

SAMPLE DEI RELATED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A consistent set of questions, in both the initial screening and on-campus interviews, will help achieve fairness in interviewing and evaluating candidates. The Search Committee should develop a set of “core questions” to ask all applicants, allowing for individualized follow-up questions. Below is a list of potential questions that could be asked of candidates. Interview questions are not limited to those on this list. The source of the questions is cited, along with a link to the source.

DEI Questions from [California State University, Chico](#)

In your experience, what are the challenges faced by members of historically underrepresented groups [or, specify historically underrepresented group(s) with which the applicant will be expected to work] in the workplace? What strategies have you used to address these challenges, and how successful were those strategies?
What does it mean for you to have a commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion? How have you demonstrated that commitment, and how would you see yourself demonstrating it here? (If the candidate only speaks to diversity, ask them to answer the question in terms of inclusion/equity.)
Describe a specific situation in which you worked with members of a historically underrepresented group(s) [or, specify historically underrepresented group(s) with which the applicant will be expected to work, or culturally and socio-economically diverse student populations] over a period of time. Based on this experience, what did you learn and how would you apply that in this position?
Why do you think it is important to address equity, diversity, and inclusion issues in this position, and what are some ways you might do that?
What programs or initiatives have you been part of to work with historically underrepresented groups [or, specify historically underrepresented group(s) with which the applicant will be expected to work, or culturally and socio-economically diverse student populations], and what specifically was your role in those efforts?
Describe the most challenging situation dealing with equity, diversity, and inclusion that you have faced and how did you handle it? Give an example of where you made a mistake or fell short and how did you self-reflect or repair the situation?
Describe the most challenging situation dealing with equity, diversity, and inclusion that you have faced and how did you handle it? Give an example of where you made a mistake or fell short and how did you self-reflect or repair the situation?
Tell me about a time when you worked with a [specify: student/patient/co-worker] with a different background or culture than yours. What did you do to ensure that you were inclusive of their identity, or provided equity, during your working relationship? (If no specific example, what would you do in this situation?)
Working with people from different backgrounds or cultures can present challenges and opportunities. Describe a time where differences in background [choose: made communication challenging OR affected communication]. How did you handle this situation, what did you learn from it, and what would you do differently in the future? (If no specific example, what would you do in this situation?)

DEI Questions from [Washington State University](#)

What are some of the techniques you use to teach in a culturally responsive way?
Can you trace the history and key politics of your field? How has it responded to calls to move away from “great white men” and toward more inclusive/diverse scholarship?
You are asked to teach a general Elementary Teaching course. Who are the five to ten authors the students must read, and why? [Listen for diversity of authors in each candidate’s response.]
How do you recruit and support racially diverse graduate students? What success have you had? Challenges?
What role models are there in your field for nontraditional students (e.g., female students, LGBTQ+ students, Indigenous students, students of color, and students with disabilities)?
A growing number of students are demanding faculty accountability on issues of race and equity. How have you responded? What areas of growth do you see for yourself?
A group of students comes to you and says that there is racial inequity in the classroom’s dynamics. How might you respond to its concerns?
What have you done to enhance your knowledge and skills related to diversity? How have you demonstrated what you have learned?
What does it mean for you to have a commitment to diversity and inclusion? How have you demonstrated that commitment, and how do you see yourself demonstrating it on our campus and/or for this role?
In your experiences, what do you see as the most challenging aspects of diversity and inclusion on a university/college campus and your work?
How has your experience and background prepared you to be effective in an environment that values awareness of inclusion and respect for diversity?
Tell me about a time when you had a situation where a colleague or co-worker was unreceptive to inclusion or diversity concerns? What was the situation? How did you handle it/what was the outcome? If not, how would you handle this situation? OR How would you respond?
Describe your understanding of diversity and inclusion and how it is related to this position?
Can you describe an innovative (teaching strategy, program) addressing diversity that you were an integral part of developing? What did you consider? What was the outcome?

DEI Questions from [Northern Illinois University](#)

Describe your understanding of diversity [inclusion] and why it is important to this position.
What is your definition of diversity and how or why do you think diversity is important?
In what ways do you think diversity is important to someone in the role of _____?
How are diversity [inclusion] issues and [leadership] [teaching or service] [customer service] related?
How would you describe your current thinking about diversity, and how has your thinking changed over time?
What does it mean for you to have a commitment to diversity? How have you demonstrated that commitment, and how would you see yourself demonstrating it here?
What are some concerns you have about working with diverse populations or communities?
To what extent do you believe there are significant differences in how one should work with diverse cultures within the US/US minorities and diverse cultures from other nations? Are different strategies appropriate, and if so, what are they?
Pose a situation/scenario involving issues of diversity. Ask the applicant how she or he would respond in that situation.
In what ways can you imagine promoting NIU's nondiscrimination policy in your responsibilities in this position?
How would you [reach] [serve] diverse groups or traditionally underserved communities?
What challenges do you think you will face in working with a diverse population?
Why do you think it's important to address diversity and equity issues in this position, and what are some ways you might do that?
How would you advocate for diversity education and diversity initiatives with individuals who don't see its value?
Explain what you believe to be an effective strategy to introduce diversity to individuals who have only experienced a limited number of cultures.
Explain what you believe to be an effective strategy to diversify curricula
When dealing with a non-diverse environment or individuals with little experience with diversity, how would you approach making diversity relevant or valued?
How would you handle a situation in which someone made a sexist, racist, homophobic or otherwise prejudiced remark?

