

Professional Development During Your Doctoral Education

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Author's Note

The opinions are solely those of the author and are not necessarily shared by other faculty. They are opinions that have developed from over 20 years of experience and thinking about professional development and job hunting within the discipline. I encourage the reader to use this booklet as a starting place for a conversation that should continue with your adviser, fellow graduate students, and other faculty members.

At most Ph.D.-granting institutions, there are excellent on-campus resources to assist the process of professional development. In particular, you should check to see if there is a Center for Teaching and Learning Services or something similar, and find out if there is a Preparing Future Faculty program functioning at your school. You can look this up at www.preparing-faculty.org.

Edward Schiappa
August 2009

Publisher's Note

This publication has been reviewed and approved by the NCA Doctoral Education Committee. Please note that the information held within this publication is not applicable in all situations. Readers are encouraged to speak with graduate school advisors and members of the academy for advice and help. Graduate programs are also invited to augment the information for their purposes.

NCA Doctoral Education Committee,
2009

Introduction

How to Use this Booklet

This booklet is an informal introduction to some of the issues involved in the professional development of Ph.D. students in communication. There are many issues involved with career development that this booklet will not address, so it should not be viewed as a substitute for talking with faculty and asking questions as they occur to you throughout your graduate education.

This booklet began as a series of talks on job hunting that I gave at Purdue University and the University of Minnesota in my role as Director of Graduate Studies at each institution. Each year I have expanded the material as I have come to realize that preparation for entering the academic job market literally begins on your first day as a graduate student. Accordingly, I suggest that you use this booklet in two ways.

First, read it through completely, cover to cover, as soon as you can. There is some information contained in this booklet that you ought to know about as early in your career as a graduate student as possible.

Second, save this booklet and use it as a reference work as you prepare to hit the job market. There are some chapters that will be very important to you once you actually are on your way to a job interview or have received an offer. So hang on to this!

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Chapter 1

Understanding the Job Market

Overview

Graduate school is a wonderful opportunity to grow and experiment intellectually in ways you probably never imagined as an undergraduate student. At the same time, it is also the time to begin the process of *defining yourself* in disciplinary terms.

Every discipline has a vocabulary that functions as a “terministic screen” (in Kenneth Burke’s words); that is, the world of communication studies is understood by communication scholars with a set of categories with which we organize ourselves. The largest of these categories in many departments is on the order of “rhetoric” or “media studies,” but clearly one can, and must, specialize.

Many humanists tend to resist this specialization and many dislike labels that limit options. Nonetheless, the first step in professional development is to think about “Who do I want to become?” This process of self-definition will be a struggle because you will want to resist labels and because (if you are like many graduate students) you will not want to limit your options. It may be difficult also because there may be a gap between the vocabulary you would use to describe yourself as a professional and the dominant vocabulary in use by the discipline.

There is no easy solution to such struggles. How you ultimately decide to accommodate the practical demands of entering the job market with the integrity of your vision of yourself as a scholar and teacher is up to you, of course. What I hope to accomplish here is simply to inform you of the choices you will need to make.

What Does the Job Market Look Like?

There are four features of the job market that are important to recognize at the beginning of your graduate education, lest you invest a number of years of your life under false assumptions.

First, you should understand what salary expectations are reasonable. The short answer is that the variability is huge. One beginning assistant professor may start at \$60,000 and another might be offered in the high \$30,000s. Consult with your Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) about current norms before accepting any offers. Reading *Spectra* or the *ICA Newsletter* regularly should give you some idea as to the average starting salaries.

For a comprehensive overview of salary information, you should consult the spring issue of *Academe*, published by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). Each year the AAUP publishes a comprehensive statistical profile of salary and compensation averages across the nation that can be ordered or downloaded directly at www.aaup.org. This information is categorized in a variety of ways including by type of institution, faculty rank, and geographic location.

Second, you need to understand that the market in communication has changed over the past few years. It used to be that anyone with a completed Ph.D. in communication could expect to land a tenure-track position fresh out of graduate school. The situation has changed dramatically. More graduates now have to wait a year longer — so that their dissertation is actually completed or very close to completion while they are interviewing — or they have had to take non-tenure-track positions. A number of institutions are now hiring faculty on fixed-term contracts with no tenure expectations. These contracts are typically for two or three years but sometimes can be one-year appointments. These can be perfectly respectable jobs to take if the teaching load is not too onerous but, for the career academic, obviously a tenure-track position is preferable.

The trend toward a more competitive job market began *before* the current economic crisis with which the U.S. is dealing; obviously a recession makes matters even worse. But do not despair. Higher education suffers less from recessions than many parts of the economy as many people return to college to enhance their competitiveness through education. No one should sugarcoat the situation: There is no question that it is tough to get a tenure-track job during a recession. But “tough” is not the same as “impossible.” Communication is still a growing discipline and continues to be a popular major on most campuses.

Because the supply of faculty exceeds the demand, many institutions have made a completed Ph.D. a *requirement* rather than merely a preference. Accordingly, the all-but-dissertation (ABD) status may not be enough to land the job you want. Knowing this fact in advance should allow you to plan accordingly.

Third, it is important to keep up with employment trends within the discipline. The best way to do this is to join the National Communication Association (NCA) and read the job postings in the monthly newsletter, *Spectra*, and the CRTNET listserv on a regular basis. Depending on your specialty, you may also want to join the International Communication Association (ICA) and read the *ICA Newsletter* as well. Reading these will help tell you what type of positions/specialties institutions are looking to fill.

You should start reading these ads now, because waiting until you are on the market will limit your ability to plan ahead and gain needed credentials. For example, at the time of this writing “media studies” and “Internet studies” are hot labels. New Ph.D.s coming out with teaching or research competencies in these areas will have an edge. Now, I am not recommending that you abandon your interests to spend time developing expertise you do not really want. But you should keep track of the specific trends, and if along the way you can develop a particular teaching proficiency that is highly marketable, terrific.

You also want to consider related disciplines where you may be able to seek a job. While communication is a major discipline in the public universities of the Midwest, the subjects we teach may be found in other departments on the coasts and in private colleges. You should consider investigating women’s studies, english/composition, psychology, humanities programs, and other disciplinary arrangements.

By the time you hit the job market you will need to demonstrate your ability to contribute to the teaching mission of your employer's department in several possible areas. It is important for you to think about these categories early in your graduate career rather than later.

1. Undergraduate level teaching:

- a. service classes
- b. classes for majors

2. Graduate level teaching:

- a. survey classes
- b. special topic seminars

Fourth, it is important to understand the range of institutions at which academic jobs are located. In recent years it has become quite common to refer to institutions using what are known as the Carnegie Categories. You may have heard of your university referred to as a "Research One" institution. Actually, the Carnegie categories have changed twice since the original categories included the "Research One" category. The current categories are quite elaborate and emphasize whether the individual institution focuses on undergraduate or graduate education and in what areas. In my opinion, to get a first grasp of the job market, the Carnegie categories from the year 2000 are more useful than the most recent ones. For details about the current classifications, visit www.carnegiefoundation.org. Here are the Carnegie categories from the year 2000, which I think are the most useful for understanding the landscape of job opportunities.

Doctorate-granting Institutions

Doctoral/Research Universities, Extensive — These institutions typically offer a wide range of baccalaureate programs, and they are committed to graduate education through the doctorate. During the period studied, they awarded 50 or more doctoral degrees per year across at least 15 disciplines.

Doctoral/Research Universities, Intensive — These institutions typically offer a wide range of baccalaureate programs, and they are committed to graduate education through the doctorate. During the period studied, they awarded at least ten doctoral degrees per year across three or more disciplines, or at least 20 doctoral degrees per year overall.

Master's Colleges and Universities

Master's Colleges and Universities I — These institutions typically offer a wide range of baccalaureate programs, and they are committed to graduate education through the master's degree. During the period studied, they awarded 40 or more master's degrees per year across three or more disciplines.

Master's Colleges and Universities II — These institutions typically offer a wide range of baccalaureate programs, and they are committed to graduate education through the master's degree. During the period studied, they awarded 20 or more master's degrees per year.

Baccalaureate Colleges

Baccalaureate Colleges, Liberal Arts — These institutions are primarily undergraduate colleges with major emphasis on baccalaureate programs. During the period studied, they awarded at least half of their baccalaureate degrees in liberal arts fields.

Baccalaureate Colleges, General — These institutions are primarily undergraduate colleges with major emphasis on baccalaureate programs. During the period studied, they awarded less than half of their baccalaureate degrees in liberal arts fields.

Baccalaureate/Associate's Colleges — These institutions are undergraduate colleges where the majority of conferrals are below the baccalaureate level (associate's degrees and certificates). During the period studied, bachelor's degrees accounted for at least ten percent of undergraduate awards.

Associate's Colleges

These institutions offer associate's degree and certificate programs. This group includes institutions where, during the period studied, bachelor's degrees represented less than 10 percent of all undergraduate awards.

Specialized Institutions

These institutions offer degrees ranging from the bachelor's to the doctorate, and typically award a majority of degrees in a single field.

Now, obviously there are a lot of categories here. This is a wake-up call for those of us who have spent most of our time in Doctoral/Research Universities. Most of the educational world is *not* like us. According to the Carnegie Institute's year 2000 categories, Doctoral/Research Universities comprise only 6.6 percent of all higher education institutions and teach 28 percent of total college student enrollment. Master's Universities and Colleges comprise 15.5 percent of higher education institutions and enroll about 21.4 percent of all college students. The Baccalaureate Colleges make up 15.4 percent of the number of institutions, but because they typically have smaller class sizes, they enroll only about 7 percent of all college students. Community Colleges (Associate's Colleges) enroll 40 percent.

All of these numbers add up to the fact that most jobs are in small colleges or community colleges, and less than half are at larger comprehensive universities. Fewer still are at schools that have significant graduate program activity.

What does this mean to you? It means that *you need to think about the sort of institution at which you want to work*. If you want to start at one of the few positions at a Doctoral/Research University, you will truly have to be at the top of your class and, in all likelihood, have published before leaving graduate school. Otherwise, you should plan to start elsewhere and work your way up. If, on the other hand, you do not particularly want to end up at a heavily

research-oriented institution, the good news is that most schools do not fall into the “Research University” category.

What can you do to enhance your job prospects?

- Finish your Ph.D. This alone dramatically increases your odds.
- Be an active researcher, presenting at conventions and seeking publication.
- Develop marketable teaching skills and areas, such as debate coaching, media production, public relations, or technical writing.
- Be ready to compete in other disciplines (humanities, cultural studies, rhetoric/composition).

For additional reading concerning the academic job market, you may want to look at one of the following books:

Christina Boufis & Victoria C. Olsen, eds., *On the Market: Surviving the Academic Job Search* (NY: Riverhead Books, 1996).

Mary Morris Heiberger & Julia Miller Vick, *The Academic Job Search Handbook*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: U. of Pennsylvania Press, 1996).

Dawn M. Formo & Cheryl Reed, *Job Search in Academe: Strategic Rhetoric for Faculty Job Candidates* (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publications, 1999).

There are excellent Internet resources to aid the job search process as well, including NCA’s Career Center. Be sure to read enough to feel confident and knowledgeable before you hit the market.

Chapter 2

Professional Academic Organizations

An important part of your socialization into an academic discipline is to attend and participate in conferences organized by professional academic organizations. It is an absolute *must* that communication scholars join the National Communication Association (NCA). This is the nation's largest academic communication organization. In addition to hosting the largest conference, it also publishes *Spectra*, the monthly newsletter of NCA that contains a good deal of important and useful information. Depending on your area of study, you also should consider joining the International Communication Association (ICA).

There are literally dozens of academic organizations to which one could belong. They may be narrowly focused, or they may be as broad as “cultural studies” or “communication.” Which organizations you should join will depend a great deal on your available income and the specific academic communities with which you want to interact. For example, if you wish to be employable in an English department, then it would be appropriate to consider joining “4 Cs” (The Conference on College Communication and Composition). If your work is classical, you may want to join the American Philological Association. If your work is more along the lines of social psychology, you may want to join the American Psychological Association. If you study relationships, the International Association for Relationship Research might be a good fit. And so forth.

Other than joining NCA and/or ICA right away, there is no hurry. Take your time and explore the organizations and conferences available before investing your money in memberships. Be sure to ask about student rates — they are usually at a considerable discount from faculty rates.

An inexpensive medium for participating in the discourse of academic communities is the use of Listservs. NCA sponsors a listserv called the Communication Research and Theory Network (CRTNET) that posts valuable information about jobs, grants, fellowships, conferences, publication opportunities, as well as posts concerning issues of the day. To subscribe, go to <http://lists.psu.edu/archives/crtnet.html> and click the join list option, or visit the NCA Web site at www.natcom.org and look under “Publications” for the CRTNET link.

If you are in rhetorical studies, you should also join the H-Rhetor listserv. Go to www.h-net.org/~rhetor and follow the directions. If you are interested in cultural studies, go to www.comm.umn.edu/~grodman/cultstud to join the Cultstud-L listserv.

Joining professional organizations and listservs is an important part of learning about the discipline. It also helps you to “network” with established scholars in the discipline. Networking is important for two reasons. It can enhance your name recognition, which can be helpful in a job search, and you will be better able to stay on top of the latest trends and intellectual discussions.

How do you network?

- Go to conferences and attend panels of scholars doing important work that interests you. Take some time after the presentations to introduce yourself. You might just say hello or you may want to ask some specific questions relating to their work.
- Attend pre-conference seminars, small conferences (i.e. the Alta Argumentation conference or the annual Public Address conference), or relevant NCA summer series. The best examples are the NCA preconference seminars since they are organized by theme.
- Start e-mail correspondence with scholars that can assist your research program. E-mail addresses are easily found on most university Web sites.
- Get to know graduate students from other departments. They will be your colleagues for the rest of your career and they can introduce you to their professors. Graduate students also are often willing candidates for panels you may want to submit to conventions. Knowing graduate students from other institutions can help you create a balanced and diverse proposal.
- Consider networking internationally or outside of your discipline if it is appropriate to your area. For example, rhetoric students should *strongly* consider joining the Rhetoric Society of America (an interdisciplinary organization) or the International Society for the History of Rhetoric.
- Talk with visiting professors and guest lecturers. You should take any opportunity to meet professors from other institutions—go out to lunch, ask questions after presentations, take courses if offered.

Here is the contact information you would need to join some of the more prominent communication organizations. In all cases be sure to check what the student fee is, and what services and journals come with that fee.

National Communication Association (NCA), www.natcom.org
International Communication Association (ICA), www.icahdq.org
Central States Communication Association (CSCA), www.csc-net.org
Eastern Communication Association (ECA), www.ecasite.org
Western States Communication Association (WSCA), www.westcomm.org
Southern States Communication Association (SSCA), www.ssca.net
American Psychological Association (APA), www.apa.org
Association for Education in Journalism & Mass
Communication (AEJMC), www.aejmc.org
Broadcast Education Association (BEA), www.beaweb.org
International Society for the History of Rhetoric (ISHR), www.ishr.cua.edu
International Association for Relationship Research (IARR), www.iarr.org
Rhetoric Society of America (RSA), www.rhetoricsociety.org

I conclude this chapter by including a presentation I once gave on attending the NCA annual convention. Note that the advice is easily translated to apply to any professional academic conference.

Top Ten Ways to Get the Most out of the NCA Annual Convention

#10: Go

While there are disagreements about how to define an academic discipline, the NCA annual conference is our best available entity that defines the discipline of communication. For me, part of being a member of this discipline means being at this conference and participating. As your career evolves you will find a variety of reasons to go—from seeing the friends you made in graduate school to hunting for a job to hearing the latest gossip to learning about the latest scholarship. But the bottom line is that you should be there as frequently as possible.

Note: Mini-conferences that are focused on more specific subfields, such as argumentation, public address, interpersonal, gender, health communication, or presidential rhetoric, are also useful in many respects. But the NCA annual conference is still the Biggie.

#9: Plan Ahead to Save Money

The NCA annual conference can be expensive. The major expenses are: registration (make sure you get student rate or volunteer to work part of the convention and have your registration fee waived); travel (varies, but shop on-line); food (highly variable), books (too tempting to pass up sometimes), and entertainment (never underestimate).

You can reduce your hotel costs by A) staying in private housing (sometimes available through local graduate student contacts); B) piling up folks in a room; C) making reservations early at the lower cost non-conference hotels.

You can reduce your food bill by hitting receptions, seeing if there is a nearby grocery store to avoid all your meals being at restaurants, and eating some of your meals at fast food joints that are almost always nearby.

#8: Dress for Comfort, Mostly

While there will certainly be a lot of folks who dress up, this is not required or even expected. What you wear to teach is fine. You will do a lot of walking and be up late, so dress comfortably—especially in picking your shoes. I personally stick to tennis shoes and jeans most of the time.

Once you near the job market you will want to take it up a notch, since first impressions can influence how “professional” you are perceived. Just recognize that your clothes are “read” as part of your performed identity here as in other places. Don’t fret. The “overdressed graduate student” is not necessarily a great persona *except* for when you are on the job market.

#7: Party, but Don't Par-tay

There are lots of parties at the NCA annual conference, most hosted by doctoral-granting programs or by NCA. I think it is useful to go to these parties because they are a good way to meet up with people (like the mega “No Host”) or to meet people you do not know. You do not have to have an invitation to attend.

There is always a mix of business and pleasure at these events. It is okay to use the opportunity to follow-up a question for a scholar about her or his work, for example. But these are also social occasions so don't be surprised if conversations do not stay focused. It is useful to wear your nametag to events where you will be interacting with people you do not know. It is common practice when someone approaches to scope out their nametag, so don't be put off by this and don't feel you have to avoid doing the same.

Be aware of the infamous “over the shoulder convention glance.” Inevitably you will be speaking with someone and they will glance past you over your shoulder to see who is coming toward them. Conventions are busy places that are filled with distracting stimuli. It is not optimal politeness to engage in this behavior, but I think to some extent it is unavoidable. Most folks are multi-tasking throughout much of the conference—looking for old friends, perhaps hoping to see a co-author or editor, looking for search committee chairs, etc. It is something you just have to put up with.

However, if there is someone you really want to have a focused conversation with, set something up that is away from crowds. Offer to buy them a drink or retire to a lounge area. If possible, leave the convention site and go to a nearby cafe.

Now, note that I say party but don't par-tay. While you certainly want to have some fun, be prudent and be discrete. There are scholars who have damaged their reputation by getting drunk and engaging in inappropriate behavior, from getting footrubs in public from graduate students to getting in fistfights to just slobbering over the nearest person of interest given their sexual orientation. These are not good choices. Neither is the choice of some graduate students coming into the hotel lobby from outside smelling like Cheech and Chong or Harold and Kumar.

#6: Prepare to Present Papers Professionally

First, practice your presentation so that you feel comfortable with it and, very importantly, so that you stay within your assigned time limits. There are few things as irritating at a conference as someone who goes way overtime.

There is no consensus about whether to read papers or to speak extemporaneously. I personally opt for a combination, reading from my manuscript for dense material that is difficult to paraphrase. But whatever you do, I strongly urge a practice run or two before you present at the conference.

Note: If you are presenting an empirical study for an audience made up of social scientists, the expectations are a bit different than they are for rhetorical or media studies papers. You should provide a handout or do overheads to provide any key statistics. Some presenters provide their whole outline via PowerPoint or with overhead transparencies. It is very rare to see such presentations given from a manuscript as they are almost always presented extemporaneously. Plan to give a concise summary of the purpose of the study, hypotheses, the method, and key findings. To stay on time with such papers, it is vital to practice before going to the convention.

Second, realize it is *not* necessary to bring 50 copies of your paper with you. Normally you are not required to provide any copies, though with social scientific papers reporting experiments it is highly recommended. If you want to economize, bring ten copies (single-spaced, reduced font, front/back if you want) and do a sign-up sheet if you run out of those. Most panels are fairly small, so I personally find it unnecessary to bring more than 10-15 copies unless it is a featured panel.

Third, be professional. This does not mean dressing up, though I would not go out of your way to dress down, either. Realize there are folks in the audience who you do not yet know and to whom you may want to make a favorable impression someday. So treat your paper presentation as a performance of your scholarship that matters.

