The Academic Job Market
Graduate Student and Postdoc “Summer Camp”
Day 3: The Interview
UChicagoGRAD - grad.uchicago.edu
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Winning the Academic Interview (in 10 minutes)
1’-2’: Look the Part

**WOMEN**
- Gray/Brown Suit
- Color Can Work
- Easy on the Jewels
- Pants vs. Skirt
- Heels vs. No Heels

**MEN**
- Gray Suit
- Blazers can Work
- Tame the Beard
- New Leather Shoes
- New Belt

**EVERYONE**
- **FIT, NOT $$$.**
- Haircut
- No backpacks
- Wear it all first
- Ask for honesty
(Prepare for the Elements)
3’-5’: Prep

- In the Week(s) before:
  - Do homework
  - Record yourself
  - ...in front of a mirror
  - Practice with partners
  - Develop questions
  - Know:
    - Your research
    - Your courses
    - Next project
    - Mentoring
    - Tricky questions

- 24 hours before:
  - Arrive in town with time to spare
  - Check out location
  - Sleep (but caffeinate)
  - No conference trolls
  - Read something unrelated to the job market—even enjoyable—on the morning of your conversation.
  - Goldilocks zone
6’-8: In the Room
(It May Get...Weird).
6’-8’: In the Room

- **Win in Five Seconds**
  - Smile / Energy
  - Handshake-ready

- **Eyes up**
  - Where?
  - Bridge of the nose
  - Keep them level

- **Posture**
  - Hands at side
  - Minimal gestures
  - Feet flat
  - Back straight
8’-10’: Answer Formulation

- **Elements of strong answers:**
  - Brevity—two sentences instead of three
  - Articulating broad **stakes** of the question
  - Addressing opposing views
  - Positive accounts of your department/experience

- **Other indicators of confidence to faculty:**
  - Rephrasing a question to **clarify**
  - Tying answers to previous questions or comments
  - Taking a moment to **think** about an answer
3’ for Questions
Workshop/Practice

- Groups of 3
- One Packet/Group
- Introductions
Workshop/Practice

- A→B, B→C, C→A

Feedback
- Positive / places to improve
- Regroup after 10 minutes, repeat
- Research/Teaching/General