neuropathic Pain: Current Therapeutics and a Promising Gene Therapy" – in Campbell Building Room 234.

8:55-9:30am: Meet with PT students in Room 234. Dr Pechak will pick Ms Dengler up at end of visit and escort to next meeting.

9:45-10:30am: Meet with Dr Anthony Salvatore (Chair, Rehabilitation Sciences) in Room 411. Dr Pechak will escort to next location.

10:30-11:30am: Break and/or continue with review of Neuro course materials with Dr Dillon if needed.

11:30am-1:00pm: Lunch with Search Committee Dr Dillon, Dr White, Dr Reed-Jones, and Dr Pechak at Mesa Street Grill.

1:30-3:30pm: Real estate tour by Lorene Perrin, Prudential, 915-345-7100 lorene.perrin@gmail.com. She will pick Ms Dengler up at Hilton Garden Inn and return her to the hotel after.

3:30-5:30pm: Break in hotel

5:30pm: Dr Melissa Carroll (Assistant Professor, Rehab Sciences) will pick up at Hilton Garden Inn for 6:00pm dinner with Dr Allison Carson (Assistant Clinical Professor, teaching content includes neuro) at Carlos and Mickey’s Mexican Restaurant 1310 Magruder.

**Thursday:** DEPART
What Should You Expect?

• To present a Research Colloquium (or equivalent) about your dissertation research to an audience of faculty and students
  • Clarify in advance how long your presentation should last and do NOT exceed the time
  • Have a Plan B – eg, email the presentation to yourself AND have it on a jump drive
  • Prepare in advance for questions that the audience is likely ask

>>>This presentation is your opportunity to demonstrate your research expertise, the significance of your research and its possible relevance to the university, and your ability to teach
  • Think in advance how you can ENGAGE with the audience especially the students

NOTE: You may or may not ALSO be asked to teach a class so your teaching can be evaluated further
Who Will You Likely Meet With?

• Search Committee
  • Typically composed of some members of the program/department plus someone from outside the department

• Many if not all members of the program/department
  • Including the Program Director and/or Department Chair

• Some of the students from the program/department
  • You may have a private meeting with students
  • This is their opportunity to learn about you, and YOUR opportunity to learn more about the university from a group that will give you a different (and possible refreshingly honest) perspective on the university and department
Who Will You Likely Meet With?

• Possible research collaborators inside and outside of one’s discipline (especially at a research-focused university)
  • Be ready to explain your research and your research plan
  • This is your opportunity to show how you can contribute to (interdisciplinary) research collaborations at that particular university
  • And this is your opportunity to see if there are possible research collaborators that will increase your potential for success at that university
Who Will You Likely Meet With?

• College / University leadership
  • Dean of the College (in which the department is located)
  • Possibly the Provost or Associate Provost

• The equivalent of UTEP’s Office of Research and Sponsored Projects
  • They may evaluate your likelihood of being successful with getting grants
  • You should explore how the university supports faculty with grant-writing and grant administration
Who Else May You Meet With?

• Human Resources
  • To be given an overview of the benefits package at the university

• Local realtor
  • You may be given a real estate tour
  • Consider communicating with the realtor in advance to narrow down the type of housing and/or areas of the community you would prefer to see
BE PREPARED

• Get advice from your major advisor, other dissertation committee members, and other mentors to learn about ways to be ideally prepared for a campus visit at that particular university and/or in your particular discipline

• Understand the university’s priorities, and what their ideal candidate is for the position for which you are applying

• If it is a RESEARCH university (see *Carnegie Classification*):
  • Be ready to clearly explain your RESEARCH GOALS & a 3-5 Year RESEARCH PLAN
    » Including specific sources of external funding for which you intend to apply
    » Identifying potential collaborators inside and outside of the university
  • Have an idea of what equipment and other resources you need to be successful
    » Get advice in advance from your major advisor and other mentors about what you should consider negotiating for in a START-UP PACKAGE in case they ask during the campus visit
BE PREPARED

• Do your investigating in advance!
  • Make it clear that you prepared for the campus interview even if it is not your dream job
    » Don’t ask for simple answers that you could have found on the university website
  • Know faculty names and their teaching/research areas
    » Ask for program/department faculty CVs in advance IF they are not posted on the university website or are otherwise easily found

• Carry hard copies of your CV and business cards

• Dress for success! (and some comfort)
  • Assume that you should be dressed in business attire unless you are certain that more casual attire is appropriate in your discipline
  • Wear comfortable shoes as you will likely be walking to various locations on the campus
  • Check the weather before you travel
After the Campus Visit…

- Reflect on what went well and what did not, so you are better prepared for any future campus interviews.

- Send thank you notes (or at least thank you emails) to the individuals who met with you.
QUESTIONS FOR ANY OF US?

Best wishes on your future academic job searches!