Being professional does not require an elaborate multi-media presentation. As often as not, I have seen technology interfere with a good presentation rather than enhance it. You also do not want to risk losing valuable time to technical difficulties that seem to happen to even the most tech-savvy presenters. Even if you have a fabulous high tech presentation all ready to go, be ready to go “old school” and present it with no technology at all if necessary.

Fourth, get to the meat of the paper. If you are not careful, you can spend too much of your time setting up your paper (background, history of research problem, theory and methodology) and then short-change your analysis. Don't let this happen to you. Practice so that you keep the academic throat clearing short (simply stipulate your positions, don't defend them), so you can get to the heart of your argument, data analysis, or findings.

Fifth, keep your expectations modest. Do not take it personally if no one shows up to your panel. It happens to us all, especially at 8:00 a.m. on Sunday morning. Also do not take it personally if no one asks you questions about your paper. Most post-presentation questions tend to go to the last paper presented. If you have even one person who engages your paper during or after the panel, be pleased. I used to see paper presentations at conferences as a key part of my publishing process. Not anymore. *Sometimes* you get useful feedback, more often than not you do not.

Sixth, support your friends. Go see your fellow graduate students at their panels, and hopefully they will do the same for you. It is nice to have friendly faces, nodding in agreement and support, in the audience.

#5: Visit the Book Exhibit

This may sound trivial but it is not. The NCA annual convention has a large book exhibit area that features textbooks, videos, and scholarly monographs. Take some time to look over textbooks in your areas of interest and to see what books are coming out in our field. This is a good way to get a sense of the cutting edge scholarship.

The NCA annual convention is a good opportunity to obtain books for free or reduced cost. If you are responsible for textbook selection for a course, most booksellers will give you (or send you) a free review copy upon request. Furthermore, all the scholarly books there are for sale, typically at a reduced convention rate of ten to fifteen percent off. You can reserve a book or, if they have multiple copies, you can buy one on the spot. Typically on the day before the very last day of the convention, booksellers will sell off their remaining books at a substantial discount—usually 50 percent. So be sure to go by there the next to last day to shop for some bargains.

Later in your career the book exhibit area will be an indispensable stopping point, such as when you are ready to shop your dissertation as a book, or when you have to make your own textbook assignments.

There are booths for NCA, ICA, AEJMC, and other organizations you may find of interest. Also, there are a set of computers set up in this area (typically) that you can check your e-mail via the Internet. Finally, there is almost always a cheap place to get sandwiches and such in this area.

#4: Meet The Big Names of The Field

People watching is a great past-time at conventions, and one part of that is looking for those big name scholars that you have heard of, but never met. I would say that almost all of these experienced scholars welcome (or at least are not bothered by) graduate students introducing themselves. So don't be shy.

More importantly, look through the convention program and if there are scholars whose work you are impressed by, go see them present their work. Even if the particular paper they are presenting is not of great interest to you, you can learn a good deal from seeing our best scholars in action. See how they formulate a research problem, organize and present their work; plus see if what they say sparks ideas for you.

Take business cards with you if you have them. If you don't, you could print up informal slips that have your name and e-mail address on it. This will save you a great deal of time at the conference and may have a better chance of not being

misplaced by the recipient.

#3: Take Advantage of Educational Opportunities

The NCA annual convention is dominated by panel presentations, but as also helpful are short courses, seminars, and preconferences.

Short courses require a fee and you have to be very picky, but some of them are excellent opportunities to get taught by the best teachers and scholars in our field. How do you know a good one? First, the topic. Second the teacher. And for this second element you will probably need to consult with a faculty member for advice.

Seminars are advertised in July. They are an excellent opportunity to network with faculty and graduate students interested in a particular area of your interest. You have to apply and be accepted, but typically they are all open to the public if space allows and you can sit in and watch what goes on and talk with participants later.

Preconferences are usually theme-driven and again are an opportunity to be involved in a smaller and more focused discussion of scholarly interests.

A few words are in order about business meetings. NCA is made up of a number of divisions, commissions, boards, caucuses, and associations. Virtually all of them have business meetings at the conference in which they make plans for the next NCA annual convention, elect new officers, make awards, and conduct other business.

Now, the large divisions, such as the Public Address Division, Rhetorical and Communication Theory Division, and the Interpersonal Communication Division, are actually fairly interesting business meetings to attend. They are also often one of the few places that a significant number of leading scholars in an area will meet at the same time. But be careful. All business meetings involve recruitment of volunteers for various tasks of the division. I recommend strongly that graduate students (and untenured faculty) avoid such obligations. Some colleagues would disagree with me strongly, I know, but keep in mind that time is your most precious commodity and that time spent here is less time available for your coursework, teaching, and research. At the early stages of your career, that is a steep price to pay.

I am certainly not opposed to service commitments and NCA is a great place to make your civic contribution, but I just don't think the time you are a graduate student is a time to do that given all your other responsibilities. Wait until you have your degree completed.

#2: Seek Innovation and Food For Thought

Four thoughts here. First, this is a chance to explore and contribute to the cutting edge of scholarship. Publication is a slow process. The typical journal article or book may be a year (or more) old by the time it appears in print. The best (and worst) minds of our discipline are at this conference, so one could argue that the "cutting edge" is not yet in print but is being explored at conferences such as this one.

Use this opportunity to attend sessions that strike you as interesting and innovative. Do not just attend sessions that have papers you will agree with. Explore papers that indicate a different methodological orientation than you are used to, for example. Second, feel free to seek advice from faculty about panels. For example, if you see a panel that is made up of papers all from one doctoral program, the chances are good that these are all student papers coming out of a seminar. I would not attend unless the subject matter is of great interest to you. You also have to be aware of the papers that have fantastic titles but that's it. Learning to separate the wheat from the chaff is somewhat of a matter of trial and error, but you should feel free to get advice from faculty.

Third, the NCA annual convention is an opportunity to hear discussions of "where the field is or should-be going." Typically these are panels featuring big names discussing issues that are partly theoretical, partly political, such as "where should rhetorical criticism be heading?" Or "how do we integrate textual and audience research?" One of the best discussions I ever had at an NCA conference was a group discussion that was "off the menu;" that is, a group of scholars who organized themselves to discuss directions in rhetorical studies in a postmodern environment. More often than not, though, these discussions are on the menu and part of the program.

As my friend Kirt Wilson put it, "While these panels are usually not very edifying from an intellectual standpoint, they provide exactly the kind of political education that our graduate students need so that when they are in job interviews they know how to talk about the discipline and its schisms. The questions, 'Where do you stand on the issue of what is a text? Do you favor McGee or Leff's position?' can be answered best by actually seeing this issue debated in such a panel."

Fourth, plan ahead. Sit down and go through the program carefully. Put a mark next to all the panels that catch your eye. Of course, it will turn out that six of them happen all at the same time. Then go back through the list and winnow down the options to one choice per timeslot (perhaps with one backup choice). If you have trouble deciding in some cases, this is an ideal point to solicit faculty feedback.

#1: Explore the Town

Most of the time the NCA annual convention is in an interesting location such as New York, Chicago, Seattle, Atlanta, or New Orleans. Spend a little time asking about what the cool things are about the city you are going to. The Internet is an obvious resource.

Then plan this into your schedule. If you plan a nice meal out, make reservations before you go if possible. Look into the tourist options the association organizes, but be very selective.

If you have contacts or knowledge of a city we are going to, feel free to organize an outing for your fellow graduate students.

Chapter 3

Your Research Identity

As noted at the very beginning of this booklet, an important part of your professional development is creating an identity for yourself, in particular, defining yourself as a researcher. This chapter is devoted to stimulating your thinking about the rather difficult questions of “How do I want to be known?” and “What is my identity as a research scholar?”

When thinking about your identity, start by asking yourself, “What are the problems I want to solve?” Working out an answer to this question will go a long way to establish your academic identity. Remember, of course, that the discipline is such that you will always have the opportunity to pursue projects not necessarily related to this identity.

By the time you hit the job market you should be able to talk about your research identity at three levels of abstraction: your intellectual identity, your disciplinary identity, and the identity of your scholarship. I will comment on each of these in turn:

Intellectual Identity

Scholars do not start from scratch. They enter scholarly conversations that have been on going. Here are some examples of intellectual identities (think of them as academic subject-positions) that are easily recognized. You are not limited to these, of course, but they may help you to start thinking about the subject position you want to create for yourself.

- A. The Social Scientist: This approach to research is characterized by a social scientific emphasis on theory development; e.g. theory development quantitative evaluation theory refinement/development. Some researchers might eschew the “theorist” label and see themselves primarily as practicing what Thomas S. Kuhn would call “normal science” that extends and applies current theories without claiming to make significant changes to them.
- B. The Theorist: This approach to research generally falls into one of three categories.
 1. System builder/Systematic philosopher. This type of research seeks to develop a privileged vocabulary concerning forms of the question “What is X?” or “How might we best understand X?” For example: How might we best understand social support? What does rationality mean today in the age of neuroscience? What counts as public discourse in a postmodern, Internet age? How do changes in communication technology change what it means to be human?
 2. Edifying Theory and Philosophy. Following a Wittgenstein Tradition, this type of research provides meta-commentaries on the state of particular intellectual discussions. For example: What is the

appropriate scope of rhetorical studies? What should count as “communication science?”

3. Popularizer/Translator. This approach to research tends to introduce new thinkers or theories into the communication discipline, typically from another discipline.
- C. The Historian: This approach to research seeks to understand and illuminate a particular historical period, phenomenon, or figure.
- D. The Critic: The criticism model of research can serve a variety of functions, including but not limited to: illustrating theory through criticism, describing or explaining a particular text, providing a corrective to other readings, and providing creative readings of a text.

Although these categories are presented as distinct here, they are rarely practiced as such. Rather, they often appear as permutations, i.e. the “theoretically sophisticated critic/historian.” In any case, it is helpful in thinking about your research identity to consider which intellectual traditions you will follow.

Disciplinary Identity

Moving down the ladder of abstraction a notch, you can ask yourself how you wish to be known within your particular discipline. Though the division is imperfect, you can think about this in terms of the subject matter in which you want to claim expertise, and the methodological skills that you can bring to your scholarship. A theme to which I will return later is the added value you bring to the table as a research scholar. A significant part of your disciplinary identity will be marked by the specific added value that you bring to a scholarly conversation in terms of subject matter and methodological expertise.

In terms of subject matter, make sure that you come out of your graduate education with three sorts of expertise.

- A. Theory Competency
Here you need to emphasize depth but also become “literate” in a variety of theoretical bodies. For depth, become an expert on a theorist you think is very important and helpful to your work and read everything she or he has written. For example, if you are a rhetoric scholar you should consider reading all of Kenneth Burke or Michel Foucault. You want to get to the point with at least some theories or theorists that other scholars consider you *the* person to go to with questions.
- B. History/Context
Another way to provide unique value is to become a specialist in a particular period of history (such as 19th century U.S. public address) or about a particular context/practice (such as adolescents, teasing, verbal aggression, apocalyptic discourse, online social networks, conspiracy, etc.).

C. Knowing the Scholarship

You need to be an authority on the scholarship published in your areas of interest and research. This is, incidentally, one of the functions of a literature review in a dissertation or research article—to illustrate your expertise in the relevant scholarship. You can also provide added value by knowing the research that is being published in a related discipline, such as psychology or classics. There are exciting research programs going on in related disciplines that many communication scholars are simply unaware. Learn about this literature and think about participating in other disciplines' conferences.

In terms of methodological expertise, it is important during graduate school to develop appropriate skill sets. I personally believe that one of the weaknesses of many rhetoric and cultural studies students is that they underestimate the importance of acquiring a range of methodological skills and fetishize theory instead. This can result in a good deal of hemming and hawing during an interview when someone asks about their methodological expertise. In any case, in communication one can roughly group methodological skills into three categories:

A. Statistics/Experimental Methodology Experience

The best advice I have heard is that would-be social scientists should take a methods course every single semester they are in graduate school. It is not simply that a particular statistics course makes you smarter; rather, learning statistical and experimental techniques gives you a broader range of ways of collecting and analyzing data. The more you know, the more you can *do*, and the more value you add to your scholarship.

B. Qualitative Methods

- a. Textual Analysis (narrative, persona, metaphor, framing, argument, etc.)
- b. Focus groups; Interviews
- c. Conversational Analysis, Discourse Analysis (including computer assisted)
- d. Ethnography

C. Foreign Language Competency

If you want to contribute to classical rhetoric literature, you need to learn some Greek or Latin. If you want to be an expert on Foucault or Derrida, you need to learn some French. Americans are weaker scholars than we should be, internationally speaking, because we tend too often to be monolingual.

The bottom line? The more of these areas you are able to develop, the more added value you'll bring to prospective employers.

The Identity of Your Scholarship

What are you studying and why? What do you want to do with it? These sorts of questions you will hear not only from friends and parents but also from potential employers. To help you answer such questions, I want to discuss three topics: your research questions, whether you see your research as basic or applied, and your target audience.

There is a nice discussion of how to frame research questions or problems in a book by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams entitled *The Craft of Research*, published by the University of Chicago Press (2008). I highly recommend this book for beginning graduate students. The authors suggest a three-step process of formulating your research agenda and provide some useful examples. The generic formula looks like this:

1. *Name your topic:*
I am studying _____.
2. *Imply your question:*
because I want to find out who/how/why _____.
3. *State the rationale for the question and the project:*
in order to understand how/why what _____.

For example (taken from Booth, et al.):

1. I am working on the motivation of Roosevelt's early speeches
2. because I want to discover whether presidents since the '30s used those speeches to announce new policy
3. in order to understand how generating public support for national policy has changed in the age of television

Whether you follow this formula or not, the issues engaged—research topic, question, motivation—are ones that you should be able to articulate with respect to your own research agenda.

You also need to think about whether you want to engage in basic or applied research. This distinction is explained (and critiqued) in a variety of places, but if it is an unfamiliar distinction you may want to start by reading what Booth et al. have to say about it in *The Craft of Research*. In a sense, the distinction is that basic/pure research pursues knowledge for its own sake, whether that knowledge be of the general or of the particular. So, questions such as “How does language influence thought?” “What are the distinct characteristics of 1960s feminist rhetoric?” or “How does visual persuasion work?” are examples of basic research questions. Applied research, as the name implies, is concerned more with applying the results of basic research to practical problems. For example, “Given the research on communication apprehension, how can we reduce the fear of public speaking in the classroom?” or “Given what we know about social movements, how can current movements best utilize the Internet?” or “Given persuasion theory, how can we construct persuasive antismoking ads aimed at teens?” would be examples of applied research questions.

Some purists argue that the fundamental purpose of scholarly research is to generate basic research and that we ought not be concerned with its uses. Such a position has been critiqued both from the left and the right, politically speaking. From the right, one can note that there is a substantial financial incentive to produce usable research, whether that research is a new prescription drug to a new way to persuade people to vote for a candidate. From the left, one can argue that all research either reaffirms existing social and economic structures, or enables various means of challenging or changing that social order.

A compelling case can be made for either a basic or applied approach to one's research. A middle ground category has been described in Donald Stokes' book, *Pasteur's Quadrant: Basic Science and Technological Innovation*, as "use-inspired basic research." The idea is that scholars seek to enhance basic understanding and are engaged by the desire to solve problems. So, for example, one studies verbal aggression or visual persuasion both to understand and to influence how such communicative phenomena are dealt with.

In any case, whatever you decide, the point is that you need to think about what your research is trying to accomplish and to be able to articulate your goals with colleagues and potential employers.

Last but not least, give some thought to the audience you want your research to address. To publish a particular research project you must craft it for publications that have a history and a recognizable constituency, so any publishing scholar has an intended audience of peer scholars who share certain interests and values. This can be defined narrowly, such as "experts on teasing" or "19th century public address scholars," or it can be defined quite broadly, such as "psychologists" or "historians." And, of course, some research can address an audience that goes beyond the confines of academic disciplines, such as media critics, policy makers, or the public at large. Which audience is appropriate for your work obviously depends on the project, but when constructing your own particular research identity do not forget who you want to read your work and how you can best reach such an audience.

Writing a Research Identity Statement

Often one is not asked to provide a narrative about one's research identity until one goes up for tenure and promotion. But writing a research identity statement or research narrative is a useful exercise even while you are a graduate student. Such a statement should include the issues addressed above: In what intellectual traditions do you see yourself as participating? What research problems drive your work? What expertise in subject matter and methodology gives your work its distinctive value? Is your work better characterized as basic, applied, or use-inspired basic research? Who are the intended audiences for your work?

I recommend that doctoral students draft a research identity statement early in their graduate education. Obviously this is a document that will be revised as your education and career progress, but the issues involved are ones that you are well served by giving thoughtful reflection.

Below are examples of short research narratives composed by graduate students with whom I have worked over the years. These are offered solely for the purpose of stimulating your own thinking. You should not try to imitate them, since obviously every scholar's research identity is distinct.

Sample Research Identity Statements

Example 1

I am a rhetorical historian who studies U.S. higher education discourse. Using the techniques of textual analysis and social/cultural historiography, I investigate the construction and influence of philosophical, curricular, and pedagogical ideas in higher education. Examples of such ideas include general education, critical thinking, and academic freedom. In my current work, I am studying influential discourses on liberal education in an effort to identify the rhetorical strategies by which “timeless truths” in education are created. Through this and other research, I seek to clarify the role of higher education in a democratic society, which promises to enhance decision-making processes regarding this vital and powerful U.S. institution.

Example 2

As a feminist media critic interested in the analysis of various media sources (print, television, Internet), I focus on the contributions that media texts make to the social construction of identity. Specifically, I examine these texts in order to distinguish what representations of gender and race they contribute to the cultural milieu. For my MA thesis, I undertook a detailed analysis of several Internet pornography web sites and drew conclusions about the ways those sites represent masculinity. This project (and my work in general) is heavily influenced by theories of social constructivism, current thinking in gender studies, and rhetorical theory and criticism. I am also committed to certain elements of audience analysis that are vital to achieving a depth of understanding about the media and their roles in society.

Example 3

I am a social scientist who studies family communication patterns. I employ both quantitative methods such as statistics and experiments as well as the qualitative method of ethnography. I am studying family communication patterns because I want to find out which communication variables contribute to family closeness and cohesion and which lead to the dissolution of the family unit. My research is aimed at the general public with the intention of teaching communication strategies to families in order to help improve and/or save their familial relationships.

Example 4

My research program focuses on the rhetoric of intellectual property and plagiarism. I am guided by two questions: how did the practice of discursive ownership come about, and how might it be different? Concerning the first question, a major aspect of my research entails chronicling the early history of intellectual property and plagiarism in the Western world. Since the earliest available presence of these notions resides in the extant writings of classical Greeks, I combine textual analysis with Greek philology in order to reconstruct

the ancient contingencies involved in the genesis of discursive originality and ownership. Concerning the second question, I take Richard Rorty's pragmatic approach, which advocates usefully redescribing phenomena in order to produce cultural change. For example, I would like to redescribe the generation of language as a service provided to a community rather than as a product owned by an individual. This could then shift the ethical problem of plagiarism from the question of theft to the question of doing the work. In short, I want to historicize the rhetoric of intellectual property as well as theorize about language production in a way that minimizes the side effects of its commodification.

Chapter 4

Putting Together Your CV

As you begin your job search, the needs of position openings will vary so your curriculum vitae (CV) will have to be flexible in order to adapt to those varying needs. A good way to do so is to create a “Master CV” that includes all available and potentially relevant information. When you apply for a position, simply edit the Master CV to best fit the job description.

Below is a sample CV along with editorial comments. Label it *résumé* or *curriculum vitae* or use no label. Curriculum vitae is not plural; it is the correct form of *vita* (genitive), so do not put curriculum vita.

You should use a 12-point font and one-inch margins for ease of reading. Use standard copy paper, rather than expensive *résumé* paper. Do not leave tons of unused space, but don’t make each page too crowded either.

I. M. Student

Department of Communication
225 Big Hall, Whatsamatta U.
Metropolis, ST 00000
800-555-5555 (home)
student@wu.edu

[do not list office *and* home addresses—list only the address to which you want them to write. You can list an office phone if you have one, but it is probably more reliable to list only your home number. If you do not have voicemail, get it.]

