

**CONDUCT SUCCESSFUL ZOOM INTERVIEWS WITH FACULTY CANDIDATES**

**Get Ready Technologically Speaking**

**Get connected to Zoom**

Ensure that you have Zoom installed on your computer or phone. This is necessary to both participate in, and set up, Zoom meetings or conferences. If you do not already have Zoom or if you have questions and would like quick guides on making the most of Zoom (e.g., joining a meeting, sharing a screen, configuring audio and video controls), go to [UNO Zoom](https://www.unomaha.edu/information-technology-services/instructional-technology/zoom.php) page.

**Test access**

Test your equipment and practice using Zoom in advance to make sure that the audio and video work as expected. Ensure that you have a stable internet connection. Consider holding a brief search committee or faculty meeting by Zoom in advance of candidate interviews so that all faculty have practice in joining and participating in this type of interview format.

**Quiet location, good connection**

Use a quiet, private and well-lit place where you won’t be interrupted by other people, pets or noises. Position your webcam so that you have a neutral background that’s free from distractions. Avoid coffee shops and other communal spaces. Ensure that there is a stable internet connection.

**Before the Interview**

**Prepare an itinerary**

Develop a detailed itinerary (like you would for a campus interview), that includes…

* Meeting times for the interviews as well as the names and positions of all participants in each session.
* Consider doing interviews with 3-4 participants plus the candidate. This allows all attendees to join the meeting individually, yet all can still easily be seen on screen and have the opportunity to talk and ask questions.
* Build in 5-10 minute breaks between each interview session to allow all participants time to stretch their legs, take bathroom breaks, refill beverages, etc. Include a 10-15 minute break mid-morning and mid-afternoon. Don’t forget to include a lunch break of at least 30 minutes as well.
* Consider building in preparatory time if the candidate will be doing a teaching demo or research talk, much as you would for a campus interview.
* Information needed to access the video interview (e.g., Zoom link, directions to refer to a calendar invite).
* Include time in each session for the candidate to ask questions.
* Consider including a 45-60 minute session for informal conversation between the candidate and search committee (or small group of faculty) that is intended to be in place of a campus tour or driving tour of Omaha. Ask each attendee to come to the session prepared to share one thing they love about UNO and one thing they love about Omaha. This is an opportunity for the candidate to ask the types of questions they might normally slip in on walks across campus, between meetings, travel to/from the hotel, etc.
* Provide a point of contact (name, phone number) for the candidate in case there are technical difficulties, someone does not show for an interview, etc.

**Identify a session lead**

For each interview session, identify someone who will take the lead. As a team, think through what this means for the session (e.g., ensure meeting starts and ends on time, handle introductions, introduce candidate, etc.)

**Share materials in advance**

Share materials in advance of the meeting including the candidate’s CV and the itinerary. Don’t forget to share the itinerary with the candidate as well.

**Use calendar invites**

Use calendar invites to set up and invite people to attend Zoom meetings. The invite should include meeting access information (e.g., Zoom link) to reduce the likelihood of technical difficulties hindering participation. Also, consider including the Zoom link for every meeting on the itinerary. Whoever sets up the meeting (e.g., search chair, administrative technician) should be sure to “enable join before host” so that the interview meeting can occur without a host joining.

**During the Interview**

**Dress appropriately**

Much as you would for a face-to-face interview, dress in professional or business casual apparel.

**Avoid other activities that steal bandwidth**

Close other programs on your computer to reduce the risk of distraction and the draw on bandwidth needed.

**Start with introductions**

The session lead should kick off the meeting with a welcome and facilitate introductions of everyone on the video call. This might include a few minutes about each person’s role in the unit or search, area of expertise, etc. and can help with connecting names and faces.

**Be engaged**

When listening, smile and nod to show that you are engaged, much as you would in a face-to-face setting. Consider muting your microphone unless you are speaking to reduce ambient or unexpected noise (e.g., ambulance passing by, dogs barking, doorbell) from traveling through to others’ speakers.

**Facilitate research talks**

If a research-focused talk is required, ask the candidate to share the PowerPoint (or other visual aid) using the “screen share” function of Zoom for the presentation portion of the interview. They can then stop sharing the screen when it is time for Q&A. Alternatively, share the PowerPoint in advance with participants by attaching it to the calendar invite. Ask other participants to mute their microphones during the presentation to reduce noise and feedback.

**Think outside the classroom for teaching demonstrations**

If a teaching demonstration is required, consider asking the candidate to share how they would teach a particular concept, problem set, etc. using active learning techniques or other high impact practices. Include information on 1) how the lesson would be delivered in both a face-to-face setting and in an online setting, 2) how academic technologies could/would be employed, 3) how they would engage students, and/or 4) how student learning would be assessed.

**Other Tips**

**Can video interviews be recorded?**

The use of video equipment makes it tempting to consider recording the interview so that others can view it later. This is highly discouraged out of respect for privacy of the candidates (even when they give permission to record) and because it could be a liability to the university. Instead, schedule the interviews to accommodate as many as possible. We do not record on campus interviews for later review, and do not want to record zoom interviews either.

**Consider building in time for the candidate to meet virtually with others on campus.**

It may be useful for the candidate to meet with someone from Academic Affairs to discuss the support and resources available to faculty, or from the Office of Research and Creative Activity to learn about support for research, sponsored projects, and so on. If interested in brief sessions such as these, contact Candice Batton or Sara Myers, respectively.

**The rules of interviewing still apply.**

All the rules about questions that cannot be asked apply to interviews conducted in this format. Thus, if you see a family photo in the background of the candidate’s home office, it is still not appropriate to inquire about a spouse or partner, children, etc. Need a quick refresher on questions that can and cannot be asked during an interview? Click [here](https://www.unomaha.edu/human-resources/_documents/job-interview-question-guide.pdf).

**Other Resources**

[Inside Higher Ed – Smile, You’re on Camera](https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2018/03/12/advice-academics-preparing-video-interviews). This March 2018 piece has a number of good tips for interviewing and participating in meetings in a digital environment.

[Indeed – Video Interview Guide: Tips for a Successful Interview](https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/interviewing/video-interview-guide). This February 2020 piece on the Indeed site has several great quick tips for candidates and participants.

The [UNO Keep Teaching](https://unomaha.instructure.com/courses/33506) site has several great resources for faculty as they work toward moving their courses to a fully digital environment. Under Quick Guides, is a link for [Using Zoom for Video Conferencing](https://unomaha.instructure.com/courses/33506/pages/quick-guides).