

# The Academic Job Search: A Gruelling Process Explained

Christina Hayes and Jon Hasenbank

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## Getting Started

- Job Types in Academia
- Job Postings
- Timeline
- References

## The Academic Application

- What is an Academic Portfolio?
- Building the Portfolio
- Technical Details...

## The Joint Math Meetings

- What is the Employment Center?
- Participating in the Employment Center

## Interviews

- Phone Interviews
- Campus Interviews

## Negotiating Offers

- Receiving the Offer
- Responding to Offers

# What are my options?

- ▶ Postdoc (Research or Teaching)
- ▶ Temporary/Visiting
- ▶ Non-tenure but Permanent
- ▶ Tenure-track

# Not all Assistant Professorships are created equal.

- ▶ Research Institution vs. Teaching Institution
  - public vs. private
  - large vs. small
- ▶ Other Considerations:
  - Research Expectations
  - Teaching Expectations
  - Commitment to Service
  - Grant Money
  - Additional Expectations???

# Deciding Where to Apply

- ▶ What kinds of positions am I considering?
- ▶ What specializations am I comfortable teaching?
- ▶ What types of positions am I reasonably qualified for?
- ▶ Do I have geographic preferences?
- ▶ What personal issues and lifestyle requirements influence my search?
- ▶ When will I realistically be prepared to begin a full-time position
- ▶ If I accept a position prior to completion of the dissertation, how will this affect my degree completion and progress toward tenure?

source: <http://www.grad.uiuc.edu/careerservices/academic/jobsearch/index.htm>

## Where to look...

- ▶ The Chronicle of Higher Education  
<http://chronicle.com/>
- ▶ AMS-EIMS  
<http://www.ams.org/eims/>
- ▶ HigherEdJobs.com  
<http://www.higheredjobs.com>
- ▶ Mathjobs.org  
<http://www.mathjobs.org/jobs>
- ▶ AERA SIG/RME (Math Education Specific)  
<http://www.sigrme.org/xopenpositions.htm>
- ▶ NCTM (Math Education Specific)  
<http://www.nctm.org/jobs/available.asp>

# Academic Search Timeline

- ▶ Application Deadlines: September to January
- ▶ Employment Center Deadlines: October
- ▶ Joint Meetings: Early January
- ▶ Phone Interviews: October - ????
- ▶ Campus Interviews: (November - ???) January - March
- ▶ Offers: Approximately 1 week after last candidate interviews (or sooner!).
- ▶ Acceptance: One week after offer is extended.

## More Information

- ▶ Articles about Employment in Mathematical Sciences
  - <http://www.ams.org/employment/job-articles.html>
  - <http://www.grad.uiuc.edu/careerservices/academic/>
- ▶ Cost of Living Calculator
  - <http://www.homefair.com/homefair/calc/salcalc.html>
- ▶ Start searching:
  - <http://www.google.com>

# What is an Academic Portfolio?

- ▶ Cover Letter (several types?)
- ▶ AMS Cover Sheet
- ▶ Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- ▶ Teaching Statement
- ▶ Research Statement
- ▶ Transcripts (Graduate and Undergraduate)
- ▶ Letters of Recommendation (several types?)
- ▶ Other Stuff...Copies of Evaluations, Syllabi, Video of Teaching, DNA sample...

## What worked for us:

- ▶ Starting early.
- ▶ Asking questions and asking for advice.
- ▶ Consulting English Dept – free services for Graduate Students.
- ▶ Keeping it short and to the point.
- ▶ Organizing and requesting materials in a courteous, time-thoughtful way.
- ▶ Ordering transcripts on time (Audits ???)

## When sending out the applications, what was important?

- ▶ Starting early.
- ▶ Painstaking organization.
  - ▶  $\text{\LaTeX}$  letters.
  - ▶ Folder for each application.
- ▶ Keeping detailed notes on EVERYTHING.
- ▶ Using appropriate materials (paper, envelopes, stamps, paying for copies).
- ▶ Calculating cost  $\sim$  \$400.

# Mathematical Sciences Employment Center

- ▶ “Meet” Market for Mathematicians
  - ▶ 4-day program
  - ▶ Meeting place and information center for employers and PhD-level job seekers
- ▶ Computer Scheduled Interview Tables
- ▶ Self-Scheduled Interview Tables

## Select 2006 Participants

- ▶ Aerospace Corporation
- ▶ American University
- ▶ Connecticut College
- ▶ Harvey Mudd College
- ▶ Idaho State University
- ▶ Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology
- ▶ Louisiana Tech University
- ▶ Saint Mary's College
- ▶ US Military Academy at Westpoint
- ▶ Willamette University
- ▶ Wolfram Research, Inc.

