



# Scaling the Ivory Tower: Your Academic Job Search Workbook

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A systematic, practical planning guide with 58 worksheets to conquer the academic job search.

**WORKSHEETS AND SAMPLE DOCUMENTS**  
**(PDF Version)**

from  
**Scaling the Ivory Tower:  
Your Academic Job Search Workbook**

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## Contact Us

**We welcome suggestions and additions.** The world of academia is changing rapidly with the inclusion of more electronic resources and publications, which in turn is impacting both the work and the work product produced by academics beyond the traditional in-classroom delivery of lectures, testing, and grading. We are greatly appreciative of any suggestions our readers may have for improving the content or adding any new items we have not considered to aid in the job search process. We would also love to hear from you about how these worksheets can be improved or questions you think should have been included on them that we missed.

Contact Mary Beth by emailing [writeonmba at gmail.com](mailto:writeonmba@gmail.com) or Hillary by emailing [hillary at transitioningyourlife.com](mailto:hillary_at_transitioningyourlife.com) with your suggestions, concerns, or desire to connect for a complimentary session.

More information about us can be found on the last page of this document in “About the Authors.”

Thank you for being a part of our work!

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**from**  
*Scaling the Ivory Tower*

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### Action Words for Cover Letters and CVs Worksheet

*We have provided several action words to stimulate your thinking. Feel free to add your own words to this list.*

**A-** Accelerated, Accomplished, Accounted for, Accumulated, Achieved, Active in, Arbitrated, Articulated

Your word(s) here:

**B-** Boosted, Briefed, Broadened, Budgeted

Your word(s) here:

**C-** Campaigned, Chaired, Championed, Clarified, Coached, Collaborated, Coordinated, Corroborated, Cultivated, Customized

Your word(s) here:

**D-** Decided, Decreased, Delegated, Demonstrated, Designated, Developed, Devised, Diagnosed, Documented, Doubled

Your word(s) here:

**E-** Economized, Edited, Educated, Empowered, Enabled, Encouraged, Endorsed, Enhanced

Your word(s) here:

**F-** Facilitated, Focused, Forecasted

Your word(s) here:

**G-** Generated, Grew

Your word(s) here:

**H-** Harmonized, Harnessed

Your word(s) here:

**I-** Identified, Illustrated, Impressed, Improved, Increased

Your word(s) here:

**J-** Justified

Your word(s) here:

**K-** Kept, Knowledgeable

Your word(s) here:

**L-** Launched, Led

Your word(s) here:

**M-** Magnified, Managed, Marketed, Mastered

Your word(s) here:

**N-** Navigated, Negotiated

Your word(s) here:

**O-** Observed, Obtained, Orchestrated, Organized,

Your word(s) here:

**P-** Participated, Pinpointed, Performed, Publicized, Published

Your word(s) here:

**Q-** Qualified, Queried, Questioned, Quoted

Your word(s) here:

**R-** Realigned, Recognized, Recommended

Your word(s) here:

**S-** Selected, Separated, Spearheaded, Stimulated, Succeeded, Surpassed, Synchronized, Synergized

Your word(s) here:

**T-** Tabulated, Targeted, Tested, Took over, Traded, Translated, Triggered, Triumphed, Troubleshoot

Your word(s) here:

**U-** Uncovered, Underwrote, Unearthed, Unified, Upgraded, Urged, Utilized

Your word(s) here:

**V-** Validated, Verbalized, Verified, Vitalized

Your word(s) here:

**W-** Won, Welcomed, Witnessed, Worked, Wrote

Your word(s) here:

**X-** eXceeded, eXcelled, eXemplified, eXpanded, eXpedited

Your word(s) here:

**Y-** Yielded

Your word(s) here:

**Z-** Zeroed, Zoomed

Your word(s) here:

Words you want to use are mainly verbs; these proscribed words are adjectives and smack of job search jargon.

Some words should not ever be used in your CV or in your cover letter. Below are just a few that will be a red flag to anyone reading your material and why. Feel free to add your own.

*Words **not** to use:*

**Unemployed.** You have just said two things you don't want to say:

1) You do not have a very high opinion of whatever you are doing now, whether you are finishing your dissertation or volunteering while you look for work; and

2) You have now highlighted any "breaks in service" that may not otherwise have caused any comment at all. Academic work is often sporadic and intermittent.

**Expert.** You have a doctoral degree. You are already considered an expert. No need to belabor it. Expect that you will be asked to demonstrate your expertise in an interview.

