

Preparing for your academic job interview

- **The job talk**
- **Questions to expect**
- **Questions to ask**
- **Negotiating**
 - Teaching load
 - Startup funding
 - Starting dates

Goals of a job talk

- **This is a marketing talk, not a scientific presentation!**
- **Introduce your field to a lay scientific audience**
- **Illustrate your long-term research trajectory**
- **Summarize your research accomplishments**
- **Summarize your research goals**
 - Five year plan, leading to a career trajectory

Outline your job talk

- Organize your talk in terms of an overarching theme that ties together your research areas
- Give adequate background to allow your audience to see the novelty/ contribution of your work
- Allot only a couple slides per experiment
- Don't include: number of subjects, specific details about methodology and research design, unless they are novel
- Explain your 5 year research plan
- Explain your career research goals

Preparing your job talk

- **Use the words “novel”, “innovative” and synonyms as much as possible.**
- **Keep the message clear:**
 - Don’t muddy the issues with secondary findings and hypotheses
 - Present disparate research topics as cohesively as possible
- **Emphasize novel findings and techniques**

Goals of an interview

- Allow the department to assess how you will fit into the department
 - Teaching
 - Research
 - Personality
- Allow you to gather information about the department and determine how you will fit in
 - Teaching
 - Research
 - Personalities
- For the most part, it is NOT to assess your scientific ability

Questions to expect

- What will write you first grant about?
- Who would you collaborate with?
- Who could serve as a mentor?
- What existing resources would you use?
- What resources do you need?
- What courses can you teach?
- What courses will you develop?
- How many graduate students will you need?

Questions to ask

- Repeat questions liberally with each faculty member: you will get differing answers that may reveal sources of conflict or miscommunication within the department
- Where do most faculty members seek funding?
- What is the typical teaching load?
- Are there teaching buy-out policies?
- Why did you come here?
- What are tenure expectations?
- Who was the last person to get tenured? to be denied tenure?
- What are students like?
- See the handout for more questions

Remembering everything

- **Make sure to take notes after your interview**
- **Write down one thing about each person you met**
- **Write down answers to important questions**
- **Write down questions that still need answering**

Negotiating your offer

- If you are being considered for a job, you have negotiating power.
- **Teaching load**
 - First year respite
- **Starting date**
 - If they want you they may delay your starting date up to 1 - 1.5 years
- **Salary**
 - <http://chronicle.com/stats/faculty.htm>
 - Often, one job offer can be used to effectively leverage another

Startup funding

- Try to find out average startup packages of recent new faculty
- Prepare an itemized list of equipment you need
- Each additional item should clearly enhance your research ability
- The goal is to reach a point where they say “no”.
- This sets up realistic expectations for your research accomplishments / time devoted to grant writing
- If you don't ask, you won't get it

Staying in touch

- **Be sure to write thank you letters to:**
 - Committee chair
 - Department chair
 - Deans
 - Faculty in your immediate research area
 - Any faculty who might be especially supportive of you
- **In your letter emphasize your fit with the department**

Good Luck!!