

## **Job Search Preparations and the Application Process**

From David Braun, with cribbing from a version by Richard Feldman, and edited for SU 2010

### **Preparing For the Job Market During Your Second Through Fourth Years (and Beyond)**

Get suitable teaching experience and accumulate evidence of your excellence in teaching, such as course evaluations, syllabi you've created, etc.. (Questions to discuss: How important is teaching experience? How much of it should one have? What is evidence of teaching excellence and how does one accumulate it?)

Present papers at conferences. (Questions: How important are conferences? How many presentations should one have?)

Publish papers. (Questions: How important are publications? What should one try to publish? Where should one publish? How much should one try to publish?)

Pick areas of specialization, dissertation topic, and write dissertation. (Questions: Is it a good idea to pick an AOS that is in demand on the job market? Should one pick a "hot topic" for one's dissertation?)

Save money for job market expenses, such as interview clothing, photocopying, APA hotel, and travel to Eastern APA and other APAs. Acquire credit card to pay up-front for reimbursable travel to on-campus interviews.

### **Preparation To Be Done in Summer and Very Early Fall of Application Year**

The application process itself is time consuming and stressful. It will interfere with your getting other work done. You will get less done during this period than you predict. (This is true even if you have already heard about this and taken it into account in estimating how much you will get done.) The process will go much better if the following are true.

You have made substantial progress on your dissertation. This will enable you to describe accurately just what your dissertation is about in your abstract. It will enable you to produce a writing sample. It will enable your letter writers to predict that you will be done soon. Being close to finishing improves your candidacy considerably. Having a degree improves it even more.

You have completed your writing samples.

You have established your teaching credentials, including documentation on teaching effectiveness and ideas for courses.

You have begun preparing a talk to give in an on-campus interview.

You have joined the APA:

[http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/membership/b\\_member.html](http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/membership/b_member.html) (The APA homepage is <http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/index.html>.) You must be a member to access the APA's online job ads and use the job placement services at the APA meetings.

### **Late Summer - Early September**

Prepare your CV and abstract and continue working on any other parts of your dossier that still need work. Consult with your dissertation adviser and others about this.

Request letters of recommendation, including letters from the Graduate Teaching Director, suitable people in the Writing Program, and people outside UR (if any). Give letter writers written information they may need, including a draft of your CV, your writing sample, and your teaching evaluations, if relevant. Letter writers give their letters to Lisa, the Philosophy Department's Graduate Administrative Assistant (AA).

Finish preparing your dossier (CV, abstract, writing sample). Discuss these with your adviser and placement director. Send Lisa a copy of your vita, and send her a new one whenever you update it. It is best to have pdf versions of all of these to send out (so that you have full control of formatting).

Prepare to attend Eastern APA (Dec 27-30, 2007, in NYC): make hotel reservations **early** (the hotel convention often fills up), buy suitable interview clothing.

Check the online JFP listings. <http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/> . Log in (you must be a member to do this), and go to the JFP page.

### **Early October**

Pester your letter writers about getting their letters to the AA. Consult with the members of the placement committee (McKay, McDaniel) if there are problems with this. For 2010, Kris McDaniel will be the placement director through the fall.

Your dossier should be complete.

The first JFP arrives. (Publication date is Oct 8, but it may appear on the web earlier.)

The online JFP at the APA website may contain "late breaking" jobs that may not be listed in the latest printed JFP. Go to <http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/>, log in (you must be a member to do this), and go to the JFP page. There should be lots there this year between the October and November issues.

### **Mid October**

Some job notices not in the JFP are published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Some get sent around on the PhilUpdates listserv.

The department also receives some letters advertising jobs. These will be in a folder in the office. (Check with Lisa.) The placement officers may also distribute some ads by e-mail.

Job seekers should draw up tentative lists of jobs to apply for and review their lists with their advisers. Interpret the AOSs and AOCs listed in a job ad liberally, but don't apply if it will be a waste of your time and theirs. Give the list to Lisa, to your advisor and to Tom McKay. For Lisa's list, provide job number (from JFP or other

source) and full name and address, so that she can send your letters of recommendation.

A few jobs may have an application deadline before November 1. Some jobs will have deadlines of November 1, more have deadlines of November 15, some have deadlines between November 15 and December 1.

### **Early October - November**

Write your individual application letters. Especially for smaller schools, make sure that they know why you are interested in their job and plan to stay there forever.

Photocopy all the materials you will send in your applications. This includes everything other than the letters of recommendation. Those in Syracuse can send their applications from the office, and the department will pay for photocopying and postage. Indicate placement as the purpose on the photocopy log. But you must do your photocopying after hours, not when the office staff members are in the office (so that they have free access to the machine for other business). Prepare envelope with the Syracuse University Philosophy Department as the return address (so that the mail room does not charge you for postage).

### **Mid-November Through Early December**

Patiently wait for responses to the first round of applications.

Check the online JFP.

Second hardcopy of JFP arrives. (Publication date: Nov 5). Also, check for late-breaking jobs on JFP Online

Repeat application process described above.

Speak with your adviser and Kris McDaniel about how to prepare for your mock interview and real interviews. Schedule a mock interview (whether you have any interviews scheduled or not).

### **December**

Participate in mock interviews with departmental faculty.

Make final preparations for interviews and revise answers to questions in light of what you learn at the mock interview. Repeat mock interview as needed.

Complete preparation of a talk to give if you are invited for a campus interview shortly after the APA meeting.

Keep advisor and placement director informed about interviews scheduled.

Get information about departments that schedule interviews with you - try to find out who will be doing the interviewing and learn their interests. Find out about their programs.

**Late December (27-30)**

Attend the Eastern APA. Check the APA's placement service for additional interview possibilities. (Probably none.)

Inform placement director and advisor about interviews.

**January - June and beyond**

Ideal case: Go for on-campus interviews in January-February. Weigh offers. Accept best offer.

As necessary, repeat application procedure with later JFPs .

Attend Pacific and Central APA meetings if you have interviews there. (The Central Division meetings are now in February, early enough to play a role in hiring/placement activity. There is usually very little hiring/placement activity at the Pacific Division meetings.)

Wait for news about openings announced in the spring and early summer. These are usually one-year or part-time positions. Since the early 1970s (at least), most students have started their careers in one-year positions. Often this has turned in to longer term employment.

**Other Advice**

The APA website has policy statements about interviewing, etc., mostly directed at interviewing departments.

Brian Leiter has advice and information from a variety of sources at this URL:  
[http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/advice\\_for\\_academic\\_job\\_seekers/index.html](http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/advice_for_academic_job_seekers/index.html)