Education

- Ph. D. Whatsamatta University ABD; Ph.D. anticipated Summer 2XXX.
Major: Rhetorical Studies
Minor: Media Studies
G.P.A.: 3.8/4.0 [optional]
Dissertation: *Title...*
Advisor: Elder Wiser [could list committee members]
- M.A. Northeast State University August 2XXX
Major: Rhetorical Studies
G.P.A.: 3.75/4.0
Thesis: *Title...*
Advisor: Younger Wiser

B.S. Southwest State University May 2XXX
Major: Communication
G.P.A.: 3.6/4.0

[NOTE: Do not provide personal data: age, race, sex, marital status.]

Academic Appointments

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Whatsamatta U. 2XXX - present.
Graduate Teaching Assistant, Northeast State University, 2XXX-2XXX.

[If you have held a faculty job elsewhere, list it here as well. Do not list non-academic jobs unless they clearly help to credential you for a specific job.]

Awards and Honors

Any research awards or nominations, including top papers, travel awards, etc.
Any teaching awards or nominations.
Any particularly noteworthy undergraduate awards.

Publications

Provide full citations. Indicate co-authors where appropriate—be sure to list authors in the correct order. List any items that are already published or that are “in press.” If the publication is relatively unknown or is from another discipline, provide a brief description of it in brackets. Also list items that are “under review” or are “being revised for resubmission” but mark them clearly as such.

Convention Participation

List all convention presentations and papers. Include:

- title
- indicate co-authors
- indicate if it was an invited or competitively selected paper/panel
- list the division
- list convention, location, and year
- indicate if it was a “top papers” panel or paper

Sample: “The Rhetoric of Rhetorical Rhetoricity.” Paper [or panel] competitively selected by Commission on Governmental Communication; National Communication Association Annual Convention, San Francisco, 2XXX.

Note: Panels are typically competitively selected, so even if someone “invites” you to be on a panel, the CV entry should still indicate that the panel was competitively selected.

Do not list panels that you chaired. Do list panels for which you were a respondent. Identify yourself as “panel organizer” where appropriate.

Research Interests

Describe both what your dissertation is about as well as what you see as your future research interests over the next few years. Tell them enough to show your interests and expertise, but it need not be overly detailed or overly broad. This section should be one to three sentences long. Adjust as necessary for the position.

Research Experience

If you had a research assistantship sometime during your graduate education, indicate for whom you worked and describe the sort of tasks you completed. If you provided material used in a publication, make sure you mention the publication.

Teaching Experience

There are two kinds of information you want to list here. First, list what you have taught with enough detail for readers to recognize what you know how to do. Second, consider providing evidence of teaching *effectiveness* such as teaching evaluation data. Assuming you are coming straight out of graduate school, it does not hurt to duplicate information in your teaching portfolio. In fact, since it is entirely possible that some search committee members will not look at your teaching portfolio, it is important to include on your CV any vital information you want them to know about your teaching. For example:

Theories of Organizational Communication (NE State: COMM 324)

Course provides an introduction to the history of the field of organizational communication and exposes students to various theoretical and meta-theoretical approaches to the study of organization, and applies theories to case-studies of organizations. Responsible for selection of readings, construction of assignments and examinations, and evaluation of student performance.

Interviewing Principles and Practices (NE State: COMM 325)

Course covers informational, employment, and persuasive interviewing techniques. Responsible for constructing lectures, classroom exercises, assignments, examinations, 5 in-class interviewing performances, and a field interview paper.

Public Speaking (Whatsamatta U.: COMM 1101)

Course covers the fundamentals of effective public speaking. Students learn to construct, deliver, and critically evaluate informative, expository, and persuasive speeches. Responsible for creating lectures, in-class exercises, all assignments, and evaluation.

[Do not include teaching evaluation data such as that below if you already have it included in your teaching portfolio.]

Student Responses to Core Items in the Student Evaluation System.

Mean scores on a 5-point scale with 5 = high score.

Northeast State University Core Items (mean scores 5-point scale)

1. Demonstrated Enthusiasm

2. Communicates Clearly
3. Interesting Presentations
4. Pleased with Amount Learned
5. Overall Effectiveness of Teacher

<u>COM 324</u>	1	2	3	4	5
(Organizational Comm)					
2XXX-F	4.58	4.50	4.67	4.67	4.75
2XXX-S	4.61	4.11	4.17	4.17	4.28

Whatsamatta U Core Items (median scores on a 7-point scale)

1. How would you rate the instructor's overall teaching ability?
2. How would you rate the instructor's knowledge of the subject matter?
3. How would you rate the instructor's respect and concern for students?
4. How much would you say you learned in this course?

<u>Item</u>	1	2	3	4
COMM 1313	6.7	6.9	6.9	6.1
COMM 1101	6.0	6.6	6.1	5.6

Undergraduate Teaching Interests

[Make sure you adapt this to the school to which you are applying. Use their terminology where possible. Refer to the institution's course descriptions—typically available online. Balance your interests with the department's needs, but do not list too much.]

Course description could include:

Rhetorical Criticism Rhetorical Theory
 Interviewing Small Group Discussion

Graduate Teaching Interests

[Adapt to the school to which you are applying.]

Rhetorical Theory Methods of Rhetorical Criticism
 Burkean Rhetorical Theory Jewish Theory and Criticism
 Seminar: Rhetoric and Religion

Graduate Course Work

[Consider demonstrating your specific training in certain areas. Group your coursework in such a way as to demonstrate your strengths and interests. Have two or three big categories, not five or six little ones.]

Format example:

Rhetorical Studies

Course Title University Instructor Name

Media Theory and Criticism

Course Title University Instructor Name

University Service

[Use this category for offices or committees in which you served.]

Various committees for Jewish Studies Program, NE State, 2XXX - present.
Secretary and Treasurer, Communication Graduate Student Association, 2XXX.

Professional Service

[Use this for one-shot events, or service work in professional organizations. Also list any Guest Lectures you may have done for other classes. You should feel free to combine the two "Service" categories into one.]

Membership in Professional Organizations

National Communication Association
Central States Communication Association
Broadcast Education Association

References

List names, title, address, email, and phone number for references. Though well-known names are useful, it is more important to list people who know your work well. Most references have Web pages with descriptions, so you can include their URL as well.

You can list people here that you may not be getting letters of recommendation from. Just make sure you get their permission first, and their preferred contact information.

Keep in touch with potential references and keep them up-to-date on your scholarship. The best references are not necessarily "big names." The best references are those that know your work well and can comment in some details about your skills.

You must have a letter from you advisor. Make sure your advisor describes the status of your dissertation.

Last Thoughts

- Tell them as much as you can.
- Emphasize your strengths.
- Make it readable (expensive paper unnecessary).
- Adapt where possible.

All of the above is merely suggestive. Have your advisor, other professors, and friends look over your résumé or "curriculum vitae" for feedback and suggestions. The point is to tell a lot about yourself and to demonstrate your strengths.

Chapter 5

Assembling a Teaching Portfolio

The emphasis on teaching credentials in academic job searches varies from institution to institution, but it is a fair generalization to say that most jobs now want to see evidence of teaching effectiveness. The vast majority of jobs for entry-level assistant professors are *not* at Ph.D.-granting research-oriented schools. In fact, many schools that emphasize teaching worry about whether applicants from leading research institutions value teaching. Accordingly, I believe that applications you make for any job position will be enhanced by including a teaching portfolio.

Your portfolio will be most valuable if you are flexible with its construction. For example, think about having separate portfolios for schools with and without graduate programs. If you can afford it, have them bound with a metal spiral binding.

In my opinion, the “must” list of things to include is as follows:

- A. “Teaching Philosophy” (how you see the teaching process).
- B. Clear statement of teaching interests (do a generic one, to start with, but try to adapt to schools by using terms often found in ads).
- C. Teaching experience: List of courses taught with description of content and duties (see sample vita for examples).
- D. Teaching evaluation data (copies of tally sheets optional, but do not include comments).
- E. Sample syllabi from courses you have solo taught. Include no more than two of these.
- F. Potential syllabi (graduate or undergraduate): Useful mostly if you know that a school is searching to fill a very specific teaching need. These do not need to be detailed. General topics and sample readings are sufficient.
- G. Anything that documents your success: from “favorite professor” dinner invites, notes of appreciation, comments from your course supervisor, records of any training workshops you attend.

Also consider adding, if you have them, the following:

- H. Examples of “products of good teaching” (student papers or videos, or describe particularly interesting or innovative teaching projects).
- I. Evidence of student growth (rarely available; stuff like pre- and post-test scores).

NOTE: Some portfolios get long enough to require a table of contents. You can simply staple the portfolio together if it is less than 20 pages. If it is over 20 pages, you may want to bind it and be sure to include a table of contents.

Make sure you look at some good examples of completed Teaching Portfolios. A number of people have put their teaching portfolios on the Web, so if you simply type in teaching portfolio in a search engine you can find a fair number of examples.

Writing a Teaching Philosophy Statement

Begin by jotting down ideas about who you are as a teacher. Consider overall beliefs you have about teaching and learning. Connect these beliefs with concrete actions you have taken or expect to take in developing, teaching, and assessing a classroom course. Collect examples of your actions along with student responses. Organize your thinking into an outline of ideas and examples. Consider the audience for whom you will write the statement.

Write an initial draft. Show it to a colleague for feedback. Put the draft away for a few days and begin the whole process again. It may take a while to be fully satisfied with your statement. Do not get hung up on this statement as few people may take the time to read it, but provide enough substance so that those who read it will understand you better.

Questions to get you started:

- How do you describe yourself as a teacher?
- What activities take place in your classroom?
- What beliefs do you have about learning and ways that you can promote learning?
- How would your students describe your teaching?
- How would your colleagues describe your teaching?
- How do you change your teaching on the graduate level (if applicable)?
- How do you assess your teaching effectiveness?
- How have you modified your teaching in response to student feedback?
- How do you keep current in your field?
- How are changes in your field reflected in your teaching?
- How do you put your philosophy of teaching into practice?
- What metaphor would best describe your teaching?

Below are examples that you may find helpful to stimulate your thinking and writing.

Sample #1

The classroom experience should be fruitful for both students and instructor. It begins with an approach to teaching that is both multi-perspectival and multi-methodological. By multi-perspectival, I mean instruction that eschews fixed, centered takes on the course content and rather invites persistent questioning and input from the students themselves. To facilitate this kind of interactive learning environment, there are a number of things that I try to offer as instructor.

First, multi-perspectival instruction widens the field of appropriate topics for any given course. For example, in the mass media courses that I teach, I seek to combine viewpoints from various combinations of technological, historical, institutional, textual, and popular approaches to the study of media. What this gives us is a broad analysis of important people and trends in the mass

media industries, of the emergence and development of major communications media, of the unique constitution of actual media content and its recombination across genres and media outlets, and of the audience's role in using and challenging preferred meanings.

Second, the multi-perspectival approach means wielding a variety of critical viewpoints in examining course content and theorizing on communication processes. Feminist, Marxian, psycho-analytic, postcolonial, and ethnic critical perspectives offer a rich menu for critically comprehending the social implications of rhetoric and culture. While I deal chiefly in critical and humanistic studies of rhetoric and communication, even quantitative, empirical approaches are enriched when their generative research questions are inductively formulated through such critical understanding.

Finally, this speaks to the importance of classroom diversity as a pedagogical aid. When the students themselves represent a broad range of ethnicities, faiths, and gender experience, the instructor who wishes to convey alternative critical viewpoints is made more effective. When there are students present whose life experiences have given them access to traditionally marginalized viewpoints, their willingness to offer personal examples and commentary benefits the entire class and ultimately promotes the instructor's teaching agenda.

As for the multi-methodological aspect of my teaching, I believe that traditional, expository lecture still has its place in today's academy, though only when used in conjunction with Socratic methods of dialogic exchange and applied, hands-on student practice. I've had the good fortune to teach two performance-based courses in which the students additionally learned-by-doing. Such experience has shown me the benefits of applied tasks and group-collaborative assignments.

To get students to think about more abstract theories, or about issues without clear-cut answers, I have found that opening a dialogue in which I pose questions to them really sets the gears of their minds in motion. Regardless of whether a particular student is called upon to respond verbally to my queries, an interestingly posed question, followed by a sufficient pause, will generate significant thought on most occasions. Never underestimate the value of a well-placed rhetorical question!

Finally, the good old-fashioned lecture is useful for conveying basic information in a straight-forward, timely manner. Some would argue that lecture is boring and defunct, but I view it as a challenge to my public speaking abilities to maintain the students' interest and present the material in a way that makes sense to them and keeps them mentally occupied.

In addition to teaching style, the multi-methodological approach entails combining different learning environments to maximize students' use of the course. I try to design my courses to follow a generally cooperative paradigm, but other times it can be quite effective to introduce competitive aspects to the basic structure. For instance, in my broadcast production course, the students generally collaborate in small group production units to produce their studio assignments. However, as added motivation for their final, longest, and most complex television production, I stage a "best-production" competition in which I award prizes to each group member from the winning team of the three or four production groups in the class. This combination of small group collaboration with in-class competition has been well received by the students and makes for improved effort for their most challenging assignment.

-Brent Whitmore

Sample #2

Good teaching is an art fraught with pleasure and pain. Having taught eight undergraduate classes at the University of Minnesota, I have learned that teaching involves finding a balance between creating a zone of comfort in the classroom and creating a place for risk, challenge, and controversy; between encouraging experimentation and maintaining rigor; between assisting students and allowing them to wrestle with material at their own pace; between simplifying course material for the sake of clarity and retaining the accuracy of complexity. Teaching is not a product but a human activity, and it is in the interactions that occur inside and outside the classroom that learning takes place, not only learning about the course material but also learning about the identities of each of us as individuals within the culture of higher education. With a philosophical commitment to the idea that meanings are created socially, I seek to enact a teaching practice that models good communication, demonstrates compassion for students as individuals, and encourages exploration of the subject matter in ways that have an impact on students' daily lives.

Partly to inspire students to accept greater responsibility for their own learning, and partly to emphasize that each student is an important part of the class community, I undertake to learn all students' names early and to use their names often, not only when I address them but also in summarizing material ("as Milpha said," "as Scott mentioned earlier"). I also strive to develop further my skills in engaging controversial issues, which are the bread and butter of skills courses in communication. Emotion, I believe, has a valid, and indeed crucial, role to play in learning, but I try to structure exercises and discussions so that ground rules for engagement are maintained and students ideally do not experience conflict as personal attack. This is not easy to do. Balancing the validation of passion for ideas and a healthy respect for people who espouse different views requires a level of finesse and sensitivity that demands the full attention of both instructor and students. In my classes, I have found that straightforward discussions of conflict offer the best potential for the ethical management of controversy.

In order to encourage students to engage the course material actively, I design class sessions to encourage students to apply concepts from the readings or lectures. A typical two-hour class session in argumentation, for example, involves about half an hour of lecture, during which I frequently ask questions and attempt to spark brief discussions, followed by twenty minutes of more student-directed activities (e.g., group discussion, analysis of a narrative or case, paired or small-group planning of future debating scenarios). After a short break, the second half of the class usually proceeds in much the same way (interactive lecture, with specific applications following). As I have taught more and become more used to myself as a teacher, I have become increasingly thoughtful about challenging students to take more control of their own learning. As a consequence, my lectures have become more interactive, and I have employed group work much more. Leading discussions effectively requires considerable skill—and an ability to think on one's feet—and I strive to improve my abilities in this area, partly by watching the techniques of teachers whom I admire.

In addition, I attempt to make my classroom an arena for exposing students to new ideas and to individuals and groups with which they may have little familiarity. I draw course materials and classroom examples from as wide a field as possible, often incorporating speeches and texts written by men and women from nondominant culture groups. Since my own research

interests focus on historical development through rhetorical action, my courses tend to favor a historical approach, examining changing patterns of beliefs and values through time. I hope that incorporating materials from various cultural traditions, geographic areas, and chronological periods fosters interest among my students in exploring other cultures, and I also hope that such a strategy promotes the acceptance of diversity within the classroom as a positive good.

Metaphors of teaching are many, and I sometimes think of myself as a guide, sometimes as an authority, sometimes as a nurturer, sometimes as an observer. I try to be sensitive both to students' needs and to my own sense of self; usually I envision my role as a teacher as that of a guide who is an informed communicator. My responsibilities include developing my own expertise in the subject matter in ways that make me capable of communicating those concepts clearly, designing a syllabus and selecting course materials that challenge students to broaden their intellectual and critical horizons, and establishing a classroom environment that accepts each student as a unique, rational being and fosters a sense of community in which questioning is not only possible but encouraged. Negotiating the myriad pressures of the classroom situation makes teaching one of the most difficult activities in which I have ever been engaged; that complexity, however, also means that the rewards are great. Drawing on the wisdom of my own teachers, I try "always to tell the truth about school" (that is, admit the realities of institutional power) and "never to teach undergraduates anything they'll have to unlearn later" (that is, do not sacrifice accuracy for simplicity). Teaching is hard, but I am committed to trying to do it well. I expect always to consider myself a teacher-in-process-of-becoming.

-Angela Ray, 1999

Sample #3

I conceptualize undergraduate teaching rather differently than graduate teaching, so this narrative will be clearer if I divide my remarks accordingly.

I have been teaching undergraduate students since 1980. The word that sums up my teaching goals with undergraduates is "empowerment." I want undergraduates completing my classes to be able to do things afterwards that they could not do, or could not do as well, prior to the class. In particular, I believe strongly

in the tradition of the discipline of rhetorical studies, dating back to the beginning of rhetorical theory in classical Greece, of seeing ourselves as preparing students to participate in a communication-rich political environment. Put simply, I believe my classes should be designed to help produce more ethical and effective citizens. I attempt to accomplish this through a combination of theory instruction and practical performance by students.

In virtually every undergraduate class I have taught there has been an emphasis both on message production and on the critical analysis of messages received. Except for a large lecture class I taught at Purdue University, all of my classes have been writing intensive (whether officially recognized as such or not). Typically I evaluate students over theoretical and factual knowledge through examinations, and evaluate students on acquiring practical productive and evaluative skills through the practice and performance of those skills. Here at the University of Minnesota I have pursued these goals in the three undergraduate classes I have taught: COMM 1313 Analysis of Argument, COMM 3110 Freedom of Speech, and WOST 3300 Men and Masculinity in Film.

I also strongly believe that undergraduates should be empowered by learning about contemporary scholarly research. I have found that students rise to the challenge of understanding new ways of understanding their world—in fact they hunger for it. If students do not have their beliefs challenged and shaken up a bit, they probably are not learning enough. Furthermore it is an important part of their empowerment to demystify “scholarly research” and “expertise” so that they understand that they can, in fact, understand it and even reach a point at which they can evaluate it.

If student reactions such as those provided in course evaluations are any guide, then my undergraduate teaching efforts have been successful. I am an energetic teacher who adapts equally well to a large lecture of 300 students or to a small seminar. I would attribute my success so far to class preparation, identifying classroom goals and adapting my teaching methods to meet those goals, extensive public speaking experience, and a deep concern for the success of each and every student. As an added bit of anecdotal evidence of success, I should mention that the campus radio station at Purdue University (WBAA) asked for permission to air the entire set of class lectures of “Communication and Social Knowledge” from the fall 1992 semester as part of their Sunday afternoon programming. Since that time they have aired the lectures at least twice.

I am now in my second decade of teaching in a Ph.D.-granting department. The simplest way to sum up my philosophy of graduate education is “professional preparation.” Our program is designed to produce Ph.D.s who will, in theory, go on to teach, research, and provide service in a college or university setting. Accordingly, my efforts in graduate courses is to guide students through a content area (such as “critical theory” or “the philosophy of Richard Rorty”) in such a way as to prepare them better to join the ranks of scholars and teachers. There are two key ingredients that go into my graduate teaching efforts: careful preparation on my part and encouraging students to envision themselves as future scholars/teachers.

When I teach a graduate-level class, I spend a good deal of time designing course materials, from the syllabus to supplemental bibliographies to the course packet. Whenever possible I send drafts of my syllabi to recognized experts in the subject area, or at the very least solicit those experts’ suggestions for class topics, exercises, and readings. When I taught my first class on feminism and rhetoric ten years ago I solicited input from Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, Celeste Condit, Sonja K. Foss, and Janice Rushing. When I taught my seminar on Richard Rorty I consulted with Rorty himself about the class design. If I have taught a class before, I consult with previous students about changes in the course design. In short, I try to approach each class as I would a major research project. As a result, the students learn more, appreciate the effort put into designing the class, and, with luck, they will find aspects of my pedagogical practices that may be useful to them when they become teachers.

