Offer on the table: It’s negotiation Time!

Check list

_The more information you have, the more you look like you know what you’re doing, the stronger your position will be, and the less likely it is that an institution will try to take advantage of you._

**General Background**

**Know what you’re getting yourself into!**
- Be aware of what the budgetary situation in a state (or institution) is: this can make a difference in terms of the benefits plan you get offered!
  - California and Illinois are currently the two leading budgetary basket cases in the US!

**Get information about BENEFITS**
- Does the university pay into:
  - Social security?
  - Medicare?
- Retirement options
  - What are the choices?
    - Defined benefits
    - Self-managed
    - Is your retirement plan portable?
- Healthcare options
  - What is the annual deductible?
  - How easy is it to be referred to specialists at other medical institutions?
- Does the university offer loan programs to buy a house?
- Does the university have agreements with car companies to purchase new cars?

**Tax implications (esp. for internationals in any country)**
- reciprocal tax agreements might exist to exempt you from paying taxes in host country for first X number of years)
• Different states in the US have varying (or no) state income tax rate
  • What is the state income tax rate?
    o In Illinois, it’s 5%
    o In Texas, Delaware and N. Dakota it’s 0%

Internationals: Get information about Visa/Green Card help from university
• How will they help you (if at all)?
  o Will they pay for work visa?
  o Will they help with paperwork, etc.?

Does the university offer spousal hire opportunities?
• The existence of a spousal hire program can be a huge incentive to accept one offer over another
• How liberal/restrictive are these programs?

Other issues
• Does the university offer cheap housing?
• Are local schools good?
• Are there provisions for on campus child care?

Once you’re in the negotiation phase
• Contact your advisor and ask for advice!
• Contact friends at the same university (if you've got them) and ask about pay scales
• Look for published pay scales (public US universities), less flexibility at public universities than at private for negotiating starting salary
• What is the record on past pay raise scales?
• This is the only time you'll have power (until you’re a faculty “star”): so ask for everything now!

What can you ask for?

Your initial salary rate is what future raises, etc. are pegged to, so this is 
REALLY IMPORTANT
• GET EVERYTHING IN WRITING!
• Basic salary
• Are there opportunities for summer teaching (and therefore summer salary)
  o If you received NSF or other support for your dissertation, you’ll probably have more leverage (history of funding)
• Equipment (laptop and/or office computer)
• if you need lab start-up and space + RA support (things that you NEED to do the work they hired you to do),
  o leverage outside funding here, too
• moving costs
• conference travel support (or equivalent)
• annual research funds?

Teaching load + related issues
GET EVERYTHING IN WRITING
Negotiate course release time to:
• start up lab
• coordinate a service program (e.g., language program, certification degree, editorial duties, etc.)
• negotiate assistant(s) for coordinating program
• Have clear-cut reason WHY release time is beneficial to you and to the WHOLE department