

CVs, Cover Letters and Other Job Hunting Horror

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Outline

- 1 Timeline
- 2 Unraveling the Mysteries of CVs
 - What's in a CV?
 - Tips for Style
- 3 Research and Teaching Statements
 - Research Statement
 - Teaching Statement
- 4 Cover Letters that Kick Butt
 - Writing the Letter

Job Search Timeline

For a position that begins Fall 2009

- 1 Summer 2008 - **Solid Drafts of the Materials**
 - Curriculum Vita (CV)
 - Research Statement
 - Teaching Statement
 - Generic Cover Letter
 - Choose **Letter Writers** (Get insight from advisor)
 - Spreadsheet with Teaching Evaluation Info and Stats
 - Work on your thesis
- 2 September 2008
 - **Get Organized**
 - Actively Search the Job Postings - www.ams.org/eims
 - Politely Request Letters of Reference to be written by **October**
 - Get Feedback from Lots of Eyes on your Materials
 - Work on your thesis



Job Search Timeline

For a position that begins Fall 2009

- 1 October - December 2008
 - Mail LOTS of Application Packets
 - Search Job Postings periodically
 - Register for Joint Meetings in January
 - Work on the **WOW** presentation of your work
 - Prepare for Interviews at Joint Meetings
 - Prepare for Phone Interview Process
 - Work on your thesis
- 2 January 2009 - Attend Joint Meetings of AMS-MAA
 - Prepare/Polish for Phone Interviews
 - Polish your **WOW** presentation of your work
 - Work on your thesis



Job Search Timeline

For a position that begins Fall 2009

- 1 February - April 2009 **CHAOS/EXHAUSTION!!!**
 - Phone Interviews
 - On-Campus Interviews
 - Thank-You Letters
 - Accept/Decline Letters
 - Negotiations
 - Comfortable Shoes
 - Forget about working on your thesis
- 2 April - August 2009
 - Feverishly work your @ss off on your thesis
 - Defend your thesis



Contents of the Curriculum Vitae

The Essentials

- YOUR NAME (IN BIG, **BOLD LETTERS**)
- Contact Info (phone, fax, web URL)
- Education, Thesis Title, Advisor's Name, (Expected) Date of Completion
- Employment Experience (RA, TA . . . **only relevant stuff**)
- Research Interests (2 or 3 topics)
- Publications
 - Great if you can get one submitted before job search.
 - Use the heading **Publications in Preparation** if none are submitted.



More Contents of the CV

- Presentations
 - Dynalite, Dynachat, Applied Math
 - Conferences
 - List chronologically with the most recent at the top
- Computer Experience
 - LaTeX, Maple, MATLAB, Mathematica, FEMLAB, FLUENT
 - UNIX, Linux, DOS, OSX
- Professional Experience/Development
 - Organizer of DynaLite (indicate dates)
 - Graduate Student Representative of EC, GPC, UPC
- Honors, Awards, etc.
- References



A CV Should Be:

- Brief But INFORMATIVE
- EASY TO READ AT A GLANCE
 - 10 - 12pt font, no fancy script
 - Use **boldface**, *italics*, underline and ALL CAPS when it's appropriate for emphasizing something important.
 - Keep Descriptions Short with Headings (complete sentences are not a requirement)
- Dated and UP-TO-DATE
- Clean (typo-free....hopefully)
- Proofread at least 3 times!! (bug your friends)

BEGIN WORKING ON IT NOW!!!



Your Research Statement

Questions To Be Addressed

- Research Area and Topic
- What Research Questions Your Thesis Answers
 - May require a brief description or discussion of an open problem. (only a few sentences – the focus should be on your work)
- **What main result does your thesis contribute to the general knowledge in that area?**
 - Mathematical Tools and Techniques Used
- RELEVANCE – Is it applicable in ways that can lead to outside funding of your research program?
- FUTURE WORK – Discuss how the results could/should be extended to other open problems. Include possible UG research projects, etc.



Tips

- Keep it BRIEF: 1-3 PAGES, Adjust Margins?
- Use the standard, fancy lingo of your area.
- Avoid giving much of the detailed math - just state the problem and the accomplishments.
- Proofread!!!
- ADVISOR SHOULD PROOFREAD IT
- A more thorough one could be posted on your web page for interested parties to download.



Your Teaching Statement

Questions To Be Addressed

- Courses Taught and Types of Students – remedial math vs. ENGR, PHYS and CoSci majors
- Media Used – Calculators, WebCT, MatLab, Maple
- Your Teaching Style – Lecture vs. Group Learning
- Classes or Techniques that you particularly enjoyed or learned from.
- Your Philosophy on Teaching, lots of online resources. Univ. of Minnesota's Center for Teaching and Learning is a good start.
- **What Did You Enjoy Most?**
- If you have really struggled at some point, mention this. Discuss what you learned from it and how the experience affected your teaching style/philosophy.



Writing a Kick-@\$\$ Cover Letter

- **Identify Position** (and where you saw it advertised)
- **Summarize your Vita Highlights**
 - DO NOT ASSUME THEY HAVE READ YOUR VITA
 - Thesis Topic and Results
 - Research and Teaching Interests
- **Identify Researchers or Research Group** you want to work with in that dept. – if possible
- Give Notable Experiences Teaching or Research - if room
- Meet them at AMS Meeting?
- **I look forward to hearing from you regarding my application.**



Tips

- BRIEF – ONE PAGE
- To Customize or NOT To Customize??
 - Personalizing each Cover Letter Requires ALOT of TIME!!
 - Identify your TOP TEN, and personalize those.
 - Create a standard letter for the rest.
- Books or Online Resources for advice on writing letters, phone interviews, on-campus interviews....see my webpage for some **Useful Links**.
- Ask Questions - Share Experiences



Summary

- **Keep It Simple and Be Organized**
- Begin keeping track of your papers, conferences, professional development workshops, etc. **NOW!!!**
- Pick a package....LaTeX, Word, Whatever. Be able to generate PDF files of all of your documents. Some institutions are now accepting email and on-line applications.
www.mathjobs.org is one example of this.
- Get a basic webpage going to put your stuff online.
- Check out my **Useful Links** page to get some links to useful online resources.



For Further Reading



D.M. Formo and C.Reed

Job Search in Academe: Strategic Rhetorics for Faculty Job Candidates
Stylus Publishing



www.math.montana.edu/davis
Useful Links Section



www.ams.org/employment/academic-job-search.html
*Get Familiar with the AMS web site AND **set up an account for electronic applications.***



www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/tutorials/jobsearch/index.html
Good Job Search Overview and Guide to Preparing Each Document



www.sa.psu.edu/career/assist.shtml
Good Cover Letter Materials here.

