

Campus Visits, Job Talks, and Interviews Focus on Linguistics

1. Academic Job Application Process

▪ Timeline for Tenure-Track jobs at Research Institutions:

- Summer: Prepare materials
- Application: September – November
- Long list interview: They contact you about a month after they close search. Long-list interview via Skype, at LSA conference (January) or person if close-by. Lasts about 1h.
- Short list interview: One or two months later they invite you to campus to give a talk about your research and spend a couple of days meeting students and professors.
- Offer: February – April.

▪ Timeline for non-Tenure-Track jobs/ jobs in Teaching institutions:

- Summer: Prepare materials
- Application: More broad and last-minute, January – May
- Interview: For research institutions there isn't always one. If there is one, it may be via Skype or person if close-by. Lasts about 30min. If it's a community college, or a language program you may be asked for a teaching demo (they give you a topic on the spot and 30min to develop a lecture on it). It lasts 2-3h.
- Offer: June – July.

2. Long-listed Interviews (for TT positions at Research Institutions):

▪ Prepare a document with answers to all these questions and memorize them!

- 1) Tell us about your **research program**
 - Bullet points of topics you've worked on (show breadth of topics, but also highlight what they have in common, so you don't come across as unfocused)
 - End with your big question
- 2) Tell us about your **future research**
 - Immediate future (right after your dissertation)
 - 5-year plan
- 3) How do you see yourself **contributing to the department?**
 - What do they lack that you bring in? You **MUST** do your research here. **Research the university and the department in DEPTH!**

- 4) Do you see yourself **collaborating** with anyone at [institution]?
 - What do you have in common with others? Again, you **MUST** do your research here. Research the university and the department in **DEPTH**.
- 5) **Why** do you want to work at [institution]?
 - Do **NOT** give a personal reason (e.g., my family/partner lives here, I want to live in this city, it's sunny...)
 - If it's a well-known R1 university, you may say you would love to teach at such a reputable institution.
 - If it's a not so well-known university, say you want to build a program that puts that university/department at the forefront of X research.
- 6) What is your **approach to advising** and mentoring?
 - Talk about how you encourage **undergrads to conduct research** and to help in your research.
 - Give examples
- 7) What is your **teaching philosophy**?
 - Portray yourself as someone who monitors/facilitates learning, not instructs. You nourish curiosity.
 - You make the classroom a safe environment.
 - Give examples
- 8) Tell us how your **research has influenced your teaching**.
 - Research has made you a critical thinker, so you convey students must question everything, rely on empirical evidence.
 - Incorporate debates in class -> develop ideas, weigh evidence, address questions empirically.
- 9) How do you plan on **recruiting participants** for your experiments?
 - Be realistic.
 - Say how you have overcome recruitment problems with COVID. Show them you do not accept defeat when things get tough.
 - Do your research! What do other labs on campus do?
- 10) What **courses have you taught** and which ones could you **teach**? (also seminars)?
 - Be realistic, don't say you can teach X if you would struggle to do so.
 - But show you are ready to get outside your preference or comfort zone if needed.
 - **Give specific course numbers and names!**
- 11) **How** would you **teach X course** (undergrad, grad)?
 - Overview of a **syllabus** (topics + reqs)
 - Give **book names**
- 12) **Questions for us?**
 - Ask questions that are not easily found online, e.g.,
 - What is the teaching load?
 - What type of research funds are available? (summer, travel support...)
 - How big are X, Y, Z undergrad/grad courses?
 - Are TAs available for these courses?
 - How are grad students funded?
 - **Where do you see the department going in the next 5-10 years?** What areas do you

intend to expand on?

- Questions that are **illegal** to ask: Anything related to:

- Age
- Race, Heritage
- Sex, Orientation, Gender Identity
- Disabilities
- Religion/Organization memberships
- Marital status
- Pregnancy/Childcare responsibilities
- Citizenship (but they may ask if you're eligible to work for them)

If asked, be neutral and polite the first time: "My X will not be an issue for my performance at this job" and steer the conversation back to a job-related topic. The second time you may say you're uncomfortable answering that question.

3. Campus Visit (for TT positions at Research Institutions):

- They usually have you choose from a set of 2-4 dates.
- They usually last 2-3 days.
- They will **fill your schedule** with breakfast, meetings, lunch, meetings, and at least one dinner too. There won't be a lot of breaks.
 - Pace yourself with snacks and coffee!
- You will be meeting with **professors**, individually, including the chair of the department. They will ask questions of the sort listed above. They may tell you about their research too. Be ready to ask them good questions!
- You will be meeting with **graduate students**, either individually or in a group. If individually, they will present you with their research and ask for constructive feedback (you may want to **research the grad students** in advance too!!). If meeting them in a group, you may want to ask them questions, such as:
 - What are your research interests?
 - What topics would you like me to cover in a seminar?
 - What would you like to see change in the department?
- During the **dinner** (usually the last day, after the talk) you will meet with the search committee and perhaps a couple of graduate students. It will be casual, but you are still being tested. Keep the conversation within safe topics (their research, your research, the university, the city, the weather, hobbies, pets). Do NOT drink more than a glass of wine.
- **Dress code:**
 - Dress **comfortably**. You cannot afford to dedicate any thoughts to discomfort.
 - A safe bet is to dress conventionally/boring. **Do not let clothes** (or lack thereof) **distract anyone from what you have to say**. Same applies to hair, jewelry, etc.
 - Suggested: (Collared) shirt + blazer/cardigan + slacks + flats or small block heels (not noisy!). Neutral colors for blazer and pants (black, gray, brown, beige...)

4. Campus Visit (for positions at Teaching-oriented Institutions):

- They usually arrange one interview in person if local or Skype if not. They ask questions then they ask for a teaching demo.
- **Questions:**
 - Tell us about yourself
 - Why did you decide to become a college professor?
 - Why do you want to work at [institution]?
 - The lack of time and resources makes it difficult to pursue significant professional research at a community college. How do your background and future goals fit into this reality?
 - Describe the highlights of your academic and teaching careers.
 - Describe the most rewarding aspect of your previous job (especially if it was in an R1 university).
 - Describe the most challenging or frustrating aspect of that same job.
 - What students do you enjoy teaching the most? The least? Why?
 - Describe how you use technology in teaching.
 - How would you describe yourself as an instructor? How would you describe your teaching style?
 - By providing examples, convince me that you can adapt to a wide variety of people, situations and environments.
 - Describe your most rewarding college experience.
 - Questions for us.
- **Teaching demo:**
 - You have 30min to prepare a class on X topic.
 - They will leave you alone so bring materials with you! (class outlines from classes you've taught, exercises, etc.)

5. Job Talk (for TT positions at Research Institutions):

- Usually you present a section of your **dissertation**.
- Usually 60min of talking followed by 30-60min of questions (but ask to confirm!)
- **Research** the department!!! They may have a broad mix of professors/students. You must tailor the talk so that:
 - **It can be understood** (to a certain degree) by professors outside your field and graduate students.
 - It still shows the **complexity and sophistication** of your work.
- Within Linguistics, it is standard to present **slides**. Ask the coordinator to **make** some **paper copies** too. Some professors may want to write notes.
- Prepare an **appendix with potential questions!!!**
- **Practice, practice, practice**. Make sure your timing is perfect (nothing below 50min, nothing above 65min). Memorize each word for the first few slides (when you are usually the most nervous and may go blank).
- Ask for feedback among colleagues!
- **Do NOT read from the slides**. Look at the audience!

- **Use your intonation** to highlight what's important.
- Ask questions to the audience (even if they are rhetorical -How do they do it!? Isn't this fascinating?!)