




JACKSON SCHOOL OF GEOSCIENCES
CAREER CENTER WORKSHOP

THE ACADEMIC JOB SEARCH



The Process

- Prepare for the Job Search
 - Determine your personal & institutional fit
 - Develop your application and *dossier* materials
 - Prepare for the academic job interview
 - The job offer and negotiations
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Prepare for the job search

- Second year of graduate school
 - Research & publish & present
 - Consider who will recommend you
 - Build credentials and teaching experience
 - Academic hiring cycle:
 - Early September – October
 - Deadlines
 - Interviews & offers in the spring
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Personal & institutional fit

- Determine the kind of position and institution in which you will thrive
 - What do you want to teach & research?
 - Type of position
 - College or University?
 - Mission
 - Research & Teaching focus
 - Size, setting, location
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The Application & Dossier

- Tailor the dossier materials to the institution
- The **Application**
 - Curriculum Vitae (CV)
 - Letter of Application (Cover Letter)
 - A Teaching Statement (Philosophy)
 - A Research Statement (Goals)
 - Letters of Recommendation
 - Other – Abstract, published paper, transcripts, diversity statement, evaluations, syllabi

The Curriculum Vitae

- A **comprehensive statement** of:
 - Your academic background
 - Teaching experience, interests
 - Research experience, interests
 - Publications
 - Presentations
 - Honors
 - Professional Experience
 - Grants

The Curriculum Vitae (cont'd)

- A **comprehensive statement** of:
 - Professional Memberships
 - Professional Activities
 - Committee Work-Institutional Service
 - Community Work-Public Service
 - Additional Information
 - Citizenship
 - Languages
 - Interests

Letter of Application

- **Purpose:** to Introduce yourself to potential employer
- Describe your research and teaching experience
- Demonstrate your **intellect and writing ability**
- Demonstrate your **enthusiasm and interest**
- Indicate that you are **ready to teach**
- Prepare carefully with assistance

Letters of Recommendation

- Your dissertation advisor
- Two to four other professional reference letters
 - People who know your research and work
 - Faculty, research colleagues
 - Employers, other professionals familiar with your accomplishments
 - **Not** from family or friends
- Ask for specific Information
 - Descriptions and examples of your excellence

The Teaching Statement

- **Tailored** to the institution
- Demonstrate a **real commitment** to teaching
 - Keep it simple and short
 - Cite evidence concisely
 - Be humble
- Write about the courses you would like to teach (currently offered and new)
 - Balance w/ undergraduate and graduate courses
 - Illustrate the area you see yourself in

The Teaching Statement (cont'd)

- Show your **character**
 - Willingness to learn, pay attention, change
 - Open mind
 - Eagerness to learn
 - Know yourself
 - Be able to perform
 - Learn from honest assessment

The Teaching Statement (cont'd)

- Draw on your **Experiences**
 - As a student, scholar, human being
 - Lessons you have learned
 - Reflect on your own experiences
 - Transformative personal experience
- Avoid promising too much
 - Balance teaching and research

The Teaching Statement (cont'd)

- About your **style**
 - Keep it short – one to two double-spaced pages
 - Write well and carefully
 - Proofread, read aloud, no errors

The Research Statement

- The **research statement** tells your *focus*:
 - What you have been doing
 - In what direction you are going
 - How your research contributes to your field
- Along with your **CV, cover letter and letters of recommendation**, it helps hiring committees assess your:
 - Areas of specialty
 - Potential to acquire grants
 - Academic ability
 - Research needs
 - Compatibility with the department or school

What they look for

- **Focus:** Your future direction
- **Independence:** Potential for funding
- **Summary** of accomplishments
- **Your fit** with the institution
- The **resources** you will need to be successful in your new job
- That you think and communicate like a scientist

Research Statement Sections

- **Abstract**
 - Describes the content of this document
- **Research Background**
- **Current** research
 - Key results, importance, future
- **3-5 year** Research Agenda
 - Short- and long-term goals
 - Plans and approaches
- **Relevance**
 - To the Institution , your Discipline, and Society

A Quote from an Expert

“The strongest research statements present a readable, compelling, and realistic research agenda that fits well with the needs, facilities, and goals of the department. Research statements can be weakened by overly ambitious proposals, by lack of clear direction, by lack of big-picture focus, or if inadequate attention is given to the needs and facilities of the department or position.”

Peter Fiske, in *"The Truth about Teaching and Research Statements"*

Resources

- ScienceCareers.org

http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_development/

Peter Fiske, MIT - "The Truth about Teaching and Research Statements"

The Academic Job Interview

- Phone Interview (**screening**)
- **On-Site** Interview (1-2 day agenda)
 - Prepare a Research Presentation
 - Common Interview Questions
 - Meet with student groups
 - Interview with the hiring search committee
 - Dine and converse with faculty
 - Meet with department chair, dean provost, president

Job Offer and Negotiation

- How to accept or decline an offer
- **Negotiations** to consider:
 - Teaching load; Teaching assistant?
 - Research Budget
 - Laboratory Needs
 - Professional fees; travel
 - Summer support
 - Hardware & Software



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