



## APPROVED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR POSITIONS AT UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

**Reminder: Questions of a personal nature are not to be asked.**

### GENERAL QUESTIONS

- Tell me about yourself.
- Zero in on a couple of the candidate's previous positions and responsibilities.
- What interests you most about this position?
- In what ways are you a good fit for this position?
- What are you known for? What is one of your chief gifts/talents that you have consistently called upon?

### COMPETENCIES

Choose 6-12 questions from the following list of competencies (skills and behaviors) that represent what a candidate must demonstrate to be successful in this position.

**Agility** – Is open to change and responds by adapting work methods and behaviors; pays attention to changing circumstances and adapts to them.

- Tell me about a time where you reacted quickly and decisively to changing conditions in the immediate environment.
- Describe an instance when you had to think on your feet to handle a difficult situation.
- Describe a time where you adjusted your behavior to meet the needs of different people or a situation.
- Tell me about a time where you worked effectively in an environment in which the parameters changed frequently.

**Analysis** – Identifies and analyzes significant problems and opportunities; relates and compares data from different sources.

- Describe a situation or problem you approached where you were able to uncover meaningful patterns in the data.
- Tell me about a time when you were able to discern all the factors impacting the situation.
- Describe a good decision you made as a result of accurately weighing the costs, benefits and risks involved in all the possible options.

**Assertiveness** – Takes forceful stands on issues without being excessively abrasive; expresses own opinions even when adopting an unpopular position

- When have you expressed an unpopular opinion at work? What was the result?
- Give me an example of a time when you took a forceful stand at work with finesse.
- Tell me about a time when you were assertive and you didn't get the reaction you intended.

**Coaching** – Uses a variety of methods such as feedback and personal example to help individuals attain higher levels of performance.

- What experience have you had in the past coaching others to attain higher levels of performance? What techniques worked and didn't work with various individuals?
- Tell me about specific individuals that you helped to develop and grow.



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**Collegiality** – Being helpful, respectful, approachable and team oriented, building strong working relationships and a positive work environment.

- Tell me about a time when you were part of a team where there were different opinions about how to complete the work, or who was responsible for what.
- Give me an example of a time when you were able to work with another person even when that individual may not have liked you.
- Describe a time where you had to modify your approach in order to work with another person.
- Tell me about a time when you were able to demonstrate respect with someone who you thought was disrespectful.

**Collaboration** – Models, encourages and facilitates open and effective communication, cooperation and teamwork within and outside of one's own team.

- Tell me about when communication within your work group broke down and what you did to resolve the problem.
- Give me an example in a recent position where you were good at keeping others informed.
- Tell me about a time where you had to work with someone that wasn't collaborative.
- Describe a situation where you had to include someone in work that you might have felt could more easily be done on your own.

**Communication-Oral and Written** – Communicates effectively one-to-one, in small groups and in public speaking contexts; writes precise, well-organized emails, letters and proposals while using appropriate vocabulary and grammar.

- Tell me about a time you used your spoken communication skills to get a point across.
- Tell me about a time where you had to write a difficult message. What was the situation? What did you write? What was the result?

**Compliance** – Honoring University policies and regulatory requirements.

- Give me an example of a policy that you ended up having to go around in order to get your work done.
- Give me an example of a policy you conformed to even though you did not agree with it.
- Describe a situation where you held a confidence or maintained the confidentiality of information.

**Conceptual Ability** – Deals effectively, not just with concrete tangible issues, but also with abstract conceptual matters.

- Describe a problem you were solving, idea you were selling or project you were implementing where you had to work with a concept that was abstract rather than concrete and tangible.

**Conflict Management** – Exhibits understanding of natural sources of conflict and acts to prevent or soften them.

- Tell me a difficult situation you avoided by preventing a conflict.
- Describe a situation where you were able to soften a conflict with another individual.
- Tell me about a time where conflict in the workplace got in the way of you being able to do your work.



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**Continuous Improvement** – Thinks of better ways to do things.

- Give me an example of a time when you suggested a better way to do a task to make work easier or save money. What was the usual way? What alternative did you suggest? How was your suggestion received? What was the impact?

**Creativity** – Generates new approaches to problems or modifications to established approaches; shows imagination.

- Describe a time where you used your creativity. Why was it creative or innovative? How was your creativity beneficial to your department/school/others?

**Customer Focus** – Regularly monitors customer satisfaction; provides suggestions to improve quality and value to the customer.

- Have you ever had to go the extra mile to satisfy a customer? What did you do?
- You may have heard the phrase “the customer is always right.” Describe a time when you felt the customer wasn’t right.
- Tell me about a time when you did your best to resolve a customer concern and the individual still was not satisfied. What did you do next?

**Decision Making** – Follows and teaches others to follow a process/method for problem solving.

- Give me an example of a time when you had to make a decision quickly with limited information.
- Tell me about a time when you held off making a decision because you didn’t have enough information.
- Describe a decision you made that did not turn out very well. What was the decision, its impact and what did you do once the result was noticed?

