

Report on the Interview Project with UCI Job Candidates, 2005-2007.

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As part of its larger project on improving gender equity at UCI, the ADVANCE Program commissioned a survey in the summer of 2007 of individuals who interviewed for UCI tenure-track positions during the 2005/2006 and 2006/2007 recruitment cycles. We aimed to assess the effectiveness of UCI recruitment practices and to identify any specific problems by collecting information on candidates' experiences during their interviews.

The UCI Administration provided names and phone contact information for some of the candidates who visited UCI in 2005/2006 and 2006/2007. Information was systematically missing from certain schools and departments. The ADVANCE Administrator attempted to collect missing information from the schools and departments themselves. Departments tended to submit all information or nothing. A few departments gave only the names and contact information of those they hired. In the end, we collected names of 172 potential interviewees. We were able to contact 81 of these job candidates. Of these, we conducted 75 interviews by phone during June – November of 2007. We assured anonymity to these interviewees. Only one candidate refused to participate in the interview and 5 others offered to complete it later, but we were unable to reach them again. We were unable to reach 90 on our list because there was no answer after repeated attempts and/or because we had incorrect contact information. While we don't have information on the complete population of job candidates, we have fuller information on those who received offers and accepted them. Appendix Table 1 reports the potential and completed interviews by department, and Appendix 2 reports the percent completed by whether on not the candidate is now working at UCI.

Contact rates varied from 38% in the School of Social Sciences to 50% in Engineering, with an average of 44%. The contact rate of female job candidates was slightly higher than the male contact rate (53% vs. 40%).

We encountered two insurmountable problems with the sample: first, we did not receive a complete list of all individuals who interviewed during 2005/2006 and 2006/2007; and second, we had incorrect contact information for almost half (47% of the population that was identified). This resulted in a sample that is not representative of the population. Namely, we have an overrepresentation of candidates who accepted UCI job offers (because contact information is easier to acquire for those currently employed at UCI). This leads us to be cautious about generalizing our results to the entire population of job candidates. Overall, our sample under represents candidates who did not receive UCI offers and candidates who turned UCI offers down. But since we have some of each of these types of candidates in our sample, we can estimate how they differ from those who accepted UCI offers.

Respondent demographics are reported in Table 1. Our sample is 65% male and 35% female. The majority of the respondents (77% are white, 11% Asian, 5% Latino/a, and 7% other. We were unable to reach any African-American respondents, and do not have information on how many interviewed at UCI during these years. Seventy-three percent interviewed for Assistant Professor positions, 4% for Associate Professor and 23% for Full Professor positions. UCI did not offer positions to 28% of our respondents and of the 47 that received offers, 42 accepted. The average year in which our respondents received their PhD was 1998, and the average respondent received approximately 2 offers.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics.

Variable	Percent (N)	
Gender		
Female	35%	(26)
Male	65%	(49)
Race/Ethnicity		
White	77%	(58)
Asian	11%	(8)
Latino/a	5%	(4)
African-American	0%	(0)
Other	7%	(5)
Rank of Interview Position		
Full Professor	23%	(17)
Associate Prof.	4%	(3)
Assistant Prof.	73%	(55)
Outcome of Interview		
Accepted UCI Job	65%	(42)
Declined UCI Job	8%	(5)
Didn't Receive a UCI Offer	28%	(18)
Mean (N)		
PhD Year	1998	(75)
Number of Offers	1.667	(75)

We begin our analysis by reporting our respondents' overall assessments of their job interview experiences at UCI. Both male and female candidates overwhelmingly rated their experiences as excellent or very good, and there is not a statistically significant differences in women's and men's responses. Women were slightly more likely to report that their experiences were excellent and men slightly more likely to report that they were very good. A very small proportion of both genders rated their experiences as poor (3%) or very poor (1%). (See Table 2.)

Table 2. Rating of Overall UCI Interview Experiences by Gender, Race/Ethnicity, Rank, and Placement at UCI.