**Ambitious, hard-working, driven, accomplished, etc.** OK, that's a series of words, but you get the idea.

**Synergy, wheelhouse, etc.** This type of jargon has been used so often by job seekers that it is nearly meaningless.

**Responsible for, Results oriented.** Start with what you did and skip these introductory words.

## Worksheets and Sample Documents from Scaling the Ivory Tower

<b>Application Tracking for Job Sources Worksheet</b>		
<p><i>Use this worksheet to help you get started in looking at the various sources for academic job listings. It may help you narrow down the places where you want to continue to look. For a more detailed tracking form that will help you monitor the entire application process, see the “Job Search Log for Academic Positions” worksheet.</i></p>		
<b>Source</b>	<b>Date Advertised/Deadline</b>	<b>Job Posting Information (e.g., number)</b>
<b><i>Professional print sources and online professional sources</i></b>		
<i>Inside Higher Ed</i>		
<i>The Chronicle of Higher Education</i>		
Journals in your own field		
Headhunters and recruiting firms in higher education		
<b><i>Social media</i></b>		
Facebook		
LinkedIn		
Twitter		
Specialized social media sites		
<b><i>Additional places to look</i></b>		
Professional social media sites/web pages for your specialty area		
Human Resources offices at colleges and universities		
Newspapers/magazines (e.g., <i>The Economist</i> )		



### Class Preparation Worksheet

*Before you begin preparing your presentation, ask the Search Committee for the information below.*

Course title:

Topic of class to be presented:

Length of class:

Modality of class (Lecture? Seminar discussion? Other?):

How many students in the class?

Are the attending students majors in the department?

Is this a beginning or upper-level class?

Who else will be attending the class?

What technology is available?

Will someone in the department make copies of my handouts or should I bring them with me?

*Thinking through and planning your presentation:*

How will you engage the students initially?

How will you introduce yourself?

What will you do so that you can see the students as people you can interact with, people with names?

Worksheets and Sample Documents from *Scaling the Ivory Tower*

What will you do to make your presentation interesting?

What slides (PPT) will you bring?

What handouts will you bring?

What is your plan for engaging class members in discussion of the material you are presenting and for helping them tie it to what they already know?

How do you want to end your class?

What other classes might you want to teach or develop if you are hired at this institution?

Worksheets and Sample Documents from *Scaling the Ivory Tower*

<b>Conference Attendance Worksheet</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>What will I do?</b>	<b>How and when do I follow up?</b>
	Ask for introductions when appropriate; use advance research to know who I want to connect with.	
	Attend seminar sessions and ask questions to make myself known.	
	Exchange manuscripts and/or determine if there is an opportunity to create a publication from seminar; volunteer to coordinate or edit	
	Interview (informally or formally)	
	Moderate, organize or present panels	
	Moderate, organize or present posters	
	Socialize: Coffee, happy hours, meals	
	View job bulletin boards and connect with anyone I know at hiring institution	
	Visit book vendors and ask questions to make myself known	

Worksheets and Sample Documents from Scaling the Ivory Tower

**Confidence Worksheet**

*Write 10 things you have done successfully at any stage in your life.*

	Successes I have had	What I did to make it happen
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

### Considerations in Applying for Full-Time Academic Job Worksheet

*Before you begin:*

How are the papers you are writing going to feed into your dissertation work? Are they potentially publishable in respected journals? [More on this in the section, “The importance of publishing early and often.”]

Have you determined which conferences will be best for you to attend in the two-three years leading up to graduation? [More on this under “Conferences.”]

Are you attending job talks in your department to see how others prepare their job talks?

Who are you meeting that might be able to tell you about job postings? [More on this in “Expand your general networking.”]

Are you clear about what is expected in your role as a faculty member? If not, make sure you spend some time understanding your prospective role.

How are your teaching skills? Do you have enough experience or training? What do your teaching evaluations say you do well or not so well?

Do you need a professional website? Many universities now require them of faculty, and some recommend them for graduate student. Make sure you know the norm is in your field.

Are you active on social media? Again, what is the expected norm for your field? [More on this in “Using social media.”]

Is your committee set up and on board with your topic?

*As you near your graduation time and review job postings:*

What is the impact on any partner for jobs you would like to get? If applicable, how will you handle being a dual-career academic couple?

What other things do you need to consider before even beginning the application process, like where you will be located, or whether at a research or teaching institution, how being at that particular institution might further future research?

Do you have all your references lined up? Do you know for certain what they will say about you or your work?

