

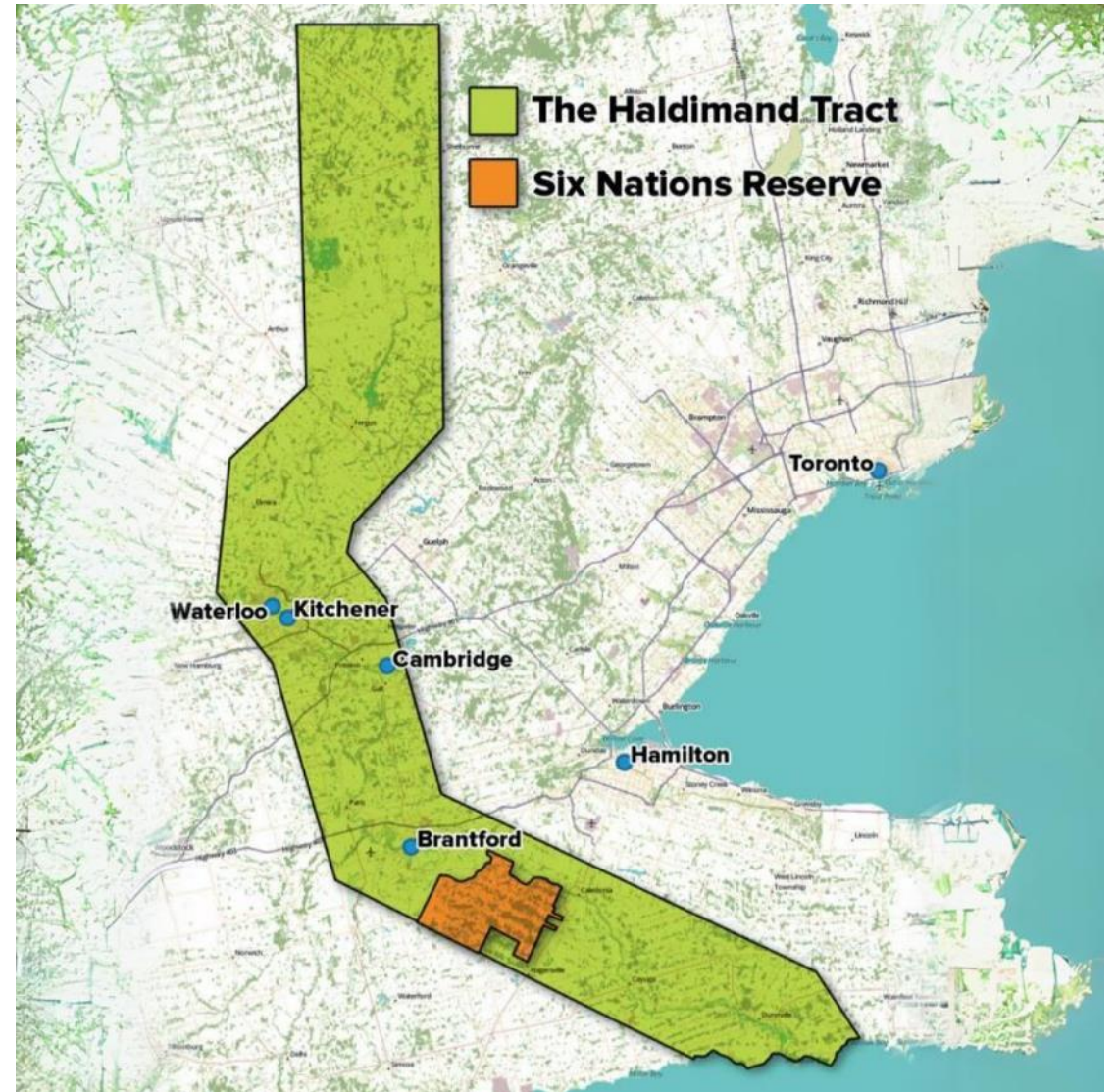
Academic Interviews

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Graduate Career Advisor



Territorial Acknowledgement

The University of Waterloo acknowledges that much of our work takes place on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron, Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples. Our main campus is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land granted to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.