	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Gender					
Female	46% (12)	38% (10)	11% (3)	4% (1)	0% (0)
Male	40% (19)	44% (21)	12% (6)	2% (1)	2% (1)

Tau-b= .0537 p=.6861

Race/Ethnicity					
White	44% (25)	40% (23)	12% (7)	2% (1)	2% (1)
Asian	25% (2)	62% (5)	0% (0)	12% (1)	0% (0)
Latino/a	50% (2)	25% (1)	25% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Other	40% (2)	40% (2)	20% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)

Fishers Exact p=.6319

Rank					
Full Professor	50% (8)	37% (6)	12% (2)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Assoc. Prof.	33% (1)	33% (1)	33% (1)	0% (0)	0% (0)
Assist. Prof.	40% (22)	44% (24)	11% (6)	4% (2)	2% (1)

Tau-b = .0646 p=.28

Placement					
Not At UCI	30% (7)	39% (9)	17% (4)	9% (2)	4% (1)
At UCI	49% (19)	44% (17)	8% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)

Tau-b = -.2534 p=.018 (one-tailed)

Similarly, there are no significant differences in the ways respondents of different racial/ethnic backgrounds or professorial ranks responded to this question. Asian candidates were less likely than other racial/ethnic groups to report that their interview experience was excellent, and more likely to report that it as very good (but our sample includes only 8 Asian candidates). There were no striking differences in reports of overall interview experiences by rank (note that the number of Associate Professor candidates (3) is too small to assess).

But as one might expect, those who chose to come to UCI had significantly more favorable views of their interview experiences than those who didn't come. While almost half of those who accepted UCI's offer reported that their interview experience was excellent, only 30% of those who didn't end up at UCI did so. At the other end, no candidates who came to UCI reported that their experience was poor or very poor, while 13% (3) of those who didn't come reported them as such.

We asked those candidates who received UCI offers to relay their thoughts about the details of the UCI offer. First, we asked them to rank-order the importance of several variables in their decision making processes to accept or decline the UCI offer. Table 3 reports how they ranked each of seven factors.

Table 3. Of Those Who Received UCI Offers, Mean Rank of Importance of Factors in Making Decision to Accept or Decline by Gender (1=most important)

	Female		Male			
	Mean Rank	(N)	Mean Rank	(N)		
Research Facilities	1.478	(46)	1.400	(15)	1.516	(31)
Area	3.261	(46)	3.333	(15)	3.226	(31)
Salary	3.457	(46)	3.400	(15)	3.484	(31)
Benefits	4.457	(46)	4.800	(15)	4.290	(31)
Gender Diversity	6.043	(46)	5.333	(15)	6.387	(31)
Childcare	6.391	(46)	6.400	(15)	6.387	(31)
Race Diversity	6.826	(46)	6.667	(15)	6.903	(31)

Job candidates ranked research facilities as the number one factor in making their decision to either accept or decline UCI’s offer, followed by the area, salary, benefits, gender diversity, childcare, and racial/ethnic diversity. On average, female and male candidates ranked the factors in the same order, but females tended to rank gender diversity higher than males (5.3 vs. 6.3).

In order to overcome possible concerns that our unbalanced sample doesn’t represent those who are not now at UCI, we break these rankings down by whether or not they came to UCI. As mentioned above, we have small N’s in the “not at UCI” category, so we use caution in interpreting the results.

When we consider whether or not the candidate accepted the UCI offer, we find a very similar, but slightly different rank-ordering of factors—namely, those who declined the offer ranked childcare above gender diversity (5 and 6, respectively). (See Table 4.)

Table 4. Of Those Who Received UCI Offers, Mean Rank of Importance of Factors in Making Decision to Accept or Decline by Whether or not at UCI now (1=most important)

	Not At UCI		At UCI	
	Mean		Mean	
	Rank	(N)	Rank	(N)
Research Facilities	1.600	(5)	1.475	(40)
Area	2.200	(5)	3.425	(40)
Salary	2.800	(5)	3.525	(40)
Benefits	4.200	(5)	4.475	(40)
Gender Diversity	6.400	(5)	5.975	(40)
Childcare	5.699	(5)	6.575	(40)
Race Diversity	6.400	(5)	6.900	(40)

Next we asked those who received UCI offers to rate UCI on a number of factors using a seven-point scale. Table 5 reports the results by gender of the job candidate.

