

# Academic Interview Process

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# Academic Job Search Process

- **Select Academic Institutions**
  - Pay attention to ads, i.e., what the universities are looking for
  - Pay attention to ranking of the department, college and university
- **Prepare your application material**
  - Teaching statement
  - Research statement
  - Resume
  - And possibly other material (pay attention to position advertisements)
- **Request letters of recommendations**
  - Provide sufficient material to your reference writers
  - Meet with your reference writers and give them information about schools you are applying and requirements those schools need to see in letters (if requested)
  - Remain people about letter writing (ask letter writers to let you know when they submitted, or check online system if letters are in, or ..)
- **Wait for interview**
- **You got interviews and start to prepare!!!**

# Let's Discuss Interview Process

- What is going on in **Search Committees at Academic Institutions**
- What to do if you get **invitations for academic job interview**
- What to prepare
  - Job talk
  - Meetings with faculty
  - Meetings with department head
  - Meetings with dean
  - Meetings with students
  - Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
  - Dress-code
  - Do's and don'ts themes

# Faculty Search Process from Academic Institution Point of View

- Departmental Faculty Search Committee
  - When is faculty search committee created?
- Makeup of Search Committee
  - Who is on search committee?
- Goals of Search Committee
  - What is the charge of search committee?
- Interview Process
  - Whom should search committee select?
- Decision Process
  - Whom should we make an offer?
- Negotiation Process (This will be discussed later in the Mavis Lecture Series)
  - What resources should a starting faculty get?

# Faculty Search Process from Interviewee's Point of View

- You get an invitation for academic job interview and then what?
- You get asked
  - What dates you may come
    - Usually it is a two day interview (depends on the size of the department)
    - Usually you give job talk during the first day
  - What will be your job talk title, abstract, bio
  - Who will be your host (host is – should be - your champion – use this fact)
  - Who will be the assistant of your host (or other assistant)

# Invitation (1)

- **Decide on dates** (keep calendar of your interviews)
  - Keep enough space between interviews so that you can make it in time, relax, ...
  - Keep interview calendar on your website (possible)
- **Prepare title**, abstract, short bio and send to assistant/host
- **Contact host** (or the host contacts you)
- **Work with assistant** to setup hotel, travel, other requirements, dietary restrictions

# Invitations (2)

- **Ask host questions prior to your visit**
  - Presentation equipment, recording, meeting students, ...
- **Get agenda** for your visit from the host
- **Look up all faculty** on your agenda
  - What's their area
  - In your particular area, what's the achievement of the faculty (papers, results, ..)
- **Look up the campus**, get familiar with the structure of the department/college (to the degree that you can see on the website)
  - E.g., if you interview in CS, make sure that you know in what college CS resides

# Preparation of Academic Job Talk (1)

- **Write your talk early !!!**
  - Don't wait until last minute
- **Prepare the talk with broader context**
  - Show clearly the importance and implications of your PhD work
- **Focus on what main idea people should walk out of your talk**
- **Make your talk interesting** with good examples
- **Use inclusive language** (he/she)
  - Be respectful to all groups
- **Be enthusiastic about your research**
  - It will reflect well about your teaching capabilities and how to engage students
- **Use humor only if you feel comfortable** using it (don't force it)



# Preparation for Academic Job Talk (2)

- **The most important 50 minutes talk of your life**
- Practice, practice, practice
- Understand your audience
  - Very diverse faculty audience
    - faculty from various areas, there might be only 4-5 faculty in your area, so your talk needs to impress all faculty (really difficulty)
  - Very focused student audience
- Finish on time !!!
  - If you go overtime, it is not good sign that you know how to control presentation time (how will you control your teaching presentations?)
- Leave time for questions
  - Answer questions briefly and to the point (if answer requires long answer, give brief answer and defer longer discussion after the lecture)

# Application Job Talk (3)

- Practice in front of your friends
  - Q&A, feedback
  - Invite friends from different areas!!
- Do not concentrate on the non-responsive audience members
  - Look at people in the audience who are following your talk
  - Look at audience, but don't get discouraged if you don't see much response
- Stay in touch with your audience, but don't change the flow of your talk during the talk based on audience feedback

