

Example of Skype Interview Questions from the English department

1. What are some of the things currently happening or developing in the fields of Victorian studies or the novel that excite you? How do you see these developments changing the field and how do you/would you teach them?
2. What kind of course would you teach on the Victorian novel if you had no constraints? Is there a course outside the field you'd be eager to teach?
3. Have you had experience with teaching the long Victorian novels? What techniques do you have for engaging and focusing students' attention?
4. In our comprehensive exam, we were surprised to find that the answers on the novel were pretty weak – that our majors lacked a set of concepts with which to analyze the novel. How might you organize an introductory course on the novel? What critical concepts do you think it would be important to explore?
5. I don't know if you're aware of this, but the student body at Amherst has changed significantly over the last decade or so. Our numbers of international students and students transferring here from community colleges have increased substantially. About 20% of our students qualify for Pell grants, which means we are drawing a fifth of our students from the poorest quintile of American society. More than half our students self identify as students of color. A lot of our most exciting students are the first in their family to attend College. In the English department, we've just begun to figure out how best to serve students from such a variety of backgrounds.

Could you talk a bit about your own experience with diversity in the classroom or beyond it. How do you think you might help us while you're here to address the challenge of introducing this wide array of students to the study of literature - especially literature from a place and time with which few of them will have much familiarity?