

Job Interviews

- Job interviews are important.
- BUT - they are no substitute for a strong research and teaching record. Work hard at building up both well before job search time!
- The job interview visit provides an opportunity both for the hosting department to learn about you and for you to learn about the hosting department.

The Hiring Process

- Varies from university to university and even department to department
- At UBC Math:
 - * All department members are given access to all applications and are encouraged to comment on them.
 - * A departmental committee oversees the initial screening, solicits extensive input from the department at large and, in particular, from the appropriate specialists and produces a short list.
 - * Each short listed candidate has an interview, in which the candidate visits the department, gives a colloquium and a seminar and talks to a number of department members (including the head), and possibly the dean or assistant dean.
 - * There are meetings (both of the screening committee and of the department as a whole) at which the short listed candidates are discussed and which lead up to votes by the department concerning which candidates are to be offered positions.

- At some other universities/departments:
 - * The entire hiring process is dealt with by a small committee, which reports directly to the department chair or to the university administration.
 - * The interview can really be an interview with the hiring committee.

Seminar/Colloquium

- Your talks can influence whether or not you get an offer.
- Practice them ahead of time – more than once – with an audience.
- Determine your audience(s) before the interview and design your talks appropriately.
 - * Usually colloquiums are attended by a very broad audience.
 - * Seminars tend to have a more specialized audience, but for job talks people from related areas often attend too.
 - * Think about which details are trees and which are forests.
- Most speakers overestimate the knowledge of the audience members.
- Control your speed - you can speak a lot faster than people can absorb what you are saying.
- Make clear what your contributions were.
- Make clear how your contributions fit into the big picture.
- If you are giving a computer talk, have a contingency plan for dealing with technological failures.

The Visit

- Check out visa rules and timing early.
- Determine the interview format and schedule before the visit.
- Learn something about the department before you arrive. You can easily get lots of info from the web.
- In particular find out which department members are in your area and related areas and what they do.
- You may very well have a meeting with a dean – have ready a blurb that explains briefly what you do in language that is accessible to scientists who are not mathematicians.
- Talk to as many people as you can, including junior faculty and even graduate students.
- Don't be afraid to request appointments with specific people.

- Think about what you want to learn about the department, university, city, country.
 - * Teaching load
 - * Service load
 - * Supervision expectations
 - * Tenure and promotion procedures
 - * Research funding
 - * Startup grant
 - * Sabbatical rules
 - * Insurance coverage, pension plan, salary procedures
 - * Housing costs, assistance
 - * Moving cost reimbursement
 - * Child care, schools