Table 5. Of Those Who Received UCI Offers, Mean Rating of How Favorable UCI was with Regard to Various Factors. By Gender (7= UCI Very Favorable)

	Mean Rating (N)	Female	Male
		Mean Rating (N)	Mean Rating (N)
Research Money	5.689 (45)	5.267 (15)	5.900 (30)
Summer Salary	4.686 (35)	4.214 (14)	5.000 (21)
Area	5.302 (43)	5.467 (15)	5.214 (28)
Housing	5.095 (42)	5.571 (14)	4.857 (28)
Salary	4.867 (45)	4.800 (15)	4.900 (30)
Benefits	5.231 (39)	5.267 (15)	5.208 (24)
Gender Diversity of Faculty	5.385 (39)	5.357 (14)	5.400 (25)
Gender Diversity Grad Prog.	5.800 (25)	5.333 (9)	6.063 (16)
Gender Diversity Undergrad.	5.643 (14)	5.250 (4)	5.800 (10)
Childcare	4.867 (15)	5.600 (5)	4.500 (10)
Race Diversity of Faculty	4.500 (36)	4.083 (12)	4.708 (24)
Race Diversity Grad. Prog.	4.739 (23)	4.500 (10)	4.923 (13)
Race Diversity Undergrad.	4.625 (16)	3.600 (5)	5.091 (11)

Job candidates rated the gender diversity of UCI's graduate programs as relatively high (5.8 on a 7 point scale), followed by research money (5.689), gender diversity of the undergraduate student body (5.643), gender diversity of the faculty (5.385), the area (5.302), benefits (5.231), and housing (5.095). They rated the following in the slightly above average range: salary and childcare (both 4.867), racial diversity in the graduate program (4.739), summer salary (4.686), racial diversity in the undergraduate population (4.625), and racial diversity of the faculty

(4.500). There are no significant differences between female and male ratings of any of these factors.

Next we consider whether or not candidates who accepted UCI's offer differed in their ratings of UCI on these factors from those who declined. On average, those who accepted UCI's offer rated UCI higher on these factors. But we take caution in interpreting these differences, because we have only five candidates who received and declined UCI offers. We report these differences in Table 6.

Table 6. Of those Who Received UCI Offers, Mean Rating of How Favorable UCI was with Regard to Various Factors. By Whether or not they Accepted (7= UCI Very Favorable)

	Accepted Offer	Declined Offer
	Mean (N)	Mean (N)
Research Money	5.718 (39)	5.200 (5)
Summer Salary	4.788 (33)	3.000 (2)
Area	5.595 (37)	3.000 (5)
Housing	5.306 (36)	4.200 (5)
Salary	5.026 (39)	4.400 (5)
Benefits	5.222 (36)	5.333 (3)
Gender Diversity of Faculty	5.353 (34)	5.250 (4)
Gender Diversity Grad Prog.	5.818 (22)	5.667 (3)
Gender Diversity Undergrad.	5.538 (13)	7.000 (1)
Childcare	5.083 (12)	4.000 (3)
Race Diversity of Faculty	4.419 (31)	4.500 (4)
Race Diversity Grad. Prog.	4.650 (20)	5.333 (3)
Race Diversity Undergrad.	4.467 (15)	7.000 (1)

Overall, those who accepted UCI's offer had a slightly more favorable assessment of UCI on most variables. The difference that stands out the most is on the area. Some of the responses to open-ended questions help to explain this difference. Candidates who accepted UCI offers oftentimes mentioned that they liked the area due to its proximity to friends and/or family. Candidates who declined offers did not mention these connections. When candidates didn't have connections to the area, other aspects (including high housing costs and high cost of living in general) may dominate their thinking in making their ratings.

We now return to our analysis of the entire sample of job candidates (those who received and those who didn't receive UCI offers). Most candidates (91%) met with the Department Chair and 44% reported meeting with the Dean. We asked whether the Chair/Dean was informative, welcoming, accommodating, and whether or not s/he showed an interest in gender and racial diversity during these meetings. Table 7 reports the responses on the Department Chairs, by gender of the job candidate.