A persistent theme in my graduate courses is that the students will soon be full-fledged members of a professional scholarly community. As a result, the values and practices that inform their efforts in a graduate class are precursors to the values and practices that will inform their efforts as professionals. Once this message sinks in with students, I have found that the quality of their work typically improves. While the vast majority of time in graduate classes is devoted to learning about the designated subject matter, the context is one of professional preparation. And sometimes that context becomes a text itself, as we explore issues dealing with the challenges they will face as scholars, teachers, and university citizens.

A clear example I can give of how this future orientation influences my graduate teaching is in working with students’ papers. One of the most important challenges for graduate students is finding

their own authorial voice. For me it is important for students to see themselves as scholars making a case rather than as students writing assigned papers. As a result, I typically encourage students to write with convention participation or publication in mind. Two of my advisees' dissertations have been published as books, and a number of class papers have become convention papers or published articles. I also create co-authorship opportunities where possible—a practice that has produced one lengthy research report written with ten graduate students and a total of eight published articles with six different co-authors.

-Edward Schiappa

Chapter 6

Pursuing Publication

Getting Published in Journals

There are two approaches to publishing: Write an essay and shop it around to an appropriate outlet; or pick a publication then write an essay suited for the outlet. Early in your career you will probably be doing the former by adapting articles you wrote for classes, but as your career progresses, think about the second option as the most efficient way to write.

Always keep in mind that you are writing for a particular audience so your essay will have to be tailored to fit the audience. With that in mind, try to strike a balance between audience demands and the preservation of your own voice and vision.

How does one find the appropriate outlet for an article?

- A. Go to the library and browse through the periodical section. You may find a publication that fits the subject matter or theoretical approach of an essay you have written or would like to write. Review what seem to be the most obvious options (feel free to consult with a senior scholar on this matter). Make sure you pick a journal that publishes the sort of methodology and data that you use. Once you have narrowed the field a bit, look at the different journals' editors and editorial boards for scholars that do similar work.
- B. Skim through issues from the last 5 to 10 years looking for problems, themes, and issues that recur. How are these framed? What vocabulary and theorists are used to address them? Using this information, add relevant citations to your essay and adjust your vocabulary or framing.
- C. Publishing in a journal is like joining a conversation. If you have read the past conversation in a journal but are not sure whether your essay makes a contribution, you can make e-mail inquiries to journal editors to solicit more information about the publication. You may want to include a short abstract of your essay to see if it is something the journal might publish.
- D. Experience and professional socialization will be important factors in helping you select the right outlet for your article. Read, listen, and ask senior faculty about various journals to help develop your understanding of the publishing game.
- E. Consider the publication's distribution and rejection/acceptance ratio when selecting a journal—especially one that is not a "mainstream" communication journal. These aspects may be significant in your initial job hunt and later promotion and tenure reviews.
- F. Where you publish is important, *especially* early in your career. Take advantage of opportunities such as calls for papers for special issues by journals as long as it is a good journal.
- G. Generally avoid calls for papers for edited book collections if you plan to seek a job at a research-oriented institution. Such publications typically do

not count for much in promotion and tenure reviews. The key to tenure at research institutions is publishing in refereed journals. Accordingly, avoid the temptation of joining edited book projects (which may or may not pan out, or may take several years to complete) and instead concentrate on getting an essay published in a refereed publication.

Cover letters or emails for journal submissions do not need to be long nor do they need to include arguments about the merits of your essay (those should be evident in the essay). A simple sentence or two should suffice in most cases, i.e., "Please consider this essay for publication in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*. I look forward to hearing from you." A notable exception to this rule applies to NCA publications. NCA editors are required to ask for a history of the paper, i.e. is it drawn from an MA or Ph.D. thesis? Who was your advisor? Has the paper been presented at a conference? When submitting an essay, be sure to include your e-mail address along with your snail mail address. This makes it easier for editors to contact you if necessary.

Since I first wrote this booklet, a growing number of journals have gone to a process of electronic submission. This is more efficient and faster, though it almost forces everyone to use Microsoft Word to minimize manuscripts from being mangled in transmission. In any case, just follow submission directions carefully and be sure to include everything that the journal requests.

If you haven't received a publication decision after a sufficient period of time has lapsed (about three months), do not hesitate to inquire about the status of your essay. In some cases editors need a little nudge to keep things moving along.

Avoid some of the common pitfalls of rejected articles:

- Make sure your bibliography/works cited demonstrates that you know the literature relevant to your essay (particularly work previously published in the journal to which you are submitting!). Look at the editorial board of the journal and think about who your likely reviewers are. If they have published in an area related to yours, do you cite them? Should you?
- Be sure to follow submission guidelines strictly. Does your essay follow the proper citation style? Have you included the requisite number of copies? Did you remember an abstract?
- Be sure to have a clear thesis that is stated explicitly in the first page. Provide a focused argument and a well-organized paper. Identify problems or gaps in previous research. Argue for the importance, relevance, or utility of your artifact or theoretical contribution. In short, position your contribution: how does it add to on-going scholarly conversations? What problem does your work contribute to solving? What scholarly gaps are you filling? Do not be modest. Preserve your voice and confidently project your contribution.
- There is no need to be overly contentious or hostile towards others' work. The person you criticize may just be the person who reviews your essay. Furthermore, keep in mind that anything you publish becomes a permanent part of a public

record. Typically it is preferable to frame your contribution in positive terms (how you add to a body of work) rather than negatively (how other work is fatally flawed).

Working with Journal Editors

The publication process requires perseverance on your part. Your success or failure may depend on your ability to work with the editor of the journal to which you submit your work. Feel free to work with your advisor or a senior faculty member to help you work through this process the first time you go through it. The following is a description of the process along with some tips to help you succeed.

After you submit your work for publication, the editor and other scholars will review it. Based on their reviews you will receive one of the following responses:

1. Accepted “as is” or with minor changes
Congratulations, your work is recognized for its value and will be shared with the rest of the academic community. Make the changes requested and the editor will lead you through the rest of the process. Some journals may ask that you sign a contract. Pay attention to clauses articulating your right to publish the material elsewhere as part of other projects, such as a book.
2. Revise and resubmit
Although this response is encouraging, there are a few questions you need to ask yourself before committing time and energy to revising:
 - Does the response suggest the article is closer to being accepted than rejected? Or do the required revisions amount to a new paper?
 - Can you make the changes necessary to make the reviewers happy without compromising your voice and vision?
 - Is the editor a “strong editor” or a “weak editor”? That is to say, does the editor appear to acquiesce to the reviewer’s suggestions with little or no comment (weak) or does she or he appear to make decisions independent of the reviewers comments? You may have to use your intuition or consult your advisor for more information about the particular editor you are working with as you answer this question. In any case, as you work on your revisions be clear about who you are revising for—the editor or the reviewers.
 - How much time would you have to invest to meet the reviewers’ requests? Is the probability of success high enough to justify such a time commitment, or would you be better off sending it to another journal? This is the sort of decision for which you may want to seek the advice of a senior scholar.

If you decide to revise and resubmit, make sure you make the changes suggested or make a strong argument as to why you did not. Also *include a brief list of the*

changes you make because some reviewers will just check those portions of your paper. Include this list as a cover sheet that goes with the copies of your revised essay.

3. Rejected

This may be a bummer, but it is not the end of the world. Remember, some of the major journals have rejection rates of up to 95 percent so you are certainly not alone. Besides, there are many possible reasons your article was rejected that have nothing to do with the quality of scholarship; perhaps the article just doesn't fit with the mission of the journal. You may want to try submitting the piece to another journal with or without revisions. If you can make a convincing argument that there were flaws in the review process, you may want to ask for reconsideration.

The bottom line to getting published:

- Answer questions that your audience thinks (or that you can persuade them to think) are important.
- Provide added value, i.e., expertise or insight that goes beyond what others have done.
- Have a long-term plan for publishing, but take opportunities as they arise. Plan for the next several years; how many articles you want to get published, where you want to publish, etc.
- Do not be shy about competing for awards. For example, each year NCA and divisions within NCA advertise a number of awards for which it is appropriate for graduate students to compete.
- Last but not least: Be persistent. The publication process gets easier with experience. It is not at all uncommon to send an essay to two or three journals before it gets accepted.

Finding The "Cutting Edge"

How does one get on the proverbial "cutting edge" of scholarship? I have only two suggestions to offer. First, simply keep up with the scholarly conversations going on. These conversations may be informal chats at conferences, or they may be signaled by calls for special issues of journals, or single-issue conferences or seminars. Keep in mind, however, that you do not have to rely on other scholars' assessment of what is "hot" and what defines the cutting edge. If you do quality work that is innovative, you can define the cutting edge yourself.

Second, arguably the most important quality in developing a cutting edge research identity is to provide "added value"; i.e. bringing something to the table that others cannot. Go back to the chapter on research identity for the list of ways to credential yourself by having subject matter or methodological expertise. Keep in mind that *interdisciplinary* and *multi-methodological* approaches to research are increasingly valued. In my own case, it was simply the matter that I learned classical Greek that provided my work on early Greek rhetorical theory its added value

within communication studies, while a background in contemporary theory helped provide added value when I engaged audiences of classicists. It is worth noting that academic fads come and go, so one should not pursue a research project *solely* because it is “hot.” As I mentioned before, if you have a topic that you are deeply interested in and you do good quality work, you will define your own cutting edge.

Chapter 7

Beginning the Job Hunt

Start at the Beginning

Tracking the job market is an essential but often overlooked activity that one can begin literally at the very start of one's graduate education. Make a habit of browsing the job opening sections of NCA's *SPECTRA*, ICA's *Newsletter*, H-Rhetor, CRTNET, and *The Chronicle of Higher Education* to get a feel for the job market. Keep track of who is looking for what. Consider developing additional teaching competencies to enhance your marketability in your job search when you hit the market.

NCA now has a Web site dedicated to Job Seekers as part of their online "Career Center" (www.natcom.org/careercenter). Other places to track jobs include a Post-doctoral job Web site: www.Post-Docs.com, the University Job Bank Web site (full-time faculty and staff jobs): www.UJobBank.com, and Academic Careers Online (www.AcademicCareers.com).

Where to Apply and When

Decide what variables are important to you (geography, type of institution, size of school, size of city, \$\$\$, none of the above).

Create five categories:

- F = Unacceptable (defined as less than safety net)
- D = Your Safety Net (Worse-case plan—including home)
- C = What you'll settle for if you must
- B = Good though not Ideal Options
- A = An Ideal Job

My advice: 1) In the fall, apply to categories A, B, C,
2) In the spring, add D.

Not all jobs are created equal. If you have a safety net, it is OK to skip options in the fall that might lock you into a job you do not really want.

If you can make a case that you fit a job, go for it. Let them exclude you; do not do their work for them. In general, cast a wide net.

When should you apply? Beat the deadline—do not wait until the last minute and send it overnight. A growing number of institutions now require applications to be completed online; again, do not wait until the last minute to submit your application materials. Most committees look at applications as they are completed. Get yours completed early; they may look at it in a less-rushed time. My suggestion is to be sure to complete your file about three weeks prior to

the deadline. Make sure that you give references plenty of lead-time (3-4 weeks) so that they can get your letters mailed. Also, be aware of deadlines around the NCA annual convention. Many places like to do “informal” or unofficial interviews at the NCA annual convention, but they won’t know to chat with you if you have not yet applied. It would not hurt to have your whole file in before the conference and then confirm its completion with an email or phone call.

What goes in your application packet?

1. Cover letter.
2. CV, including list of references. Adapt to specific job, if you can. One copy is fine; make sure it can be photocopied. Do not reduce the font size, use 12-point.
3. Teaching Portfolio.
4. A writing sample (whether requested or not). A published piece is preferable, but if not available make sure it is your best work and you are the first author. Do not send more than two samples. The only time a writing sample is *not* a good idea is if the position is clearly a teaching-oriented position and you confirm with your advisor or DGS that the program has *no* interest in your research abilities.
5. Three letters of recommendation. Orchestrate the letters about a month in advance of the deadline by giving your recommenders a photocopy of the ad, a pre-addressed stamped envelope (on university letterhead), a copy of your CV and other appropriate information. *Note:* The first letter is the most time consuming, so make sure there is enough lead-time. It is also good to request them in batches, so they can all be done at once, instead of one at a time.
6. Do not send:
 - a) transcripts (unless specifically and explicitly requested),
 - b) pictures, age, race, gender, religious, or familial status information,
 - c) other information that would be “illegal” for them to request or that is irrelevant to your ability to do the job advertised (like press clippings).

Writing the Cover Letter & What Goes with It

The cover letter is a very important part of the application submission. This summary is broken into two parts—a general overview of the cover letter and some specific guidelines for the organization of the cover letter.

1. Be sure that your cover letter is positive in tone and never defensive. For example, do not begin a letter with a statement like, “I know I may not seem to fit this position, but...”

2. Keep the letter brief. Remember that search committees may receive many applications for a single position, and they may not have the time or energy to read lengthy letters. One and three-quarter pages should be enough space to convey all the necessary information. Moreover, to improve the letter's readability, you should keep the paragraphs short and use bullet points when appropriate.
3. Do not worry about duplicating information on your *CV*. Even though the cover letter and *CV* may include similar information, they should be substantively different. Whereas the *CV* merely lists your qualifications and experience, your cover letter should make an argument about the ways that your qualifications and experience fit the position for which you are applying.

Here is a sample organizational approach for a cover letter:

1. Paragraph 1: Greeting. Identify the position to which you are applying using the exact terminology in the ad. Identify where you read about this job. Offer a thesis (i.e. "I am a good fit for this position because...") and a preview of the letter.
2. Middle Paragraphs: Make your arguments for why you are a good fit by addressing the needs ascertained from the ad. Generally you should include arguments for your research, teaching, and service. The degree of emphasis placed on these areas will depend on the institution and position. Provide concrete evidence and make connections. Avoid merely offering a generic self-description. This is what 90 percent of the cover letters do: "Here is my dissertation, blah blah, here is what I am interested in." This is simply not going to capture the attention of the search committee unless you frame your description in the context of advancing the claim that you are a good fit and can meet their department's needs. Tailor the argument using the institution's terminology (see their job description as well as their course catalog).
3. Next to last paragraph: Dissertation Status. Again, be concrete. Explain exactly where you are on your dissertation and make it clear that you will be finished by the appointment date. Let them know how many chapters are planned and how many completed; if you can, indicate the approximate date you anticipate a final defense. Do not embellish your status as the search committee will verify your report with your dissertation advisor. Needless to say, the appearance of deception will quickly eliminate you from a search.
4. Last paragraph: Express enthusiasm, but do not appear desperate. Offer to answer any questions and provide other relevant materials if requested. Suggest a meeting at an upcoming NCA convention or other conference if the timing is right. List your e-mail address at the end of your letter even if it is also on your *CV*.

See the Sample Cover Letter on page 50.

Letters of Recommendations

Obviously your letters of recommendation are extremely important. Who should these come from?

First and foremost, your advisor: Make sure you ask your advisor to comment explicitly on dissertation status and offer to return e-mail if folks want an update.

Second, make sure you ask people who know your work well. So-called “Big Names” help to the extent that search committees may know and respect their opinions, but only in proportion to how well your letter-writers know you or your reputation. Better to have a detailed letter from a little-known professor than vague praise from a Superstar. If someone agrees to write for you, be sure to provide an updated *CV* to them that includes the courses you have taken and any other salient information she or he may need to write a detailed letter. If someone seems hesitant about writing for you, let her/him out of it gracefully—you do not want a reluctant or half-hearted letter of recommendation.

Make this task as easy for your letter-writers as possible. Provide addressed envelopes and job descriptions for each letter. Be prepared to do drafts for people or at least offer to identify “talking points” that you hope they will address. Faculty get very busy so they may need your help to make sure your letter addresses the points you want it to address. So make sure to provide an up-to-date *CV* and feel comfortable asking folks to make sure they address X or Y issue. Also provide a copy of the ad to make sure that they are fully informed about the position.

You should have at least three, and no more than five letters of recommendation. You can list more references on the *CV* if you like, but do not have more than 5 letters sent.

People do a stock letter for you on their computer and then tend to modify it only a bit. Do not worry about asking for lots of “individualized” letters—it’s our job!

Other Job-Seeking Tips for NCA Annual Convention

The reason so many folks strongly recommend going to the NCA annual convention in a year you are job hunting is because of the opportunity to meet informally with search committee members who are attending. Also, programs that have an early closing deadline are using the NCA annual convention, more and more, as an opportunity to meet with candidates and do some initial screening.

How do you maximize your chances? First, bring extra copies of your *CV* with you. That way if you do have an informal meeting you have something to give them. Second, for any jobs you apply for that have a deadline before or near the date of the NCA annual convention, mention at the close of your application letter that you will be at the convention and would be happy to meet with them if they are interested. Some places will follow up by contacting you (usually by e-mail) to set up an appointment at the NCA annual convention. If there is a place in which you

are strongly interested, then you should contact the search committee chair by e-mail about a week before the annual convention and ask if it would be possible to meet. Finally, you can keep track of the “party” schedule and if a place in which you are interested is having a party, go to it.

Make sure that your presentations at the NCA annual convention are particularly good in your job year. You do not know who will be in your audience and you do want to make a good, professional impression. Be careful with your submissions and make sure the presentations are something that you are comfortable being evaluated on because judgments about the quality of candidates can and do occur at the annual convention.

It is important to understand that most folks at conventions are very distracted and pulled in multiple directions at once, so this can be a frustrating process. It is rare when you would come out of a short conversation in the hallway or at a party with a sense that much was accomplished. Nonetheless, it helps for them to put a face with a name, and it is a chance to communicate at least one memorable fact about yourself—something that when they go back home and hear your name the first thing they will say is “Oh, I met that candidate and she or he does X.”

At the same time, it is not uncommon to find oneself in an impromptu interview in the middle of a hallway that becomes quite intense. So do not seek out people involved in searches unless you are ready to switch into interview mode quickly.

If you are lucky, the ideal situation is when they call to set up a short interview with one or more members of the search committee. That means they are serious about using the annual convention as a way to collect information about their top candidates, so you should treat any prearranged meeting like that the same way you would an on-campus visit, which means to gather information about the program so you can talk intelligently about it.

A Quick Word About Facebook/MySpace/Twitter, etc.

A growing number of graduate students are active users of various online social networking sites, such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, blogging sites, and so forth. A word to the wise: Some search committee members can and do “Google” applicants for job positions to see what they may learn apart from what is on your CV. A clear set of norms and legal regulations concerning what is appropriate to look for, and where, have not emerged yet given that the Internet is a mix of public and private spaces. Nonetheless, you need to be aware that anything you put on the web using your name could be viewed by potential employers.

OK, so you have sent out your applications and now you have a phone call inviting you for an on-campus interview. What do you do next?

Search Committee Chair
Department of Communication and Journalism
University of Maine
5472 Dunn
Orono, ME 04469-5724

Dear Search Committee,

Enclosed are the submission materials for my application for the Assistant Professor in Rhetoric position advertised in the National Communication Association's newsletter *SPECTRA*. As you will find, my teaching experience, research program, and record of service make me a good fit for this position.

As a graduate teaching assistant at Arizona State University and the University of Minnesota I have three productive years of teaching experience. During this period, I have been afforded the opportunity to teach a wide variety of courses including public speaking, small group communication, freedom of speech, and communication in business and the professions. My approach in the classroom emphasizes empowering students to participate in a culturally diverse and rhetorically rich world. More specifically, I emphasize persuasive argument and critical-thinking as essential elements in decision-making processes. To that end, I incorporate fundamentals of rhetorical theory in each course as a complement to core curriculum concepts.

Furthermore, my continuing research program informs my work in the classroom. My exploration of the ways that political and popular texts influence human relationships with the natural world is facilitated by critical rhetorical theories and methodologies. For example, my recent publication in the *Western Journal of Communication* demonstrates how Al Gore's environmental tome, *Earth in the Balance*, simultaneously operates to sustain the organization of production and consumption attributed to the rapid destruction of the environment and opens a space for the possibilities of a reconciliation with the non-human inhabitants of the world. This project and others integrate my extensive education in rhetorical theory and criticism.

