

## **GOING ON THE JOB MARKET: A PREVIEW**

### **Materials you need to go on the market**

1. Substantial writing sample of ~20 pages. CW's may choose to use mainly published work, but you should have some samples of new work prepared to send as well. Non-CW's should revise and polish material from a strong, finished chapter of the dissertation, and should have at least one other chapter complete by the time applications go out (keep in mind that you will need to be prepared to give a job talk, and that this will have to be different from your writing sample).
2. Boilerplate letter of application to chair/search committee. Animate what's distinctive about your research/creative work and your teaching.
3. Updated curriculum vitae (aka c.v., vita).
4. For non-CW PhD's, a dissertation abstract (aka précis), which consists of a paragraph or two introducing the main argument of the dissertation, followed by paragraph summaries of each chapter. Create a lively sense of what's innovative and controversial about your arguments.
5. Updated dossier (3-5 current letters of recommendation, including a letter focused mainly on your teaching by someone who has seen you teach, preferably someone other than your dissertation director).

Other materials sometimes requested, useful to have ready to send:

1. Additional dissertation chapters, writing samples
2. Copies, offprints or page proofs of published work
3. "Teaching Portfolio," usually consisting of items below
4. Statement of teaching/pedagogical philosophy
5. Sample syllabi
6. Copies of course evaluations
7. Copies of teaching reports (1-2 reports on observations of your class by department faculty)

### **Rough calendar for what to do and what to expect**

#### **Spring/early summer**

1. Prepare your writing sample. This is the single most important document in your job materials.
2. Consult sample job materials (on file on Blackboard) and begin preparing your own.
  - Boilerplate job letter that can be tailored to jobs with different emphases (if you are applying in more than one field of specialization, you will want a boilerplate letter for each field)
  - Updated c.v.
  - For non-CW's, a boilerplate dissertation précis that can be adapted for jobs with different disciplinary emphases
3. Submit writing sample to dissertation director & committee members for feedback (the earlier in the summer the better)
4. Make revisions and resubmit to your director (and any other appropriate committee members). Continue revising until your director thinks your sample is market ready.
5. Request letters of recommendation from your dissertation director, appropriate committee members, and anyone else who may seem appropriate. Be sure you have requested one letter from someone who will mainly address your teaching. This person should have observed you in the classroom at least once. This letter will not be the same as the teaching reports you have on file in the graduate office, but you may request a letter from someone who has written such a report in the past (and who therefore may have substantial knowledge of your teaching). Consider soliciting letters from well-known non-UIC writers or scholars who are familiar with your work. If you have been on the market before, begin

requesting updated letters from your recommenders. When you make your request for updates, send your most current cv and any relevant materials that may help your recommenders speak knowledgeably about new developments in your scholarship or credentials.

### **August/early September**

1. During the final weeks of August, submit boilerplate job letter, CV, and precis to your dissertation director and, ideally, other committee members who can give you feedback no later than second week of classes.
2. Revise materials based on feedback from committee.
3. Set up an account with Interfolio, our online dossier manager. Charles Watkins will provide you with instructions and a code that will pay the maintenance fee for your account (you will pay the postage for your dossier mailings). DO NOT SET UP THIS ACCOUNT UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF FALL SEMESTER WHEN YOU ENTER THE MARKET – ACCOUNTS EXPIRE IN 5 YEARS SO YOU WILL WANT TO GET MAXIMUM USE.
4. Submit revised materials to graduate director and placement director by September 20.
5. Meet with placement director individually and with dissertation director & committee, and continue revising until the materials are market-ready.
6. Attend the fall placement meeting (usually takes place sometime around the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week of classes).
7. Email [engljobs@uic.edu](mailto:engljobs@uic.edu) when you have questions about application protocols, Interfolio, etc.
8. Confirm date for a lecture or reading in the Department Colloquium for any open Friday before the last day of classes in the fall.
9. Materials should be market-ready by October 5. Copies of final letter, CV & précis (if applicable) should be given to both the graduate director and the placement director.

### **Mid-September to Early October**

1. MLA job list comes out – keep a running list of jobs to which you will be applying. See attached sheet for other job advertisement venues – some of these will also have jobs with fall deadlines.
2. Tailor job letter & precis to specific jobs. Be sure to research each department.
3. Proof all materials carefully before sending them out. Make certain your job letter, cv and (if applicable) précis meet the deadline advertised for the job.
4. Keep careful records of what you send where.
5. Job talks begin on Fridays as part of the Department Colloquium – you should attend as many of these as you can – including those not in your field.

### **Late October/November**

1. Requests begin arriving for additional materials (dossiers, writing samples, teaching materials, etc.) – fill requests promptly, and keep records of what you send where. Notify your dissertation director and the placement director of all such requests.
2. Attend the November placement meeting (usually scheduled just before Thanksgiving Break) to discuss what to expect in job interviews.
3. As you prepare for interviews, develop several concise, interesting statements that you can deliver at will about your current writing projects (CW) or about the argument of your dissertation (non-CW), as well as of other research/writing interests you have or hope to pursue.
4. Participate in mock interviews with classmates in preparation for a mock interview with faculty.
5. Schedule a mock interview with faculty to take place during finals week.

### **Late November/early to mid-December**

1. Invitations (usually via phone or email) for MLA interviews begin– keep a schedule handy at all times to avoid conflicts.
2. Last chance for mock interview with faculty before MLA.
3. Notify your dissertation director, the placement director, and the director of graduate studies of all interview requests.
4. Research Universities and Departments with which you have interviews.

### **MLA/January-April**

1. Invitations for campus visits from institutions who interviewed you at the MLA. Notify your dissertation director, the placement director, and the director of graduate studies of all campus interview requests.
2. Notify your dissertation director, the placement director, and the director of graduate studies of any job offer you receive. Never accept an offer at the time when you receive it. Thank the person and arrange to be back in touch with any questions you have before making a decision.