Interview Questions
(mainly for academic positions in North America)

Questions they will ask you

1. General
   1. What do you feel you will bring to our department?
   2. What interests you about our school / this position? (be specific!)
   3. Describe the perfect position in terms of your goals. Describe how you view the balance between teaching, service, and research?
   4. What can you tell us about yourself that stands out from other candidates?
   5. Where do you see yourself in five years’ time? Ten years?
   6. What mix of teaching and research are you looking for?
   7. What are some of your strengths?
   8. What is one of your weaknesses?
   9. Would you be willing to write grants? If so, what types of grants would you pursue? (upper division math research for students, math ed, other)?
   10. Are you willing to serve on committees (hiring, course development, etc)?
   11. Are you willing to help with various clubs and honor societies?
   12. Your publication/teaching/service... record is not great. How can you explain this? Will you be able to meet expectations in the future?
   13. Are you comfortable with our campus’ mission?

2. Research
   1. Describe your research (have a 1 minute and 3 minute version of this, as well as an explanation for the dean/president/provost, etc … that they can understand)
   2. How do you define “success” in research?
   3. With whom in the department could/would you collaborate? (or at a school nearby)
   4. How does your research fit in with our current faculties’ research?
   5. How will you fund your research? Where do you see yourself applying for grants?
   6. What is your most important research achievement? Which of your publications do you feel is the most significant?
   7. What was the most important development in topic X for you this year?
   8. What is the cutting edge in your field and how does your work extend it?
   9. What is your best quality as a researcher?
  10. What is your worst?
  11. What was your contribution to this multi-author publication?
  12. What are your future research and/or scholarly goals?
13. What aspects of your research do you think would interest the committee?
14. How much financial support do you need for your research?
15. What items do you need to be a productive researcher (technology, journals, etc)?
16. Are there undergraduate research projects in your area? How will you involve undergraduates (graduates, postdocs) in your research?
17. What techniques will you use to keep research active when your teaching load increases?
18. Would you be able to continue your research in a teaching centered school?

3. Teaching Philosophy
   1. Describe your teaching style/philosophy.
   2. Describe a typical day in the classroom.
   3. What excites you about teaching?
   4. How do you define “success” in teaching?
   5. What is the role of the instructor in the classroom?
   6. What role do effective teaching practices play in your approach?
   7. How do you go about teaching a difficult topic?
   8. If you were to develop an upper division / a graduate-level course, what would it be and what would it involve?
   9. Would you be opposed to half of your teaching load being comprised of core math classes for non-math majors? What is your feeling and opinion of that?
10. What would you do if you set an exam with a very high failure rate?
11. What do you think you can improve in your teaching or would like to learn about?
12. How do you motivate “reluctant learners”?
13. What would your peers say are your best characteristics towards teaching? What would they say you need to work on?

4. Practical Teaching Experience
   1. Which of our courses would you be interested in teaching?
   2. Do you have any experience in online teaching? What do you see as the differences and difficulties with this method and how would you address them?
   3. Do you have any experience teaching large lectures? What techniques would you use to keep students engaged?
   4. Give an example of a time when something did not go well in your classroom.
   5. How do you handle teaching students with a large range of skill levels in the same class? (probably wouldn’t see that question come up at a top-
tier university, since in theory their students would all be of the same high calibre, but for smaller liberal arts universities/colleges…)

6. Do you have experience teaching (blah) class?
7. Are you willing (confident) in organizing lab classes?
8. Have you taught any core math for non-majors before (when, where) and describe your experience?
9. Do you mind teaching statistics?
10. How have you used technology in the classroom?
11. How do you feel about technology in the classroom (calculators, computers, etc…)?
12. What steps have you taken o improve your teaching?
13. How to address gender imbalance?
14. Could you talk about your experience with instructing international students? (If the university has a large number of international students)
15. We are very proud of our success in fostering diversity with the field; X campus represents a very diverse community and fostering diversity is very important to us as a group. What have you done to foster diversity and how would you do that here at XX campus?
16. Our institution is committed to the education of (blank) minority group (in Canada we have a commitment to Indigenous education through the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation commission, but in USA or elsewhere I imagine institutions have a strong commitment to African American student education, or other minority/disadvantaged groups); could you outline your experiences with instruction of these students, if any?
17. Give an example of a time when something went very well in your classroom

5. Service
   1. How have you contributed to service in your department or the discipline?
   2. How would you structure an outreach program?

6. Personality
   1. Discuss a time when you had a conflict with a supervisor. With a colleague?
   2. Describe your personality. Do you see yourself as people-oriented?
   3. What are some of your interests or hobbies outside of the university?
   4. How do you feel about living in XX city?

7. Supervising
   1. How do you plan to involve undergrads in your research?
   2. What would you expect from a PhD student?
3. What would you do if you had a PhD student or Masters' student who was struggling?
4. Do you have any ideas for a PhD or master's project?

8. **Misc**
   1. Where else have you applied that you are considering? Where else have/will you interview?
   2. Will you take the job if it is offered to you?
   3. What questions do you have about our campus?
   4. Do you plan to learn the local language? If so, how and how quickly.

