

# Negotiating for Novices: A Guide to Negotiating Faculty Positions and Postdocs

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## Agenda

- Negotiating basics
- Components of a job offer & what can be negotiated
- Research
- Negotiating well
- Role playing & discussion
- Things to do (& not to do)
- Non-academic offers
- Scenarios
- Postdocs
- Resources at Career Services
- Practicing negotiation

## Negotiating basics

- Why should you negotiate?
  - Future annual pay raises depend on your base salary
  - Retirement benefits depend on your base salary
  - Best environment for your tenure success
    - More time and resources for research and writing and/or teaching

3

## Negotiating basics

- Most institutions **expect you to negotiate** (even if you don't have another offer)
- The **best time to negotiate is after an offer is made** but before you have accepted it
- Wait until **you have an offer** to negotiate
- Negotiate with the **mission, resources, culture, and needs** of the institution in mind
- **Structure: Win Win** – not adversarial
  - Get into the mindset of the department chair or dean
  - Whether you accept or decline the offer, you are a colleague

4

## Negotiating basics

### Factors affecting negotiations:

- **Institution type**
  - Private vs. public
  - Large vs. small private college/university
  - Research-intensive vs. teaching intensive
  - Flagship campus vs. branch campus
  - Non-union campus vs. unionized campus
- **External and internal pressures** for institution or a department
  - External offers/peer benchmarking
  - Internal equity/structure of compensation/salary compression
  - Budget constraints/resources
- **Your value to the institution**
- **The value of the position to you**

5

## Components of a Tenure-Track Assistant Professor Job Offer

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • Start date*                                 | • Maternity/family leave*                     |
| • Title                                       | • General benefits (health, retirement, etc.) |
| • Salary*                                     | • Performance, tenure & salary review         |
| • Relocation reimbursement*                   | • Intellectual property                       |
| • Conference travel/professional development* | • Visa assistance                             |
| • Lab start-up package*                       | • Thesis completion*                          |
| • Teaching and advising load and preps*       | • Dual career issues*                         |
| • Summer salary/teaching opportunities*       | • Decision date*                              |

*\* Can be negotiated depending on the institution*

6

## Terms of the Offer

- Salary
  - Amount of your base pay
  - 9 months vs. 12 months; if 9 months, opportunities for summer salary?
  - How long is your salary guaranteed?
  - How your salary is funded (research grants, teaching, etc.)?
  - Any policies on outside consulting?
- Appointment
  - Full-time tenure track
  - Length of the initial contract
  - When is it renewable after successful reappointment review?
  - If joint appointment, which is your “tenure home”? What is tenure criteria for each department?

7

## Research – preparing for negotiations

### **Research yourself and your priorities**

- How does this institution compare to the others you interviewed with?
- Which institution will allow you to do your best work and be most successful?
- Where do you want to live? Where will you be happy?
- What is your financial “bottom line”? (if relocating, factor in cost of living changes)
- Is there a partner, or other family member who will be affected by your decisions?

8

## Research – preparing for negotiations

### Research the position and institution

- What is the rank and type of institution? What are their resources? How big is your department?
  - Review the institution’s website: FAQs, history, mission statement, points of pride, etc.
  - Webpage for the Office of the Provost, including information for prospective faculty and faculty handbook
  - Department website; course listings; faculty profiles
  - Google the institution to see if there’s been any major news
- Consider the way the role contributes to the department or institution

9

The screenshot displays the Penn The Provost website. At the top, the Penn logo and 'OFFICE OF The Provost' are visible, along with a search bar. A navigation menu includes links for ABOUT, OFFICES, INITIATIVES, POLICIES, ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS, and CONTACT. The main heading is 'RESOURCES FOR PROSPECTIVE FACULTY'. A sidebar on the left lists various resource categories, with 'RESOURCES FOR PROSPECTIVE FACULTY' selected. The main content area features a banner with the text: 'Penn and Philadelphia offer a wide range of opportunities for work and leisure, with New York and Boston to the north to Baltimore and Washington DC to the south.' Below this, there are two sections: 'A GREAT PLACE TO WORK' and 'A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE'. The 'A GREAT PLACE TO WORK' section includes a photo of a woman in a classroom and a list of links: 'Learn more about: Faculty Positions at Penn, Non-Faculty Positions at Penn, Family-Friendly Policies at Penn, Work-Life Balance, Mentoring at Penn, Teaching at Penn'. The 'A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE' section includes a photo of the Philadelphia skyline and a list of links: 'Learn more about: University City, Center City Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Area, Regional Job Opportunities for Spouses and Partners from HERC (Higher Education Recruitment Consortium)'. At the bottom, there is a section for 'DUAL CAREER COUPLES' with the text: 'The recruitment of dual career couples and families to Penn is a University-wide priority. The University and schools offers a number of resources to offer the transition to life in the Philadelphia area. Finding Jobs for Two Partners. In certain cases, the Office of the Provost can provide funding for dual career couples hired across schools.'