Take Action:



Treaties Recognition Week

November 4 - 11, 2024

[Check out the Office of Indigenous Relations](#) site for events and videos

Support Land Back movement

[O:se Kenhionhata:tie](#) Land Back Camp and Willow River Centre



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Let's make this a supportive space

Listen and learn from each other with respect

Ask questions throughout the training

Participate in a way that works for you

Harmful language will not be tolerated



Introductions- feel free to share

For example:

- Name
- Program/department
- Pronouns
- Emoji describing how you feel today
- What are you hoping to learn or take away today?





FORMAT OF ACADEMIC INTERVIEWS

First round/screening interviews

Conference Interviews	Video Interviews
Held at major annual conference/convention of discipline	Screening interview to determine who gets a campus interview
Interviewers = representatives of search committee	Interviewers = any combination of members of the search committee
Approximately 15-30 minutes in length	Generally 30-60 minutes
General questions about your research/teaching and service	General questions about your research/teaching and service
In person **	Via webcam

Sample questions that may be asked

1. What interests you about this position & what experiences have prepared you for the role.
2. What are your research goals during this position? What are your long-term goals that this position might contribute to?
3. What research experience are you most proud of and why? What research experience was the most challenging, and how did you confront those challenges?
4. You will have the opportunity to teach undergraduate and graduate courses/workshops. Without being too detailed, what would your introductory course in X be like? What would be a graduate course that you can offer that is unique to you?
5. X is committed to building an inclusive community, advancing equity and inclusion within the university/organization. In what ways have you addressed issues of equity and inclusion in your past professional activities or in your own research?



Virtual Interviews: Controlling what you can



- **Test your tech:** test run the software with a peer to ensure a smooth experience
- **Be early:** set-up computer, close extra tabs, turn off notifications and open the program
- **Start with a strong introduction:** say hello, smile and look directly into the camera
 - “Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today.” “I’ve been looking forward to our conversation.” “It’s nice to meet you!”
- **Be prepared for small talk:** Remain positive, find a common interest

Virtual Interviews Tips

1. **Sound:** find a quiet space and a room with some sound insulation
2. **Background:** have a clean and simple background
3. **Camera Angle:** ensure your camera is at eye-level by stacking textbooks or a box under your laptop
4. **Lighting:** use natural light or a lamp. Ensure you are not backlit
5. **Dress:** dress appropriately for you and the role (from head to toe!)



Components of the campus interview

- Breakfasts/lunches/dinner with faculty
- Lunch/coffee with (grad) students
- Campus tour
- Area/community tour
- Interview with Search Committee
- Interview with Dean or Chair
- Job/Research talk (30-50 min followed by Q&A)
- Teaching demonstration (teach an actual class or teaching a topic to faculty pretending to be students)
- One-on-one meetings with any faculty who want to meet with you
- One-on-one meetings with faculty/staff you have requested to meet with

Sample questions search committee may ask

Research:

- How does your work contribute to the field or society/community/university?
- Why/how did you choose your research topic and what theoretical framework did you use?

Teaching:

- What is your teaching philosophy? How does it influence your approach in the classroom?
- Tell us about your teaching experience and how you dealt with problems that came up?

Service:

- Have you been actively involved in committee work in the past?
- How well do you get along with those who have very different opinions and/or whose work you do not respect?
- What opportunities would you create for graduate/undergraduate students to participate in your research?



ACADEMIC INTERVIEW SCENARIOS

Responding to interview scenarios

Throughout this section, I will be sharing scenarios of academic interviews. With each scenario, I would like you to:

1. Identify a problem within the scenario (there might be more than one, but focus on one problem)
2. Provide how you might change the scenario so that the interview goes better
3. Share your response in the chat

Scenario 1: Preparation for an Interview

During a department meet and greet, Hae-mi (she/her) is approached by an individual who asks really engaged questions. The individual seems the most engaged of all the others, and overall the conversation is going really well.

To Hae-mi, the individual seems quite young, especially compared to how other faculty members are dressed/look, and assumes the individual is a grad student. Given her observation, Hae-mi asks “So, tell me about your research: What is your dissertation about?”

“Um, I’m an Assistant Professor,” the individual replies. Hae-mi apologizes, and the conversation ends awkwardly after the faculty member answers her question.

