

Sample Interview Questions

Questions about Research:

1. Could you tell us about your dissertation?
2. Tell us briefly about the theoretical framework you used in developing your research?
3. If you were to begin it again, are there any changes you would make in your dissertation?

4. How would you explain the broader significance of your research to an educated layperson?
5. What audiences are you addressing, what are the other hot books or scholars in your field, and how does your work compare with theirs?

6. How does your research address culture, language, race, or ethnicity?
7. What is the most significant piece of scholarship that you have read in the last year?
8. What is the cutting edge in your field and how does your work extend it?
9. Describe your current research.
10. What are your research plans for the next five years?

11. Where do your research strengths lie? Why? What are your research weaknesses? And how will you improve?
12. What facilities do you need to carry out your research?
13. Your current research may require more (financial or technological) support than this institution is able to provide. How will you deal with this? Do you have experience applying for outside funding?
14. We see that you have done a lot of conference papers and presentations; we have limited professional development funds. How do you feel about that as a limiting factor? (Will you continue to go and pay your own way? Will you resent the limitations?)
15. Tell us about a research project in which you've been involved that was successful and one which was not. Why do you think these were the outcomes?

Questions about Publication:

1. In what journals do you expect to publish your research?
2. How will you go about revising your dissertation for publication?

Questions about Research and Teaching:

1. Tell us how your research has influenced your teaching. In what ways have you been able to bring the insights of your research to your courses at the undergraduate level?
2. How would you balance your teaching duties and your own research plans?
3. How would you involve graduate or undergraduate students in your research?
4. Would you be able to take on a graduate student immediately?



Columbia University
Graduate School of Arts &
Sciences Teaching Center

Advancing teaching and learning

The Teaching Center is the go-to place for practical advice about teaching. We can help you:

- Successfully market your teaching
- Deal with anxiety, challenges to your authority, and other classroom issues
- Design innovative courses, deliver scintillating, substantive lectures, and lead stimulating discussions and labs.
- Respond appropriately to shy, withdrawn, or disruptive students.
- Use technology more effectively.

The Teaching Center offers:

- Weekly workshops
- Individual consultations
- Certification in pedagogy
- Observations on your teaching
- A library of teaching, job search, and publishing resources

A catalyst for innovation, *The Teaching Center*

- Promotes interdisciplinary
- Sponsors research in the science of learning
- Supports improvements in the assessment of learning outcomes
- Works collaboratively to improve public education through community and school partnerships

To arrange a one-on-one consultation, contact:

Steven Mintz
smintz@columbia.edu
212-854-1066

5. We have a heavy teaching load here - 12 hours per term; how would you manage this and still work on doing research and publishing?

Questions about Teaching:

1. What is your philosophy of teaching?
2. What do you consider your teaching strengths and weaknesses?
3. If you have a student who is doing poorly in your class, but has not missed classes and appears to be a good student, what would you do?
4. There is a strong move to infuse interdisciplinary work into the curriculum. Have you done such work in the past?
5. What classes could you teach in our program?

6. How would you plan a course in ___? What texts would you use? What topics would you cover?
7. How would you evaluate student learning?
8. How do you bring diversity into your day-to-day teaching?
9. Could you tell us about your teaching experiences?
10. How have you used technology in the classroom?

11. How do you feel about teaching students of mixed abilities?
12. If you could teach any course you wanted, what would it be? What would you teach next if you could teach two of them?
13. How do you feel about teaching introductory courses? How would you organize the introductory course?
14. How would you organize an upper division course in your field?
15. How would you organize a senior seminar in your field?

16. If you could teach your dream upper-level specialty course, what would that be?
17. What critical approaches do you find most persuasive? How do they translate into your teaching?
18. What kinds of writing assignments do you give your students?
19. How do reading and writing interact in your classroom?
20. How do you know you've been successful in teaching?

21. What experiences have you had teaching diverse students? (Well prepared, under prepared, full-time, part-time, students with full-time jobs and/or family care responsibilities, students representing different ethnic groups and races, religions, ages and genders?) What teaching methods have proved effective with such students?
22. Tell me about your teaching techniques (e.g., group projects, case method, etc.)
23. How do you motivate your students?
24. How would you work with our students as opposed to those at Columbia?
25. How do you address culture, language, ethnicity, race in your courses?

Questions about Department and Community Involvement:

1. We have instituted a community service requirement for all undergraduates - how would you see yourself interface with such a program?
2. Could you tell us about your long-range plans and commitment to this department?
3. How do you see yourself contributing to the department?
4. What non-academic or extra-curricular activities would you be interested in sponsoring or participating in?

Questions about Career and Personal Choices:

1. Where do you see yourself professionally in five years?
2. What do you do when you are not working?
3. What's the last book you read for fun?
4. How would you feel about living here?
5. I understand your partner is completing his/her Ph.D. What if you receive job offers in different locations?
6. If you get more than one job offer how will you decide between them?
7. How do you feel about living in this city?
8. If you get more than one job offer how will you decide between them?
9. How will you fit in as a department member and what kind of contribution will you make to our community?