Table 7. Evaluation of the Candidate’s Meeting with the Chair, by Gender of the Job Candidate. (1=low, 7=high)

	Total (N)	Female (N)	Male (N)
Informative	6.045 (67)*	6.360 (25)	5.951 (41)
Welcoming	6.324 (68)*	6.600 (25)	6.262 (42)
Accommodating	6.123 (65)*	6.333 (24)	6.100 (40)
Interested in Gender Equity	5.913 (23)	5.909 (11)	5.917 (12)
Interested in Racial/Eth Equity	5.182 (11)	5.667 (3)	5.000 (8)

*One of these cases has a missing value for gender. This explains why summing the number of male and female respondents falls short of the total respondents.

Overall, candidates rated Department Chairs positively on all of these factors: They have an average rating of over 6 on a 7-point scale on being informative, welcoming and accommodating, a mean of 5.9 on interest in gender equity, and 5.1 on interest in racial/ethnic equity.

Next we assess evaluations of the Department Chair by whether or not the job candidate accepted a UCI job offer. Table 8 reports the results. Again, we use care in interpreting these results due to the small N.

Table 8. Evaluation of the Candidate’s Meeting with the Chair, by Whether or not the Candidate is Now at UCI. (1=low, 7=high)

	Not At UCI (N)	At UCI (N)
Informative	6.500 (4)	6.526 (38)
Welcoming	7.000 (4)	6.763 (38)
Accommodating	7.000 (4)	6.474 (38)
Interested in Gender Equity	5.000 (1)	5.950 (20)
Interested in Racial/Eth Equity	4.000 (1)	5.300 (10)

Mean ratings of meetings with the Department Chair do not significantly differ by whether or not the candidate accepted UCI’s offer.

Now, we consider the same variable concerning the candidates’ meetings with the Dean. Table 9 reports similarly high ratings of the Deans on the extent to which they were informative, welcoming, accommodating, and interested in gender and racial equity.

Table 9. Evaluation of the Candidate’s Meeting with the Dean by Gender. (1=low, 7=very high)

	Total (N)	Female (N)	Male (N)
Informative	5.781 (32)	6.000 (10)	5.682 (22)
Welcoming	6.212 (33)	6.200 (10)	6.217 (23)
Accommodating	5.964 (28)	5.875 (8)	6.000 (20)
Interested in Gender Equity	5.833 (6)	5.600 (5)	7.000 (1)
Interested in Racial/Eth Equity	5.750 (4)	5.333 (3)	7.000 (1)

Now we consider ratings of the deans by whether or not the candidates accepted a UCI offer. Table 10 reports very similar ratings for candidates who accepted and those who declined UCI’s offer.

Table 10. Evaluation of the Candidate’s Meeting with the Dean by Whether or not the Candidate is Now at UCI. (1=low, 7=high)

	Not At UCI (N)	At UCI (N)
Informative	5.750 (4)	5.789 (19)
Welcoming	6.250 (4)	6.250 (20)
Accommodating	6.333 (3)	6.000 (18)
Interested in Gender Equity	-- (0)	6.200 (5)
Interested in Racial/Eth Equity	-- (0)	5.750 (4)

Portrayals of Gender Equity on Campus

We asked job candidates how the female faculty members portrayed gender equity on campus to them. A little over half (56%) of female job candidates reported that they portrayed the campus as equitable, while 44% said the topic didn’t come up. The response by male candidates was very different: only 7% reported that female faculty members portrayed the campus as equitable, 2% reported that it was portrayed as inequitable, 2% that it was in-between, and 88% said the topic didn’t come up. This indicates that female faculty members consider gender equity a topic to discuss with female but not male candidates (see Table 11).

Table 11. UCI Female Faculty Members’ Portrayal of Gender Equity at UCI by Gender of Job Candidate.

	Equitable (N)	In-between (N)	Not Equitable (N)	No Mention (N)
Female	56% (14)	0% (0)	0% (0)	44% (11)
Male	7% (3)	2% (1)	2% (1)	88% (38)

Open-Ended Responses.

We asked job candidates to explain to us in their own words several aspects of their job interview experiences. The most general open-ended question we asked was: “Please describe in your own words, your overall experiences at UCI. What stood out to you? How did you perceive the climate? How welcome did you feel?” The majority of open-ended comments (67%) were entirely favorable. These interviewees commented that they felt welcome, they enjoyed the interview, and didn’t have any negative experiences. Table 12 reports the percentage of entirely positive comments by department.

