

This post is based on my experience as a 4x interviewee, 6x apprentice, 2x interviewer, and program advisor of 4 years.

Read on for my take on the [URAP](#) interview process.

1 Interview Format

How my lab conducted interviews:

1. We would invite potential apprentices to our meeting space at the [Computing Sciences building at LBNL](#) for a 15 minute interview
2. A 2-3 person panel of mentor and student project leads will describe the project in more detail and their expectations for you
3. If you're still interested in the project, they'd ask some of the common questions in Section 3
4. Lastly, they answer any questions that you may have for them.

Other Formats:

- Interviews at other labs often follow a similar format
- Some labs may ask for a short slide presentation of an example piece of your work, tour you around the lab, or host a lunch with the lab. I did these activities at some UCSF-based labs.
- Compared to being interviewed by a company from industry, I cannot speak to this topic since I have not experienced one from a company yet.

2 Three Interview Tips

1. Do at least one mock interview
2. Prepare 2-3 questions for them
3. Be yourself (cheesy, but in other words, don't just tell the interviewers what you think they want to hear)

3 Prepare For These Common Questions

General

- Tell us a bit about yourself
- Why are you interested in this project/lab?

Qualifications

- Tell us about yourself and your qualifications.
- Are you familiar with [skill listed probably in the URAP project description or student qualifications sections]?
- Do you have experience with [some method/tool]?

Logistics

- What is your availability to work on this project?
- What is your coursework load and other commitments this semester?
- Are you free during [meeting time and frequency] when we have our project meetings?
- How many hours do are you available to spend on this project?

Future

- How long would you like to commit to the project?
- What are your future academic goals?

Note. It is OK to say something along the lines of "I am not familiar with x and I do not have experience in y." Interviewers don't expect applicants to know everything. I did this and was still a successful applicant.

4 What to Wear

- Wear whatever you feel comfortable in!
- My only suggestion would be to avoid gym clothes.
- T-shirt and shorts? Jeans and a nice blouse? Suit? All are acceptable.

Good Luck!