10

## Research – preparing for negotiations

### Consider information you gathered during your interview process

- How faculty have started up their labs and with what resources
- Ideas of what cannot be negotiated
- Information on the following:
  - Standard teaching load/different preps
  - Resources for first-year faculty
  - Summer/overload teaching
  - Sabbaticals
  - TENURE PROCESS AND SUCCESS

11

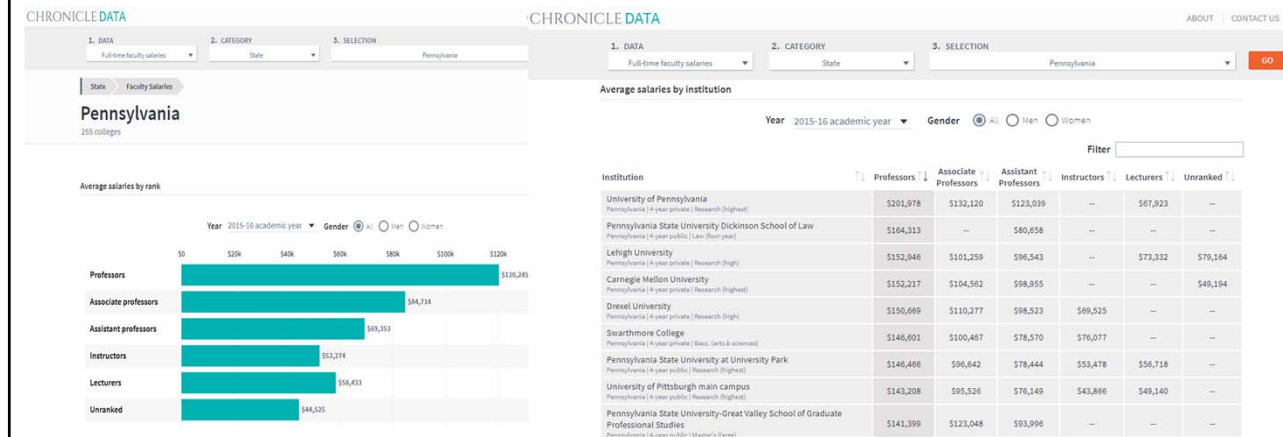
## Research continued...

- **Connect with your networks.** Ask advice from mentors, alumni, and colleagues
  - *“Does X range seem in line with what an assistant professor in this field makes at your institution?”*
  - *“What resources were helpful to you when you were preparing for interviews and negotiating offers for assistant professor positions?”*
  - *“How did you assemble and negotiate your start-up budget for your current lab?”*
- **Connect with postdocs or faculty recently affiliated with the institution**

12

## Resources for researching faculty salaries

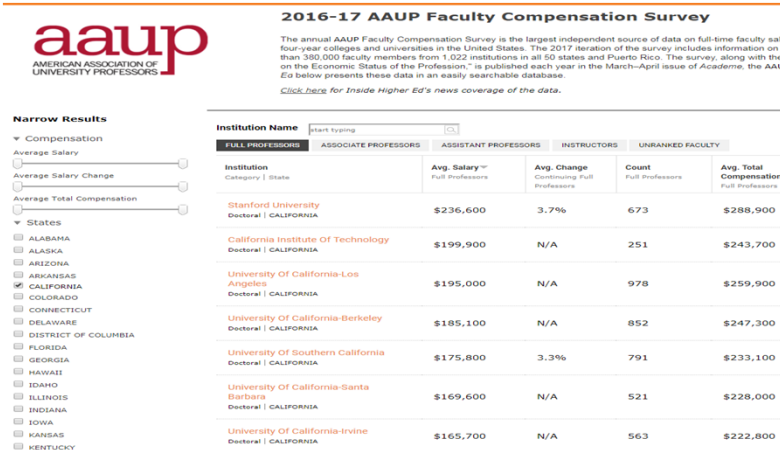
- Chronicle of Higher Education Faculty Salary Information: <https://data.chronicle.com/>



