



Academic job search 101

GradSWE at UA

GradSWE



- GradSWEUA is part of the international SWE network
- Goals
 - Be a support community for graduate students and professionals on STEM at UA
 - Improve women representation on STEM field (students and Staff Members)
 - Diverse voices brings better solutions!
- Academic Job Search Series
 - Help you in every step of the way!
 - Work together towards our professional goals.
 - Everyone is welcome!
 - Thank you for your suggestions on the sign-up form.
 - Use the form to be a part of this series.
 - Contact: jsnunes@crimson.ua.edu

Sign-Up form



Speakers

- Dr. Joshua Bittle
 - Served on faculty search committees
- Dr. Hyun Jin Kim
 - Started faculty position in 2020
 - Served on faculty search committee 2020 - 2021
- Dr. Xinwu Qian
 - Started faculty position in 2020
- Dr. Beth Todd
 - Served on numerous search committees since 1991
 - Undergraduate Program Director (teaching-related interview questions)
- Dr. Taber Wanstall
 - Will start a tenure-track position at the University of Dayton, Fall 2021

Overview

- Application
 - Cover letter, CV, research, teaching, and diversity statements
 - Deadlines: September – before March
 - Some schools will ask for rec letters when you're applying
- Phone/video interview
 - November – April
 - Before on-site invitation, schools generally request 3-5 letter of recommendation/or phone calls
- On-site interview (virtual 2nd round interview during pandemic)
 - Late fall – spring
 - Search committee makes a recommendation
- Offer and negotiation with Dept. Head (2nd visit)

School and position types

We are going to focus on doctorate-granting universities in the US by Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education

- “Very high research activity (R1)” doctoral universities
- “High research activity (R2)” doctoral universities

There are other types, such as master’s colleges & universities, baccalaureate colleges, associate colleges, special focus institutions, and tribal colleges.

We will also focus on tenure-track positions with research and teaching duties. There are other positions, such as lecturer, research scientist/professor, adjunct positions with different interview process.

Job boards and announcements

- <https://www.academickeys.com/>
 - <https://academicjobsonline.org/>
 - Department/college/university websites
 - Professional societies
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- Setup email alerts from online job boards
 - Visit job boards starting summer before, since some schools have early application deadlines (Sept. - Oct.)

Cover letter and CV

- Cover letter
 - 1-2 pages
 - Indicate the position you're applying for
 - Short paragraphs on research and teaching philosophy
 - Some schools ask for a paragraph on diversity as well
- CV
 - Education
 - Research
 - Teaching (teaching assistant experience)
 - Awards (scholarships, fellowships, honors, etc.)
 - Service

Research statement

- Usually 1-5 pages
- Present your research vision for next 5 years
- About 3 concrete research ideas & make sure to highlight your achievements
- Use figures and citations effectively
- Mention potential funding sources and collaboration

Teaching statement

- Usually 1-2 pages
- Present your teaching vision, skills, experience
- Highlight your teaching experience
 - Did you teach/TA any courses?
 - Did you get good teaching evaluation scores from students?
 - You can share anecdotes or include comments from students on official teaching review forms
- Mention what courses you can teach

Diversity statement

- Usually 1-2 pages
- Present your vision for diversity and inclusion
- Highlight your experience
 - Did you have leadership positions/participate in any relevant activities/initiatives?

Phone/video interview

- About 30 mins
- Set of questions that the committee has to ask about current and future research, teaching, funding, service, diversity, etc.
- You can totally practice and prepare answers in advance

On-site interview

- Research seminar (+ chalk talk) and meetings with faculty, admin, and students
- Tour with local realtor (optional)
- 2-3 days (+ traveling)
- Scheduled usually at the last minute
 - “Can you fly in next week?”
- Interview itinerary provided usually at the last minute
- During pandemic, many schools had to do virtual 2nd round interviews, but shortlisted candidates could still request on-site visit (with family)

Offer and negotiation

- Startup funding for research facility and equipment
- Salary
 - For public schools, you can easily find this information
 - For other types, use network (advisor, mentors, friends, career center, Future PI Slack, etc. to gather more information to better negotiate)
- Summer salary
- Graduate student
 - Are they providing RA or TA? How many students for how long?
- Teaching load
- Relocation support
- Immigration support
- Spousal hire (usually offered by schools located in small cities/towns)

Immigration status

- Not all universities will automatically help you with your H-1B or green card
 - Could be on OPT which might make you ineligible for some grants/funding
- The situation is ever changing these days
 - Avoid traveling abroad

Where to get help/find info

- Advisors/mentors/colleagues/friends
- Future PI Slack
 - Very active discussion board for people in the job market/going through the job search process
 - https://twitter.com/futurepi_slack?lang=en
- The Professor is In
 - Incomplete/Unofficial/Unconfirmed List of Schools That Have Hiring Freezes or Pauses
- International Offices at both current and future institutions regarding immigration status

Helpful programs

- Rising Stars Workshops at MIT/Stanford/Berkeley and top universities in Asia (Seoul Nat'l Univ. hosted 2019)
 - Programs for female scholars
- Academic Leadership for Women in Engineering by the Society of women Engineers
 - Similar programs available via SHPE, SACNAS, NSBE, AISES, etc.

Advice

- Apply early
- Specs are important, but how you present your stuff (on paper and verbally) and how you interact/network with people are also very important
- Understand job search process before your interview
- During/after the pandemic, what universities are looking at will remain the same: research, teaching, grant writing abilities, etc.
- Strategies to demonstrate those abilities might change
 - More importance on online technical communication skills for Zoom interviews/teaching demonstrations

Questions collected from sign-up sheet

- Job search experience and academic research plan experience share
- Available positions and types of positions. How to negotiate salary. How to secure housing and tips for finding housing. When is the best time to apply.
- As a current graduate student and GRA, I would like to know more about CV preparation (teaching, post-docs, service, etc.), networking, and salary negotiations.
- Career paths, typical progression paths, salary/benefit expectations, finding the right location for not just you but your family
- Publication requirements for an academic position.
- Best way to search and find job openings; tips on how to read and evaluate job faculty descriptions and pay/benefits information; tips on creating a strong CV and application

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Coming soon!