Have you prepared your CV, research statement, teaching philosophy and typical cover letter that you can repurpose to any posted position? [More on each of these in separate sections below.]

*If you do not succeed in landing an academic position in the first job cycle:*

Have you got a realistic back up plan? Will you search for administrative job at a university or another institution? Are you willing to go outside the academic environment for employment while you keep looking?

Should you look for postdoctoral positions?

### Considering a Job Offer Worksheet

*Take the time to look at the position in depth. Ask yourself:*

What is the absolute least amount I can accept and still actually survive the move and transition?

How willing am I to live with the absolute minimum?

When will the first paycheck arrive?

Will I be doing something new? Or things I already do? What do I anticipate the preparation time for the job duties to be?

What are the resources I will have?

Who will my colleagues be, and will there be an opportunity to collaborate if desired?

Will this job put me on the path toward a leadership role? Is that important to me?

What are the commute times and will that have an impact on my work?

What benefits like health insurance and faculty development money does this job offer include?

What are the benefits and drawbacks for me? [Location, cost of living, community, research facilities, etc.]

If applicable, what are the opportunities for my partner?

### Considering an Adjunct Job Worksheet

*Answer the questions honestly below to assess whether you really want to pursue an adjunct job.*

Why do you want to accept an adjunct position?

Family considerations: For instance, your spouse is the primary income-earner, and a move is required; you have very small children and do not currently want to pursue a full-time academic position; you do not want to leave academia behind even though you have not been able to secure a full-time position.

Location: Is adjuncting attractive because it's located in a place you want to live or travel?

Experience: Will the job increase your skills teaching, honing current class curricula, or developing syllabi for new courses?

Is adjuncting a placeholder for you while you continue to seek a full-time position?

Do you see adjuncting as a way to develop new colleagues or collaborators?

Do you see adjuncting as a way to find time to write and submit writing for publication? If so, what is a realistic way to look at the time you will have available for this?

What are the expectations of the hiring institution concerning the adjunct position?

What is the expected teaching load and schedule? [4-4, 4-3, 2-2, or other variation; is it M-W-F or T-Th?]

Is there an opportunity for any possible course relief in the future?



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What services or equipment is offered? This may include office, mailbox, email address, computer, phone, library privileges, parking, lab or studio space.

What expectations, if any, go beyond meeting classes and holding office hours?

What are the terms of employment being offered? [1, 2, 3-year contract? Potential to renew after the initial contract period?]

What are the expectations for research and publishing for an adjunct?

What are some other issues to consider?

Salary and other incentives:

Health benefits:

Commute time:

Need to work at more than one institution for financial reasons:

### Considering a Job Offer Worksheet

*Take the time to look at the position in depth. Ask yourself:*

What is the absolute least amount I can accept and still actually survive the move and transition?

How willing am I to live with the absolute minimum?

When will the first paycheck arrive?

Will I be doing something new? Or things I already do? What do I anticipate the preparation time for the job duties to be?

What are the resources I will have?

Who will my colleagues be, and will there be an opportunity to collaborate if desired?

Will this job put me on the path toward a leadership role? Is that important to me?

What are the commute times and will that have an impact on my work?

What benefits like health insurance and faculty development money does this job offer include?

What are the benefits and drawbacks for me? [Location, cost of living, community, research facilities, etc.]

If applicable, what are the opportunities for my partner?

### Cover Letter Checklist Worksheet

*Make sure you have done these things:*

- Created letterhead with contact information as part of document (not in header)
- Correct name and title of person in address
- Correct physical address
- Date
- Reference to job number or job title
- Correct salutation with title (Dr. So-and-So)
- Read, reread, and had someone else read for grammar and typos
- Crafted a compelling first sentence to hook the reader (“Why *this* job?”)
- Told a story about who I am in relation to the position
- Provided detail about my accomplishments
- Showed knowledge of the institution and its particular issues and/or types of students
- Demonstrated familiarity with department and potential colleagues
- Discussed current and future research plans
- Referred back to CV at least twice in the body of the letter
- Explained any anomalies in time to degree or time out of academia
- Carefully read and specifically addressed issues mentioned in advertisement
- Formal closure
- Signed letter
- Listed enclosures
- Made sure enclosures are attached
- Made note to self about date to follow up