**Dependability** – Consistently matches commitments with appropriate follow-through.

- Give me an example when you earned the trust of others by being dependable.
- Tell me about a time when it was very difficult to follow through on a task or project and you followed through anyway.

**Development** – Makes efforts to build challenges into current job responsibilities and apply new skills on the job, recognizes one’s own strengths and areas for improvement.

- What did you do in your last job to improve your skills and performance?
- Give me an example of a new task or responsibility you took on and how you went about it.
- Give me an example of steps you have taken to develop yourself over the past year.
- Tell me about a time when you experienced a failure. What was the impact, how did you react to it, and what did you learn from the experience?

**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion** – Creates an environment of understanding and acceptance.

- What have you learned from working with diverse populations?
- How does your own identity impact your work with a diverse staff and student body?
- Tell me about a time you navigated tricky dynamics around race or other identities in your work.
- Talk about a time that you successfully adapted to a culturally different environment.



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- How would you describe your current thinking about diversity, and how has your thinking changed over time?
- Why is it important for an organization to care about diversity and inclusion?
- How do you cultivate a sense of belonging?
- How would you help to create and sustain an organizational environment that acknowledges and celebrates diversity and employs inclusive practices throughout its daily operations?
- What steps would you take to create a climate that is supportive and respectful and that values differing perspectives and experiences? How would you measure the success of this objective?
- When have you previously been involved in creating meaningful dialogue between and among groups that increases understanding of varied perspectives and the nature of social and economic inequalities? How would you incorporate this in your management practices?
- How would you work with people under your supervision to foster a climate receptive to diversity in the department, the curriculum, staff meetings, printed materials, initiatives, etc.?
- What issues have arisen from your work with non-traditional and first-generation students? What has gone smoothly and what has been challenging in this work?

**Energy/Drive** – Exhibits energy and a strong desire to achieve.

- Give me an example of a time when you went above and beyond the call of duty.

**Ethics and Integrity** – Follows through on commitments; incorporates honesty, respect and fairness in daily actions.

- Tell me about a time where you demonstrated integrity – even when no one was looking.
- Describe a situation where you used to discernment and choose not to be honest and yet still demonstrated integrity.
- Tell me about a time when you did the right thing, even when it was going against the crowd.

**Financial Management** – Manages financial assets responsibly with a focus on cost effectiveness and productivity.

- What opportunities have you had to estimate and monitor expenditures?
- Give me an example of a typical budget you managed and a time when you met the budget, went over budget and were under budget. What were the circumstances of each?
- Tell me about your financial management responsibilities and successes in this area.

**Health and Safety Responsibility** – Integrates health and safety precautions into daily activities.

- Give me an example of a time where you adhered to health/safety requirements even when it wasn't expedient or practical to do so.
- Tell me about a time when you didn't adhere to health/safety requirements.

**Independence** – While committed to team efforts, exhibits a willingness to take an independent stand.

- Describe a time when you were able to accomplish something on your own even when it you might have been more comfortable working with others.
- Tell me about a time where being independent in your thinking or the way you work that caused a problem.



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- Describe a time where you held a different viewpoint than others and stood your ground in defending that point of view.

**Influencing** – Motivates others to buy into ideas, able to engage others in looking at a situation in a new way.

- What is the toughest group that you have had to get cooperation from?
- Tell me about a time where you had to get others to accept your idea.

**Initiative** – Takes and does things that no one has requested, that will improve or enhance job results and avoid problems, follow through.

- Describe a slow time at your work and what you did to fill the down time.
- Describe a situation where you achieved more than what was required.
- What projects have you started on your own this year?

**Innovation** – Explores opportunities for doing things in new ways; improving processes, initiates and/or supports improvements in work processes to reduce cycle time and increase first-pass yield.

- Give me an example of an opportunity you had or created to accomplish something new or in a new way.
- Tell me about a time when you suggested a better way to do a task to make work easier or save money.

**Judgment** – Demonstrates consistent logic, rationality and objectivity.

- Give me an example where using good judgment was key to accomplishing a task or completing a project.
- Leading people – Involves team members in solving problems and making decisions, inspires people to follow the lead, obtains input from others, facilitates change, and inspires confidence and optimism through a clear vision and by personal example.
- Tell me about a time you included others in the decision-making process even when it would have been easier in the short term not to.
- Tell me about a time when you made an unpopular decision that affected others.
- Tell me about a difficult change that you had to lead others to implement.
- Describe a situation where you were able to have a positive influence on the actions of others.
- Give me some examples of efforts you have led to develop your workplace as a multicultural environment.
- How have you work with people too foster the creation of climates receptive to diversity in the workforce, in the curriculum, in faculty/staff meetings?

**Listening** – Actively listens to others' opinions and ideas; respects and seeks to understand differences in opinions.

- Give me an example of a time when you actively listened in order to understand another person with whom you had a difference of opinion.
- When has not actively listening to what was said caused you some difficulty?



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**Managing People** – Empowers others through delegation key tasks/functions; establishes clear understanding of roles and accountabilities, setting clear expectations, providing feedback and guidance, holding people accountable.