## Preparing

- ▶ Register (early October deadlines)
- ▶ Submit “Short CV”
- ▶ Prepare other ways to present yourself (talk, business card, poster session)
- ▶ Mention participation to potential employers
- ▶ Prepare as though preparing for campus interview
- ▶ Cost ~ \$1000 (includes travel, food, registration, lodging)

## My Approach to the Phone Interview:

- ▶ Scheduled appropriately
- ▶ Satisfied restroom needs
- ▶ Turned off call-waiting
- ▶ Charged phone (admittedly forgot this once...)
- ▶ Had drink, pen, paper, and notes on hand

(Used Campus Interview tips to prepare for questioning)

## What happens during a campus visit?

- ▶ Various meetings:
  - Department faculty
  - Students
  - Administrators (Dean, Dept Head, Provost, President)
  - Other faculty
- ▶ Talk(s)
  - Research Talk
  - Student Talk
- ▶ “Social” activities: dinners, party.
- ▶ Tours: campus, town, parks.
- ▶ Miscellaneous Extras: realtor, day care, schools.

see handout

## How We Prepared:

- ▶ Scheduled interviews by order of interest
- ▶ Bought suit(s)
- ▶ Prepared & Practiced Talk(s)
- ▶ Researched Institution and People
- ▶ Practiced Answering Questions
- ▶ Prepared Questions to Ask
- ▶ Checked weather
- ▶ Carried-on important items (slides/contact info)

## Preparing Answers

- ▶ Practiced answering sample questions.
- ▶ How did you end up in Mathematics/Math Education/Statistics?
- ▶ I see in your teaching statement that you believe in ..., how do you realize this in the classroom?
- ▶ How do you plan to involve undergraduates and other departments in your research?
- ▶ What would a typical theorem in your dissertation sound like?
- ▶ You didn't do a postdoc, do you feel this is a weakness given the research expectations for this position?

## Preparing Questions

- ▶ Don't ask about salary.
- ▶ What contributions are you looking for from a new faculty member?
- ▶ How would you describe the culture of the dept?
- ▶ What is your vision for the Math Ed Group/ Math Dept/College/????
- ▶ How are faculty evaluated? Process for promotion and tenure?
- ▶ In the last ten years, how many cost of living raises have gone through?
- ▶ What internal funding resources are available? (e.g., Travel, Summer research grants, Sabbaticals?)
- ▶ How are new faculty supported (e.g., Mentorship program, Project NExT, Support for Grant Writing)

# The Interview Day

- ▶ Handy Items:
  - Copies of portfolio, a snack, and cash.
  - Notes, clipboard, and a pen!
- ▶ Confiding is neither appropriate nor smart.
- ▶ Personality and confidence play a big part.
- ▶ The interview is part of the assessment of how well you fit into the department.

## A few valuable reflections:

- ▶ Comfortable shoes & clothing are a must.
- ▶ Drinking too much  $\Rightarrow$  No job.
- ▶ Mastering interviewing techniques (STAR)  $\Rightarrow$  job.  
    Situation Task Action Results
- ▶ At the end of the day, the question to focus on is : “Are you a good fit?”
- ▶ Sending a thank-you after EVERY type of interview is appropriate!!!

## Being Prepared for Offers

- ▶ DON'T SAY YES!!!!!!!
- ▶ Knowledge is power.
- ▶ You are at your strongest point when you receive the offer.
- ▶ An offer isn't an offer unless you have it in writing.

## Accepting & Negotiating

Some questions we considered:

- ▶ What are reasonable expectations?
- ▶ How should I communicate my “demands”?
- ▶ Salary range for the field.
- ▶ Cost of living (cost of living calculator)
- ▶ Benefits package (health insurance, dental, vision, retirement, cell phone discount, tuition exchange program)
- ▶ What are mathematical start-up packages? (computer, book money, travel money, course release, summer funding, moving expenses, temporary housing)

## Rejecting & Rejection

- ▶ Rejection Sucks (even after success).
- ▶ It may be wise to think about the future when rejecting offers...
- ▶ I have found sincerity and honesty pay off.

# Thank you for your support and guidance!

- ▶ Jeff Banfield
- ▶ Marcy Barge
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- ▶ Jason and Reece Dahl
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- ▶ Richard and Rose Swanson
- ▶ Phil Turk