## Resources for researching faculty salaries

- American Association of University Professors (AAUP) Faculty Compensation Survey: <https://www.insidehighered.com/aaup-compensation-survey>

\*Remember that these figures are averages



## Resources for researching faculty salaries

- Salaries of faculty at public universities are public record; published online often through a university system or through a major state newspaper
  - Examples: University of California Office of the President; The Texas Tribune
- Other general salary resources such as [glassdoor.com](http://glassdoor.com), [payscale.com](http://payscale.com), and [salary.com](http://salary.com)

15

## Understanding start-up packages

- Start-up packages differ widely across different types of institutions and vary depending on policies (i.e. external grants)
- Determines how long you can do research before you have to secure additional grants
- Institutions have set number of years your funding covers, but you can negotiate what your funding pays for

### **Components of a start-up budget:**

- Lab space and location
- Personnel/staff salaries (postdocs, grad students, technicians)
- Lab and computer equipment
- Research support

16



## Negotiating a start-up budget

- Understand the structure of start-up funds
- Lab space and location can be a sensitive issue
- Be ready to share equipment
- Personnel (including lab technician, postdoc, grad student) and salaries are recurring costs and crucial for lab success
- Suggest win-win solutions: propose sharing equipment, grad students, etc.
- Explain why your requests are necessary for you to do your research
- Create a detailed start-up budget and a brief 1-page summary of equipment needs
- More information on websites of professional associations and journals: ASCB, AAS, Nature, Science, etc.

17

## Negotiating for partner hires

- A complex and significant request that requires a lot of work and negotiation among the department chair, dean's/provost's office, and other department chair
  - Institution's resources and ranking should be taken into consideration
- Approach the request delicately and after offer has been made
  - Exceptions to the timing
- Consider limiting other requests

18

## Pre-offer negotiations

Keep in mind you want to avoid negotiations until you have an offer

### Application Forms

- Try to write in “negotiable” or fill in the text field with a “0”

### During Interviews

Your goal is to delay discussion of compensation and specifics of your research/lab budget until after an offer is made.

- “Salary is not the most important issue to me. What is more important to me is the (role, institution, etc.)”
- “I am open to any reasonable start-up package, and I'm sure that the institution provides sufficient resources for tenure success.”

19

## Post-offer negotiations

The moment you have waited for has arrived!

- An offer is usually given via phone, and sometimes by email
  - You will be contacted by **the department chair/search committee chair**
- **Confirm it's really an offer** - a job offer has a salary figure attached to it. Until an employer gives you an exact figure, keep looking at other opportunities
  - “If I made you an offer, would you take it?” is not an offer
- **Indicate how pleased you are** but don't accept immediately
  - Don't negotiate on the spot
  - “I'd like several days to think about this.”
  - Think about questions you want to ask
  - How long you have to make the decision will vary and can be negotiated

20

## Negotiating well

- **Be sure to get the offer in writing.** Some employers prefer to finalize the offer before formally writing an official offer letter that you sign
  - You should request and receive a letter/email that includes the salary, start date, and the date by which they want a decision from you, and all other details
  - If during negotiations the salary and conditions of employment change, get another letter
- **Prepare to negotiate before you do it.**
  - Understand the terms of the offer
  - Think about your priorities
  - Some institutions won't move much from the original offer
  - Have a rationale for your requests, and avoid confrontational tones

21

## Negotiating well

- When possible, negotiate by phone and follow up with a summary of what was discussed by email
  - Take your time to negotiate; don't rush to sign the offer
  - Negotiate all your requests at the same time
  - Be intentional with professional reasons for what you seek
  - Don't ask for everything
  - Express/reiterate enthusiasm for the job

22

**I have never done this  
before, do I have to  
negotiate? Yes!**

23

**But first...role play!**

24

## Negotiating Don'ts

- Give personal explanations of why you'd like a salary increase
- Negotiate without considering the mission and needs of the institution
- Assume that there is a "normal" for offers in your field
- Make a list of demands
- Negotiate one thing at a time
- Negotiate every small thing
- Negotiate quickly to close the deal
- Be confrontational

