



# Job Search Timeline

## *PhD Student Seeking an Academic Position*

### Career Development Center

The timetable for the academic job search is only relatively standardized. In many cases recruiting for academic positions revolves around initial screening interviews conducted at major annual professional conferences; followed by comprehensive interviews and research presentations ('job talks') on the institution's campus. But this is not true in all cases. In general, you will apply for academic positions in the late summer or fall, a full year before you plan to begin your new position. Work with your advisor and departmental faculty to thoroughly understand the time-table and application processes applicable to your particular field.

## Years 1-4

- ⊗ Use faculty members from your department together with Deans/Administrators to help you to identify relevant University resources
- ⊗ Attend department orientations, training sessions offered by the library, and the Center for Teaching and Learning, etc.
- ⊗ Identify fellowship/grant/scholarship opportunities early (many graduate student fellowships are for 1st or 2nd year graduate students - e.g., NSF fellowships; other fellowship application processes may take several months to 1 year to complete)
- ⊗ Explore areas of research with different faculty members, complete your coursework expeditiously, and start your professional networking: attend departmental events, seminars, professional conferences and lectures.; Consider presenting at these events
- ⊗ Be a teacher assistant for a few classes to gain teaching experience
- ⊗ Gain supervisory experience through mentoring an undergraduate research assistant
- ⊗ Volunteer or take part in outside experiential opportunities
- ⊗ Audit or take classes at OSU in areas outside or adjacent to your area of primary research to expand your breadth of knowledge
- ⊗ Attend workshops on grantsmanship, publishing, presenting/public speaking, and teaching offered through multiple departments on campus.
- ⊗ Try to attend and present a poster or slide presentation at one professional conference a year starting in your 2nd year; Discuss presentation opportunities with your advisor
- ⊗ Participate in the scholarly life of your department - arrange colloquia or symposia, attend presentations, help on committees where possible
- ⊗ Continue applying for grants
- ⊗ Submit articles for publication (ideally in refereed journals - discuss with your advisor), identify opportunities for collaboration on book chapters, edited volumes, and other publications and/or research with professors
- ⊗ Create a Curriculum Vitae (CV) as early as possible and keep it up-to-date by reviewing it every six months. It is easier to make new entries as they occur, than it is to retroactively create an entire CV
- ⊗ With your advisor, begin considering who will comprise your dissertation committee
- ⊗ Discuss with your advisor the application processes and search committee expectations of candidates in your field or area of specialization; Attend workshops or panel presentations on this topic
- ⊗ By Fall or Spring of Year 4, have your dissertation proposal approved by your (three) core committee members
- ⊗ Start outlining chapters and writing your dissertation in the Spring of Year 4, continuing over the summer prior to Year 5. Attend writing workshops, attend dissertation support groups, and write with a dissertation partner to keep each other on track
- ⊗ If you are planning to begin applying for positions in the fall of Year 5 (to start working the following fall), you will need to plan out your year carefully as the application process, dissertation completion, and other obligations (e.g., teaching) will be taxing



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# Year 5 (or Final Year of PhD Program)

## Preceding Summer

- Update your CV for your academic job search
- Have your CV reviewed by others: Make an appointment for a review at Career Services; as well as and seek opinions from your advisor(s) and colleagues/friends
- Make a list of faculty members, advisors, and others from whom you are planning to request a letter of recommendation or ask to be a reference
- Contact your recommendation writers AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (over the summer - or earlier - is best, when they have more time to prepare your recommendation letter) and set up a meeting with them to discuss your career plans. This will assist them greatly with writing specifically about your relevant strengths and skills in their letter.
- Review job openings in the Chronicle of Higher Education, on professional association websites and journals, and on other relevant locations - discuss them with your advisor
- Start drafting cover letters for use with your applications; These letters - and all written materials in your applications - can be reviewed by career counselors and your advisor/departmental faculty
- Prepare your Statement of Teaching Philosophy, if requested by an application
- Prepare a summary Statement of your Research or dissertation - again, if requested by an application
- Gather application materials together: course syllabi you have designed, teaching evaluations, submitted/published articles, conference abstracts, transcripts, etc.
- If you haven't already done so, join professional associations within your field (if you are not already a student member)

## Early Fall

- Check job postings in The Chronicle of Higher Education and in other professional association websites and journals
- Ensure all your letters of recommendation are ready, and send thank you notes to your recommenders; Keep them your references apprised of your application progress
- Finalize your CV, cover letters, and other application materials
- Work with career counselors at Career Services and advisors/faculty in your department to have your application materials reviewed
- Prepare and rehearse your job talk presentation
- Deliver your job talk or research at departmental colloquia, lab meetings, and regional conferences
- Keep in close contact with your advisors regarding the positions to which you are applying; they may be able to network on your behalf



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- Send in applications
- Prepare for first-round interviews

### Late Fall

- Present a poster or presentation about your research at professional conferences
- Expect to network and undergo first-round interviews at (typically) professional conferences
- Continue applying for positions
- Send thank-you notes following any interviews
- Set aside time for campus visit interviews ("fly outs"), which typically occur between January and March

### Spring

- Go on campus visits for interviews, job talks, and teaching demonstrations
- Send thank-you notes
- You will begin to hear back from tenure track and post doc positions
- Work with a career counselor and/or your advisor on negotiating your job offer(s) - ALWAYS take the time needed to consider all of your options
- If you have not yet found a position, don't worry! In many fields, the academic job market is very tight, and new PhDs (or post-docs) often do not get offers in their first year of applying. Because of this, it is important to pursue contingency plan(s) to sustain and help you develop professionally through the next year - or two: adjunct or visiting professorship teaching opportunities, post-doctoral research, etc. It often takes more than one year to find a position - Discuss your options with your advisor or with a counselor