

Preparing Materials for the Job Market

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Sept 15, 2015

General Advice

- Be honest
- Be specific
- Be confident, yet humble
- Ask for help
- Write and revise (and revise....)
 - NO spelling, grammar issues!!!!

Job Market Materials Matter!!!

“The most valuable asset on the job market is a high-quality polished job talk” – Cawley

But, you need to secure the opportunity to give the talk!

You will need.....

- C.V. or resume
- Cover letter
- Job Market Paper / writing sample

- And sometimes
 - Statement of teaching philosophy / teaching effectiveness
 - Statement of research interests

C.V. / Resume

- Some resources
 - Non academic resumes: [link](#)
 - Academic: [link](#)

Cover letter

- Different letters for academic and non-academic positions
 - Generally, non-academic letters are short (1 page)
 - Provide contact information
 - Highlight skills relevant to the job
 - Briefly explain why you are interested in the job
 - Good examples here [link](#) and [link](#)
 - Academic letters are usually longer (2 pages)
 - Might have multiple versions (tenure track, non tenure track, teaching focused)

What goes in your cover letter?

“For jobs that are a particularly good match, you should tailor your cover letter to explain why; liberal arts colleges in particular may be looking for signals of applicant interest and match; see Holmes and Colander (2007). You do not have to tailor every cover letter; most can simply state that you are applying for the job they advertised, explain your research fields and job market paper topic, and state that you would welcome an opportunity to meet with their search committee at the ASSA/AEA meetings.” (Cawley, 2014)

What goes in your cover letter?

- Intro
 - Why you are writing (applying for a job)
 - Who are you –your pedigree (degree(s)) and completion dates
- A concise, but “complete” description of your research and why it matters
- A description of other relevant experience
 - Job, teaching, relevant leadership experience
- Why you are interested in this job/ why you fit
- Closing
 - Enclosures, looking forward to opportunity to learn more/ meet, contact information

Sell, but don't oversell yourself

- Cover letters are an opportunity to
 - Highlight your qualifications (provide more detail than your c.v. will)
 - Provide relevant information not in your c.v.
- Be confident, but not arrogant
 - Avoid generalizations, “braggy” language

“I Plan to Take Full Advantage of My Acquired Skills!”

From [The Professor is In](#) A line from a letter last week:

“In my own lab I plan to take full advantage of my acquired skills and use the XXX equipment to further investigate xxxx.”

This kind of language is braggy and at the same time, completely devoid of meaning. Who doesn't take advantage of acquired skills? When a person washes their dishes, are they not taking advantage of acquired skills? ...

If it is a thing that can be said of LITERALLY ALL HUMAN ENDEAVOR then it adds nothing of value to your candidacy for this job.

...it's “bragging the obvious.” Don't brag about engaging in generic human behavior! Job documents are short. Don't squander words. Make every word count, with substance and distinctive meaning about you and your profile.

To Tailor or Not?

- Tailoring sends a signal of interest
 - Happy medium? Choose your “top ten” and go the extra mile
- At LEAST, check the correct title of the position and the school!

How might you tailor?

- Why you for this job?
 - What specific skills/experience do you have that is relevant for the job listing?
 - Courses you've taught or TA'd for?
 - How your research complements research of faculty in the department
 - Experience or preference for the location
 - Alum of the department?

Teaching Philosophy

What is a Teaching Philosophy Statement?

A teaching philosophy statement is a narrative that includes:

- your conception of teaching and learning
- a description of how you teach
- justification for why you teach that way

Teaching Philosophy

- Generally 1 -2 pages
- Write in present tense, first person
- Use informative headings
- Include specific examples
 - Your teaching strategies, assignments, etc.
- “Own” your philosophy
 - Avoid general (and empty) statements such as “students learn best by doing”

But I haven't taught?!

- You have been a student (for a long time!)
- You have likely been a teaching assistant
- Good advice here for writing a teaching philosophy when you haven't taught much or even if you have: [link](#)
- Other good resources:
 - [ISU, CELT](#); [Michigan](#); [Cornell](#)

Where to start?

- Questions to help you get started:
 - Why I teach
 - What I teach
 - How I teach
 - How I measure my effectiveness
- Or choose a theme and develop it
 - Research current teaching methods in the field
 - Outline your plan for being a good teacher

Research Statement

- A one (maybe 2?) page description of your research agenda
 - What is the over arching theme of your research and why does it matter?
 - (maybe?) Why do you do it/ why are you passionate about it?
 - What specific projects have you done thus far
 - What's next – future work
- More guidelines and examples here: [link](#)

Questions???