9. **Illegal questions**
   1. Do you have a partner? And, what do they do? Are they in the same field as you?
   2. Do you have children? Do you expect to have children?

**Questions for you to ask**

1. **General**
   1. Describe the ideal person who you would want to fill this position.
   2. How long has each person been there?
   3. What do you like best about working here?
   4. What do you wish you would have known before you started working here?
   5. How does the department interact with one another? (What is the social atmosphere?)
   6. How active is faculty outside of the department? Are there any community outreach programs?
   7. What are some service areas the other faculty are involved in?
   8. Where do you see yourself/the department/the university 5 years from now? What steps are you/the department/the university taking to reach that goal?
   9. I noticed 3 years ago there was a salary restructuring. What arc is the university currently on?
   10. What is your timeline?
   11. Is there a union? What do they negotiate? Are there fees?
   12. Would you be able to support me in Project NExT? (Be ready with a brief description of what Project NExT is after you ask this question to a provost or dean!)
   13. How is a typical faculty’s time split between teaching, research, and service?
14. What do you like about the school? What do you dislike about the school?
15. What is the department’s relationship with the rest of the college? What is the department/college's relationship with the community?
16. Are there any particular responsibilities that you are hoping this position will take over?
17. What are the service expectations?
18. Can I meet with some of the students? (Ask in advance!)
19. When will a decision be made?

2. Technology
1. Will I get a new computer? How often are computers replaced?
2. What software is available on the university computers?
3. What resources are available in an average classroom (projector, overhead, computer, etc.)?
4. Do you use any particular course management system?
5. Do you use Webassign or a similar system?
6. What type of technology is prevalent on your campus?
7. What type of computer resources to students have access to? Are they required to have laptops?
8. What type of computer software packages does the department have licenses for?

3. Teaching
1. What is the teaching load?
2. What is the maximum number of preps I could have? What is the typical number of preps?
3. Is teaching in the summer available? Is it required?
4. What are my options for teaching a variety of courses?
5. How are course assignments made? Do faculty “own” courses?
6. What is a typical class size for intro class? Upper level class?
7. What is the distribution of lower/upper level courses?
8. How often do you offer major courses?
9. Are there opportunities to develop new courses?
10. Besides student evaluations, how is teaching evaluated?
11. Are there particular courses you are looking for someone to teach?
12. Are there graders/TAs? What level are they at?
13. Does the department teach freshman seminars? What form do they take?
14. Do the majors do senior research projects?
15. How does the department encourage undergraduate research and/or independent studies? Do independent studies count toward the teaching load?
16. What will I be teaching my first semester/year?
17. Do faculty members share course materials?
18. Teaching expectations if you are funded by an outside research grant?
19. (if there is/are student(s) on the committee) What do you like about the programme here; do you have enough access to your professors; do you like the selection of courses available? What would you change?

4. Research
1. What type of scholarly support do you have?
2. Could I arrange my schedule to have an “off” day to focus on research?
3. Is there an expectation of grant writing?
4. What can you say about the research levels of the current faculty?
5. What types of seminars are held?
6. What type of research expectations are associated with this current tenure-track line?

5. Travel and Conference
1. Is there funding for travel to conferences?
2. Are students encouraged to go to conferences? Is there support for the students?
3. Are there opportunities to plan/host conferences? (Is there funding for such endeavors?)
4. How often do faculty attend conferences?
5. Are outside of the college collaborations supported?

6. Health Care
1. What health insurance options are there? Is there dental and vision insurance?
2. How much will I have to pay for health care each month?
3. Is there child care on campus?

7. Retirement
1. What are the retirement options (state plan, 401K, etc.)?
2. How long do I have to be vested for each plan?
3. For a 401K, how much does the university match with (and up to what percent)?

8. Tenure
1. What are the requirements for tenure?
2. What is the tenure process like? (Or, “Can you describe the tenure process?”)
3. Is there a standard expected number of publications? Do papers published before hire date count towards tenure?
4. How many committees do you serve on? How often do they meet?
5. Have you had anyone denied tenure? Did their previous reviews reflect this?
6. How often are tenure-track faculty evaluated?
7. Are there external reviewers for tenure? Who chooses the external reviewers?

9. Students
1. Is there a student run tutoring program?
2. Is there an active math club?
3. In the past, have any students presented at a conference (talk, poster, etc.)?
4. Do the students participate in any contests (math modeling, Putnam, etc.)?
5. How many math majors do you have?
6. Can you describe a typical non-major student? A math-major?
7. What are the main majors that the math department services?
8. What is the general education requirement for mathematics?
9. Is there an undergrad mentoring program?
10. Is there undergraduate research opportunities?

10. The Area (convince them you'd accept the job)
1. Do you offer language courses for new faculty?
2. What is the real estate market like? General housing costs (buying / renting)? Where do most faculty live?
3. What can you tell me about the area?
4. Is campus / city bike friendly?
5. Are there big cities close by?
6. What is the cost of living?
7. What types of companies are in the area?