In addition to my commitment to teaching and research, I realize that service to the academic community is important to fulfilling the educational mission. My record demonstrates that I take this commitment seriously. For example, as the chairperson of the Communication Master's Student Association at Arizona State University I served as a liaison between the graduate student body and the department faculty concerning matters of departmental policy and the hiring of new faculty. In this position I learned that participation is vital to successful organizational governance and look forward to continual contributions throughout my academic career.

As you can see by the previous example, I fit the teaching, research, and service needs for the Assistant Professor in Rhetoric position well. Moreover, I meet the requirement for Ph.D. in hand by the appointment date as I am scheduled to defend my dissertation, "A Part Of or Apart From: Perspectives on Discourse and the Environment," on January 12, 2001.

I have heard many wonderful things about your department and would be pleased to become a member. If you have any questions feel free to contact me, I would enjoy the opportunity to discuss the position with you over the phone or at the upcoming NCA annual conference. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Former Student
student@wu.edu

Chapter 8

The Academic Interview

Before you go on your interview, you should learn as much as you have time to learn about the department. Visit their Web site and learn about individual faculty research interests, and look over their course offerings in their course catalog.

Find out as much as you can about the interview schedule and the events in it. Even if they cannot tell you the exact times, at least find out what events will be included so that you can prepare accordingly. Below I describe the typical sorts of events involved in an on-campus interview.

A) Public Presentation

The purpose of this presentation varies a lot from institution to institution. At a research-oriented place, the purpose is to hear an example of your finest scholarship so that they can judge you as a scholar. At other places, it may have a wholly different purpose. It is worth asking the search committee chair explicitly about the anticipated format and purpose of this presentation.

It might be any of the following:

- A research report taken from your dissertation to illustrate the sort of research you do. This would be like the typical convention paper presentation, only longer.
- A research narrative in which you describe your past interests and future research plans. This tends to be more general and informal.
- A teaching philosophy presentation that describes your pedagogical beliefs, past classes, and future teaching plans.
- A hybrid presentation that combines a narrative about yourself as a researcher and as a teacher.

The point is to ask who the audience is, and exactly what they want to learn.

An added bit of advice here is that if it is a research report, do not “dumb it down.” They want to be impressed with your research sophistication, so do not worry about jargon or theory. Give them your best work. Most research-oriented institutions strongly prefer you present something out of your dissertation: You should do so unless you talk to the search chair and she or he agrees that some other sort of presentation is more suitable.

Leave plenty of time for Q&A. That’s where they get interested. At the same time, do not be surprised if some folks are “rough” on you in the Q&A. Be confident. The fact that folks engage and challenge you is a sincere form of flattery. Do not lose your cool. Stay friendly and charming, and do not be afraid to answer a question with a question—such as “what would you suggest?”

As you may have noticed at conferences, some folks do not manage their time well and run out of time just as they get to the most interesting part of their analysis. Do not do that.

What are folks trying to learn from your talk? It varies, but they are often looking for clues to the following: What direction is your research likely to take in the immediate future? What scholarly conversation are you participating in? What research question(s) interest you? What are your theoretical and methodological commitments?

In terms of “theory,” they basically want to know who you have read and who has influenced your thinking most profoundly. It used to be enough to say “I’m a Burkean,” but you should say a bit more than that these days. Do not be shy about dropping names. On the other hand, if someone asks you about someone you have never read, do not be afraid to answer, “I have read a lot of books in graduate school, but that wasn’t one of them. Please tell me about it.”

You could be asked “big” questions such as the following that you should be prepared to answer: How do you define “rhetoric”? How do you define a “text”? What should be the scope of rhetorical studies? Or, for communication theory folks, How do you define communication? What major psychological theories inform your work? What should be the scope of communication studies? Do not spend much time prepping for these, but be ready for them.

In terms of “method,” they basically want to understand how you do what you do, and how you put together an argument. The only hard questions to answer sometimes are when you have someone from a different research tradition who wants you to explain what you do in their terms, such as quantitative social scientists who ask you questions about methodology, construct validity, and reliability. Or, you may have a cultural studies-oriented faculty member ask you about the ideological implications of your discourse formation and *that* may be unfamiliar. My advice here is to try to translate these questions into broader terms. For example, I typically describe scholarship—all scholarship—as a matter of making arguments, claims, and cases. The method and evidence that is appropriate will depend on what sort of argument you want to make. Humanists need to be careful about not making claims their evidence is not sufficient for, so just qualify your claims appropriately.

I was asked not long ago what makes the ideal research presentation. I do not think there is such a critter as an ideal research presentation. The organization of the straightforward research report depends entirely on the project. My only suggestion is to avoid a common mistake. Many inexperienced applicants spend way too much time setting up their theoretical framework (or their methodology) and end up running out of time such that they do not get to develop their argument very well. While setting up any theory or method stuff you need is important, of course, I think the audience enjoys actual history or text a lot more.

1. Introduction

- describe what got you interested in this area (Keep it short.).
- provide a one-sentence thesis statement of your central claim.
- provide a VERY brief description of the organization of the talk.

2. Guiding Assumptions

- This is where you identify and describe any key theoretical or methodological presuppositions that guide your analysis in this project. You are doing this for two reasons. First, you want to prove that you are theoretically sophisticated by illustrating your grasp of relevant communication or rhetorical theory literature. Second, you need to build an argument with your audience, and this is the place where you lay out the assumptions that your audience needs to share if they are going to follow your argument.
- This section need not be terribly long. As I said before, too many people end up spending way over half—even as much as 90 percent—of their time on this and never get to the meat of the project. It should be no more than 30 percent. It can be even briefer than that if you would prefer to interweave some of the theory explication within your textual analysis.

3. Text & Analysis or Experimental Design

- This is where you do whatever sort of analysis you want to do. If you are doing a rhetorical or media analysis you may need to provide historical context, but do not let this go too long. Make sure you have plenty of time to quote some text or share sample media products (if you have a text).
- If you are doing an experiment, this is where you would explain your experimental design. This is the part of a social scientific presentation that usually gets the most scrutiny (“How did you operationalize ‘X’?”), so be thorough but do not spend so much time that you short-change you discussion of the results.
- You could provide a handout of some sort (this usually goes over well) that includes key concepts and sources. If you want to use a laptop, make sure you have plenty of time to have your equipment set up and that it works easily before the presentation.

4. Results and Wrap up

Make sure you emphasize your “bottom line” so your audience is clear on your argument. If you are reporting the results of an experiment or survey, be sure to spend enough time so that your audience feels they have a clear understanding of what you learned and accomplished through the project. Talk briefly about where you want to go in the future. And make sure to leave plenty of time for Q&A. If you are scheduled for 60 minutes, I suggest leaving 20 minutes for Q&A and discussion.

It is not uncommon to be asked a question about your future research plans or your research “trajectory.” In part, they want to know what your research plans are, but a frequent subtext is “How do you plan to get tenure?” A good answer here will enhance your candidacy. For example, when I first started my career, my answer would have been that I plan to revisit a series of classical Greek texts and authors in light of the framework I had created in my dissertation. My general theme was to study what I called “the disciplining of Rhetoric” through an analysis of the development of a technical vocabulary. At that point I was thinking it might be a series of articles that would lead to a book.

Note there are three parts to the answer: A general theme or research question; a tentative set of projects; and a material manifestation (articles or book). Some folks will want to hear about the research question, while others may just be wondering, “Does this person have a plan to get to tenure?” so this sort of answer addresses both sorts of concerns.

B) Meetings with the Faculty

They may schedule one-on-one meetings or you may meet with a group. In any case: listen, listen, listen. Ask about how they see the position fitting into the overall needs of the program. Be prepared to talk about your research. Also be prepared to talk about what sort of classes you would be interested in teaching. If they have a graduate program, be sure to distinguish between your undergraduate teaching interests and your graduate teaching interests. Make it clear that you are a team player and would cooperate to help the department meet its needs.

You should not assume that everyone has read your file. The fact is that most will not have. So do not worry about repeating information that is in your file.

If you have other interviews, it does not hurt to let that slip into the conversation if it is not awkward. It makes you seem more attractive to them, typically.

Other than that, just be yourself. If you have one-on-one meetings, you may run into faculty members who like to gossip or even dish dirt about the department or other faculty. Just be a thoughtful listener in such cases. Never say anything to anyone during an interview that you would not want repeated to everyone.

C) Meeting with the Dean

Typically this is a setting in which a dean will try to persuade you that the school is a good place to work. The main exception is when the dean asks about your dissertation. If she or he does, you had better be ready to make a good argument that you will be done. I know of cases where the dean nixed a candidate because she or he was not persuaded the candidate would be done on time.

When she or he asks if you have questions, ask about:

- tenure expectations
- service obligations
- support for junior faculty
- the Dean's position on the department's status and role in the institution.

D) Meetings with students (undergrad or grad)

Listen, listen, listen. Students rarely feel like they have a voice. Give them one and ask about their research interests and their needs within the department. If you plan to work with graduate students in your own research, make sure you say so. Stress your belief in the importance of professional development.

Understand that graduate students sometimes like to use such a forum to air complaints about the department. Listen respectfully, even take notes, but do not come to any conclusions without further research. Again, say nothing you do not want repeated.

E) Teaching Presentation

If they ask you to do a teaching presentation, stick to material you know very well. Do not worry about adapting to fit the syllabus of the class exactly. Do not risk getting dragged into an area you know little about. Beyond that, it is fairly obvious: Be prepared, organized, energetic, and friendly. Move around. Use the blackboard. Bring a handout if it fits. *Have fun.*

Caveats: A good rule of thumb is to assume that members of your search committee are watching the class: Don't do or say anything you feel could be used as a reason *not* to hire you. Don't try to be pals with the students or prove how hip you are. Be professional and avoid profanity.

F) Meals

It is easy to forget that meals are part of the interview, too. Feel free to have one beer or glass of wine if others are drinking, but no more. Meals create a false sense of intimacy. Do not say anything you do not want repeated and keep in mind that even in such a setting you are being evaluated as a candidate.

Additional Interview Tips

1) Throughout your interview: Be Yourself

I say this because sometimes candidates feel like they need to be especially witty, or critical, or erudite, or whatever. Do not think about perceptions. Just be yourself and feel free to be friendly. Part of what they are assessing, consciously or not, is whether or not they would want you to be their "neighbor" down the hall. Are you someone they would want as a colleague? And you are doing the same thing. So to get the most accurate information, the most important thing is for everyone to relax and be themselves.

During interviews, different faculty members adopt different modes of operation. Some will be in recruiting mode and spend most of the time wooing you for the position. Others will be very task-oriented and be asking questions about your fit with the job needs. Every now and then you may encounter someone who is in “intimidation mode” because they think the way to find the strongest candidate is to bully them and see who survives. Do not be put off by such a person. Just be polite and professional. Typically their colleagues are embarrassed by such a person’s antics, and whatever they happen to say or do will have no bearing on the results of the search.

2) Ask questions

Ask first and foremost what they perceive as the greatest needs this position is supposed to meet. That allows you to learn if there is a consensus about that, plus allows you to directly address the issue of “fit.” Always keep in mind that “fit” is usually the number one factor in hiring decisions.

The level of service obligation varies considerably from school to school, so be sure to ask about what is expected of new faculty. Are faculty involved in undergraduate advising? Are there standing committees upon which you will be expected to serve? Are there extracurricular activities (debate, student clubs) with which you will be expected to work? If you have web-development skills, is it likely that you will be asked to work on the department’s webpage?

Ask about the department’s climate, the teaching load, living in this location, cost of housing, quality of K-12 schools (if relevant), etc. It does not hurt to ask the same questions of different people, since it is useful if you hear different answers.

What can’t you ask? You can ask “generic” questions about employment conditions that affect all faculty there. This includes things like tenure expectations, computer availability, travel support, teaching load, the department’s track record for raises—anything that involves most or all faculty.

What you should not ask about is anything that is an employment condition specific to you; i.e., items subject to negotiation later. This includes salary, moving expenses, a teaching reduction the first year, things like that. They may volunteer this information, and that is fine if they do, but if they do not, just save it for later.

If you can think of any examples of questions that you are not sure which category they fall into (“can” or “can’t”), just ask a senior faculty member for advice.

3) Salary Information

It is a bit awkward to ask outright about salary information unless someone brings it up or volunteers the information. However, if the school with whom you are interviewing is a public institution, salary information should be available either through the library or the Human Resources department. I suggest that before you visit campus make some phone calls and find out where this information is available. Try to find some free time before,

after, or during your interview when you can go get the information. *This could become very helpful in the bargaining and negotiation stage.*

4) Illegal questions

There are certain questions dubbed “illegal” questions that interviewers are not supposed to ask. These include questions about race, marital status, age, and religious preferences. Now, technically they are not illegal in the sense that the person asking can be fined or punished just for asking them, but they could become the basis of legal action if a job candidate feels that the questions or answers improperly influenced the hiring decision.

So what do you do if asked an “illegal” question? In my opinion the best reply is another question, asked with a smile: “Why do you ask?” This should prompt the questioner to remember that the question is inappropriate without being confrontational or negative. The questioner may then withdraw the question and move on, or they will explain why they ask. You can then be in a position to answer, or not, depending on the circumstances.

For example: I once had a student who received an interview at a leading research institution. She was asked not only about marital status but also about the ethnicity of her spouse. She was appalled and refused to answer the questions. In hindsight, it may have been the case that the interviewer was already thinking about the possibility of hiring her spouse with funds that many universities make available for minority candidates. So the better answer in this case would have been to smile and ask, “why do you ask?” You may like what you hear.

But what if you do not? If you feel the question is inappropriate and is not asked for any particular reason that is in your interest, then of course you are entitled to refuse to answer. There are two ways to handle this situation. The first is to simply ignore the direct question and instead answer what you think is the agenda behind it. For example, if you are asked if you plan to have children, you could simply answer “whether I do or not, I plan to pursue an active research and teaching career.” The second option is to say simply “that is a personal question and I am not comfortable discussing the matter at this point.” Try to be pleasant about this if you can.

If things get ugly, then back in your hotel room feel free to make notes about the interaction. You will want to report the incident to that university’s EEOC or affirmative action officials later.

5) Emergency Consultation

Ask your DGS or advisor if it would be O.K. if you called them during the interview if something unexpected comes up about which you want advice. I suspect that they will be happy to help. I have had this happen on a couple of occasions where students were made an offer on the spot, or asked an illegal question, or something else unexpected happened. So feel free to call for help if you need it.

6) Phone Interview Tips

First, treat the interview seriously. You might dress up as if it were a face-to-face interview to put yourself in the right mindset. Second, have all your materials with you and review them shortly before the interview—syllabi, research material, writing samples. One advantage of a phone interview is that you can surround yourself with crib sheets without distracting those calling. We had one former student who stunned her interviewers by being able to answer a question about how a particular class would be taught with a complete and specific answer. So preparation is helpful. Third, when you receive the call, ask those calling to introduce themselves if it is a conference call and write down their names. Try to have a mental picture of the group sitting around a table and address search committee members individually if you can. Picture them smiling and nodding as you answer. Do not let the lack of visual reactions throw you off. Fourth, phone interviews should be *scheduled*; don't feel obligated to respond to a call out of the blue if you are not ready, simply ask to set up a time so that you can be properly prepared. Lastly, be sure to review all of the questions at the end of this chapter to be sure you are thoroughly prepared.

The bottom line to any interview trip is to prepare thoroughly before you go. Then once you are there, relax and have fun. It is not uncommon that, on an individual, faculty-by-faculty basis, they already have largely made up their mind and are simply seeking information that supports their judgment. So relax and just be who you are.

Following Up

It is perfectly appropriate to contact the chair of the search committee, or any other faculty member you met, after the interview to say how much you enjoyed the visit. You could also do this in writing as a thank you note. You can e-mail any additional questions that may have occurred to you, or even amplify an answer you made during the interview.

The most important thing to remember after the interview is that these things take time and you never hear back as quickly as you would like. So you must be patient and do not assume that “no news” means you are not in the running.

I end this chapter with a list of questions adapted from a list published in *Journal of College Placement* (Winter 1983). My thanks to job candidates who have added to the list based on their interview experiences. You will never be asked all of these questions in any one interview experience. However, since you can never guess which questions may come up, the best way to prepare for the interview process is to be ready to answer any and all of them.

If you take the time to sit down and write out answers to all of these questions before you go to any interviews, you will find yourself thoroughly briefed and ready to go.

Questions that Applicants for a College Teaching/Research Position Should Be Prepared to Answer

Curriculum, Teaching Competence

1. How do you create a syllabus for a new class? How do you structure/organize courses?
2. What would you include in courses this position is expected to teach? What concepts would you want a student in (name of course) to understand and apply by the end of the semester? What textbooks might you use?
3. What is your greatest strength as a teacher?
4. What classes are you teaching now? Which is your favorite and why?
5. If I/we could speak to your students, what would they tell me/us about you?
6. What is your preferred method of course evaluation?
7. What range of courses within your field are you prepared to teach, and what areas are you interested in developing?
8. Tell us how you think about “difference” (race, ethnicity, etc.) in preparing and teaching your classes. Or: Students in our classes represent different ethnicities; please describe your experiences or ideas about teaching in a diverse ethnic and intra-ethnic classroom.
9. What is your understanding of how our interdisciplinary degree and your field’s concentration might mutually inform one another?
10. How would you describe your relationship with your students? How do you get to know students, and how important are relations with students to your vision of being a professor?
11. Tell us about a conflict you had with a student and how you resolved it (grade complaint, whatever).
12. What do you see as the most important tasks of an M.A./Ph.D. program in Communication?
13. If you were creating a mandatory reading list for graduate students in your area of expertise, what would the top 3 items be?
14. How does your teaching philosophy align with the University’s vision?
15. Describe the needs of first-generation-to-college students, as you understand them.
16. How would you explain the utility of a degree in communication to the parents of an undergraduate at our institution?
17. What do you know about “service learning,” internships, or “civic engagement” initiatives at our institution? How could you contribute to such efforts?

Research

1. How would you describe your Identity as a Research Scholar? That is, How would you describe your theoretical commitments? What are your major research questions? How do you see the purpose of your scholarship?
2. What specific research skills (methodological or otherwise) do you possess that you believe will enable you to be a productive researcher?
3. What is the most significant piece of research that you have read in the last year? And why is it significant?
4. Tell us about your favorite theorist—why is she or he your favorite? How do you “use” him or her?

5. How do you go about writing/doing a research paper/project?
6. Describe your dissertation research. How is this a significant contribution to the field? How do you plan to cull publications from your dissertation?
7. What direction do you anticipate your research going after the dissertation? That is, aside from the material you will present in your research presentation, what other research, publication plans, or professional activities do you have in mind?
8. What should be the future of your area of expertise? (rhetorical studies, interpersonal, etc.)
9. Where do you stand on the most “cutting edge” controversies in your area of expertise? (What is a text? What is the role of the critic? What is “cognition”?)
10. How would you respond when challenged by someone antagonistic to your perspective or line of research? (e.g., a social scientist challenges critical-interpretive work, or vice versa).
11. Do you consider yourself a qualitative or quantitative researcher? What value do you see in the “other” approach?
12. What journals do you regularly read? (Be 100 percent honest, of course, but add “are there others you would suggest?”)

Role Commitments & Fit with the Institution

1. How important is collegiality to you? What kinds of relationships do you want to build with fellow faculty? How have you dealt with a conflict with a colleague in the past (or, if you haven’t, how would you deal with it)?
2. What kinds of committee work have you done in the past and what was positive and/or negative about how the committee functioned?
3. How much are you willing and able to participate in departments committees, outside committees, and extracurricular events?
4. In what ways do you see yourself making professional contributions in the next five years?
5. How and what can you contribute to our faculty?
6. Could you describe some innovative approaches for increasing our department enrollment?
7. What do you think is the primary purpose of the public/private university? (For example, what is the function of the Land Grant institutions in the 21st Century?)
8. What is the utility of your research for the world outside the academy?
9. What kinds of organizations outside the academy would find your work helpful?
10. How would you plan to become involved in this community?
11. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of this position?
12. What kind of commitment are you willing to make to this institution? (i.e., How long do you plan to stay?)
13. Summary Question: Tell us how your background, experience, and worldview might relate to our University’s vision.