Table 12. Percentage of Open-ended Responses that reported Entirely Positive Comments, by Department.

	<u>Percent entirely positive comments (n)</u>	<u>At UCI</u>	<u>Not At UCI</u>
Engineering	64% (11)	71% (7)	50% (4)
Mechanical	67% (3)		
Civil and Environmental	67% (3)		
Chemical	100% (2)		
Electrical	33% (3)		
Bio Medical	- (0)		
Social Sciences	88% (17)	93% (14)	67% (3)
Cognitive Sciences	100% (4)		
Logic and Philosophy of Science	50% (2)		
Economics	83% (6)		
Sociology	100% (2)		
Political Science	100% (3)		
Biological Sciences	47% (15)	43% (7)	50% (8)
Neurobiology and Behavior*			
Molecular Biology*	0% (2)		
Ecology and Evolutionary Biology	54% (13)		
Physical Sciences	68% (31)	83% (12)	58% (19)
Math	60% (5)		
Earth System Science	43% (7)		
Chemistry	72% (11)		
Physics and Astronomy	87% (8)		
Total	68% (74)	77% (40)	56% (34)

* We combine responses from the department of Neurology and Behavior with those from the department of Molecular Biology in order to avoid reporting on a single respondent.

The School of Social Sciences was particularly successful at conducting interviews that elicited entirely favorable comments, followed by the schools of Physical Sciences and Engineering. Biological Sciences was less successful, with less than half (40%) of the interviewees mentioning only positive comments.

Many of the less than positive comments reported routine or small-scale issues/problems such as the department was only moderately welcoming, the department was less enthusiastic than the reception the candidate received at other places, or that their experiences were mixed. Other comments were more negative. Three candidates (from three different departments) reported that they were never notified about the outcome of the interview. Two interviewees reported negative experiences with the UCI housing office (one said the program is atrocious, and that the feeling is widespread, another reported that the housing official assumed that she was the spouse rather than the candidate, and asked if she planned to work). The cost-of-living in the area came up once, as did the lack of competitive salaries. A few interviewees mentioned negative experiences with individual faculty members. One was the subject of inappropriate comments by a senior faculty member while in a public forum and another mentioned that several faculty members asked inappropriate questions about his/her family status. One interviewee had a very negative experience with the Department Chair, and the Dean appeared to be uninterested in this same candidate. All three of the latter occurred in the same department. Other negative comments were specifically directed at the department. Among them were lack of organization or direction for the interview, inflexibility, disinterested faculty, and an uncomfortable session where the interviewee met with all faculty members at once to answer questions.

Of the candidates who received UCI job offers, we asked for the main reason that they accepted/declined the offer. The reasons candidates accepted UCI's offer fall into three main categories: professional opportunity (good academic fit, chances for collaboration, quality of department, campus, and system, the status of UCI as a growth campus, and the research facilities); atmosphere (faculty members are dynamic, young, include many women, collegial, happy, supportive (especially of junior faculty), and welcoming); and family needs (family in the area, spouse likes the area, candidate's spouse was offered a job).

Only a few of our interviewees declined UCI offers. They reported better offers elsewhere and the poor quality of life as reasons for declining UCI's offer.

When asked to provide examples regarding how female faculty members portrayed gender equity on campus, 58% of the female, and only 6% of the male candidates offered responses. Female respondents offered the following examples: faculty members seemed aware that parenting responsibilities oftentimes fall disproportionately on women; the department recently hired several young females; no different treatment by gender; favorable maternity leave policies; no inappropriate questions during interview; female faculty members seemed happy, and they were informed about resources for women. One of the three male candidates who offered an example mentioned UCI's equal opportunity job advertisement, another mentioned that there didn't seem to be a gender problem in the department, and the third said that female faculty members seem to think that more needs to be done.

When asked to provide an example of how the racial/ethnic faculty members on campus portrayed racial/ethnic equity, only two white candidates (and no faculty of color) responded. The two comments simply indicated that the candidates didn't see a problem.

Conclusion

Our initial concern about the unrepresentative sample is somewhat warranted in that we found that those who are now at UCI reported more positive overall job interview experiences than those who are not now at UCI. But as we demonstrate in our tables, these differences do not appear to be consequential for our analyses of many of the more specific questions. As a group, the candidates who did not come to UCI did not respond to any of our specific questions in a significantly different way.