BEFORE THE ACADEMIC INTERVIEW

- ✓ Review the job posting
- ✓ Review your application documents
- ✓ Research the department, the team, the strategic plan etc.
- ✓ Research the people you will meet
- ✓ Understand the needs of the department/faculty/university



PREPARATION FOR THE “CAMPUS VISIT” INTERVIEW



Scenario 2: The Job Talk

When preparing for his talk, Morris (he/him) is finalizing his slides that feature citations from academic sources and from his qualitative survey results. When he did a mock interview, one of his colleagues pointed out that most of the included quotations from sources and survey responses identified as male. Morris acknowledged this, noting that they were the strongest of the quotations and would be able to address this in the job talk if it were to come up.

During the Q&A of the job talk, a faculty member brings up this exact point. Morris replies that there were other quotations but these best supported his argument. The questioner followed up with “But...what might the other sources, who do not identify as male, indicate? Do they disprove your argument?” Morris got defensive and replied: “Not really...they kinda say the same thing.” He, then, continued to defend his choice to include the quotations he did.

ANTICIPATE QUESTIONS

Research

Teaching

Collegiality

Reflect on how you fit and how you add to the department



Understand how your experiences connect with and add to the department



Identify your experiences that provide evidence



Make a list of questions you want to ask

Job talk

- ✓ Focus on current and future research
- ✓ Dissertation/past research has a place in your talk but should serve as a launching point and not take up much space
- ✓ Make connections between you and the department/university/location
- ✓ Centralize your talk on what makes you unique, both in terms of how you might fit but also what you can contribute
- ✓ Strategize to anticipate questions



Scenario 3: The Teaching Demo

Avery (they/them) is required to do a teaching demo in addition to their job talk. The teaching demo requires Avery to teach a concept of their choice within their field to first year students. Knowing the topic very well, Avery decided that they better focus on the research talk and prepares a similar lesson they have taught at their current school.

After the teaching demo, a faculty member raises their hand and says, “I enjoyed the teaching demo, but I’m not sure how this would work with our students, especially first years. We find our students tend to be from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds in our first year classes.”

Avery didn’t realize until that moment that the concept they taught was a concept from a 3rd year course. They fumbled on how they might teach the concept in first year and wasn’t confident in how they might teach it to students outside of the discipline.

Teaching Demo

- ✓ Carefully read the teaching demo instructions and don't be afraid of asking for clarifications
- ✓ Less can be more; try not to overpack the lesson
- ✓ Ensure the content is appropriate for the audience, whether the audience is “real” or faculty pretending to be that audience
- ✓ Focus on highlighting your teaching strengths if given options
- ✓ Aim for interactive teaching demo; limit lecturing (which can be hard in a digital environment)

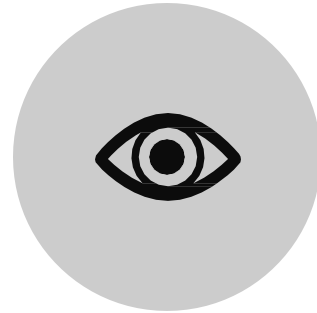


QUESTIONS?

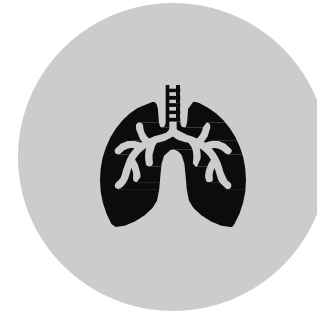
Managing anxiety & taking care of yourself before and on interview day



SELF-CARE



VISUALIZATION
AND IMAGERY



BREATHING



USING YOUR
SUPPORTS

During the interview

- It's ok to ask for a question to be repeated
- It's ok to stop and take a sip of water or deep breath to ground yourself
- Be kind to yourself if you stumbled on one question
- Get up and do something between the interviews/talks: snack, dance, step outside
- You can follow up with a thank you email and re-word something or mention something you didn't express the way you wanted



PRACTICE SELF-CARE (After the interview)

- Take a moment and note the positives of your interview
- Plan to treat yourself after the interview
- Reflect on questions you had difficulty with
- Celebrate! 😊 YOU DID THE INTERVIEW! YAY!



RESOURCES

- UW Counselling Services: 519-888-4567 x 32655
- KW Counselling Services: 519-884-0000
- 24/7 services:
 - Good to Talk 1-866-925-5454
 - Here 24/7 1-844-437-3247

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QUESTIONS?