Generic Questions

1. Why do you want to work for this university/in this department?
2. Identify your greatest strengths and weaknesses. What have you done to eliminate the latter? (This is an awful question, but it still gets asked. Suggestion: Candidates should only give one strength and one weakness, making sure to eliminate the weakness.)
3. How do you think you would like living in this region/city/town?
4. What would you do if you were unable to find a position in an institution of higher education?
5. Time Management: How do you handle it when you have too much to do?
6. Tell us about your interests outside of being a professor. (This is likely to be asked in an informal setting, such as a meal. Sometimes this is asked to learn whether a candidate “has a life” outside of work.)

Chapter 9

Negotiating Your Contract

What should you do while waiting for an offer?

First, do *not* assume that “No News means Bad News.” There are many reasons why a great deal of time might pass between your campus interview and a decision being made. Many universities have a rather long and convoluted paper trail that must be followed before an offer can be made. Maybe it takes several weeks to get the faculty together to make a decision, then the Dean is gone for a week or two and they have to wait for her/his approval. Maybe another candidate could not interview until well after your visit. Who knows? In any case, do not panic. Just go about your business and be patient.

Second, do not hesitate to e-mail if you really need to know what is going on. If you have another interview or offer, and you need an update on the status of a particular search, then e-mail the search committee chair and ask, simply and directly. Most search chairs will be happy to be upfront with you about what is going on and when you can expect a decision. And they will want to know if you have an offer from somewhere else that may impose a deadline for a decision. So do not let the process mystify or disempower you. If in doubt, call or e-mail.

The Offer

OK, so you get “the call” and receive an offer from an institution. What should you expect? The main thing to do when you get an offer is to get the most complete information you can so you do not have to call or e-mail back repeatedly to get clarification.

You are not into the bargaining stage yet. I will get to that in a minute. In the “offer” conversation what you want is clarity as to the terms of your offer. The main parts of an offer should include a clear position on the following:

- 1) Salary: Clarify that this is a 9-month, 10-month, or 12-month salary.
- 2) Teaching Load: Clarify whether you will receive a reduced teaching load your first year (or at least minimize the number of new preps each term). Make sure you know what your expected teaching load will be in your first and subsequent years.
- 3) Summer School/Summer Research Grant: Some institutions offer summer teaching as a routine matter, while at other places the competition to teach summer school is quite intense. Just make sure you get a clear understanding of what is included in the offer in terms of summer school options or guarantees.

Research-oriented institutions may have summer research grant money so that you can make extra money without teaching summer school. Normally the department chair will tell you about this, but if in doubt, ask.

- 4) **Moving Expenses:** What institutions do in terms of moving expenses varies considerably. Some institutions have very strict rules that simply forbid faculty from receiving any moving expenses, while others have fairly generous allowances. If a department chair says she or he has no discretion on this matter, she or he probably does not.
- 5) **Computer and Start-up Equipment:** Most schools now have a consistent “package” of start-up equipment that they will provide. In some cases they will need you to articulate your precise needs. For example, if you need video equipment for your research, or a special set of software packages, you will need to make that clear. But at the very least in the offer you should get a commitment for a new computer and the necessary software to do your work.
- 6) **Service Obligations:** During the interview you should have learned what sort of service obligations are typical for new faculty (undergraduate advising, committee assignments, curriculum development, webpage team, etc.). Be sure to ask at this point for a thorough description of what the service expectations would be during your first two to three years.
- 7) **Added Goodies:** Some places give new faculty a “book allowance” or offer you a research assistant. Most won’t, but if in doubt, ask if either of these is available.

Negotiating

Many people think of bargaining and negotiation as obscure arts best practiced by those with a ruthless personality. It is much simpler than that if you spend just a bit of time thinking about what you want to do and what your comfort zone is.

First, get the e-mail address of “The Decision Makers” involved with your offer. By “The Decision Makers” I mean the person or persons who have the authority to make changes in your offer. Now, you might not have direct access. It may be that the offer is approved by the Dean but you have to deal with the department chair or head. That’s cool. Get the department chair or head’s e-mail address. The advantage of e-mail is that it produces a written record, and it takes away some of the pressures and uncertainties of a live phone conversation.

I will describe different bargaining scenarios. The specific bargaining strategy I will advocate is actually the same in all three cases; what differs is your mindset.

Scenario #1 is that you know you are going to accept the position, but you want to sweeten the deal a bit. Now, the precise reasons you are going to accept

the position do not really matter. The point is that, for whatever personal and professional reasons, you are not going to say “no.” Before I get to “The Strategy” all I need to say here is to resist the temptation of saying “yes” too fast. Do not make it too obvious that you are going to say yes. If you do, you may lose your bargaining position. Nonetheless, it is important to know your own mind and realize that whether you get more from the bargaining process or not, you are going to say yes.

The reason you want to avoid being too eager to say “yes” is simple: *Saying “no” is the only power you have in the bargaining process.* Bargaining can be thought of as a process of stress reduction. Up until you get an offer, you are the one feeling all the stress. But once a faculty has made a decision that they want you, however, the stress is on them to hire you. If you turn them down, they will have to move down the list to less desirable candidates or even run the risk of a failed search. They do not want that to happen! So, for the only time in the job search process, you have some power. That is why they must be convinced that they are at risk of you saying “no.” Otherwise, they have relatively little motivation to give you the things you want to bargain for.

Scenario #2 is that you really are not sure if you want to accept the offer or not. Again, there may be a number of personal or professional reasons for your lack of certainty. It does not really matter. The point is that you are uncertain, and that means you can use the bargaining process to help you make up your mind.

This is the key question you have to answer: “What would it take for you to feel good about accepting the offer?” That is what it all boils down to. And this question is absolutely crucial for you to be able to answer if you are going to have a coherent bargaining position.

Think about it this way: If you cannot imagine anything that they can do to get you excited and pleased about taking the job, then you really need to say “no” and walk away. They need to move on, as do you. This scenario can and does happen. For example, when I left my first job I knew that I wanted to get out of debate coaching and I wanted to be part of a Ph.D. program. There literally was nothing that my institution could do to keep me in that position. As a result, when I had an offer from a Ph.D.-granting program for a non-coaching job, I did not bother to bargain with my first employer. There simply was no point. As another example, you may have gone to interview in a little school in a small rural town just to see what it would be like. After the interview you come to the conclusion that there is simply no way you could be happy living in a small rural town. So, just say no. Do not waste your time and theirs bargaining for a better deal that you will still end up turning down.

On the other hand, let’s assume that you start off uncertain about whether you want to accept the job or not, but after you think about the question “What would it take for you to feel good about accepting the offer?” you realize that there are concrete things that they could do that would, in fact, motivate you to be quite pleased and excited to accept the job. Now this could be \$5,000 more in salary, or it could be a guaranteed reduction in teaching load for three years, or a research assistant. The key is for you to think about why you are uncertain about the job,

and to be creative about envisioning what it would take for you to be happy there. Once you can answer the question “What would it take for you to feel good about accepting the offer?” you are in a position to bargain.

Now, here is where we get to the strategy. The strategy is a simple one. You e-mail the Decision Maker (dean or chair) and say “I am excited about the offer and I am ready to say ‘yes’ if we can agree on the following: X, Y, Z.” Memorize this exact wording. That is the strategy in a nutshell: “Yes, If.” It is a very effective strategy because it clearly says to them, “look, you can end all your search efforts and eliminate all this stress simply by doing X, Y, and Z and signing this person on the dotted line.” This is an extremely powerful inducement for them to meet your terms, or come as close as they possibly can.

Now, this strategy only works if you really are willing to say “yes” if they meet your terms. Department heads/chairs do not want to keep running back and forth between you and their Dean. So if you ask for more salary or whatever, they want to be sure that if they get it for you, they can be done with this process. That is why vague requests for a better salary or reduced teaching will seldom get results. You can assume that the department chair believes the original offer to be a fair and reasonable one. The best way to motivate the chair to go back to the Dean and get you a better deal is if they can be confident that by doing so, they can end their search efforts and land you, the candidate of choice.

Accordingly, it is important for you to think about the initial offer and your options long and hard before entering into any bargaining or negotiation. I realize that choosing a job is a complex matter, but you have to wade through all that to figure out what you really want to do before entering into bargaining.

To sum up, both “yes” and “no” are very powerful words in this context. For them to be motivated to act, they have to be convinced that you are willing to say “no” and walk away from the offer. So you either need to be a good actor or truly be willing to say no. Sometimes it actually requires the act of saying “well, if that is the best you can do, I have to say ‘no’” to get them to change their mind. I have seen this happen more than once. But “yes” is equally powerful, if combined with “if.” The “Yes, If” strategy is quite literally the best—and most honest—strategy I know of.

Now, what can you bargain for? The short answer is “anything and everything.” The longer answer is that it depends.

Here I need to add a word on behalf of flexibility: You need to consider the overall package that you are being offered. It may be the case that the Dean or department chair has some areas of flexibility and other areas where they have very little room to negotiate. If you have doubts about whether they are being honest with you, talk to your advisor or DGS to get an opinion about whether what you are being told is plausible.

The major areas are fairly obvious:

- 1) **Salary:** Unless they are bound by a union contract, you can always ask for more salary. You may not get any more, but you can ask. As always, the best strategy is “Yes, If” and you identify a very specific salary you want. A lot of this depends on the market. Find out what new assistant professors are getting at other institutions and feel free to use very specific information about offers at other places you know about as evidence of your market value. Department chairs do not always have this information and often are quite glad to have the information to use with their deans.

You also might want to know what your peers are being paid. If you are talking with a public institution, salary information is usually a matter of public record and can be obtained either through the University library or through their Human Resources Office. If you did not investigate such information while you were visiting campus you can still request this information on your own without going through the department so you can get a sense of what other faculty are getting paid. Now, they may be underpaid so do not feel you have to stay “in line” with them. You may actually help them in the long run by bringing the department more into line with the market. In any case, this is information worth having as well.

- 2) **Teaching Load:** In general this is not something you can change. If it is a research institution, the standard load will probably be two courses per semester. A heavy teaching-oriented place may ask for up to four or five classes per semester. Many places fall in-between and it is not unreasonable to have a place asking for “some research” along with three classes per semester. Obviously, the more research they ask for, the less teaching they should ask for.

While you probably can't bargain a permanent reduction from the normal load at an institution (especially as an entry-level person), you certainly can and should ask for a reduction for your first year or two. Furthermore, you should ask to keep the number of different preps to an absolute minimum. If you have to teach three classes in the fall, you certainly do not want three new preps.

- 3) **Summer School:** As mentioned earlier, most places have fairly set policies as to how summer school appointments are made. Nonetheless, it is perfectly appropriate to ask for a commitment to teach summer school for the first year or two if that is what you want.
- 4) **Summer Research Money:** If the school you are dealing with is at all research-oriented, then they probably have summer research money. In that case, do not ask for summer school teaching but instead ask for this. They probably will offer it outright without prompting so it is rarely something you have to bargain for. Note: You cannot ask for both summer research money and to teach in the

summer. Research money is designed to free you from teaching so you can get research done. Double dipping is typically prohibited.

- 5) Moving Expenses: Again, this is something set up in advance and probably not something about which to bargain. However, if the offer does not include any moving expense money and the chair has not stated outright that they are prohibited from paying it, then it is certainly reasonable to ask for support.
- 6) Computer and start-up equipment: Again this is an item for which you should not have to bargain. But if you have any doubts about what they are promising, it is reasonable to ask the chair to state the commitment in an e-mail (which puts it in writing). If there is a particular bit of equipment you need that is not offered, then it becomes fair game to bargain about.
- 7) Service Obligations: If the service obligations seem heavy and do not appear to contribute to your efforts toward promotion and tenure, it is appropriate to come to some sort of understanding about what the limits of your obligations are for the first few years at the institution. The more specific the limitations, the better. For example, if the department uses faculty for undergraduate advising, you could ask to put off such obligations while you get your feet under you the first two years.
- 8) Other goodies: As I stated before, different places have flexibility in different parts of the package. Make sure you come off as willing to listen to a new and improved offer even if it does not meet the letter of your requests. Feel free to make added suggestions to the chair such as additional travel money for conventions if she or he is limited in other areas.

The Logistics of Bargaining

Three points here. First, e-mail or fax is ideal because they put the exchange in writing while decreasing the tensions of a live phone interaction. Second, use the “Yes, If” strategy. Use wording very close to the following: “I am excited about the offer and I am ready to say ‘yes’ if we can agree on the following: X, Y, Z.” Third, spell out the X, Y, Z specifically to identify the changes in the offer you want. Feel free to repeat items in the offer that are OK and state explicitly that those items are OK.

Then sit back and wait for a response. Typically you will get some of what you want, but not all. Then it is up to you to decide if it is enough to get you excited about taking the job.

A Word of Warning: *Most* chairs have had some experience in the hiring process and will be very professional in the bargaining process. But every now and then you could run into a chair who is taken aback by your requests and acts as if such matters are rude to discuss. This happened to two students of mine who were bargaining for positions. All you can do in such a case is be very

polite, but insistent. Talk to your DGS or advisor if you run into problems. You may be advised to take the matter to the Dean if need be, or it may simply be a matter of adapting your style to fit that of whomever you are dealing. The vast majority of chairs are very professional about all of this, but do not be totally shocked if you meet up with someone who just doesn't seem to get it.

The "Yes, If" strategy works! It has worked for me and it has worked for others. For example, not long ago one of our graduate students was offered an entry-level assistant professor position. By using the "Yes, If" strategy he obtained three concessions that were not part of the initial offer: \$2,000 more in base salary, a two-course teaching reduction his first year, and a two-year \$4,000 supply budget for equipment and materials to develop curriculum in his area.

What if the strategy does not work? It is possible, for various reasons, that you will get no improvement in your offer. The department chair may say that the relevant dean said no, or that no money is available, or offer some other explanation. At that point you should take at least 24 or 48 hours to let this information sink in before making a final decision. You may want to consult with your advisor or DGS about the chair's response and whether it is indicative of any institutional problems. If not, the central question is still "Can you still get enthused about taking the position as offered?" If so, then go ahead and accept the position. If not, then you should consider turning the position down.

Negotiating Partner Hires

If you have a partner, you need to think about whether to negotiate employment assistance for your partner. If your partner is a non-academic, some schools will make an effort to assist you in finding employment for your partner. They will do this without you having to negotiate for that assistance. However, if your partner is an academic or could be hired within an academic institution, you can consider whether to make a "partner hire" a condition for your accepting the offer. This happens on a regular basis and some institutions want to hire partners because it is harder for partners to leave and go elsewhere than individuals.

The most practical question is when to bring up your partner's status. Because each couple's situation is a bit different, I strongly recommend that you seek the advice of your advisor and DGS on this matter before you begin your search efforts. In most circumstances facing entry-level job applicants, it is better to wait until after you have received an offer. There is usually no reason to risk a school avoiding making you an offer because they know they will have to get into a partner hire situation. However, there may be some particular circumstances where you want to do this early in the process, especially if your partner already has tenure. As I say, it is a good idea to discuss strategy early.

Angela Ray's Thoughts on Pursuing Partner Hires

My initial impulse is to say, "Don't count on it." If you're negotiating a contract for an entry-level assistant professorship, then you and your partner need to think very carefully about the

circumstances under which you would be willing to live. Are you willing to live separately; if so, for how long? Is one partner willing to move without the assurance of having a job right away? There are no “rules” for this; you and your partner must think carefully about what you want for your own lives and careers.

If item 1 is “Don’t count on it,” then item 2 is “It never hurts to ask.” Who knows? The institution with which you’re negotiating, or the community in which it’s located, may be searching for someone just like your partner. But be clear in your own mind about whether a partner hire is a requirement for you to accept the position.

When do you bring up this issue? There are different schools of thought on this question, and different people offer varying advice. Each situation is unique, but if I had to identify a rule of thumb, I’d say that it’s best not to mention the partner until you have actually been offered the job. Then the department faculty are in a frame of mind to want to do what they can for you. Before an offer is tendered, mentioning a partner situation may just make you look like a troublesome candidate. One can imagine a conversation among search committee members: “But would she really come here? She’s got a partner who’s a tenured law professor in Minneapolis. Would they really move to Podunk College? Maybe we’d better go for candidate #2.” The fact that such questions are “illegal” doesn’t mean that they’re not asked, or that they’re not considered in decision-making. Set yourself up for success: without an offer, the negotiation is moot. Don’t lie, but don’t offer information too early.

So, when you’re offered the job, you and your partner should make a list of scenarios under which you would accept the job. Rank these scenarios in order of preference. If you decide to ask for a partner hire, separate that discussion from the other contract discussions (about teaching load, etc.); the partner-hire question can overwhelm everything else, and you need to get what you can in other realms as well. Enlist the aid of the negotiator. Even if you can’t get a partner hire right away, it’s likely that you can get promises for some kind of assistance from people at the institution, either before you move or afterward. Assistance might take the form of introductions to relevant others, in departments or companies that might be interested in your partner’s skills.

The presence of a partner (or children) is routinely framed as a “problem.” Yet many individuals in the academy—as individuals, not necessarily in their institutional roles—realize the importance of rich personal lives, and they’re likely to want to help and support you. It is crucial for you and your partner to talk together and decide together what kind of lives you want, and what you’re willing to do, short- or long-term.

After the Deal is Struck

As I have said, e-mail or fax is ideal because everything is in writing. It is important to get as much in writing as possible to make sure you understand the details of the final offer and to protect you in the future in case the department chair changes. Once you have come to terms with an offer, it is fine to accept the offer with a phone call but also send an e-mail or fax that states clearly (and for your records) what you have agreed to.

Most places do not have a formal contract, but the offer letter functions as one. Faxes and e-mails constitute a written contract as well. So do not be too shocked if you do not get a formal contract to sign but make sure you get something in writing.

Party!

Once you have signed, go party. Relax. It is over. Now you can concentrate on finishing that dissertation or, if you are already done, all of the other things you have to do before the fall.

Questions?

It is impossible to anticipate every contingency. If something comes up that you are uncertain about, call your Director of Graduate Studies or advisor for advice.

Chapter 10

Planning for a Career Outside of Academia

The academic career track is not for everyone. There are a number of people who stay in an academic career as a default option because they do not know how to pursue a career outside of academia. This chapter provides some advice for how to prepare and pursue a nonacademic career. There is a growing number of useful resources on this topic, including from NCA, and one should not stop with reading this chapter.

Because I have not personally ever pursued a career outside of academia, I solicited advice from former graduate students in communication who have gone on to successful careers outside of academia. I asked them two questions: “What coursework would they recommend for someone preparing for a nonacademic career?” and “What advice do you have for finding a job?” Below are their answers.

Suggestions for Coursework

Judy Chayer, Performance Consultant and Facilitator, Judy Chayer and Associates

I found the courses relating to Interpersonal Communication and Small Group Communication extremely helpful. In particular, I found helpful the courses that actually required work in teams, and processing of how the teams worked together or didn't work well together. Also, I did find the basic public speaking classes and second level public speaking (focusing on persuasion and influence) to be very helpful. These were courses requiring you to actually develop and present your own presentations.

There were some excellent courses in the areas of Individual and Organizational Psychology. Also, I found some very good programs about training program evaluation.

Phillip Wilbur, Director, Tobacco Control and Health Programs, Danya International, Inc.

I can look at this two ways: one, what prepared me for my career and two, what I look for when hiring. In both cases, writing is of paramount importance so it is best to take courses that require a lot of writing. If you know the specific area you want to work in (e.g. political consulting, health communications), I suppose it would be worthwhile to take courses that will expose you to the names and ideas you need to be acquainted with in those fields. (For example, although I didn't expect to be going into health communications while I was in grad school, I did take a course in social marketing. I've found that that course is still helpful to me in terms of having exposed me to some of the basics - names, ideas, theories - that many of my colleagues take for granted.)

As someone who looks at resumes and hires people, I have to say quite honestly that I don't remember ever looking at what courses someone took. Their major area of study is of interest to me, but after that I never expect that someone will have learned in school the specific knowledge or skills that they'll need to do a particular job I'm hiring for. Again - I look for a good writer because I can't/don't have time to teach that. Anything else they need to know about the job, they'll learn on it.

