

Diversity Interview Questions Guide

Possible Interview Questions – Staff Positions:

- What is your definition of diversity? How do you encourage people to honor the uniqueness of each individual? Please provide a specific example.
- What aspects of diversity are you most comfortable with and which do you think you have to learn more about? How would you go about it?
- Tell us about a time when you included someone in your team or on a project because you felt they would bring something different to the team.
- Tell us about a time when you responded to a co-worker or student who made an insensitive remark. Describe the situation, the actions you took, and the outcome.
- How will you contribute to the College's efforts to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion in a meaningful way? How have you approached this in your current (or last) job?
- Please describe a time when you had to work with someone culturally different from yourself. What was the situation? Did you face any specific challenges?
- What steps have you taken at your current (or last) employer to create an inclusive work or learning environment?
- Tell us about a time when a colleague was not accepting of another's diversity? Describe the situation, the actions you took, and the outcome.
- Please explain how diversity has played a role in your career and contributed to the professional you are today.
- What specifically have you done to further your knowledge about diversity, equity, and inclusion?
- How have you put what you learned to use in the workplace?
- If you were hired, how would you use this position to increase or enhance diversity in the College of Education and Allied Professions at Western Carolina University?

Possible Interview Questions – Faculty Positions:

- How do you create a learning environment that is effective at meeting the needs of students with different learning styles?
- Tell us about a time when you have taken steps to ensure that everyone in your class felt included. Describe the situation, the actions you took, and the outcome.
- How do you challenge stereotypes and promote sensitivity and inclusion? Please provide a specific example.
- 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?
- Please describe your experience teaching underrepresented communities.
- How have you incorporated the viewpoints and perspectives of underrepresented groups into your curriculum? Please provide a specific example.
- Please tell us about an instance when you have demonstrated leadership or commitment to equity in your work.
- Can you describe an innovative program, activity, or teaching strategy addressing diversity that you were an integral part of developing?
- Explain what you believe to be an effective strategy to introduce diversity to individuals who have only experienced a limited number of cultures.
- What do you see as the most challenging aspect of working with a diverse student body? What steps have you taken to meet this challenge?
- Please describe your experience working with diverse populations of students and/or staff.
- Tell us about a time when you created a classroom environment of honesty, inclusion and respect for others. Describe the situation, the actions you took, and the outcome.
- What steps have you taken to reduce bias and champion diversity understanding in your classes? Please provide a specific example.
- How do you adapt your teaching to meet the different culture and learning styles of your students?
- How would you handle a situation in which someone made a sexist, racist, homophobic or otherwise prejudiced remark?
- Western Carolina University values the commitment to enhancing diversity university-wide and fostering a culture of inclusion. Please tell us how you define diversity, equity, and inclusion. Describe how you would make a contribution to the university's effort to enhance DEI in your classroom and through your work.

Possible Interview Questions – Senior Leadership Positions:

- Western Carolina University values the commitment to enhancing diversity and equity university-wide and fostering a culture of inclusion. First, please tell us your definition of diversity, and second, describe how you would make a contribution to the university's effort to enhance diversity.
- What do you see as the most challenging aspect of a diverse academic environment? What steps have you taken to meet this challenge?
- What steps have you taken to reduce bias and champion diversity understanding in your current job? Please provide a specific example.
- Describe a time when you had to help resolve a conflict between two colleagues or students. Describe the situation, the actions you took, and the outcome.
- Describe your experiences in strategic planning related to diversity.
- Describe your experiences in assessing diversity initiatives and their outcomes.
- In your experience, what are the challenges faced by members of historically underrepresented groups in the workplace and in successfully completing their education? What strategies have you used to address these challenges, and how successful were those strategies?
- Can you tell me of a time when you changed a process or procedure to make your department or organization more inclusive?
- Describe any contributions you have made to maintain or promote workforce diversity.
- What was your role, what was the outcome, and what level of the organization was affected?
- 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 is your vision of a university that fully embraces diversity?
- Suppose that you encounter a pervasive belief that diversity and excellence are somehow in conflict. Generally; how do you view the relationship between diversity and excellence? Specifically; what efforts would you undertake to encourage a commitment to excellence through diversity?
- If you overheard a co-worker make a sexist, racist, homophobic or otherwise prejudiced joke or comment, what would you do?

Possible Interview Questions – All Positions – Past Experience:

- How would you describe your current thinking about diversity, and how has your thinking changed over time?
- How have you demonstrated your commitment to diversity issues in your current (past) position?
- Tell us about one or two specific things that you have done to promote diversity, equity and/or inclusion in your current (or last) job?
- What has been your approach to dealing with discussions about potentially difficult topics, such as race, religion, politics, or sexual orientation? Please provide a specific example.
- 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?
- Describe how your career has been enhanced by exposure to diverse people, places, or experiences. Please provide a specific example.
- Give an example of a situation or project in which you worked with people from a wide range of backgrounds and ideas. What was your role and what was the end result?
- Tell us about a time when you were challenged by a situation where others were behaving in an inappropriate or uncivil way. Describe the situation, the actions you took, and the outcome.
- Please share an example of a time when you had to adapt your behavior in order to work more effectively with others who were culturally different from yourself. What was the situation and the outcome?
- Please describe a time when you had to work with someone culturally different from yourself. What was the situation? Did you face any specific challenges?
- Have you ever realized you had said or done something that may have been offensive to a colleague, student, or coworker? How did you respond to that realization, and what was the outcome?
- Please describe how you work to create a campus environment that is welcoming and inclusive? Please provide a specific example.
- What specifically have you done to further your knowledge about diversity and inclusion?
- Tell us about a time when you were unable to be tolerant of another person's point of view. Describe the situation, the actions you took, and the outcome.
- How have you put what you learned to use in the workplace?
- Please describe your experiences recruiting, hiring, training, and/or supervising a diverse workforce.

Possible Interview Questions – All Positions – Hypothetical Situations:

- If you were the successful candidate for this position, how would you help develop a sense of belonging for (students/your stakeholders) from diverse communities to this university? What do you expect the challenges would be? What do you expect the benefits would be?
- 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?
- One of the core values at Western Carolina University is cultural diversity. If you were selected for this position, how would you demonstrate and promote this core value?
- How would your vision for this position be aligned with this university's commitment to equity and diversity?
- What is your vision of a university that fully embraces diversity?
- Describe a situation in which you would utilize your multicultural skills to solve a problem.
- If you overheard a co-worker make a sexist, racist, homophobic or otherwise prejudiced joke or comment, what would you do?
- Suppose that you encounter a pervasive belief that diversity and excellence are somehow in conflict. Generally; how do you view the relationship between diversity and excellence? Specifically; what efforts would you undertake to encourage a commitment to excellence through diversity?
- When interacting with an individual from a different culture than your own, how do you ensure that communication is effective?
- Working with people from different backgrounds or cultures can present unique opportunities for collaboration and creativity. Describe a project or decision which could be enhanced by including diverse perspectives.
- 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?