### Cover Letter Planning Worksheet

- What will be your lead sentence?
- 
- What makes you unique?
- 
- What is your best strength?
- 
- How will you explain time to completion or time gaps?
- 
- What do you bring to the institution [what's in it for them]?
- 
- What are 2-3 reasons why you know you are capable of handling this job?
- 
- What are 4-5 competencies you could present in a bullet form?
- 
- What evidence do you personally have proving you can do this job?
- 
- What can you point to as an accomplishment(s)?
- 
- How will you relate your CV to the job advertisement?
- 
- What have you discovered about the school or department that you want to remember to mention in your letter?
- 
- What research plans would you like to pursue? [Do not censor yourself. This exercise is for your benefit, so whatever pops into your mind, no matter how far-fetched, include it.]
- 
- How will you wordsmith your letter to demonstrate confidence in performing the advertised position?
-

### Cover Letter Worksheet

*The First Paragraph:*

Attention-getting opening sentence: What's my story? How did I get hooked on doing whatever I do?

Follow up with details about what makes me an outstanding candidate for the job. What makes me unique? Work the title of the job position advertised into this paragraph.

*The Second Paragraph:*

What are my accomplishments and professional and/or academic qualifications? (Degree, courses taught, grants secured any other specific accomplishments.) Refer to CV here.

*The Third and Fourth Paragraph(s)*

What can I do for you? (Demonstrate my knowledge of the institution, potential colleagues, students, research plans, and the local community, etc.)

*Fifth Paragraph:*

How will I politely wrap this up?

### CV Checklist Worksheet

- Correct contact and institution information
- Correct contact information for yourself
- Correct spelling and no typos
- All hyperlinks work
- Correct and consistent verb tense used
- Font and size are consistent
- No unnecessary jargon unless terms specific to your field are needed
- Document is formatted as requested, typically a PDF
- Included numbers and facts, where possible
- Checked for readability
- Checked for accuracy
- Listed all academic qualifications:
  - Education
  - Professional experience
  - Publications and presentations
  - Research
  - Teaching
  - Service, including grant writing
  - Professional associations or memberships
  - Honors and awards
  - Licenses, if applicable
- References, if applicable
- Created a specific file name that identifies you and the date for yourself

## CV Worksheet

*You can list details in the categories below or start with an online template.*

### **Basic contact information**

Legal name:

Address where mail will reach you:

Daytime phone number:

Professional email address:

### **Education**

Most recent degree:

Institution:

Year of degree:

Dissertation or thesis title, if applicable:

Next most recent degree:

Institution:

Year of degree:

Dissertation or thesis title, if applicable:

Next most recent degree:

Institution:

Year of degree:

Dissertation or thesis title, if applicable

Diplomas or certificates, professional license and license date may follow, but not license number unless specifically requested.

### **Relevant Professional Experience**

Where you worked, when, job title:

Brief description of duties using action verbs:

Where you worked, when, job title:

Brief description of duties using action verbs:

Where you worked, when, job title:

Brief description of duties using action verbs:

### **Specialized Skills:**

**Postdoctoral Training** [If none, omit the heading]:

**Publications** [Label as submitted, in press, or published]:

**Presentations**

**Grants Secured:**

**Teaching Philosophy** [This may not be needed here]:

**Honors and Awards:**

**Professional Associations or Memberships:**

**Languages** [Level read or spoken, and fluency]:

**Other Skills** [Only if there is something pertinent to your field]:

**Service:**

**References:** Should be placed on a separate page, with names, titles, and current contact information [make certain it is correct]. That is sufficient.



### Elevator Speech Worksheet, Part 1

*As you read the items below, think about the number of floors on the left-hand side of the page as the floor where you start and the floor where you get off.*

1. Who am I? Introduce yourself using your name.
  
2. What do I do? What do I teach/research/administer?
  
3. Experience: What is my particular expertise? Area of education? [This is a place to show at what stage you are in your career. Do this avoiding graduate field jargon. Only 1% of the population every attends graduate school, so make your level of experience clear to the person outside the higher education arena-even if you are ultimately addressing people in higher education with the hiring power.]
  
4. Experience (continued): What benefits derive from my work? What are my skills, based on my proven accomplishments, that others will find of use? [This is a great place to use examples of how your research can be put to use.]
  
5. What group of people do I serve? Who benefits from my work?—Be specific: What position am I in? In what capacity do I serve? “The opportunity to do [x] is what really drew me to this field.” For instance, “I help kids with cancer survive into adulthood.”
  
6. Why do I do this? [Connections want to understand and will remember your why especially if you give them a story: “My younger brother died of leukemia when he was only seven.”]