Elizabeth Owen, former Communications Project Coordinator, Worldwide and U.S. Communications, Levi Strauss & Co.

I think it would have been really smart for me to have taken a news writing course through the journalism school. In our unit (corporate communications), we follow the Associated Press (AP) style guidelines. So, I've picked things up along the way that I would have learned quickly (and probably better) if I'd taken a course. AP is the standard style used in press releases, so if anyone goes into my sort of department or even into Public Relations, they would need to know that style. I also think it would have made me a better writer while I was in school, I realize now that I wasn't as good of an editor as I thought I was!

It seems pretty important to be familiar with (digital) technology and to have at least a working knowledge of HTML. I took a class my sophomore year of college and never thought about it again. Luckily I remembered a lot of it, because now I use it all the time! I work with our intranet and extranet daily, but even people who don't have jobs like mine, who work in other areas of the organization, often need to learn HTML, how to use a scanner, burn CDs, use zip drives, etc. because they are responsible for working with graphic designers, developing web pages for intranets, etc.

I never looked into them too much, but sometimes I think that taking one of the technical writing classes would have been smart. The thing is, those classes never appealed to me because I liked the reading theory and then attending classes where there would be interesting discussions.

Melanie Hohertz, Associate Director, Human Capital Communications, UnitedHealth Group

First, do really, really, really well in Argumentation. Why? Because you need to be able to clearly and concisely organize, promote, and defend your ideas in almost any communication-oriented job. And if you absolutely hate researching and writing the cases, you'll know you're not cut out to be a technical writer or communications consultant. (Both jobs demand that you become an overnight expert on highly specific topics.)

Second, pay attention when your professors are talking about audience adaptation. This is the essence of marketing and public-relations jobs, as well as an essential basic for technical writing and consulting.

Finally, do yourself a huge favor throughout all your classes by turning your spell-checker and grammar-checker off and getting used to proofing your own work. Learn to be critical and demanding. Also, teach yourself the standard proofreader's symbols—they're not that tough. You will need these skills if you want to be a communications professional, and they're generally woefully underdeveloped. Trust me, they're appreciated by employers—my firm actually administers a written test covering these basics before they'll even consider you for a position. Besides, if you get good at this, you can make a small fortune writing memos for CEOs who aren't equipped to do it themselves.

One last note: as you receive feedback from your classmates and professors on your writing, learn not to take their remarks or edits personally. Otherwise, if you choose communications as a career, you're going to live in a world of hurt until you realize that what you write is not sacred. It will be sliced, diced, and sometimes outright mutilated by co-workers.

Jim Kushner, Director, Market Research, Hong Kong Business Support Centre of Japan Tobacco International

The courses most useful to me were those that taught me how, not what, to think. That might seem obvious, but the more I was forced into logic, discipline, time management, and organization (of thought, of term papers on arcane topics, of expression) the greater the impression in later life. I have forgotten most of the obscure facts, but not how to find them if I need them. By that, I don't mean an Internet search engine, either.

Communication was a good entry point. The courses in Persuasion, Negotiation, and Organizational Communication in particular were useful.

Jeremy Rose, Former Trial Consultant, National Jury Project

My answers would be very career-specific; i.e. not about "students looking forward to a nonacademic career track" per se, but "students looking forward to a career in trial consulting." One of the things I immediately liked about trial consulting was that I drew on so many of my courses, including:

- Persuasion (although I only took this as an undergraduate, and took a minimum number of rhetoric courses because they were a requirement – looking back now, I wish I'd taken more)
- Public speaking - I have to say, in my job I draw on public speaking more than any
- other course I've ever taken - in helping lawyers craft their opening statement, for instance. I have a shelf full of basic public speaking

textbooks, and thumb through them regularly. I have an article published in *The Trial Lawyer* journal in 2001 called “Obstacles to Persuasion in the Courtroom” that is essentially a rehash of basic public speaking/ persuasion principles, but the point is, its stuff even experienced trial attorneys still don’t know!

- Small Group Communication. I basically took every small group course that my school had to offer, but still wish I’d been able to take more.
- Organizational Communication - how could this not be important for a real-world career?
- Media Studies - Comes in handy when we’re trying to argue, for instance, why media coverage of a case really does influence a jury pool, something judges are still reluctant to believe.
- Basic stats / methodology. The stuff I use is fundamentals of statistics and, in terms of non-statistical methodology, the most useful thing I learned by far was about questionnaire design. About 40 percent of my job consists of drafting questionnaires, and we receive abundant proof all the time that how you ask the question matters.
- Linguistics courses (esp. linguistic pragmatics), psychology courses (that focus on the nature of bias). One of the continual surprises to me is how little judges and others in the legal community know about bias - they still believe that you can just ask people if they’re biased, and can rely on their answers. Even worse, they believe that people can “leave their biases behind” when they enter the courtroom.
- Nonverbal communication - although for the most part I use it to try to convince lawyers that they can’t rely on body language to tell what their jurors are thinking, or explain to people why the assumption that they can tell when a witness is lying just by looking at him is most probably false.

In general, I found courses that focused on theories much more useful than courses that focused on facts. In other words, grad school for me was not about gaining “knowledge” (in the factual sense) but about learning theories that are useful as analytical tools. This is perhaps why I find 95 percent of all academic articles completely useless - because they’re so totally centered on determining “facts,” but have little to do with teaching me to think.

Jerie McArthur, Vice President of Organizational Consulting for Business Technology and Communication Inc.

Courses that teach both qualitative and quantitative research methods so that they are familiar with both. Courses that teach about business and finance so that they can measure what they do and translate the measurement into dollars if they are going into business. If they are going into consulting a course in basic anthropology would be helpful to learn the basic perspective of an anthropologist and some research methods from that field.

Tips For Job Hunting

Phillip Wilbur, Director, Tobacco Control and Health Programs, Danya International, Inc.

Internships are absolutely key. I know it sounds cliché, but almost no one who is in school knows much about the world beyond school. Internships bridge that gap and give you an idea of what the rest of the world thinks is important. They also give you a network of connections that are crucial when you're job hunting. And, if you're heading toward an area that isn't a good fit for you, an internship serves as an early warning system. Internships also teach you about how to have a job. I've run into a surprising number of otherwise smart people who just don't understand how to act professionally. Maybe this shouldn't be a surprise - for most people, their first 'real' job is their introduction to the working world, a world that is significantly different from being a student.

Judy Chayer, Performance Consultant and Facilitator, Judy Chayer and Associates

For me, one of the best things that I did was to become a Teaching Assistant. This was helpful for two reasons. One, it gave me experience in teaching/training other people (which for me is at the foundation of my consulting practice). Two, it got me connected much more closely with the faculty. Getting connected with the faculty, and, thankfully having some faculty within the Communication Studies department who not only taught in academia but also "practiced" in the business world was how I really got my break in the world of business. One of my professors was doing some consulting/training work at Honeywell. Being over there working with Honeywell, he became aware of an internship that was open in Honeywell's Management Development Center. George told me about the internship and basically gave me a referral. I got the internship which gave me the opportunity to further develop/get more real-life business experience and gave me an insider edge when a permanent full-time position opened up at the Management Development Center. The rest is history.

Elizabeth Owen, former Communications Project Coordinator, Worldwide and U.S. Communications, Levi Strauss & Co.

Make sure that you can articulate what your degree program was (and what you studied) in a way that makes sense to people who are not academics. For instance, words like "rhetoric" don't have the same meaning in universities and in the outside, non-academic world. It is really important to be able to articulate how what you studied prepared you for the type of work you are looking for. Emphasizing that our program required extensive writing, critical analysis and experience with public speaking were big selling points, I think, when I discussed what I studied. People were less interested in my area of focus (women's health; rhetorical analysis of legal cases/public policy, etc.) than they were in knowing that I had studied things that they could see as applicable to business.

If you are going to emphasize that you know can write, make sure that you proof your resume, cover letters, etc.

How I found my job? I sort of fell into this. I spent a few weeks searching Monster.com looking for things that were interesting. I saw something here and decided to apply because I'd read about LS&CO. when I was doing some research for my Organizational Communication class (how businesses responded to HIV/AIDS). I applied to work here in risk management, and my job would have been mostly policy analysis and implementation (ergonomics, etc.). After meeting with a few people, an HR person told me that there was an opening in the communications department and was I interested. I interviewed here and they offered me the job. It couldn't have hurt that one of my mom's best friend's spouses got me the initial interview. I think networking must help everyone get a job at some point.

Bill Elwood, Scientific Review Administrator, National Institutes of Health

I think these answers lie in students' own interests. Internships, volunteer work, campaign/issue work—all of these can be trigger points for career choices. Other professional associations may help as well. I'm very active in the American Public Health Association; some health communication people are too. Colleagues, friends, and APHA's Career Mart can be other resources for your students. I'm sure that the political scientists, sociologists, etc. have similar offerings that can help students.

Melanie Hohertz, Associate Director, Human Capital Communications, UnitedHealth Group

Tip number one: even as an undergrad, but especially as a grad student, start building a portfolio of your communications work that can help sell you during your interview and/or land you your first freelancing jobs. By a portfolio, I do not mean a file of your recent papers—nobody wants to read those. So how to go about it? First, you can get cheap but valuable experience by volunteering to help a nonprofit or two with their communications. Use that as a springboard to learn how to target messages, weave together design and text, and manage projects. At the minimum, you'll get experience and references; if you're lucky, you can take a hand in creating actual communication pieces that you can then show off to prospective employers. Second, you can write letters to the editor in local papers, opinion pieces in school publications, or get an article or two published in a scholarly journal. Third, consider starting your own web site or 'zine, and make sure that at least one or two pages/issues are remarkably well-written and carefully laid out, preferably in a design program like Dreamweaver or Quark (knowing those types of programs is a huge bonus in this field). However, if you take this route, I'd strongly recommend you create a topical interest site/'zine rather than a personal one. You don't really want a rant about your love life as part of your portfolio.

Tip number two: You hear it everywhere else, and you'll hear it again here: network. People usually recommend and hire people they know. Ask your professors for the names and numbers of ex-students they're still in contact with. Or (especially once you've got that portfolio together) get a few business cards made up with your name and contact information, and call yourself a freelancer. Go to a few of the communications-oriented business society meetings and introduce yourself to whoever will stand still. Hand them a card, tell them that you'd love to show them a few examples of your work sometime. Add in that you've got the lowest rates in town (even if you quote \$30 an hour, it will be true) and you'll turn their projects around on a dime, and you'll almost certainly get a few follow-up calls.

These tips aside, how did I get my job? My illustrious consulting career began with temping in graduate school for extra spending money. I was transcribing one-on-one employee interviews for a small corporate performance-improvement consulting firm. One day I turned in my afternoon's batch of transcriptions with a cover note alerting them to the fact that there was an obvious pattern of responses among a particular group of employees, and I'd attached small yellow post-it flags to the areas they should reference if they decided to investigate it for their client report. The next day, I was offered a job.

I worked with this firm on-and-off for about two and a half years, and by the time I got out of academia for good, I'd been lucky enough to have a range of experiences, from leading focus groups and designing surveys to writing and proofing proposals, presentations, marketing materials, and memos. I could even give one of the company's seminars in a pinch—amazing how teaching classes will get you over your difficulties speaking in public.

These bare-bones skills and a four-piece portfolio landed me an associate (entry level) job in the communications consulting practice of one of the "Big 5" professional services firms. Keep in mind that this was before I got around to finishing my thesis and earning my master's degree, so you might have a leg up already on where I started. Your own path could very well be shorter and more graceful.

Your communications skills have wide application. You can go into consulting, marketing, training, editing, teaching, even tangential areas like human resources. You can join a firm or freelance. If you need to narrow your focus, buy lunch for two or three people in the field and ask them what they love and what they hate about their jobs—you'll figure out pretty quick what areas could be right for you. It can be done! Good luck

Jim Kushner, Director, Market Research, Hong Kong Business Support Centre of Japan Tobacco International

I was opportunistic in my first few jobs. At the end of MA coursework, and against my advisor's advice, I accepted a teaching position. He was right, but luckily he did not give up on my judgment because he then introduced me to his former professional colleagues at U.S. Information Agency, where I got my first job combining every one of my personal and professional interests. At some point later, a research contractor—one of my Asian suppliers—told me she had an opening to manage her Hong Kong office, so without thinking too much about it I accepted that and moved abroad. That was over 25 years ago.

So the direct answer to your question, in my case, would be: network, be open to opportunities, and grab one when it comes along as long as it fits into the overall game plan. This assumes there is a game plan, which I didn't really have. The indirect answer, for anyone not actively interested in teaching, would be to try to match the probable applications of the usual communication lessons with one's personal interest. If one doesn't really know what personal interests are, don't worry too much about it, at least not at first. It may be that the recruiter who goes after the student may see something that the student doesn't. As long as the professional opportunity is clearly not ridiculous ("we need any warm body, and you seem to qualify") it might turn into something interesting. More or less, the willingness to be flexible is what got me to where I am now. The academic training prepared me to handle it, and the daily experiences prepared me to keep doing it.

Jeremy Rose, Jury Consultant, National Jury Project

I was driven by failure and by luck. The failure came from the fact that in 1994, my job search went nowhere. After an intensely frustrating year, I went to a Christmas party, where I ran into one of my professors. She said, "Are you only looking for academic jobs?" The answer was no. She gave me the name of someone at the National Jury Project that she had known for decades - through political and social connections - and the rest is a question of good timing, good word of mouth from my professor, and my own natural charm.

Jerie McArthur, Vice President of Organizational Consulting for Business Technology and Communication Inc.

Work the network of people you know, set up informational interviews with people who have jobs that you might like, and apply to human resources departments of companies you might want to work for. Finally, don't expect a job in a week; this isn't waitressing. My consulting assignments have usually come from people in my network. I started my own company so this is not relevant

for what most students want. The other advice you might give them is the importance of internships while they are in school to add to the network and to their resume.

Chapter 11

Publishing Your Dissertation

It is becoming increasingly important for scholars in the humanities to publish their dissertations as books in order to obtain tenure at research-oriented institutions. In some disciplines it is even crucial to landing a tenure-track job. Accordingly, it is wise to make an effort to turn your dissertation into a publishable book manuscript.

Picking a Dissertation Project

Professors are often asked what makes a good dissertation topic. I am afraid I have no easy answers to this question. I do have a few facts to keep in mind as you ponder your choice of dissertation projects:

- The dissertation will define who you are as a researcher early in your career. Especially in your efforts to gain that first job, make sure you are confident about building the early part of your research career around this project.
- You will be expected to present part of your dissertation at those job interviews that include a research presentation.
- You should plan to publish your dissertation either as journal articles or as a book. Dissertation-related publications will probably be the bulk of your case for promotion and tenure.
- Your chances for landing the job you want may depend on completing your dissertation.

What do these facts mean? To me they imply a minimum of three criteria with which to evaluate dissertation topics:

- 1) Your project should show off your most sophisticated theoretical and methodological skills.
- 2) Your project should engage a topic about which you have considerable enthusiasm and want to pursue post-dissertation. Your dissertation should be part of a larger research program that you can envision for yourself.
- 3) Your dissertation project should be “doable” in a reasonable length of time. Do not try to write “The Definitive Work” on your topic. It is fine if there are further dissertation-related projects that you can pursue after graduation, but meanwhile you need to keep the scope of your dissertation focused enough that you can finish it. Ed’s first axiom concerning dissertations is: “Done is Good.”

The process of publishing your dissertation can begin before you ever start writing it. Consult with your advisor and DGS about how your dissertation might be designed and organized in

such a way as to make it marketable as a scholarly book. To be sure, you will have to make revisions, but thinking about writing for a broader audience is a good way to conceptualize the project in terms that may produce a more valuable work.

During your final year working on the dissertation, it is not inappropriate to begin a dialogue with possible publishers. The easiest way to do this, initially, is simply to wander around the exhibit hall at the NCA annual convention and chat with acquisition editors at their booths. Make sure before you start a dialogue that you are, indeed, talking with an editor and not a supporting staff person. You can bring copies of the dissertation's abstract with you to leave with such editors.

How do you decide which press?

Start with university presses. They are perceived as far more credible than private publishers. Aim high initially. Why not? Generally you can "grade" university presses like University of Chicago, Yale, Cambridge, and Harvard A+ for just about anything. The grading differs a bit depending on the area of specialization for which your book would be appropriate. For example, the University of South Carolina Press, SUNY Press, and Southern Illinois University Press are examples of presses that have a fine reputation in rhetoric and/or communication studies, though they do not have the same overall prestige as a Harvard or Yale. There are some "A" private presses that do communication books (like Sage, Praeger, or Lawrence Erlbaum & Associates), so you may want to go with one of them before going to the Bs and Cs in university presses.

Consult with a senior scholar in your area of expertise for advice on how to grade university presses with respect to your discipline. Try to avoid so-called "Vanity Presses" who will charge you a fee (called a "subvention") to publish your book.

Who do you contact?

The Press has its own in-house acquisition editors, plus they typically contract Ph.D.s in the field to edit specific series. Most presses are on-line now, so check the web for the press's address and the editor's name. Some presses even identify acquisition editors by the area that they cover on their Web site, so you can direct your inquiry to the specific person you want. Otherwise, just send it to the editor-in-chief and that person will forward it to the appropriate person.

Keep in mind the distinction between an acquisition editor (who works for the press full-time) and the series editors (who are academics). The politics of who has the authority to sign books will vary from publisher to publisher. In some cases, series editors have a great deal of freedom to sign whatever book deals they want, but in most cases such authority is guarded carefully by the press's editorial board.

If you know of a specific series put out by a specific press, see if you can identify the series editor and send the proposal to him or her directly. How do you identify such series? Look through your own bookshelf or at your local highbrow bookstore and see who is publishing books similar to yours by subject or purpose. Often these books will identify the series on the cover. It may say “Rhetoric and Communication” or something like “Women’s Studies,” “Rhetoric of Inquiry,” “Presidential Studies,” or something like that. Typically the editor of such series is a professor and gets a cut of the royalty pie if they sign books directly rather than having them referred by the press, so they have an added incentive to court your manuscript. If you cannot identify the series editor, do not fret, just send it to the press.

All you need to send initially is enough for the editor to tell if they might want to review the whole manuscript. Most press Web sites now have detailed instructions for potential authors: Follow such instructions carefully. If they do not provide details, start with a cover letter, a recent CV, a prospectus that describes the whole book, a sample chapter, and the table of contents.

Initially, you can contact multiple presses at once to see if there is interest in your project. However, some presses will agree to have your manuscript reviewed only if you agree that they are the only press who is reviewing it. So, be picky before you commit your manuscript to a press that may take months to process it.

When do you contact the Press?

It used to be the case that academic publishers would issue a contract based only on a proposal or incomplete manuscript. As profit margins for academic publishers continue to dwindle, presses have become increasingly picky. Furthermore, the better the press, the more demanding they are, so it is best to wait until you have a complete manuscript. Ed’s axiom of editor interest is: The amount of enthusiasm a manuscript can elicit is in direct proportion to its completeness. This is particularly true for a first-time book author. You might be able to get a contract offer based on a proposal or incomplete manuscript from a C or B press, but if so, you might have a shot at an A press if you wait until you have a finished manuscript.

You can publish parts of your dissertation as journal articles and still submit the dissertation as a whole as a book. However, make sure that at least half of the book manuscript is made up of material that has not previously been published. Be careful about having part of the book under review with journals at the same time the book as a whole is under review—you could get yourself caught up in a copyright mess.

Cover Letter to Publisher

Keep this short (one page) and to the point. Make sure you include the following:

- Author ID: Where you are now, date and place of Ph.D., any other relevant titles, affiliations, or accomplishments (like previous books).
- Prospectus: You should include with the cover letter either the book’s

introductory chapter, or a prospectus of about 10 pages (plus the table of contents). This is what the editor will read to decide whether the press is interested in seeing the full manuscript. In your cover letter, this should be reduced to a maximum of one paragraph.

- Intended audience: Identify whether the audience is academic, general, or both; if academic, identify the relevant disciplines. Also make it clear if you think the book has the potential of being adopted as a textbook.
- Manuscript status: Tell the editor how long the manuscript is, indicate that it is complete, and indicate whether it is based on a dissertation or not.
- End by saying the editor should feel free to forward your proposal to the relevant series editor, and that they can best contact you by e-mail.
- That is enough. They do this all the time and they simply won't take the time to read complex justifications or explanations.