# Academic Job Talk (4)

- Structure (approximate)
  - **10 minutes** - do introduction into the problem and placement into the overall space (what was the starting bar when you started your research)
    - Must be understood by everybody in the audience
  - **20-25 minutes** – show depth in your problem solution
    - Must impress faculty in your area and neighboring areas
  - **10 minutes** – show results
    - Must impress everybody – you should show that the solution to the problem introduced in the introduction yields great results
  - **5-10 minutes** – provide impact of your research and vision for the future
    - Must provide enough information that faculty understands what you will do when you join the department

# Other Job Talk Variations

- Not all faculty will be at your talk (teaching, committee meetings, student exams, ...)
- Prepare
  - **15-20 minutes summary of your research** to give during a faculty meeting (1-1 meeting)
    - Consider if faculty is in your area or different area, head, or dean
  - **5 minutes summary of your research** – elevator speech to give to a faculty you meet in the hall or grad student who accompanies you from one meeting to another

# Meeting Faculty

- Prepare for meeting with faculty
- Look carefully at the agenda
- **Divide faculty into three categories**
  - Faculty in your area of expertise
  - Faculty in collaborative areas of your expertise
  - Faculty distant from your area of expertise
- Consider **what to discuss with each faculty**
  - Research accomplishments, impact, teaching, resources, collaboration between colleagues, departments, colleges, students, ....

# Meeting with department head

- Prepare **short pitch of your research**
  - How will your research benefit to the department?
- **Ask questions** about
  - Teaching load
  - Resources (labs, assistants, IT, ...)
  - Collaborative efforts
  - Centers in department
  - Collaborative efforts across departments
  - You can bring up a two body problem (you need to bring it up!!)
  - Any other question you have about the department, evaluation processes, resource allocation, teaching issues, sizes of classes, student quality, size of student body, alumni, employment of students, .....

# Meeting with dean

- Each interviewee meets with dean of the college (or two if you interview for interdisciplinary position)
- Prepare **short pitch of your research**
  - Respond to question – how will your research benefit to the college?
- **Ask questions**
  - Resources
  - Collaborative efforts between departments, colleges,
  - Centers and research labs – their role and how you can benefit from it
  - Find out about initiatives at the college level (educational initiatives, research initiatives, ..)

# Meeting with students

- If meeting with graduate students is not on the agenda, ask for it when you talk to the host prior to your visit
- **Ask graduate students about**
  - Resources (labs, office space, Tas, ...)
  - Collaborative efforts
  - Attention to research, teaching, service, ...
  - Support from department, ....
  - ....



# Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner themes

- **Breakfast**
  - Usually you may meet with host to discuss the day ahead of you
  - Ask questions – get clarifications when you heard some contradicting messages
- **Lunch and Dinner**
  - Meet faculty in less formal setting and relax (see from agenda who is attending)
  - Ask more informal questions such as housing, life on campus, general information about campus life, industry around campus, research park, social life in town, ....
- Understand **table etiquette** of the country/institution where you interview

# Dress-Code

- The **first day** of your visit (when you give job talk), you should dress more formally
- The **second day** of your visit, you can dress more casually, but I would ask the host about the general dress code of the institution (and expectations).
  - West coast is more casual, east coast as well as mid-west institutions are more formal
- Female students – fully covered
  - formal dress or pants/jacket/blouse (first day)
- Male students
  - ties with suit (first day)

# Do's and Don'ts

- Recommendations:
  - Do ask about resources (in general), teaching load, students, faculty collaboration, grants, funding
  - Show interest about the department, campus, edu environment
  - Don't ask during the first visit about salary, start-up packages, resources you need/want to get – this is all negotiable after you get offer
  - Don't say bad things about your advisor, academic institution where you come from !!! (don't brown-nose) People talk and it can come around to hunt you !!!

# Do's and Don'ts

- Show interest in the interview/department/faculty !!!
  - Even if it is not your number one choice!!!
- Not only you are interviewed, but also you interview the faculty/department to find out if you and the department are a good fit for each other
  - Ask questions and respond to questions !!!
- Keep notes after each interview what happened so that you can make comparison once you get offer –

Good Luck with your  
Academic Interview !

# Resources

- Internet Resources

- [Http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6hEiZ7LkoLo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6hEiZ7LkoLo)
- <http://vpge.stanford.edu/docs/AC6.pdf>
- [http://vpge.stanford.edu/docs/AC10\\_11reading7.pdf](http://vpge.stanford.edu/docs/AC10_11reading7.pdf)
- <https://www.asha.org/academic/career-ladder/chap3/>