2020 Virtual Interview Strategies

This coming interview season will be a great chance for innovation and creativity within our programs. The purpose of this guide is to provide some ideas on the different ways that interviews can be conducted to help get your creative juices flowing.

Interview Day:

Option #1
Fellow applicants sit in a main Zoom room before using a breakout session for their 1:1 faculty interview. The breakout room serves as an equivalent to a physical office. If a current fellow is the co-host, that fellow could help drive the applicants to their breakout rooms while the coordinator stays in the main session to facilitate conversation. Some questions to use to keep the conversation flowing can include:
- Which TV show would you like to live in and why?
- What would your superpower be?
- Where are you from originally/do you get to go home?
- What household chore do you actually enjoy?
- What was your childhood favorite toy?
- What was your favorite food/recipe?

Option #2
Create a Zoom link for each faculty member and send their unique link to the candidates in conjunction with their scheduled interview with that faculty member. If you prefer, you can add the faculty member as the co-host and enable a waiting room so that the faculty member is notified when the applicant enters the room and is waiting to be admitted to the Zoom. This option is great for large programs handling multiple applicants at the same time because it allows faculty to essentially manage their own interview day.

Option #3
Create a Zoom link for all the interviews for the season. Enable the waiting room feature and coordinator sits in the main zoom room waiting to admit the candidate and faculty interviewer together. Once both individuals are in the main zoom room, transfer them to a breakout room. Coordinator can push a 5-minute warning to the breakout room. Encourage the group to leave the breakout room and leave the zoom meeting without returning to the main session. Coordinator gets ready to admit the next applicant and interviewer to the main zoom room.

Option #4
A set of ten candidates was broken into two groups, interviewing with five faculty members. Both groups met with the current fellows for about 45 minutes each. The waiting room was enabled as well

as the creation of a Breakout Room for each candidate. Once each candidate was in their assigned room, they stayed in for all of the individual interviews with faculty popping in and out. This prevented the breakout rooms from opening and closing and having to reshuffle everyone quickly.

The best piece of advice is: PRACTICE. Recruit family members to act as candidates and faculty and try the interviews in a few different ways. Consider running a brief practice session with the faculty interviewing so that they were ready and familiar with the process.

Resources for this type of group setup in Zoom:
- Group Interview Schedule Template
- Zoom for Group Interview Setup

Note: Does your program utilize panel interviews? There a couple of options: panelists can meet in person and use a laptop to zoom from that room, or they can all be present virtually and be assigned to one breakout room

Pre-Interview Dinner/Happy Hour:

1-hour event that includes introductions, then poll questions throughout the event that ask for votes on fun facts about faculty members on the call.

At a certain point, it is helpful to utilize automatic breakout rooms to randomly divide all the zoom participants into smaller groups to encourage better mingling

Appendices:

How to Use Breakout Rooms

- https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206476093-Enabling-breakout-rooms
- https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206476313-Managing-breakout-rooms
- https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360032752671-Pre-assigning-participants-to-breakout-rooms

How to Use Polling

- https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/213756303-Polling-for-meetings

How to Use Waiting Rooms

- https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360022174112-Using-a-Waiting-Room-with-Zoom-Rooms

Training Guides-Accessible via OneDrive when using UCD credentials to login

- [How To Avoid Zoombombing](#)
- [Zoom Basics and Advanced Features Guide](#)

University Zoom Trainings:
- Consider signing up for a UCD zoom training at: https://www1.ucdenver.edu/offices/digital-education/instructional-design/training-and-workshops
- Want a 1:1 Zoom consultation from a campus expert? Sign up at https://calendly.com/ode-training/consultations?month=2020-05

Some decisions you will need to consider prior to interview planning:
- Will you be updating your program website indicating that virtual interviews will occur?
- How will you send your interview packet to candidates? (load onto website, offer file downloads via Google, OneDrive, Teams, etc.)
  What features of zoom will you use? (breakout rooms, waiting rooms, etc.)
- What will your post-interview feedback look like?
- Will you send candidates all the interview information in a word document, in a set of calendar invites, or both?
- Do you need any co-hosts? (Having 1-2 trainees as co-hosts is another way to build rapport with the candidates, since we will lose the social aspect of in person pre-interview dinners/happy hours)
- Will you offer a test run to applicants to troubleshoot any Zoom tech issues on their end prior to the interview day?
- Will you do a virtual lunch/dinner with the applicants via zoom? (people seem less than thrilled about having to eat in front of others on zoom)
- How will you be strategic about interview breaks throughout the day?
- Consider how you will avoid "zoombombing" with passwords and meeting settings
- Consider changing your name in Zoom to indicate your title and role in the department for applicants.