

Academic Job Search Timetable

Note: Compiled with appreciation of the academic job search timelines that colleagues have created at peer institutions.

Major Action Items Two Years Before Your Position Would Begin

- Research the job search timeline in your field by connecting with informed faculty.
- Review your accomplishments and set goals to address areas that the hiring market values in addition to your specific academic knowledge. You might seek additional professional development in areas such as:
 - pedagogy and teaching;
 - presenting;
 - working with data;
 - technology in the classroom;
 - budget management;
 - grant writing;
 - universal design.
- Conduct an Internet search to get a feel for what is posted when and where (professional association sites, higher education publications, university/college employment sites, etc.).
- Look at postings to find out what application materials are typically required.
- Identify opportunities to attend and present at future conferences.
- Determine in which publications and discipline-specific journals you seek to get published.
- Explore if you can sit on any hiring committees in your department to broaden your understanding of the process from that side of the hiring table.
- Volunteer for a leadership role within a professional association or student group to which you belong.
- Think about the kind of institution(s) that would be your best fit.
- Consider where in the country you would be willing to move.
- Recognize that you will want to have a Plan A, Plan B, and so on, and begin to identify how best to move forward with those plans.

Major Action Items 18 Month Before Your Position Would Begin

- Talk to your advisor and with other faculty whom you respect, to gather impressions about how they view your readiness to enter the academic job market.
- Have a completion date in sight for your dissertation, as hiring committees may not consider a candidate without a Ph.D. in hand.
- Continue involvement with conferences and consistently seek opportunities to get published.
- Inform your contacts about your progress and seek input from those you respect.
- Learn if you need to take any specific steps to request letters of reference from the people who you desire to provide them.
- Continuously collect and organize all the materials that you will likely need when you embark on preparing your application materials.
- Update or write your vita.
- Attend conferences in your discipline and make it a point to present and/or network.
- Begin to identify specific institutions that are of interest to you in the geographic areas to which you are willing to move.
- Think about yourself as a faculty member and reserve time to explore areas of future research and possible funding opportunities.
- Concentrate on the academic job search and continue to take action steps on your other plans.
- Join others who are undertaking an academic job search as there are benefits to working side-by-side with those who are going through a similar experience.
- Remove, "I just haven't had time." from how you define yourself.

Major Action Items One Year Before Your Position Would Begin

- Create a near final version of your vita.
- Identify and choose a credential service to help organize and facilitate your job search.
- There are both free and paid services out there like Interfolio and Vitae.
- Attend academic job search programs offered at your institution and/or through your professional affiliations or campus department.
- Identify specific application materials that you need to create and begin drafting and sharing with faculty and advisors for edits.
- Determine if you need a portfolio and begin to prepare one, getting input from those who have experience.
- Arrange for letters of reference to be written and meet with everyone who will support your search to share any particulars about what you hope they speak to in their reference.
- Keep working on your dissertation and research.
- Learn to effectively plan in ways you might not have had to in the past.
- Keep current with research and emerging topics in your discipline as your interviews will likely test your knowledge and ask you to also speak about your future research plans as a faculty member.
- Attend conferences even if you do not have first-round interviews. You never know whom you will meet and how they might be a resource to you in uncovering positions that are not yet posted, but emerging.
- Engage others to help you practice your interview skills (phone interview, conference interview, campus interview) and make sure that you are practicing out loud with others and not only in your head.
- Develop your ideas about the presentations and/or teaching demonstrations that you might give as part of a campus interview.
- Practice your delivery of presentation(s) and teaching demonstrations in front of knowledgeable peers and faculty

Major Action Items The Summer Before Your Position Would Begin

- Prepare your application materials, absolutely everything, and seek lots of feedback. It is not uncommon to have 5-10 revisions on each of your written materials.
- Develop one or two syllabi for courses you would like to teach. One course might be introductory in nature while another might be for an advanced course.
- If you have not done so already, provide your letter writers with any content that will help them to write the best letter possible in support of your application.
- Strengthen your LinkedIn profile to convey you are of the faculty member mindset.
- Ask the faculty in your department if they can recommend any recent new hires with whom you can speak about their academic job search.
- Engage in action items for your Plan B, Plan C, etc.
- Keep everyone in your support network informed of your progress, readiness, and next steps.
- Know what you are going to wear and feel comfortable in it.
- Research institutions and departments for which you would like to work and make note of how they describe their culture, the learning environment, expectations for students, etc.
- Look at the faculty profiles within the departments for which you would like to work and gain a feel for the work of the individuals.

Major Action Items During The Fall Application Cycle & Beyond

- Actively seek out job listings and apply, apply, apply for any that are in your geographic areas of preference and for which you are a strong fit. Don't waste your time or that of a hiring committee.
- Confirm that your dossier is complete.
- Commit to staying organized as the jobs to which you apply will undoubtedly require different application materials and you will want to be sure that you provide exactly what they seek.
- Remind people in your support network to keep their eyes open to possibilities.
- Tweak your application materials as needed for each of the jobs to which you apply.
- Develop questions that you seek to ask during your interviews and make sure that the answers cannot be found by simply looking at the institution's or department's web site.
- Learn more about your strengths, weaknesses, and fit within institutions with each interview that you have and adjust your search.
- Continue to practice your interviewing and presentation skills.
- Consistently send thank you notes to those you encounter during interviews. While one institution may not hire you, one of the committee members may have a colleague at a different institution and recommend you as a possible fit. Everyone is a future colleague at this point through either future employment or professional association involvement.
- Continue to look for newly emerging jobs.
- Read about faculty negotiations and involve those you respect in conversations about strategies for negotiating in your field.
- How's that Plan B or Plan C? Recognize that your Plan B or Plan C might provide you with the opportunity to become a stronger candidate during the next year's cycle of interviews.
- Consistently thank those in your network as they support you and share your successes and/or seek additional advice as the application cycle unfolds.
- Think strategically about what you might do to benefit your future candidacy in next year's hiring cycle.
- If you accept an academic position think about ways that you can share your knowledge with the students from your graduate school department who are soon to embark on an academic job search.