**Secrets of the 2 Year College Interview**

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**The 2 Year College (2YC) interview committee:**

2YC interview committees are usually selected to represent the whole college, not just the discipline, with about 5-10 members. The committee is typically composed of a faculty member(s) from geology and/or related fields, campus staff, 1-2 students from a student organization, and an administrator.

**Enhance your chances of being selected for an interview:**

* Respond exactly to the questions on the application and those of any assigned essay.
* Read and follow all instructions in the job application carefully. It is common for screening committees to eliminate more than half of all applicants because they do not meet requirements or do not follow directions.
* Be sure to complete all required forms and submit all required letters and transcripts, if any, on time.
* On the CV, emphasize teaching experience , interests, community involvement, volunteer work, and experience on college, university, or professional committees

**Cover letter:**

* Compose your cover letter carefully. The letter should be clearly written and free of scientific jargon. The committee will be looking for evidence of your ability to communicate effectively on all levels. The letter should highlight the following; teaching qualifications, graduate work that is relevant to teaching or education, and life experiences that enhance your ability to teach or that can be used in your pedagogy. It may be best to refrain or minimize discussing your past and current research interests since most 2YC are more focused on education not research.

**Presentation:**

* Be prepared to demonstrate your teaching skills as part of the initial screening interview. Some 2YC will require you to present a lecture on a pre-decided topic. Make sure you have a clear and concise pedagogy in place. Candidates are often asked to teach a short lesson (10-30 min.), sometimes on a pre-assigned topic. Your presentation will be judged less on content and details and more on your presentation skills and your ability to convey a well-defined, concrete concept.

**Planning for the Interview:**

* Research the college, its campus, and its community beforehand. The college website should provide basic information as well as the college's last accreditation self-study or the college master plan. These documents often include details about the student population and the population in the area served by the community college. Be familiar with the mission statement of the college, it will help you identify key concepts and talking points for you to cover during your interview.
* Spend time reflecting on your pedagogical practices. Community colleges seek candidates who display an unconditional commitment to and regard for students from diverse backgrounds who need faculty members to guide them through the transition from work or high school to college-level study. The idea of weeding students out or tossing them into the pool and exhorting them to "sink or swim" runs counter to the idea of community college teaching.
* Plan out how to present yourself to your best advantage in your introductory and concluding comments. What do you want the committee to remember about you? What distinguishes you from the other candidates?

**Common interview questions:**  
Why are you interested in teaching at a community college?  
What are the greatest challenges for community colleges and their missions?

What's your greatest teaching success? Why? What's your greatest teaching failure? How did you handle it? What have you learned from it?

What type of community service contributions can you make to this college?   
What contributions can you make to your profession through your work at this college?   
Describe your experiences with developmental education or with meeting the needs of students with disabilities.  
Describe your experiences incorporating technology into your teaching.  
Explain specifically how you incorporate the concept of diversity into your classes.  
What have you done in your courses to maximize students' success in learning?  
How do you keep up to date in the advances in your field?

What do you know about our college or student population?  
What experiences have you had with defining student learning outcomes and assessing them?  
  
**Other points to consider:**

* Have a few suitable questions in mind to ask about the position or your department or the college, if given the chance. Committees are not impressed by candidates who have no questions or who only want to know about salary and benefits or opportunities for teaching more advanced courses or for obtaining released time for research. Instead, ask about the administrative structure of the college (if that has not already been made clear), opportunities for faculty development, the reappointment, promotion and tenure procedure, challenges facing the college, and opportunities to serve on committees or to become involved with student groups or the community.
* Be aware of the time limits of the interview and be sure your answers are delivered in a succinct, energetic manner. The committee will be observing you closely during the interview to determine how you will engage with students.

**What not to do:**

The committee is seeking an instructor committed to the specific mission of that community college with a focus on teaching. Committee members want to assure themselves that you are really interested in a career at their college, *not just interviewing there as a second choice because there is no position down the road at the university*.