

Astronomy Department Chair Interview Questions

1. Describe methods you have useful to study celestial phenomena, using a variety of ground-based and space-borne telescopes and scientific instruments.
2. What kind of experience do you have analyzing research data to determine its significance, using computers?
3. Share an example when you developed theories based on personal observations or on observations and theories of other astronomers.
4. What is the secret to raise funds for scientific research?
5. Walk me through how you collaborate with other astronomers to carry out research projects.
6. Share an approach to develop instrumentation and software for astronomical observation and analysis.
7. What is the most challenging part of directing the operations of a planetarium?
8. Describe an experience when you conducted question and answer presentations on astronomy topics with public audiences.
9. Tell me how you calculate orbits and determine sizes, shapes, brightness, and motions of different celestial bodies.
10. What kind of experience do you have reviewing scientific proposals and research papers? Have you found a useful method?
11. Share an effective approach to teaching astronomy or astrophysics.
12. Walk me through how you develop and modify astronomy-related programs for public presentation.
13. Describe an experience in which you identified the educational needs of your students and successfully developed a way to teach/train them.
14. Tell me how you organize, plan, and prioritize your work.

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15. What are some long-range objectives that you developed in your last job? What did you do to achieve them?

16. Share an experience when you applied new technology or information in your job. How did it help your company?

17. Give me an example of when you thought outside of the box. How did it help your employer?

18. Would you consider analyzing data or information a strength? How so?

19. Share an example of a time you had to gather information from multiple sources. How did you determine which information was relevant?

20. Share an experience in which your understanding of a current or upcoming problem helped your company to respond to the problem.

21. Name a time when you identified strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions to problems. What was the impact?

22. Share a time when you successfully used scientific rules or methods to solve a problem at work.

23. Please share an experience in which you presented to a group. What was the situation and how did it go?

24. How would you rate your writing skills? (Ask for an example that demonstrates great writing skills.)

25. Provide an example of a time when you were able to demonstrate excellent listening skills. What was the situation and outcome?

26. What kind of experience do you have with measuring radio, infrared, gamma, and x-ray emissions from extraterrestrial sources?

27. What have you found to be the best way to supervise students' research on celestial and astronomical phenomena?

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28. Share a time when you willingly took on additional responsibilities or challenges. How did you successfully meet all of the demands of these responsibilities? (Make sure the candidate is a self-starter and can demonstrate some initiative.)

29. Provide an example of when you were persistent in the face of obstacles.

30. Share an experience in which your ability to consider the costs or benefits of a potential action helped you choose the most appropriate action.