Interviewing Conference

Is the Interviewing Conference mandatory?
Yes. By requiring attendance at the Interviewing Conference, we are able to provide you with the most efficient experience possible. All of the faculty, staff, and students involved with the SAAHE program (around 65 people) make themselves available during the Conference to participate in candidate activities. Coordinating the same people outside of the Conference dates would be very difficult and we could not guarantee you access to the same activities or people that are available during the Conference.

What if I can only attend part of the Conference?
Please contact Desirée Rieckenberg (desireer@tamu.edu) if you can only attend part of the Conference. Some accommodations can be made in certain circumstances. However, it is best for you to make every attempt to attend all of the Conference activities.

What is the attire for the Interviewing Conference?
We recommend business attire for the two required days of the Interviewing Conference (February 24 and 25th). For the optional activities on Wednesday, comfort is the key. If you choose to participate, you will be walking around our very large campus. Walking shoes are highly recommended as are jeans/shorts and t-shirts. We will send out information regarding the expected weather so you can pack accordingly.

Who will I have a chance to meet during the Interviewing Conference?
During the Conference, you will have the opportunity to meet and interact with most everyone who is involved with the SAAHE program including the faculty, professional staff in Student Affairs, and the current graduate students.

I’d like to stay with a current SAAHE student. What can I expect from that arrangement?
The assistance starts before the Conference when you are matched with a student host. The host will contact you and help you with transportation needs such as driving directions or airport pick-up (arriving in College Station only). Your host also will help you find the Conference check-in on the first day. If you forget something or just have some questions, they will be happy to accommodate you however they can.

I saw a “writing sample” on the Interviewing Conference schedule. What exactly is that?
It is an on-site, timed writing assignment. A short case study will be provided and you will be asked to write a response based on the information contained within the case study. The purpose of the writing sample is to assess your writing skills and learn more about how you process information.

Will I have any free time during the Conference?
It depends on your personalized schedule. There will be periods of down-time in most candidates’ schedules. However, that time may only come in 30-45 minute increments. Whatever free time you have in your schedule is yours to spend how you wish.
When do I receive my personalized schedule?
We make every effort to finalize schedules and send them to you via e-mail several days prior to the conference. If that is not possible due to unforeseen circumstances, you will receive your schedule when you check-in on Thursday morning.

Is it possible to change my personalized schedule?
There is a possibility of changing schedules, but it is remote at best. Candidate schedules are coordinated with those of faculty and hiring supervisors. That can entail balancing up to 50 individual schedules. A change on one person’s schedule can have an impact on other people’s schedules. If we can change something on your schedule without having to change someone else’s, we will gladly do so.

NOTE: If you have specific times you need to block off in your schedule, please let us know as soon as you can. It is easier to incorporate your scheduling needs into the planning process than it is to change it after all of the schedules have been set.

Graduate Assistantships

Do I have an opportunity to interview for all of the available assistantships?
We will accommodate as many assistantships interviews as we can. As we get closer to the conference date, you will be sent a web link and asked to rate your interest level in all of the assistantships. We will then do our best to schedule interviews based on your rankings. The number of interviews we are able to schedule for each candidate is dependent on how many candidates and positions we have.

What is the compensation for an assistantship?
Compensation varies for each assistantship. Monetary compensation ranges from $925-$1300 per month for 9 to 12 months (20 hours/week). Health insurance is provided with all positions but, in accordance with Texas state law, it does not start until 90 days after you have been employed. Graduate students have access to the on-campus health center which can cover basic medical needs and prescriptions during the waiting period for health insurance.

Are there any other perks for graduate assistants?
It varies for each assistantship. Most Residence Life assistantships come with a furnished apartment with cable, telephone, internet, and all utilities paid. Other assistantships offer financial support for professional development activities (conference attendance, workshops, etc.). Most assistantships provide private or semi-private offices with computers. In addition, graduate students are provided significant professional opportunities such as advising student organizations, working on Division committees, and participating in high profile projects such as assisting with national conferences.

Does the SAAHE program offer tuition waivers?
Yes. The tuition waiver covers 9 credit hours. While all of the assistantships we offer in the SAAHE program do currently qualify for the tuition waiver, it is best for you to confirm during your interviews that each position does intend on offering the tuition waiver for you. The status for each position could change and we want you to have the most current information. Please do not assume that waivers will be offered for each position. Go ahead and ask the question during your interview.
Am I guaranteed an assistantship if I am admitted into the program?
Assistantships are not guaranteed. However, it is essential that our graduate students have opportunities to apply what they are learning in the classroom and we work very hard to match graduate students to assistantships. It is rare that a student joins the program without an assistantship. When that happens, we do everything we can to find other opportunities for the student.

If I were to accept an assistantship, when would I start working?
Start dates are negotiated with your supervisor. Some students start early in the summer while others come to campus just before school begins in August. It is up to you to begin that conversation with your supervisor.

Selection Process

How are the decisions made as to who is offered admission into the SAAHE program?
When the conference concludes, all of the feedback we receive from your interviews and writing sample are considered along with your academic qualifications and background. The faculty members then determine which candidates would best fit within the SAAHE program.

Are there a set number of students admitted to the program each year?
No. However, we do have resource considerations such as available assistantships and faculty schedules that vary each year and factor into the decision-making process. Over the past few years, our entering class size has been around 15-17 people.

When will I know if I am offered admission?
We call all candidates one week after the conference concludes to let them know about their status with the program.

When do I find out if I am being offered an assistantship?
If you have matched with an assistantship, we will offer you the assistantship at the same time we offer admission.

How long do I have to make a decision?
You will be notified of your specific deadline at the conclusion of the Conference. This deadline allows candidates approximately four to five weeks to consider all of their options for graduate school while still providing our hiring supervisors time to fill their positions if candidates choose not to join the program.