25

## Negotiating Do's

- Do involve your advisors and mentors to seek their advice
- Express gratitude for the opportunity
- Research available data before negotiating
- Be polite, enthusiastic, and kind throughout the negotiation process
- Understand the institution
- Prioritize the requests that are most important to you
- Frame requests as questions, not statements; adopt an open tone
- Be reasonable in your requests
- Know what you need to carry out your research
- Consider the big picture and the whole package

26

## Negotiation beyond the academy– public, private, nonprofit settings

### Non-salary forms of compensation/benefits -

- Bonuses
- Long -term incentives (options, stock, equity)
- 401K
- Job title, reporting structure
- Health Insurance, Life Insurance
- Holidays
- Relocation costs
- Start date
- Certain kinds of work conditions/flexibility (schedule, travel, extra vacation days)
- Professional support: continuing education (tuition benefit), conference attendance,
- Computers/phones for use at home
- Earlier evaluation for promotion

27

## What can be negotiated in a non-academic offer?

### Salary

- Discussing salary usually comes before negotiating other benefits or conditions
- Express your enthusiasm again for the job and ask “if there's any flexibility in determining salary?”
- Your best arguments are based on what you can contribute and what comparable employers are paying for comparable work

28

## Scenarios

### **When the first offer isn't your first choice:**

- If you are offered job A, but prefer job B, let job B institution (if you've interviewed there) know as soon as you get the first offer
- Ask for their search timeline and when they might be able to make a decision
- Always tell the truth- don't invent job offers for negotiating purposes

### **When you have multiple offers:**

- Try to prioritize your top two offers and decline the rest
- You can use your offers as leverage, but remember that department chairs want to know you're serious about working at their institution

29

## Wrapping up your negotiations

### **Accepting an offer**

- If terms of the offer changed during negotiating, get a new offer letter in writing
  - Send a written confirmation, even if you accept verbally over the phone.
- Thank everyone who helped you
- Notify other institutions who interviewed you that you have accepted a job, thank them for their interest, and withdraw from the search
- When you accept a job, you're making a commitment. Keep it.

### **Declining an offer**

- Be very gracious! Thank them (again) for their interest and time spent considering your candidacy.

## Negotiating for Postdocs

- Less opportunity as stipend/benefits are often determined by university
- Brainstorm areas of personal/professional development that you might be able to negotiate
- Ideas (address BEFORE accepting postdoc!)
  - Access to research experiences you would not get otherwise
  - Additional technical training
  - Opportunities to teach or mentor
  - Expenses related to conferences/travel

31


<http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/interviewingadvice>

 Career Services **Interviewing Advice**





How to Prepare



Interview & Question Types



Sample Questions by Industry

- Appointments & Walk-Ins
- Resumes, CVs, Cover Letters & Correspondence
- Interviewing Advice
- Networking & Mentoring
- Resources by Career Field
- Career Exploration
- Jobs & Internships / PennLink
- On Campus Recruiting
- Career Fairs
- Applying to Grad School



Etiquette/Appearance



Follow-up & Negotiating Offers



Interview Practice & Resources

32



## Career Services can help...

### See a Career Advisor if you want help with:

- Preparing your application materials
- Practicing your interview and negotiation skills
- Evaluating offers and making decisions
- Writing thank you letters (and helping to phrase a “no thank you” response)
  - [www.vpul.penn.edu/careerservices](http://www.vpul.penn.edu/careerservices)
  - Call **215-898-7530** or **login to Handshake** to make an appointment.
    - Walk-in hours every day--check our website for details

33

## Take a few minutes to write down what you'd like to negotiate and take turns playing the candidate and the dean/department chair

- Adopt the mindset of the dean/department chair and of the candidate
- Try to negotiate at least 3 things

34

## Career Services programs

### Academic Job Search Series:

#### **PANEL: Finding the Right Postdoc (STEM)**

- Thursday, February 22, 5-6:30 PM, Houston Hall, Ben Franklin Room

#### **FACULTY PANEL: Preparing for your First Year as a New Faculty Member or Postdoc**

- Tuesday, April 10, 4:30-6 pm, Houston Hall, Golkin Room 223

#### **WORKSHOP: Preparing for the Academic Job Market**

- April date and location TBD