How would you respond to a conversation between [co-workers] [students] [colleagues] that was clearly offensive to others?
If you were hired, how would you use this position to increase or enhance diversity at this university?
Sometimes there is a belief that a commitment to diversity conflicts with a commitment to excellence (i.e. we will have to lower our standards to achieve or accommodate diversity). How would you describe the relationship between diversity and excellence? What kinds of leadership efforts would you undertake to encourage a commitment to excellence through diversity?
In what ways do you feel it is appropriate to incorporate topics related to diversity and [your discipline] into the classes you teach? How would you do this?
How has your [education] [previous work experience] prepared you for [working with] [teaching] a diverse population?
How has your background and experience prepared you to be effective in an environment [that values diversity] [is committed to inclusion] [where we see awareness of and respect for diversity as an important value]?
What is your past experience or training in [working with] [teaching] _____ populations?
What specific experiences have you had addressing concerns of diverse [communities] [students] [populations] at your current or previous institution? What role have you taken in addressing those concerns?
Please tell us about an instance when you have demonstrated leadership or commitment to equity in your work.
What programs or initiatives have you been part of to [work with diverse populations] [address diversity issues], and specifically what was your role in those efforts?
This University, like many universities, is highly concerned with issues of diversity and equity. How has your past work demonstrated an active commitment to equity?
Can you describe an innovative [program] [activity] [teaching strategy] addressing diversity that you were an integral part of developing?
In what ways have you demonstrated commitment and sensitivity to the importance of diversity in your previous experience?
Describe a time when you worked to incorporate diversity issues or diverse communities into [a project or event you worked on] [a class you taught].
What training and experience do you have in developing and implementing [services and programs] [courses] [course objectives] [learning objectives] that incorporate diversity?
Describe your experiences in strategic planning related to diversity.
Describe your experiences in assessing diversity initiatives and their outcomes.

What experiences have you had with recruiting, hiring, training, and/or supervising a diverse workforce?
What is the most challenging situation dealing with diversity that you have faced and how did you handle it?
If we were to ask your colleagues or supervisor at your current position, what do you think they would say about your diversity background, experience and contributions?
What areas of diversity do you think you have to learn more about and how would you go about doing it?
What have you done to further your knowledge or understanding about diversity? How have you applied your learning?
How has your research incorporated diverse populations?
What role has diversity played in your [approach to teaching _____] [teaching strategies] [management of classroom dynamics]?
What kinds of experiences have you had in relating with people whose backgrounds are different than your own?
Have you ever realized you had said or done something that may have been offensive to a [colleague] [student] [co-worker]? How did you respond to that realization, and what was the outcome?
In your experience, what are the challenges faced by members of historically underrepresented groups [in the workplace] [in successfully completing their education]? What strategies have you used to address these challenges, and how successful were those strategies?

DEI Questions from [University of Montana](#)

At this University, diversity, equity and inclusivity are core values. How has your experience and background prepared you to be effective in this environment with these values?
Please provide an example of a situation when you had to exercise your leadership skills to help resolve a conflict between two diverse colleagues or subordinates. Please outline the situation, the actions you took and what resulted.
In your career experience, please outline a situation in which you had the opportunity to work with an organization whose leadership or focus was on a culture or community that was different from your own. How did you adapt and what was the result?
If you were the successful candidate for this position, how would you connect colleagues and contacts from diverse communities to this university? What do you expect the challenges would be? What do you expect the benefits would be?
How would your vision for this position be aligned with this university's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion?
If you are the successful candidate for the position, you would represent this university in every interaction you have. What measures will you take to ensure you create a "face" that is welcoming to individuals from all backgrounds?
Please discuss how your record of achievements in your career has been enhanced by exposure to diverse people, places, experiences or publications.
What is your approach to enhancing your understanding of different cultures? In other words, how do you expand your own learning with regard to diversity?
What is your approach to dealing with discussions that are related to difficult questions; for example; race, religion, sexual orientation?
How have you incorporated the viewpoints of [insert subject area, i.e. American Politics] from groups outside the mainstream such as LGBTQ, individuals with disabilities, or recent immigrants into your curriculum?
In what ways do you demonstrate support for diverse colleagues and clients?
What is your vision of a university, such as UM, that full embraces diversity?
Explain how diversity has played a role in your career and contributed to the professional you are today.
What do see as the most challenging aspect of a diverse academic environment? What steps have you taken to meet this challenge?
How have you handled situations where a colleague or subordinate was not accepting of another's diversity? What was the result?
What does it mean to have a commitment to diversity and how would you apply that commitment at this university?

What specific things have you done to further your knowledge about diversity? In what specific ways have you used that knowledge?
Diversity can pose a variety of challenges in working environments. Please describe the strategies you have used to address diversity challenges. In what ways were the strategies successful? In retrospect, would you change anything about your strategy?
Please describe the ways you have promoted a diverse workforce in your current or previous position(s).
What specific things do you do to positively influence those you supervise or work with on the benefits of diversity?
How did your current or previous employer benefit from diversity?
In your opinion, what is the most important leadership trait required to foster a receptive climate to diversity in the workforce?
In what specific ways has diversity shaped your leadership/teaching/counseling/advising/management style?
As a higher education professional, what specific things have you done to promote diversity in the community?
In what specific efforts have you engaged to reduce bias and champion diversity understanding?