

A Summary of the ITLAL event “Finding an Academic Job that Fits your Needs”

Hannah E. Attard

The ITLAL event “Finding an Academic Job that Fits your Needs” occurred in April 2015. It was a panel discussion with representatives from Hudson Valley Community College, Siena College, The College of St. Rose, and Schenectady Community College. After the panelists introduced themselves the audience (mainly comprised of PhD students) asked questions. Below is a summary of the answers and advice from the panelists.

1 Workload

- Typical teaching load is 9 credits each semester
 - Use packets of time to get papers in the queue.
- Along with teaching, you need to advise students. The number of advisees you have can vary but a rough number is ~ 10
- Each school said there is a 10 month contract paid out over a year. Most people (especially younger faculty) remain over the summer to do research, etc. but some people go on long vacations or leave for the summer
- Research
 - Some schools expect you to get grants or at least be applying for them
 - Siena and St. Rose require some research.
 - The Community Colleges didn’t require research, but it is still encouraged that you’re involved in some sort of scholarship.
- Hybrid classes (both in person and online) are becoming more common
 - Siena mentioned they do not have any online classes
 - It depends on the school you are applying to
- Service
 - All schools require some sort of service, but it varies from institution and type of institution

- Some schools, especially those involved in the community may require *community service* along with university service
- It's important to know what is expected of you before you accept a job (and even before you interview – so do your research!)
- **ABD: All But Dissertation**
 - Some schools will hire someone who is ABD, but your workload doesn't change.
 - Specifically at a community college it is hard to finish your dissertation while teaching (although some community colleges do offer sabbatical)
 - Schools are moving away from hiring ABD

2 Applying

- Cover Letter, Cover Letter, Cover Letter!!
 - All the schools agreed this is the most important part of the application
 - It is the first thing that is read and determines if the rest of the application will be looked at
 - Make sure the cover letter is a response to the job ad
 - 3 page limit!
 - Address all the necessary and preferred qualities outlined in the ad
 - Proof read it with the job ad to ensure you hit all the points
 - * Give the job ad and the cover letter to someone else to read to make sure you are addressing all the necessary points
 - Your CV should back up the statements you made in your cover letter
- Teaching Philosophy
 - Show what you got out of your teaching experience
 - Be articulate and have a good teaching philosophy
 - Mention problems you've had teaching and **where you want to improve** (no one wants to hire the young hot shot who thinks they know everything about teaching)
 - Emphasize the learning objectives of your course
 - Mention student work (e.g., types of assessments used in class)
 - Can also include an annotated syllabus in your teaching portfolio

- If you're brought in for an interview all the schools said they have each applicant perform a teaching demonstration along with a research seminar
 - All applicants may lecture on the same topic
 - Typically you have ~2 week notification of the topic
 - This can occur in an actual class or can be separate with open attendance to all students
- Before you apply **do your homework on the school**
 - know how you are going to stay involved in scholarship, how to get undergrads involved in research, and what you need to be able to do that
 - Especially for community colleges it is important to understand the mission of community colleges in general, not just the one you are applying to
 - At teaching universities you have a *student-centered* faculty
 - Recommended books from a panelist for understanding student culture:
 - * *My Freshman year* by Rebekah Nathan
 - * *Generation on a Tightrope: A Portrait of Today's College Student* by Arthur Lavigne.
- It is important to have teaching experience (more than a TAship) when applying to any teaching university
- Reminder: At UAlbany, ITLAL and the FFLC are available to help with teaching portfolios, CVs, etc. Email: futurefacultyfellow@albany.edu