What happens next?

The editor (acquisition or series) will contact you to let you know if she or he is interested. If so, the editor may ask you for suggestions for possible reviewers. Be ready for this and have a list of three or four scholars who you have reason to believe would be favorable toward your project. Do not feel the least bit awkward about suggesting people you know and you are sure would write a positive review. Even if the editor does not ask for names, you should be proactive about recommending people or at least types of people. For example, if you think a "cultural studies type" or a "critical theorist" would be best, suggest that. Editors sometimes want to have a manuscript reviewed by scholars outside of the discipline of communication. If so, you might receive a very different reaction to your project from, say, a traditional historian or political scientist than a cultural or media studies person. You need to offer the editor guidance as to whom you think would be the most appropriate sort of reviewer.

Once an editor has accepted your manuscript and sent it out for review, you wait. Generally the editor will offer an estimate of the length of time, but normally you should hear something back within three months. If you do not, you should follow up with an e-mail to the editor. Book decisions often take less time than a journal article because most reviewers are paid a nominal fee for their review.

Once the reviews are received by the editor, the editor should provide a fairly clear message as to her or his level of interest. Most of the time this will be a clear "sorry" or a clear "we want this manuscript to publish with revisions." If it is the latter, the editor will probably ask for you to write a letter explaining how you plan to meet the reviewers' concerns. Once that letter is received, the editor will take the manuscript, reviews, and your letter to the editorial board of the press to ask for approval for a contract. In your letter describing your plan for revisions, the best course of action is to be upbeat and positive about the revisions. Express your gratitude for the quality feedback and, if you can say so honestly, indicate your intention to incorporate all the recommended revisions. If there is something with which you seriously disagree, politely explain your disagreement. Most of the time, however, you should be brief and indicate that you intend to make the suggested changes.

More than 90 percent of the time the editorial board will approve the project and a contract will be issued. But every now and then there may be someone cranky on the board who shoots the project down. If that happens, there typically is nothing more you can do than to try again with another publisher.

The most complicated situation to handle is if an editor expresses interest, but wants you to revise the manuscript and have it re-reviewed before issuing you a contract. If that happens, then you should probably consult with a senior scholar who has some book publishing experience about what to do. If the revisions seem reasonable and “doable” to you and the editor gives you a strong indication that publication is likely if you do the revisions, then you should go forward with them. If, however, you are uncomfortable with the direction of the revisions, or they seem too extensive to you, or the editor is not being sufficiently positive about the project, you may want to withdraw your manuscript and shop elsewhere. As I say, you probably should sit down with a senior scholar with the reviews and the letter(s) from the editor and get some advice before making a final decision.

The Contract

What does the contract include? Book contracts are pretty standard. There are three parts I would look closely at: royalty rate, paperback decisions, and “right of first refusal.”

The typical royalty rate from a university press used to be 5 percent to 10 percent for hardcover and 5 percent for paperback, though there is some variation here depending on the press, the likely audience size for your book, and the state of the economy. In recent years with a weak book market, presses have tried to keep the book price lower by giving lower royalties to authors. On one hand, I know of professors who have been given cash “advances” on their book sales to entice them to sign with a press, and on the other I know of professors who were offered a contract with 0 percent royalties on the hardcover. So there is great variation. If your contract is significantly different from the five percent or ten percent rate, you would be well advised to consult with a senior scholar with book publishing experience.

Most presses will begin with a limited run of your book only in hardcover. The first run may be 500, 1000, or 1500 (rarely is it any higher, especially for a first book). It is very rare that a press will agree to issue your book initially both in hardcover and paperback. If they do, that is a real plus. Most of the time they will issue your book only in hardcover and wait to make a decision about releasing the book in paperback until they see what sort of sales the book has. Accordingly, before you sign anything make sure you are clear on how and when the decision to release your book in paperback will be made. The typical procedure is that the press will not even consider a paperback release until their stock of your book gets down to between 100 and 200 copies. If this happens within the first two years of the release of your book, the chances are excellent that they will reissue the book in paperback. So make sure you are cooperative with the press’s marketing division and identify as many markets (including conventions) where the book should be advertised as possible. Collect reviews of your book and save any e-mail you might receive indicating a positive response to your book. Make sure your book is nominated

for book awards given by various academic organizations (such as NCA). In short, do not leave all the marketing effort in the hands of your publisher—work with them.

I should pause and clarify that you are not going to get rich from publishing your dissertation. You may make a few hundred dollars for a few years. The reason you want your book to go into paperback is so that it stays “alive” and stays in print. If it takes too many years for your publisher to sell down their stock of the hardcover, they will not reissue it in paperback and instead let it go out of print.

Finally, there is a clause called “right of first refusal” in most book contracts. This is a clause that says you will let this press be the first to review your next book manuscript before you submit it to anyone else. You are under no such obligation. It is standard practice literally to cross this section out of each copy of your contract (put your initials next to the crossed out section). Do not worry, you will not jeopardize your book contract by doing this. As I say, it is standard practice.

Time-Frame

Book publishing takes time. It will take at least three months for the first review, plus whatever time you take for your revisions. Once you turn in your final manuscript, it will take about a year before your book comes out in print. Plan on the whole process from start to finish to take at least two years. It could take more if you have to submit your manuscript to more than one publisher. Thus, the earlier you can start the process, the better.

For an excellent guide to the publishing process, buy your own copy of the *Chicago Manual of Style*. It is not cheap, but it is excellent. The chapter on how to do an index is still the best I have seen.

Chapter 12

Promotion and Tenure

It may seem early in your career to think about promotion and tenure, but it does not hurt to have a basic understanding of how the process works. In fact, when you interview for positions early in your career it is quite important for you to get a clear picture from the institution about what the expectations are for promotion and tenure. What follows is not a guide to promotion and tenure, but simply an introduction.

By “promotion” I refer to moving from the beginning rank of assistant professor to that of associate professor. Later in your career you may seek to be promoted to full professor, but this is not the time to worry about that. “Tenure” refers to the virtually lifetime commitment one receives when an institution bestows tenure. Now, at most places one receives a promotion from assistant to associate professor with tenure. That is, you are promoted and tenured at the same time. But this is not always the case. One could be promoted without tenure, or tenured without promotion. The most common practice, however, is to promote and tenure at the same time.

Although the promotion and tenure process varies widely from institution to institution, there are some important common characteristics. Promotion and tenure reviews generally consider your contributions and accomplishments in research, teaching, and service. The emphasis placed on any of these in promotion and tenure reviews depends upon the mission of the institution. For example, at a research university, primary emphasis is placed on your research productivity. *The* determining factor for promotion and tenure is whether you have published a sufficient quantity of quality articles or books. Some institutions have a rough estimate of the quantity needed. It might be a book and 6 articles if you are in the humanities, or about 10 articles in the social sciences. As I say, these standards vary considerably. At some heavily research-oriented schools, teaching and service are “considered” but often given very little weight in comparison to research. At other research universities, teaching may be considered with equal weight. Every place is a little bit different.

The proverbial small liberal arts college would more likely value your contributions in the classroom and to the university community. I know some schools that actually do not want their faculty conducting research because they think it takes away time better spent teaching.

Most often, some combination of all three areas—research, teaching, service—is considered in making a promotion and tenure decision. Obviously the key idea here is to find out what the promotion and tenure expectations are before you start working at an institution so that you can allocate your time and energy accordingly.

At most institutions, a beginning faculty member has what is called a “probationary” period of 6 years. Theoretically, you are eligible to go up for tenure and promotion at any time, but most faculty do not go up earlier than their 4th year. You must go up during your 6th year, commonly

referred to as your “penultimate” year. If you do not receive tenure, then you are given a 7th year (to search for a new job) and then must depart the institution.

Promotion and tenure reviews generally pass through three levels: departmental, college or division, and university-wide. The amount of influence bestowed to each level varies from department to department, chair to chair, dean to dean, and institution to institution. As a result it is difficult to make any generalizations. At some places the department review is the most difficult stage, and once you are approved at the departmental level, all else goes smoothly. At other places the department review is routine, but the level of scrutiny at higher levels is quite intense. Sometimes the tough scrutiny occurs at the dean level: Deans have been known to turn down tenure and promotion for candidates who were approved by their department. The university-wide process here generally (but not always) rubberstamps what the collegiate deans recommend. By contrast, at some institutions the president has intervened to overturn decisions made by departments and deans.

So, once again the only advice I can offer is to ask about the history of practices at any place you are hired.

The key to receiving promotion and tenure is simple. First, understand the institution’s expectations. Get as much in writing as you can about the expectations. If a new department head, dean, or president comes in after you have been there a few years, find out if the rules are the same or if they are being changed. Make sure that you receive feedback every year as to how you are progressing towards promotion and tenure, and if there are any weaknesses identified in your case, fix them. Most places want their junior faculty to succeed and will do their best to help you develop your career so that you are in good shape for promotion and tenure.

Second, do good work. If you are at a research institution, set a goal for yourself to exceed the quantity of expected publication. Do not wait to jump into a busy publication effort. The process takes time and you strengthen your case if you begin to publish immediately rather than waiting. If you are at a teaching institution, work hard to produce excellent syllabi and document your success as a teacher. In any case, keep your CV up to date and make sure you record all the various work you do that could be considered when you go up for promotion.

Tenure/Promotion Dos and Don’ts

Things To Do

- 1) The most important initial step is to learn what is expected for promotion/tenure at your specific institution. Ideally, this is a question that you asked when you were interviewed for the position. Even if you received an answer at that point, keep asking and ask lots of folks you trust, because sometimes you will get different answers. All you can do in such cases is to collect the information and assess the reliability of the sources, then err on the side of caution. That is, set a goal for yourself that exceeds what you believe is expected.

It is worth noting that sometimes administrators change, and with them, promotion and tenure expectations. Be aware of this, and note that this is an added reason to plan from the beginning to exceed what you think is expected.

A key part of #1, of course, is to understand the relative importance of research and teaching. Most of what I will write here is about research. However, it is crucial to understand what the expectations are in terms of teaching. So, on to #2.

- 2) Find out if your institution has any *specific* expectations in terms of the level of demonstrated teaching excellence required for promotion and tenure. It is unlikely, but be sure to find out if they expect nominations for teaching awards, pedagogically-oriented publications, etc.

For the most part, however, just be a good teacher.

- A) Write good, thorough syllabi. Get feedback from senior faculty or department leadership who will be making the promotion and tenure decision.
- B) Keep all your syllabi, handouts, etc. that you give your students.
- C) Keep *all* teaching evaluation data, raw data and student comments as well as summaries of that data. Find out if your department keeps track of department-wide averages and collect that data as well. At some places when you go up for promotion and tenure, you are required to report certain average scores on teaching evaluations and compare them to departmental averages.
- D) Collect samples of your students' work, such as exemplary papers and projects.
- E) Keep any letters, notes, or emails that you get from students praising your course.
- F) If your department does not have a regular peer visitation program for untenured faculty, go ahead and invite senior faculty or departmental leaders to visit your class (*you* should guide which day they visit) and solicit their feedback on your teaching.
- G) If your institution has a faculty development program aimed at "new" teachers, consider participating. You might learn something, and it shows commitment to pedagogy to record on your CV that you participated.

- 3) Think about your research identity: Who are you as a researcher? How would you like to be described in a few years, as someone “emerging as a leading scholar of X?” What is the X? What makes your work valuable? See the section of the professional development booklet on one’s research identity, but now rethink that in terms of being a professor. Many places require candidates for promotion and tenure to write a research narrative. You don’t have to start that now, but you could get a conceptual jump by writing a paragraph that describes how you see yourself as a researcher: what your area of expertise is, the objects/phenomena/texts/issues/problems you are interested in studying, and a bit about what theoretical and methodological orientation you take. Hopefully, 90 percent of what you do as a researcher in the next few years can easily be understood as part of this. Of course, you may change and evolve and that is fine, but it is good to have a starting place in mind for yourself.
- 4) Make a research plan, and stick to it. Once you understand what it is expected (say, a book and 5 articles), map out a plan whereby you will be sure to *exceed* this expectation by the time you go up for promotion and tenure. Normally you always want to have several things at various stages of development. Set a reasonable, but ambitious, goal for yourself, such as to put out two journal articles (or their equivalent) accepted for publication each year, plus to publish your dissertation as a book. If you meet that goal you can get tenure almost anywhere.

Write out a list of projects you are thinking about and set *specific* deadlines by which you want to submit them. You don’t have to do this 5 years out, but at least 2 years out is a good idea.

I cannot tell you how to manage your work schedule, but you *must* map out a plan where you set aside blocks of time *every week* to be working on research. This simply *must* be your #1 goal. Do *not* see writing as something you do in your spare time. It is what you are hired to do, so it should be your #1 priority and all other obligations *must* be scheduled around your research work, not the other way around. This is much easier said than done, I realize. But *you* must realize that if research productivity is expected, you must take control of your schedule to devote the necessary time.

- 5) Publish in venues you can explain and defend. I will say more about this under “Don’ts” but for the moment you want to make sure you can explain why the journals, etc., you publish in are important and visible for the scholars you want to reach. This does not mean that all your pubs must be in NCA’s or ICA’s “top journals,” though you certainly should shoot for that when you can. But it does mean that you should have a rationale for why you have selected the places that you do. Some institutions rate journals rather specifically, such that “national” journals “count more” than regional journals, but many places do not. In any case, learn what the norms are of your particular institution. It is perfectly OK to publish more than one article in the same journal, assuming

that journal is highly respected and especially if it is considered a *leading* journal in your specialty. Multiple pubs in *Philosophy & Rhetoric* or *Quarterly Journal of Speech* are an asset, not a liability. Conversely, do *not* publish multiple articles in journals that are not highly regarded.

- 6) Cultivate relationships with possible external reviewers. At most places, a crucial part of your promotion and tenure evaluation is the assessment of your work made by external reviewers. From day one, you should be thinking about who these folks might be and keep a list on your computer or in a file. Send offprints to possible reviewers and don't be shy about introducing yourself at conventions or even through an unsolicited email. At the same time, don't send unsolicited manuscripts and ask for feedback out of the blue. Make the contact first, and if the person seems receptive, move forward from there. This is solid career advice quite apart from promotion and tenure matters, as it is important to learn from senior scholars and to get their feedback on your work.

When the time comes to select the external reviewers, you may or may not have a lot of input as the rules vary from institution to institution. Find this out, and if you can suggest names, then (as I have said) keep a list. Editors of journals in which you publish are certainly folks you should consider, as are senior scholars in the area of your research. If you have respondents at conferences that appreciate your work, consider using that person as an external reviewer (which, by the way, is another good reason always to have your paper to them on time). You should seek mentorship on this that is specific to your case, and don't be shy about thinking about this sooner rather than later.

- 7) If research is the most important criterion for promotion and tenure decisions at your institution, then publish, publish, publish. And 90 percent of your publications should be in refereed journals. Always be thinking about how to turn a conference presentation into a publication, or how to turn a teaching experience into something you can write about and publish. *See yourself* as a research scholar, always thinking about the project you are working on and the next one you can't wait to start. You must have a passion for this that matches the level of zeal expected by your institution.
- 8) Publish your dissertation as a book. For details, see the earlier chapter.
- 9) Seek mentorship. Now, there are all sorts of mentoring relationships and it is tough to generalize about them. Some institutions officially designate a particular senior faculty member as your mentor, though this is rare. In most cases, the burden is on *you* to seek advice and counsel from senior faculty at your institution, and elsewhere. Ideally, this is a topic you ask about during your interview: What sort of relationships are there at that institution between senior and junior faculty? Even if you did not ask this, or even if there is a poor history of faculty mentorship at your institution, you can be proactive.

Generally speaking, there are two categories of interaction that are valuable (professionally speaking) to have with senior faculty. One is “advice on research” and the other is “navigating the details of work.” Research advice can be as specific as feedback on a paper or “where should I publish this?” to as broad as “how should I gain visibility in my area?” Ask senior faculty who have relevant expertise to read completed drafts of your work—you will figure out fairly quickly if they do not want to do this. Ask them to lunch to talk about your work from time to time—don’t wait for them to make the first move. “Navigating the details of work” can include just about anything, from feedback on a syllabus to which service committees to avoid. Pretty much anything you want to ask about is fair game, though obviously you don’t want to overload any one individual with a constant barrage of detailed questions.

Most (though certainly not all) senior faculty are quite willing to provide advice and mentorship, it is just that it does not occur to many of them to initiate such interactions. They are busy folks, but in most cases they will be more than happy to make time for you if you seek it.

Also, don’t forget about your teachers back in graduate school, especially your advisor. Again, most of us are quite happy (even eager) to continue a professional relationship after graduation. It is one of the pleasures that make this career rewarding, so don’t hesitate to seek advice from your former teachers.

- 10) Though this advice is easier to give than to follow, try to allocate your work time in approximate proportion to how important it is considered for your annual review and eventual promotion and tenure case. That is, if research is considered about half of your case, with teaching and service the other half, try to devote about half your work time to research.

Things Not To Do

- 1) Don’t over-commit to service work. “Service” is sometimes used to describe a wide range of activities, from undergrad advising to department committee work to faculty governance. Work on graduate student committees is *not* service, but counts as part of your teaching mission. Typically one subdivides service into three or four categories: department, college, university, and professional. Do your best to avoid college or university committees where possible; such work should be the responsibility of tenured faculty. It is appropriate and expected to have *some* department service and *some* participation in your academic professional organizations.

Service work is often rewarding, but is valued the least in promotion and tenure decisions. Many places seek to “protect” untenured faculty, but many do not. You will need to protect yourself. Practice saying the word “no.” Practice saying,

“I’d be happy to do this after I am tenured.” It is probably not your habit, but you must be selfish for just a few years so that you can be generous for many years afterward.

Now, recognize that many places—even those that claim to protect junior faculty—*will* end up putting you to service work, perhaps even excessively. One has to walk a fine line between offending one’s senior colleagues and letting yourself be abused. If this is a problem, seek the advice of senior faculty/ leadership in your program. In any case, try to pick your service work with care and an eye toward how much time it will take.

- 2) Don’t take on too many new course preparations. Of course, a few new preps over 5 years are fine, but do not fall into the habit of creating new courses every year. While it is useful for promotion and tenure to be able to document that you have both contributed to the core curriculum and added innovations of your own, don’t overdo it.
- 3) Only do conference papers that you plan to rework for publication. Period. It is okay to participate in panel discussions or to act (rarely) as a respondent, but otherwise simply do *not* invest the time writing a conference paper unless you plan to try to publish it.
- 4) Publish in conference proceedings *only* if you are using material that you can expand/revise to publish other places as well, or if it is a very distinguished conference. Generally speaking, conference proceedings are not “counted” for much, so they are generally not a good investment of your time. One is okay, but I would avoid doing more than that during your probationary period unless you can make a persuasive argument as to why a particular conference proceedings is a valuable outlet.
- 5) Do *not* publish more than one chapter in an edited book. Such publications often are discounted or not counted at all. One exception to this would be a distinguished collection or encyclopedia that being asked to contribute to is a sign of evidence of your stature as a scholar in that area. Now, this is one of those bits of advice that is hard to follow when one receives invitations to participate. I would suggest a couple of decision rules. If you could publish the same work in a refereed journal, go for the journal. *Only* publish in a collection that you are sure will get done and in print (some never do), that is coming out with a university or otherwise noteworthy press, and only do so if you can defend the choice as appropriate. I have seen successful promotion and tenure cases where the candidate published mostly in edited collections, but was able to make an argument that their work was so interdisciplinary that traditional journal outlets were inappropriate. But in general, avoid publishing in edited collections. Just say no unless there are very compelling reasons to think otherwise. Even then, it would be wise to seek advice before making a decision from an experienced colleague.

- 6) Do *not* write book reviews. The only exception is if you *must* read a particular book anyway, and you can limit your writing time to one and only one day. Even so, I would refuse to do more than one (at most two) of these during your probationary period. If you are publishing two regular articles a year and book reviews are “extra,” feel free!

- 7) Do *not* panic. This is your life, now, and the only thing that is different is the importance of how you invest your time at work. If you want promotion and tenure, then starting *now* you need to make sure you allocate your time accordingly. Do good work, and you will be rewarded in ways that few careers can offer.

