

Steps in the Academic Job Application Process

Revised 9-25-17

Fall

1. Search for initial postings of positions. Deadlines generally range from Sept 1-Dec 15 for full-time, tenure-track positions.

a. Some places to look for postings:

H-Net job guide (<https://www.h-net.org/jobs/home.php>)

AHA Career Center (<https://www.historians.org/jobs-and-professional-development/aha-career-center>)

Chronicle Vitae (The Chronicle of Higher Ed)
(https://chroniclevitae.com/job_search/new)

2. Notify letter writers of need for letters as soon as possible.

a. Best Practice: A least one-month notice for first letter.

3. Prepare application materials.

a. First-round materials always include: cover letter and CV.

b. First-round materials sometimes include: 2-3 letters of recommendation, writing sample, statement of teaching philosophy and/or research agenda, diversity statement, and/or sample syllabi.

c. *Craft materials specific to the hiring institution.* Review their current faculty distribution and specialties; course catalog; department programs and mission statements, etc. Distribute 2-3 sentences throughout the cover letter that show that you know something the place that you are applying to.

d. If you mention in your cover letter that you can or would be interested in teaching a specific course, be prepared to share a simple syllabus or outline of a syllabus for that course in later rounds.

4. Share draft of required first-round application materials with primary advisor and other letter writers.

a. Do this early. It's better to show your letter writers an early draft than to wait until the last minute to share your statements.

b. *More specific letters = better overall application.*

5. Submit application materials.

a. Ask a friend to read over for obvious typos (including misspellings of faculty names in hiring department).

b. Submit by the "we will begin to review applications on" date. Don't wait for the official closing date.

Late Fall / Winter

1. Look out for emails asking for a second round of materials.

a. Second-round materials sometimes include: 2-3 letters of recommendation, writing sample, statement of teaching philosophy and/or research agenda, diversity statement, and/or sample syllabi.

- b. If necessary, ask for up to an extra week beyond the deadline that the department provides. Don't ask for more than that.
- c. If the department does not give you a deadline, it's okay to write the committee chair to ask for one.

2. Schedule a Skype, phone, or conference interview, if invited.

- a. Notify the Grad Placement Committee (here) as soon as you receive the interview request. We will set up a mock interview for you.
- b. Ask the committee chair who will be at the interview, if they do not provide that information.

3. Practice, practice, practice for the first interview.

- a. Be prepared to answer the questions that the committee will almost always ask: describe your research; what is the significance of your research; what courses would you be interested in teaching; how would you teach Course X, Y, or Z (or, what kinds of readings would you assign students for Course X, Y, or Z); do you have any questions for us?
- b. Use your question time to show that you have looked closely at the hiring department and institution. Question such as "How do you find the students?" are generic and tedious. Questions such as, "I see that you offer X but not Y. I was wondering if there was a reason for that, and whether the department would be interested in having Y? Because I'd be interested in doing Y" are inspiring and engaging.
- c. Practice answering these questions in less than 1 minute.
- d. If interview is on Skype: set up a mock Skype call with a friend to check microphones, visuals, and backgrounds. (Try to have books in the background, not dirty laundry or Cheerios.)
- e. Go out for a movie or otherwise relax the night before the interview. You want to be loose and engaging (in so far as possible!).
- f. At the end of the interview, ask when you can expect to hear back from the committee about the next round. It shows that you are genuinely interested.

4. Schedule a campus visit, if invited.

- a. Notify the Grad Placement Committee (here) as soon as you receive the campus visit request. We will set up a mock job talk for you.
- b. Work closely with dissertation committee members, informal faculty advisors, and Grad Placement Committee to prepare for visit.

Winter / Early Spring

1. Negotiate, negotiate, negotiate the offer.

- a. You can and should negotiate a job offer. Yes, even if you don't have any other offers and you wouldn't dream of saying no to this job.
- b. Work closely with dissertation committee members, informal faculty advisors, and Grad Placement Committee to navigate this process.