

Sample Equity-minded Interview Questions for Candidates and Referees

Equity-minded interview questions should include: 1) those that evaluate the candidate's potential for successfully carrying out the job (as described in the Position Announcement) while also, 2) fulfilling the University's mission which states: *“California State University, Northridge is committed to the core principles of diversity and inclusion, to the policies and practices that ensure equitable consideration and opportunity in education and employment, and to a culture that embraces a multiplicity of talents, knowledge, beliefs, abilities and experiences.”*

1. Interview questions related to TEACHING

- Have you had experience from your previous employment or are you currently mentoring and/or teaching students from historically underrepresented groups? If yes, what methods have proven effective in engaging these students? If no, what methods do you plan to use with our students, the majority of whom come from these backgrounds? How will you evaluate whether the methods are effective?
- Using a proposed class for our department, briefly describe a lesson plan and/or teaching strategies that are designed to foster an inclusive classroom for students who have different identities and come from different backgrounds.
- How do you utilize technology in the classroom to meet the needs of diverse learners?
- Briefly describe your teaching experiences with non-traditional and first-generation college students. What methods have proven effective in helping these types of students achieve success on par with so-called 'traditional' students?
- Describe how you create a student-centered learning environment in the classroom.
- What type of students do you find most challenging to teach? Why?
- CSUN's institutional goals are to close the equity gaps in academic performance that exist between traditionally better-served students who typically perform better, and under-represented students that do not achieve the same outcomes. Have you had teaching experience using pedagogical techniques that resulted in a closure of equity gaps for historically excluded and underrepresented minority students?
- How do you draw upon your students' prior knowledge, backgrounds, and lived experiences in order to inform your teaching?
- How do you successfully engage diverse learners, particularly in a course that is for non-majors?
- How do you define excellence in teaching?

2. Interview questions related to SERVICE (e.g. student mentoring, student engagement, and committee work for the collective good of an organization)

- In what ways are you qualified to mentor students from diverse backgrounds, such as the students we have here at CSUN? What have you found to be the most effective ways?
- Tell us about an instance where you adapted your mentoring approach in order to work more effectively with students who have identities that are different from yours?
- In what ways have you fostered (or anticipate fostering) inclusive approaches to mentoring?
- Have you been or are you currently involved in outreach and/or service activities that help with advancing equity and access to higher education? If so, please elaborate.
- CSUN's institutional goals are to ensure that its diverse students experience equitable consideration and opportunity in education. How do your lived experiences help you contribute to CSUN's institutional goal such that students can meet their academic, personal, and professional goals?
- Do you have (or have you had) a contributing or leadership role on a committee, task force or in a professional society in our discipline related to a diversity, equity, and inclusion issue? If so, what were your duties and responsibilities as part of this committee?

3. Interview questions related to RESEARCH

- Describe how you plan to meaningfully involve undergraduate and/or graduate students in all parts of your research program.
- How do you recruit and then support students from diverse backgrounds into your research group or lab? What successes have you had? What challenges have you encountered?
- What roles have your students played, to date, in your research program?
- How do you create an inclusive environment in your lab or research group?
- Is your research interdisciplinary in nature, and do you envision cross-disciplinary work in the future? Please elaborate.
- What opportunities have you had working and/or collaborating in diverse, multicultural and inclusive research settings?

- How does your current or planned research program for the next 5 years address inequities and/or underserved populations locally or nationally?
- Does your research address issues related to DEI, such as race, gender, diversity, ability, sexuality, inclusion, health disparities, educational access, political engagement, economic justice, social mobility, civil and human rights, etc.? Please elaborate.

4. Interview Questions for REFEREES:

- How long have you known [candidate X] and in what capacity?
- How would you characterize their accomplishments and strengths as a teacher and scholar?
- If you have observed [candidate X] teaching, what strengths does s/he bring to the classroom? Any areas of concern?
- Describe [candidate x's] commitment to diversity in teaching, research and service.
- What are some of [candidate X's] accomplishments in terms of research and scholarship? What kinds of support do you think [candidate X] would need in order to be a successful teacher and scholar?
- Are you aware of any outstanding professional conduct issues or issues with students, during the time you have known [candidate X]?
- Would you hire [or re-hire] this candidate for a faculty position in your department? Why or why not?
- Is there anything else you can tell us that would be helpful for our search committee to know about [candidate x]?

We welcome faculty search committees to draft their own interview questions that explicitly incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion expectations into teaching, research, and mentoring, particularly where they are linked to a specific discipline or field. We invite you to submit drafts of these questions for review by the Faculty Equity Advocates (FacultyEquityAdvocate@csun.edu) prior to scheduling a [consultation booking](#). Please allow at least 2-3 business for document review prior to booking a consultation.

Here's an additional guide for creating your own equity-minded interview questions:

https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/institutional-diversity/sites/oidi/files/Equity-Minded_Interview_Questions.pdf

Planning Questions to help make the On-Campus Visit a Welcoming and Inclusive Experience for Candidates:

Question	Creates inclusion for:
Is there a particular time you prefer to have a break in the day?	Nursing parents; single parents; those with medical conditions/medications to take.
The dean's office is X buildings away from where you'll do the bulk of your activities. Does 15 minutes seem like enough time to travel between those buildings?	Candidates with physical constraints or chronic pain.
Would you prefer to see the rooms you'll be teaching/speaking in ahead of time? Will the morning of the presentation be soon enough, or should we try to arrange another time for you to see it when you arrive?	Candidates with a range of neurodiversity; candidates with physical constraints.
Are there additional communities on campus you'd like to meet and talk with?	Candidates from marginalized groups (e.g. gender, sexuality, racial, ethnic or ability groups).
For your lunch and dinner, are there particular types of food you'd like to avoid for health or dietary or religious reasons? Are there foods you are particularly keen on?	Candidates with medical conditions; candidates from certain religious groups; class diversity.
When do you typically eat dinner? For e.g., a 7 p.m. dinner would get you back to the hotel by about 9 p.m. Would that be too late for you?	Candidates with medical conditions; parents; candidates from particular religious groups.
Do you prefer to be picked up at the airport by a committee member or would you prefer to secure a ride with an uber, lyft, or taxicab?	Candidates with medical conditions that require medication to fly; candidates from lower socio-economic statuses; gender diverse candidates.
Would you like to meet with a specialist in our HR benefits office or the Office of Faculty Affairs?	Candidates with medical conditions or with families; candidates from lower socio-economic statuses. Also, RTP concerns.
Do you need a pet-friendly hotel and/or accommodations for a support animal?	Candidates with service animals or other support pets.