The findings of this interview project reveal that overall, UCI departments do a good job conducting interviews that are favorably evaluated by candidates. The overwhelming percent of job candidates rated their interview experiences as excellent or very good. These ratings did not significantly differ by gender, rank, race/ethnicity, but they did differ by whether or not the candidate came to UCI. Faculty, Department Chairs, and Deans all made candidates feel welcome and were informative. When they mentioned it, existing female faculty members portrayed the gender equity situation on campus as favorable.

The open-ended questions elicited many favorable remarks, but also indicated that there may be issues in certain departments. Candidates criticized departments in the school of Biological Sciences most often.

Appendix Table 1. Potential and Completed Interviews¹ by Gender and Department

	Percent of Interviews Completed		
	Female (N)	Male (N)	Total (N)
Engineering	100% (2)	46% (24)	50% (26)
Mechanical	100% (1)	14% (7)	37% (8)
Civil and Environmental	- (0)	37% (8)	37% (8)
Chemical	- (0)	50% (4)	50% (4)
Electrical	100% (1)	100% (2)	100% (3)
Bio Medical	- (0)	67% (3)	67% (3)
Social Sciences	43% (21)	33% (24)	38% (45)
Cognitive Sciences	50% (6)	20% (5)	36% (11)
Logic and Phil of Science	100% (1)	33% (3)	50% (4)
Economics	83% (5)	37% (8)	46% (13)
Sociology	100% (1)	100% (1)	100% (2)
Political Science	100% (6)	29% (7)	23% (13)
Chicano and Latino	0% (1)	- (0)	0% (1)
Anthropology	0% (1)	- (0)	0% (1)
Biological Sciences	54% (13)	39% (18)	45% (31)
Neurobiology and Behavior	- (0)	100% (1)	100% (1)
Molecular Biology	33% (3)	0% (3)	17% (6)
Ecology and Evol Biology	60% (10)	43% (14)	50% (24)
Physical Sciences	61% (13)	41% (56)	45 % (69)
Math	40% (5)	16% (19)	21% (24)
Earth System Science	75% (4)	57% (7)	64% (11)
Chemistry	100% (1)	67% (15)	69% (16)
Physics and Astronomy	67% (3)	40% (15)	44% (18)
Total	53% (49)	40% (122)	44% (171)

¹ We do not have information on the population of candidates interviewed. This is a percentage completed of the names we received.

Appendix Table 2. Potential and Completed Interviews² by Whether or Not Candidates are Now At UCI and Department

	Percent of Interviews Completed		
	UCI (N)	Non-UCI (N)	Total (N)
Engineering	69% (13)	29% (14)	48% (27)
Mechanical	33% (3)	40% (5)	38% (8)
Civil and Environmental	100% (2)	17% (6)	38% (8)
Chemical	100% (1)	33% (3)	50% (4)
Electrical	100% (3)	- (0)	100% (3)
Bio Medical	67% (3)	- (0)	67% (3)
Social Sciences	80% (20)	12% (25)	42% (45)
Cognitive Sciences	60% (5)	17% (6)	36% (11)
Logic and Phil of Science	50% (2)	50% (2)	50% (4)
Economics	100% (5)	14% (8)	46% (13)
Sociology	100% (2)	- (0)	100% (2)
Political Science	75% (4)	- (9)	8% (13)
Chicano and Latino	100% (1)	- (0)	100% (1)
Anthropology	100% (1)	- (0)	100% (1)
Biological Sciences	86% (7)	33% (24)	45% (31)
Neurobiology and Behavior	100% (1)	- (0)	100% (1)
Molecular Biology	100% (1)	0% (5)	17% (6)
Ecology and Evol Biology	80% (5)	42% (19)	50% (24)
Physical Sciences	85% (13)	36% (56)	45% (69)
Math	- (0)	21% (24)	21% (24)
Earth System Science	80% (5)	50% (6)	64% (11)
Chemistry	100% (3)	62% (13)	69% (16)
Physics and Astronomy	80% (5)	31% (13)	44% (18)
Total	81% (52)	29% (119)	45% (171)

² We do not have information on the population of candidates interviewed. This is a percentage completed of the names we received.