

LONG-LIST INTERVIEW QUESTIONS 2015–2021

These are questions I have received during Skype interviews or their formal equivalent during 2015–2021. Each section lists the type of academic institution, position applied for, and date of interview. When possible, I have also listed the length of the interview.

Most questions were recorded directly after the interview; in two cases I did not write the questions down or do not have access to the notebook they were written in, so I contacted members of the search committee who are professional acquaintances to include them in this list.

Questions have been slightly edited to preserve institutional anonymity.

A. International Research University

Position: Assistant Professor

Date: December 2015

Research

1. Please tell us about your current research/research career to date.
2. Outline a project you would undertake if you were awarded research funding. How do you see your research program if you come to [this institution]?
3. Talk us through the timetable of your research/publication plans.
4. Please tell us about your experience with getting research funding. How can you assist the department to access research grants?

Teaching

1. Tell us about your experience teaching.
2. How do you think your teaching could develop further?
3. Describe a course or topic that you would teach if you join our department.
4. What courses would you develop if you come to [this institution], and why?
5. We also expect that faculty teach introductory and mandatory core courses, such as Introduction to Anthropology. How do you feel about that?
6. How would you attract new students to this department?
7. Tell us about your experience in supervising graduate students.

Fit

1. Why do you want to work at [this university]?

2. Why do you want to join our department?
3. How does your work fit with the department and the university?
4. How would you fit with existing activities in our department/university?
5. Which groups here would you expect to collaborate with?
6. In what ways other than your subject expertise can you contribute to this department?

Service

1. Please tell us about your service to university and community engagement.
2. One of the key goals of this department is to increase the number of disciplinary majors and to promote our programs. How would you contribute to this work?

B. Private Liberal Arts College, Northeast US [SLAC]

Position: 2-year teaching postdoctoral fellow

Date: April 2016

Length: 20-30 minutes

1. Could you spend a few moments giving us a little more background about your research, how you got into it, and where you see it progressing in the next several years?
2. Given your own research interests, and given the structure of our department, what courses do you think you could introduce to our curriculum that would engage our (undergraduate) students?

[If a there is a specific course that needs to be covered]

3. As you recall, one of the courses we would expect the candidate for this position to fill is _____. What approach would you take towards teaching [name of course]? What are the major themes, approaches, or critical texts that you would like to incorporate into this course?

C. Private Liberal Arts College, Northeast US [SLAC]

Position: Assistant Professor

Date: November 2016

1. How would you contribute to diversity at [our institution]?
2. What are 3 courses you could teach for us?

3. What are your professional plans for the next 5 years?
4. How would you incorporate students into your research?
5. How would you contribute to the interdisciplinary environment at [this institution]?

D. Public Research University, South US [R2]

Position: Assistant Professor

Date: January 2017

Length: 22 minutes

1. What are your research and publishing plans for the next 5 years?
2. What do you see as major trends in archaeological theory?
3. What are some courses you'd teach for us (also for applied students)?
4. How do you incorporate students into your research?
5. How are you prepared to teach a diverse body of students?

E. Public State University, West US [M1]

Position: Assistant Professor

Date: January 2017

Length: ~45 minutes*

1. Why do you want to work here?
2. What skills do we need to provide to students taking biological anthropology?
3. What are your views on the pros and cons of being in a department like this (small, public school, etc.,)?

*Note: This is one of the few interviews I have participated in that did not adhere strictly to the exact question and answer format that most schools now require for HR reasons. Instead this was a free-ranging conversation where people asked me follow-up questions and interjected with new information when appropriate. As a result, it was one of the most positive interview experiences I have had.

F. Public Small Liberal Arts College, South US [M1]

Position: Assistant Professor

Date: January 2017

1. Can you describe a new course you would develop for us?
2. How do you go about incorporating your students in your research?
3. What is your dream project, post-tenure?

G. Public University, Southern US [R3]

Position: Assistant Professor

Date: February 2017

1. What attracted you about this program and why would you be a good fit?
2. How would your research fit in with the department?
3. The teaching load is a 3-3. What are some courses you would develop for us?
4. What is your position on field schools and local outreach?
5. What are some of the methods you use in your research and who else could you collaborate with on campus?
6. What would be your greatest challenge about teaching here?
7. Where do you see yourself in five years?

H. Public University, Midwest US [R1]

Date: January 2018

Length: 34 minutes

1. Why would you be a good fit for the department?
2. Describe some courses you'd be interested in developing as an online course.
3. How do you mentor undergraduate and graduate students?
4. Describe your upcoming field project and how you would turn that into a field school.

5. What is your plan for the next five years of research?
6. How do you plan to fund your next five years of research?
7. What kind of inter-disciplinary work would you envision doing at this institution?

I. Private University, North-East US [R1]

Position: Two-Year Research and Teaching Postdoc

Date: March 2019

Length: 30 Minutes

1. Tell us a little bit about yourself and your research.
2. What kind of research would you present to the [Institutional Humanities Institute], how would you see your work intersecting with the humanities scholars?
3. What types of (bioarchaeological) evidence are most valuable for answering your research questions?
4. [After I talked about osteobiography as a research strategy]: There are many different dimensions of biography, how do you define it? Are there any examples of historical osteobiography you can think of?
5. What are some courses you would develop for us?

J. Private University, West Coast US [R1]

Position: Tenure-Track Assistant Professor, Anthropology (Archaeology Focus)

Date: November 2019

Length: 26 Minutes

1. Tell us about your research.
2. Tell us about your bioarchaeological training and focus.
3. What sorts of facilities would you need to do your research?
4. Can you define what you mean by biocultural?
5. What sort of social theory does your work incorporate (from cultural/social anthropology)?
6. What cultural anthropology faculty would you be interested in working with?

7. What courses would you teach for us?
8. What questions do you have for us?

K. Ivy League University [R1]

Note: These questions are poorly remembered and approximate.

Position: One-to-two year teaching postdoc with research component

Date: 20 April 2021

Length: 13:40–14:10 EST

1. How do you see your research fitting into the department and the intellectual community here?
2. What are some courses you could teach for us?
3. What would you need for teaching in terms of resources?
4. Quick logistical question: are you able to teach full in person in Cambridge in the fall?
5. How would you teach a course on the archaeology of collapse?
6. In what directions do you see archaeology headed in terms of teaching and research and how does your work speak to that?
7. How do you approach the ethics of teaching bioarchaeology?
8. How would you see this postdoc fitting in with your professional trajectory? What would you hope to gain from it?

L. State University, East Coast US [R1]

Date: 01 December 2021

Length: 9:30–10:01 AM EST

1. Why are you interested in applying to [Institution]?
2. What is the body of theory that currently informs your work, and what are the larger social implications of your research questions?
3. Please describe where you see your work going for the next dozen years—this includes upcoming research and data collection plans, sources of funding, etc.
4. How do you envision making connections with other researchers (both within the department and at the interdisciplinary level) in your teaching and research?

5. Can you tell us a little bit about your general approach to teaching and mentoring for undergraduate and graduate students and some courses you'd see developing for us?

6. How do you approach diversity and inclusion in your research and teaching?

Bonus: Oxbridge, UK

NOTE: These were not questions asked of me, but questions asked over the course of one of the searches I witnessed in Biological Anthropology during the 2018–2019 academic year. Some were asked publicly, and some were asked during the private interview phase.

1. Who is your intellectual hero?

2. What is your academic guilty pleasure? (A field you follow but that does not overlap with your research sphere).

3. If you get this job and in twenty years you decide to write a popular science book, what is the title? What is the topic?