- Give me an example of a time when you successfully managed a group.
- What strategies have you used to get the individuals of a group to work well together to achieve the same goal?
- Tell me about a time when you had difficulty managing an individual.
- Walk me through your approach to ensuring that you hire, develop and retain great staff. Give me some examples.
- Describe a situation where you were able to successfully coach an employee to better performance.
- Tell me about a time where you positively influenced a morale problem.
- Tell me about your most difficult management challenge.
- What do you like about managing people?
- Give me some examples of your efforts towards creating an environment that affirms and utilizes diversity for added value.

**Mentoring** – Actively and successfully trains and coaches people for current assignments and develops them for promotion into position where they succeed.

- Give me an example of a time where you successfully guided another person's development.

**Meet Deadlines** – Displays consistency and success in adhering to deadlines

- Give me an example of a time where you met a particularly tight deadline.
- Tell me about a time where you were unable to meet a deadline. What were the circumstances? How did you recover? What would you do differently next time?

**Negotiations** – Finds common ground to accommodate the conflicting needs and wants of different stakeholders.

- Tell me about a particularly tough negotiation that you successfully managed.

**Organization & Multi-Tasking** – Plans, organizes and schedules in an efficient and productive manner, demonstrates ability to work on multiple projects simultaneously.

- Tell me about a time where you created order out of chaos.
- Give me an example of a time when your schedule was suddenly interrupted or changed. What did you do?
- Give me an example of a time where you had to work on multiple projects simultaneously. How did you manage it?
- Explain a situation you've been in where multiple demands have been placed on you. How did you handle it?
- How do you determine what project or request constitutes a high priority?
- Have you ever been in a situation where the amount of work assigned to you exceeded the allotted time? How did you handle that?



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**Political Savvy** – Shows awareness of political factors and “hidden agendas;” builds informal network to influence information sources and influence.

- Tell me about a time when you had to effectively assess and work through the politics of a situation in order to get your work done.

**Problem Solving** – Assesses the major elements of a specific situation from a number of viewpoints and considers an array of alternatives.

- Tell me about a time when you had a complex problem to solve. What options did you generate? How did you choose the best one?

**Project Planning** – Devises and implements clearly defined strategies to achieve project objectives.

- When working on a project, how do you decide what gets top priority? Give me an example.

**Quality Orientation** – Strives for quantitative measures of quality in one’s own job.

- Describe work or a project for which you were responsible that demonstrated your commitment to producing a high-quality product or result.
- Give me an example where you achieved more than was required.

**Results Driven** – Sets clear, challenging objectives and regularly monitors progress.

- Describe a situation where you and/or your team were able to achieve a particularly challenging goal.

**Strategic Thinking** – Works on initiatives that have the greatest strategic impact for the organization; anticipates changes that may impact department or school.

- Give me some examples that demonstrate your ability to see the big picture and foresee the impact of potential changes on your department/school.

**Stress Management** - Recognizes stress triggers and works to mitigate them, maintains work/life balance, responds appropriately to stressors outside of one’s control.

- As your manager, how would I know if you were under stress? What would be the signs?
- Tell me about a time in the past year when you felt you were under pressure.
- Tell me about a recent workflow or production problem, such as a co-worker calling in sick. How did you respond?

**Team Builder** – Achieves cohesive, positive, mutually supportive team climate; treats subordinates fairly and shares credit; shares information.

- Describe the processes you put in place to ensure good communication among your staff.
- Describe a situation where you were able to satisfactorily resolve a confrontation or disagreement among staff.
- What have you done in the past to build a strong and productive team that worked well together?



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**Team Player** – Seeks to build collaboration by encouraging trust, mutual respect and shared purpose among the various participants in an engagement.

- What did you do in your last position to contribute toward a teamwork environment?
- Describe a time when you helped someone on your team at their request when it wasn't convenient for you to do so.
- Describe an ineffective teamwork situation in which you were involved.
- Describe a team you were on where communication was strong. What made it strong? How did you achieve and maintain that level of communication?

**Training** – Actively and successfully trains/coaches people for current assignments and develops them for promotion into positions where they succeed.

- Give me some examples where you were able to successfully train someone to perform better.

### **Teaching Specific Questions Related to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion**

- How would you address racial tension among students in your classroom?
- How do you adapt your teaching to meet the different culture and learning styles of your students?
- Has diversity played a role in shaping your teaching and advising styles? If so, how?
- Do you find students from different cultural backgrounds have different learning needs? If yes, how do you address these needs?
- Practices and outcomes related to diversity and inclusion are vital measures of institutional excellence. How would you support creating culture of organizational learning and continuous improvement at the faculty level?
- What experience have you had in increasing research and grant funding opportunities which include diversity/inclusion related outcomes?
- How do you seek opportunities to improve the learning environment to better meet the needs of students from all over the world and from students who have been historically marginalized in the US, such as Indigenous, Black, Latino, Asian, and LGBT Communities?
- A group of students comes to you and says that there is racial inequity in the classroom's dynamics. How might you respond to their concerns?
- In what ways do you feel it is appropriate to incorporate topics related to diversity and including into your curriculum? How would you do this?