Sample Interview Questions

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| **Background,**  **skills overview, job/culture fit** | * What attracted you to this position and why? * Please describe current or prior work experience and education that have prepared you for this position. * Are there any other interests, skills, accomplishments, or experiences that you would like to share with us that would make you an asset in this position? * How do you describe your work style? * Describe your experience within a higher education setting. * Why VCU and why now? * What challenges are you looking for in this position? * What would you consider to be your particular strength(s)? * How would your background and experiences strengthen this academic department? * How will your teaching, research and service activities interrelate, and how will you work to integrate them? |
| **Communication**  **Skills** | * Tell me about a time in which you had to use your verbal communication skills in order to get a point across that was important to you. * Give me an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person, even when that individual may not have personally liked you. |
| **Conflict**  **Management/ Resolution** | * Give me an example of a specific occasion in which you conformed to a policy with which you did not agree. * Think of a situation where you distrusted a coworker/supervisor   resulting in tension between you. What steps did you take to improve  the relationship?   * How do you handle conflict? Please provide an example. |
| **Coping Skills/ Resilience** | * Give me an example of a time you worked particularly well under a great deal of pressure. How did you handle the situation? * Think about a time when you felt overwhelmed or stressed out. How did you handle it? |
| **Creativity** | * Give me an example of a project where you came up with the idea and managed the process start to finish. * Describe a creative or innovative idea that you produced which lead to a significant contribution to the success of an activity or project. |

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| **Customer**  **Service** | * Provide an example of a particularly challenging interaction you have had with a customer or coworker. How did you handle it? * At times, we must all deal with difficult people. This can be a challenge when it is someone with whom we need to develop a cooperative relationship. Tell me about a time you were successful in developing a cooperative relationship with a difficult person at work. |
| **Decision Making** | * Give an example of a time in which you had to be relatively quick in coming to a decision. What was the outcome? * Give an example of a time in which you had to use your fact finding   skills to gain information for solving a problem. How did you analyze  the information to come to a decision? |
| **Detail**  **Orientation** | * Give an example of a task you had to complete that required the tracking of many details. What system did you put in place to track the details? * And what did you do to make sure all the details were completed?   Please give an example where your attention to detail resulted in a  successful outcome. |
| **Diversity** | * Tell us about your experience working with people from diverse backgrounds? * Please define what diversity means to you and tell us about your experience working with diverse populations. * VCU is an Equal Opportunity Employer and we believe it is important for all of our employees and students to feel   welcomed and respected. Give us an example of a time when you  worked with someone who was different from you? What did you  learn?   * How do you promote an appreciation of cultural and individual differences in the workplace? |
| **Goal Setting/ Orientation** | * Tell me about your greatest career achievements. Why did you pick those examples? * Tell me about your career plan and what you have done so far to accomplish it. * Describe the most significant plan or program that you ever developed or implemented. * Can you please give us examples of any significant accomplishments you have had in which you contributed to advancing the goals/objectives of the university and/or organization? * What motivates you to do your best? * What are your professional goals? |

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| **Integrity** | * Describe an instance in your professional life when you believe you made a mistake or wrong decision. How did you resolve it? What did you learn from this instance? Does this experience continue to influence your decision-making? * How would you handle a request that needed immediate attention for which you did not have the authority to answer or were unsure of the answer and your immediate supervisor was not available? |
| **Interpersonal**  **Skills** | * Give an example of a time when you had to carefully analyze another person or situation in order to be effective in guiding your action or decision. |
| **Leadership**  **Skills/Influence** | * What are three effective leadership qualities you think are important? * Give examples of how you have demonstrated these qualities in your past/current work situation. * Give me an example of a time in which you felt you were able to build motivation in your coworkers or subordinates at work. * Can you share with the committee a bit about yourself, your career path, and what appeals to you about this leadership opportunity at VCU? * Can you please describe the scope of your experience in leading a complex university and/or organization? * What experience do you have in developing strategic goals and objectives for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? * Can you please describe your leadership style and your experience leading and mentoring a professional team? * Can you provide an example(s) of how you had lead a significant change in an organization? Were you successful and might you have done something differently? * What do you consider to be the major issues and challenges facing public education? |
| **Mission-**  **Centered** | * What is your understanding of the Mission of VCU? * What aspects of VCU’s Mission Statement appeal most to you? * How does your work fit in with the mission of VCU? * What are your prior experiences that help you relate to the University   Mission?   * What do you think is the single, most important characteristic of an employer? What workplace values are important to you? * If you are selected for this position, how would you support the   University’s Mission? |

