Appendix D. Conducting a Good Virtual Interview

Faculty recruitment is an integral part of achieving excellence as a university. Interviews by Skype (or some other video-conferencing service) are often used for the first meeting of our applicants. In addition to the University and College policies and procedures for search committees,[1,2] the following are recommendations for an effective virtual interview.[3-5]

1. The Search Committee Chair has responsibility for ensuring a smooth and effective interview process.
2. When scheduling the interview, be aware of time zones and allow enough time between each interview.
3. Once the interview has been confirmed, send **interviewee and interviewers** the relevant information – names of interviewers, Skype contact details, duration of call, etc.
4. Find out whether the candidate needs any special accommodation for the interview. This becomes important for persons with disabilities.
5. Have reliable internet access (use ethernet rather than Wifi) **and a platform with which you are familiar**. Make sure that the interviewee has received relevant information about the internet access and has adequate time to become comfortable with it. **Offer the candidate a chance to do a test run with a member of your IT staff**.
6. Try to anticipate technical problems and have back-up options at the ready and someone on hand to facilitate.
7. Ensure consistent treatment of all candidates, including internal candidates.
8. Develop a set of core questions for each candidate. Be aware that certain questions are not allowed. (See below.)
9. Be as prepared for this interview as if the candidate were sitting in front of you, and conduct the interview with the same level of professionalism and importance.
10. Your set-up is, for the candidate, a photographic representation of the institution and its culture so be carefully aware of how that is portrayed. Use a quiet space that will not be interrupted and that shows your department in a positive and professional light.
11. Establish eye contact with the interviewee: look into the camera, not at the image of the person on the screen.
12. Be kind/humane to the interviewee
    o   individually introduce committee members
    o   sit at a reasonable distance from the camera such that panel members can be clearly seen, even if it means having only 2 or 3 persons visible at a time
    o   check for appropriate lighting, camera angle, non-distracting background
    o   committee members should be physically present, stay for the duration of the interview, and be fully engaged with interview while there. (Candidates can see you looking at your phones, etc.)
    o   have a pre-arranged order of questioners to minimize long silent periods. Recognize that the candidate will be disadvantaged and demoralized by lost time
    o   allow all interviewees similar time for interview. Have extra questions at the ready to minimize lags in the conversation. At the end, let the candidate know the next steps.
13. Use a distinct, dedicated line for each candidate and hang up, making sure the line is clear, before starting discussion.

Sample Interview Questions for Faculty. A useful list of sample questions grouped under the headings - Experience And Qualifications, Diversity Experience, Teaching and Student Engagement, Research and Professional Development, Project Management and Problem Solving, Technology and Professional Relationships, is available at https://agrilifeas.tamu.edu/documents/faculty-interview-questions.pdf/.

Remember that in general, questions that touch upon age, race, ethnicity, national origin, disabilities, gender, religion, children, marital status or sexual orientation should be avoided.
https://cpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/sites.udel.edu/dist/4/648/files/2019/07/Interview-Questions-to-Avoid.pdf

References and Resources

1. Interview Guide, Search Committee Training, UD Human Resources, August 2015.
2. Faculty Recruitment, A Guide for Search Committee Members, UD ADVANCE, March 2015.
   https://cpb-us-w2.wpmucdn.com/sites.udel.edu/dist/4/648/files/2015/03/Recruitment-Manual-2huq4b9.pdf
3. Kelsky, K., Making the Most of a Skype Interview, ChronicleVitae, August 9, 2016.
4. OneWire Resources, Tips on How to Conduct the Perfect Skype Interview, August 12, 2013.
5. Leitch, C., How to Conduct a Skype Interview, Recruitment, Oct. 26, 2017.