



Academic Job Search

1. Types of Qualifications:

- A. “ABDs considered”: These posts state that they will consider candidates who are ABD (all but dissertation, or candidates who have completed all of their PhD requirements except for defending their dissertation), but will usually hire a candidate with a PhD.
- B. “PhD preferred”: These posts state that they will consider candidates who are ABD, but they, like the one above, usually hire a candidate with a PhD.
- C. “PhD required”: In order to apply for this position, you should have your PhD in hand or your dissertation defense date in the next couple of weeks.

2. Who Applies:

- A. ABD: Only apply if you have your defense date in sight. Most institutions will not hire a candidate without at least a set defense date.
- B. PhD: These candidates have already successfully defended their dissertations.
- C. Masters: Candidates with their masters may apply for some lectureship positions.

3. What to Expect:

- A. Depending upon when jobs are posted and how long the hiring committee takes to review applications, your interview invitation may not come until months after you apply.
- B. Some search committees are looking for specific kinds of candidates, so a rejection from one position does not mean that the same candidate would be rejected from other positions.

4. The Interview:

- A. In-person interviews: Dress professionally, but comfortably. Avoid clothing that lessens your ability to interact normally and relax.
- B. Skype interviews: Choose a setting with a professional background. Do not conduct your interview at home if there is the possibility that you will be interrupted by other people or pets. Use a LAN connection instead of relying on a wireless internet connection, which can go out during your interview. Practice looking into the camera during your interview, and avoid looking at yourself on the screen. Dress professionally, even if the interviewer cannot see your legs.
- C. Phone interviews: Use a landline instead of a cell phone, and try to secure a conference room where you can put the phone on speaker. Choose a location where you will not be interrupted.
- D. Create a list of questions that you would like to ask the interviewer regarding the institution or position. Your questions will demonstrate your interest in the position and your preparedness for the interview.

5. The Campus Visit:

- A. Beginning: You are being evaluated from the moment you get off of the plane to the moment you board to go home. You may be taken directly from the airport to dinner



with the committee, so dress professionally. Your driver may be a graduate student, but be prepared for your statements and behavior to be relayed back to the committee.

- B. Physical presentation: Dress for the interview, the presentation, the dinner, and for any other activity in a professional manner.
- C. Presentation advice: Each campus visit will have different requirements for the presentation. Create a unique presentation that speaks to those requirements, and do not simply present on your dissertation.
- D. Research: Research the school, the school's mission statement, and the committee members. Think about how you would fit in the institution, and market yourself as a colleague.
- E. Q&A: In the Q&A session, stand your ground and support your arguments, even when people disagree with you.

6. Making an Impression:

- A. Connect to the hiring committee: Connect to the hiring committee by showcasing yourself as a colleague. Demonstrate an interest in their research, and share your own research interests.
- B. Connect to the students: Research the student body and show how you can relate to those students, specifically nontraditional, minority, or first-generation students.
- C. Connect to the town: Ask questions about the area, and conduct your own research on the town.
- D. Above all, show how you will be a valuable colleague and positive addition to the department.

7. Types of Institutions:

- A. Research institutions:
 - I. These institutions are focused on research, and teaching facilitates research.
 - II. Be prepared to discuss what you have researched in the past, what you are researching presently, and what you wish to research in the future.
 - III. Discuss your grant-seeking process and successes.
 - IV. Discuss your willingness to collaborate with other faculty.
- B. Teaching institutions:
 - I. These institutions are focused on teaching, and research enhances teaching.
 - II. Be prepared to discuss your own experience with curriculum design and community involvement.
 - III. Develop and emphasize your teaching portfolio and your teaching philosophy.
- C. Small institutions:
 - I. These institutions typically see applicants in terms of how well they will fit in with existing faculty.
 - II. Smaller departments can be great, but research the town and the culture well before visiting. Culture clashes can be amplified in small departments.

8. Cultures of Institutions:

- A. Some institutions are family-oriented, and involve the families and children of faculty and students in many of their activities.



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- B. Some institutions view families as a distraction from faculty and students' responsibilities on campus, and will be less understanding of family-related absences or accommodations.
- C. Departments or institutions with a lot of diversity are more likely to value other cultures and perspectives than departments without diversity.
- D. A discipline-specific culture within a department or institution is one in which there is little collaboration between departments or disciplines.