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| **Multi-Tasking**  **and Follow**  **Through** | * Give me an example of a time when you had to juggle several important activities and projects in a limited amount of time. Did you stay on top of all of them? How? * Tell me about a time that you willingly took on more work even though you were already busy. How were you able to get everything done? * Describe situations in the past where you have had to handle multiple tasks or priorities at the same time. How did you handle it? |
| **Organization/**  **Planning Skills** | * What did you do in your last job in order to be effective in your organization and planning? Be specific. * Give me a specific example of a time when you did not meet a deadline. * How did you handle the subsequent situation? * Describe a time when you took the initiative to do something that needed to be done, even though it wasn’t really your responsibility. What circumstances prompted you to act? * Please give an example where your organizational skills resulted in a successful outcome. |
| **Problem Solving** | * Describe your problem-solving abilities. Give us an example of how you have used them to evaluate and solve a difficult situation. * Please provide an example of when you needed to resolve a difference of opinion with other employees, in or outside your department, which was holding up the timely completion of a project or significant task. What did you learn from that experience? * Can you please provide an example of how you have used creative approaches to problem solving? |
| **Process**  **Improvement** | * Do you have any experience with process improvement projects? If yes, please describe the project, the project’s goals, your role and contribution. * Tell me about a suggestion you made to improve the way job processes/operations worked. What was the result? * Continuous quality improvement is important to this role. Give us an example of how you have contributed as a team member or team leader on an improvement project. |
| **Research** | * What are your future research goals? * How does your research enhance your teaching? * Please tell us about your research interests and how you see that fitting in with the department’s/college mission/direction. * Tell us about your research interests and how you see your research program developing over the next few years. How well developed will your network of research contacts be? * How will you develop your research agenda as a faculty member? * What type of resources would you require to successfully continue your research agenda? * What are your research interests? * In your research, do you prefer to collaborate or work alone? Why? |
| **Self-Motivation** | * Describe a situation where you have been able to go outside of your role to add even greater value to your organization. * Provide an example of a time you were asked to complete a project requiring a skill you did not have. What did you do? |
| **Service** | * Tell us about your service experiences. * How have you managed your services commitments with teaching, office hours, and research in the past? |
| **Teaching** | * Describe your teaching philosophy. * What do you think are the most important attributes of a good instructor? * How would you incorporate VCU’s “Make It Real” into your teaching? * Tell us about your teaching methods, philosophy and goals. * What excites you about teaching? * Tell us about a time when you successfully managed a difficult student and a time when you did not successfully manage a difficult student. * Describe the highlights of your academic and teaching careers. * How would you describe yourself as an instructor? How would you describe your teaching style? * What motivates you? How would you motivate students? * Describe a successful situation in dealing with students and what you learned from it. * What are some things you have done in your teaching career particularly well or in which you have achieved greatest success? * If you could choose a course that you have always wanted to teach, what would it be and how would you teach it? * What teaching strategies do you use in your University classes? What? What are the intended outcomes of these strategies? * How do you assess the learning outcomes of your instruction? |
| **Teamwork** | * What did you do in your last job to create or contribute to a teamwork environment? Be specific. * Describe a situation that you may have faced where the teamwork needed to be improved. What steps did you personally take to improve the situation? * Describe a situation where you were a part of a particularly effective * Tell me about a time when you were part of a team that did not get along or did not work well together. What happened? * Tell me about a time you worked as a team member on a team that had one or more unproductive members. What did you do? Why did you choose to do that? * What do you look for in your academic colleagues? * Describe your ideal faculty colleague. In what ways do you fit the description, and in what areas do you have the most progress yet to make? |