

ACADEMIC JOB SEARCH FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Search Process

The process of searching for a faculty or research position within academia shares many commonalities with a general job search. The differences between the academic search and a general search may primarily be found in:

- The application materials required
- The amount of time needed to execute and complete the search
- Interview and negotiation experiences

Some institutions require applicants to use a credentials filing service to submit their application materials such as Interfolio (www.interfolio.com). This guide gives a general description of how to execute an academic job search. Each academic field may have unique requirements and processes, so we encourage you to speak with faculty advisors and professionals in your field in addition to reading this guide.

Application Materials

Applications for academic positions may require some traditionally requested materials such as a general application form, cover letter, transcripts, samples of work/writing, etc. Additional materials that may be required for academia include:

CV (Curriculum Vitae)

A curriculum vitae is a longer version of the traditional resume. Unlike a resume, there is no page limit and individuals are encouraged to include detailed information about a wide range of experiences spanning their entire career. Formatting considerations for a CV are the same as for a resume (consistent font, aligned bullets, balance of white space and text, etc.) and content headings may be similar to resume headings with the addition of other categories (e.g., “teaching experience,” “research experience,” “professional publications,”). Download a CV template from our website.

Research Statement

A research statement is an essay, usually one to two pages long, that describes your previous research experience as well as your intended trajectory and goals for future research. This document helps academic institutions understand how your research interests and activities fit with departments to which you are applying and how you might contribute to advancing both the department and the institution. You might talk about:

- How you will build on your prior research
- Awards, grants, special recognition your previous research has garnered
- Plans or ideas for how to fund future work

Speak with faculty advisors and professionals in your field regarding how to create a research statement for your specific field of interest.

Teaching Philosophy / Statement

A teaching philosophy is a one to two page essay that describes your approach to teaching. This is often used to help institutions understand what kind of instructor you will be and how your methods align with their teaching practices. This statement may include your thoughts and feelings about learning, a description of your teaching methods, and your opinion of the purpose of teaching and education. Some institutions may provide prompts for you to follow. If this is the case, the prompts will usually be listed in the general application form.

More on the Back!



Teaching Portfolio

Many individuals choose to create a portfolio with artifacts from their teaching experiences to showcase their teaching experiences. What you choose to include in your portfolio may vary depending on your discipline, experience, and the position, but some potential artifacts to include are:

- syllabi you have developed
- student work samples (make sure to acquire permission to use these), student feedback/evaluation
- sample assignments, lesson plans, etc.

You can use Squarespace, Wix, Google Site, and other online platforms to build your portfolio.

INTERVIEWING

An interview is an opportunity for the academic institution to learn more about skills, background, and ability to do the job and that you can successfully fit into the organization and its culture. Just like interviews for non-academic jobs, personality, confidence, enthusiasm, a positive outlook, and excellent interpersonal and communication skills count heavily in the selection process. There are a few components that are unique to an academic interview:

Conference Interview

Some institutions prefer to conduct interviews at annual meetings of professional organizations or at regional/national conferences. While interview groups vary in size, you may be one of several individuals interviewing on a lengthy schedule for the day. This interview may involve several academic departments/representatives, but the construction and size of the group can vary. Conference interviews are usually preliminary and are followed by a second-round on-campus interview. In addition to general interview preparation, be prepared to answer questions related to research goals and teaching experience.

Teaching Demonstration

Teaching demonstration is common for faculty interviews. This type of demonstrations usually occur in one of two forms. In the first form, you would be asked to teach an existing class on a topic of their scheduled curriculum. Be sure to ask for a syllabus if one is not provided. In the second form, you may be asked to teach a group of students the administration has gathered specifically to watch you teach. You may be given a topic or allowed freedom to decide what to present. In either form, it is recommended you treat the experience like any normal classroom session. If you have not taught in the past and are concerned about this.

Job Talk/ Research Presentation

A “job talk” is a unique opportunity for applicants to speak about their history, qualifications, and goals for the future to a variety of stakeholders at an institution. This seminar-style presentation may be given in front of a large or small audience of academic department representatives, institution staff/ administration, students, community partners, etc. The institution may or may not give you ideas for what to speak about in your presentation. Be prepared to talk about your:

- research
- philosophy of teaching
- goals and future directions for research
- desire to work for the institution

It may be helpful to prepare for this interview by participating as an audience member in seminars and job talks at your current graduate institution to see what works and what does not. You will also want to rehearse this speech for timing and to help if nerves set in on the day of the interview. At the end of the talk, there is generally an open forum question and answer session where members of the audience may engage with you.

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