

## **OWU Sample Interview Questions for Faculty Candidates Regarding Diversity** Measuring Diversity and Inclusion Key Competencies during the Interview Process

As a component of *The OWU Strategic Plan and the Statement of Aims*, Ohio Wesleyan University embraces its historic commitment to Education for Leadership and Service and strives to become an institution that is recognized for excellence in teaching, the accomplishments of its faculty, the reputation of its programs, and the engaged learning experiences of its students that can prepare them to be world citizens. Consequently, all our faculty members are expected to demonstrate diversity cultural competencies.

The following are among the questions faculty-hiring committees can ask to potential candidates of employment to measure whether they meet the essential functions of the job relating to diversity competency. To help facilitate the search process, the Office of the Provost has compiled a list of questions that faculty might use during telephone, conference, and/or on-campus interviews. However, all of the questions are unbiased and appropriate to ask.

Good luck in your search for your next colleague and we hope you find this helpful.

The Office of the Provost

### **Sample Questions**

1. Ohio Wesleyan University's goal is transforming into a premier liberal arts college. This opportunity is grounded in a vision for liberal education that enriches the life changing education offered to OWU students. We empower each other and value our diversity, celebrate our success. What is your model of success and how will you fit into this culture and further this goal?
2. Please describe strategies that you have used to create an inclusive learning environment for your students.
3. Please describe how you would work to create a campus and classroom environment that is welcoming, inclusive and increasingly diverse.
4. Describe how you, as a faculty member, function and communicate effectively, sensitively and respectfully within the context of varying beliefs, behaviors, identities and backgrounds.
5. What opportunities have you had working and collaborating in diverse, multicultural and inclusive settings.
6. What is your definition of diversity? How do you encourage people to honor the uniqueness of each individual? How do you challenge stereotypes and promote sensitivity and inclusion?

7. 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 USA, such as the Native Americans, African Americans, Latinx/Hispanics, Asians, and other communities?
8. What is your method of communication with students who are different from the Professor? How do you procure their academic success? How do you convey thoughts, ideas, or adverse conclusions?
9. Describe your experience or explain how you have been educated to understand the history of African Americans, Latinx/Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans and other historically marginalized communities in the USA.
10. Describe if you have had experience in mentoring and/or teaching students of diverse backgrounds. Offer an example. What methods have proven to be effective and what have you learned from the experience?
11. Describe if you have had experience in mentoring and/or teaching students of underrepresented backgrounds. Offer an example. What methods have proven to be effective and what have you learned from the experience?
12. Students of color are not well represented in the field, including ours. How do you see yourself contributing to the recruitment and retention process of students of color?
13. Tell us about a time when you had to work with someone who had the direct opposite personality of yours?
14. Give an example of how you walk in the shoes of people we serve and those with whom we work.
15. Give an example of how you honor commitments and describe a time when you were asked to compromise your ethics. What did you do? What would you do in the future?
16. How do you think a Higher-Ed institution benefit from multiculturalism?
17. How do you define social justice?
18. Describe a situation in which you encountered a conflict with a person from a different cultural background than yours. How did you handle the situation? (Please be specific)
19. In previous work experiences, what has been the greatest obstacle in developing a multicultural-competent staff? Where there institutional efforts in developing a multicultural-competent environment?

20. Describe a situation in which you utilized your multicultural skills to solve a problem.
21. What ideas do you have for educating students about diversity?
22. How has diversity played a role in shaping your social style?
23. Tell us about a time when you changed your style to work more effectively with a person from a different background.
24. Tell us about a time you took responsibility/accountability for an action that may have been offensive to the recipient and how you did that.
25. Talk about a time when you had to abide by a policy that you did not personally agree with.
26. Talk about a time when you had to deal with conflict at work.
27. Talk about a time when you were placed on a team and you or someone on that team didn't see eye-to-eye.
28. Describe the most difficult person you've ever had to deal with at work.
29. What students do you find most challenging to teach?
30. Describe a time when you needed to work cooperatively with someone that did not share the same ideas as you.
31. Give an example of a time when you had to make an adjustment to your personal style in order to successfully work with a coworker.
32. Give an example of a time when you had to expend social capital to champion social justice.
33. Give an example of a time when you could not be tolerant of another person's point of view.
34. What research or work, if any, have you done in the area of diversity, cultural competency, health disparities, etc.?
35. Have you done any research or work in the area of social justice in the community?
36. Have you done any research or work in the area of service in the community?

37. What do you see as the most challenging aspects of an increasingly diverse academic community? Follow-up question: What initiatives have you taken to meet such challenges?
38. What is your sense of the complexities and leadership challenges related to social justice and multiculturalism?
39. 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?
40. Suppose that in working with a University unit you discover a pervasive belief that diversity and excellence are somehow in conflict. How do you conceptualize the relationship between diversity and excellence? What kinds of leadership efforts are needed to encourage a commitment to excellence through diversity?
41. In what ways have you integrated multicultural issues as part of your professional development?
42. Talk about how you responded to a co-worker who made an insensitive remark.
43. Talk about a time that you successfully adapted to a culturally different environment.
44. What have you learned from working with diverse populations?
45. 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?
46. Do you speak any other languages other than English? If so, what language(s) and to what extent are you fluent in that/those language(s)?
47. What are some specific things you are going to do within the next two years to further your development in cultural competency?
48. How does your own identity impact your work with a diverse staff and student body?
49. Tell us about a time when you successfully managed a difficult student and a time when you did not successfully manage a difficult student. What did you learn about yourself?
50. When interacting with a person from a different culture than your own, how do you ensure that communication is effective?

**Source documents:**

Portland State University

<https://www.pdx.edu/hr/sites/www.pdx.edu.hr/files/Interview%20Questions%20Regarding%20Diversity.pdf>

Iowa State University,

<http://www.provost.iastate.edu/administrator-resources/recruitment/guide/appendix-5>

University of Massachusetts, Lowell

<http://www.uml.edu/hr/pdf/REVISED-F-Sample%20Interview%20Qs-%20Faculty.pdf>

Search Committee: A Tool for Human Resource Professionals, Administrators, and Committee Members  
by Christopher D. Lee, Ph.D. SPHR, CUPA-HR