7. What makes me unique? [In business, this is often referred to as your Unique Selling Proposition or USP—What makes you different from the competition? Why would anyone want to hire you specifically? Or think in broad terms: what is the main thing you want this person to remember about who you are? Continue the example, “I was the first person in my lab to identify a new way to detect a lack of iron in DNA material.”]
  
8. What do you want the other person to do? [Do you want a business card, a later meeting, a referral, or something else? Know what you want to you can ask directly.]
  
9. Show them you care: Wrap up with “Who are you? What do you do?” This is very important so that the person you are speaking to does not get the impression you are only out for yourself. No one likes to feel diminished by a conversation.

### **Elevator Speech Worksheet, Part 2**

#### *1. Very Basic Structure:*

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm in \_\_\_\_\_ [field], and I'm looking to \_\_\_\_\_ [teach/work at nearby community college or research university].

Fill in the last blank of the first sentence with your current career aspiration, whether it is to stay within your field, or move up, or even move into an alternate academic career like biotechnology.

Now work to make it more intriguing, providing a memorable sound bite version:

#### *2. Sound bite version:*

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I use my classes to help make the aspirations of young adults come true, and I welcome the opportunity to learn more about how I could do more of this at [community college or research university], where I understand you work.

### Equity and Diversity Statement Worksheet

*Before beginning your statement, check the website of the institution to which you are applying, and look for any reference to the kinds of diversity that are valued. You should also check to see if the institution has its own equity and diversity statement or its own instructions for the statement they want from you. Your statement may address personal or cultural worldviews including experience of race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, and geographic region. Below are some questions to get you started.*

What past experiences helped shape your understandings of what diversity and inclusion mean?  
[Tell a story from your own life.]

How have you addressed issues of diversity in the past:

In the classroom?

In your research?

In your service, which may include volunteer work? [Here may be a place to discuss your involvement with the Native Americans library movement or advancing middle school girls in coding camp.]

How do you envision your work incorporating diversity and inclusion at this institution that is committed to [same sex education, historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), military education for veterans, etc.]?

What, if any, initiatives you would like to pursue with any particular underrepresented constituency of the institution? [Helping first-generation college students integrate, dealing with immigration or language issues, recruiting new students from diverse populations in summer school program, etc.]?

### **General Job Search Preparation Worksheet**

*Take some time to consider and write your answers below the questions here. If you are having problems answering the questions, an academic job search coach may be able to help.*

What type of positions am I considering? [Adjuncting, non-teaching, research jobs or postdocs? Another way to look at this is, “What compromises am I willing to make?”]

What specializations am I comfortable teaching?

What are my preferences for a specific type or size of institution?

What types of positions am I reasonably qualified for?

What are my geographic preferences? Are any particular locations deal breakers?

What personal issues and lifestyle requirements influence my search?

Are there networks [friends, family, mentors or other supporters] than can make a community under consideration more or less attractive?

When will I realistically be prepared to begin a full-time position?

If I accept a position prior to completion of the dissertation, how will this affect my degree completion and progress toward tenure?

### How Long To Look for a Faculty Job Worksheet

Should I quit looking after two or three years? What is my gut feeling about this?

What is a realistic timeframe to continue looking, considering my own financial resources?

Have I talked to all the other people that will be affected by this decision [spouse/partner, children if old enough to be a concern, advisor, other people involved in my research program]?

How much do I have my heart set on a faculty job and how much am I open to other possibilities? [Revisit this question after each year of job searching.]

How can I live true to my values outside the academy?

What other life goals do I want to fulfill outside the academy?

List three goals here:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What are some places outside the academy where I can still use my PhD and be happy?

List 5 possibilities to investigate:

- 1.
- 2.

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3.

4.

5.

What other resources do I want to investigate to help me with this decision [career services at alma mater, books, articles, websites, blogs or other online tools about leaving the academy]?

What am I willing to do in terms of retraining?

Learn new systems, techniques, languages (including computer programming)?

Conduct information interviews to understand what jobs outside academy entail?

### Imposter Syndrome Worksheet

How do you relate to Jodi Foster's comments below?

For Jodi Foster [feeling like an imposter] first happened when she put her acting career on hold to pursue an undergraduate degree and then again after she won the best actress Oscar for *The Accused*. "I thought it was a fluke," Foster explained in a 60 Minutes interview. "The same way when I walked on the campus at Yale. I thought everybody would find out, and they'd take the Oscar back. They'd come to my house, knocking on the door. 'Excuse me, we meant to give that to someone else. That was going to Meryl Streep.'" (Young, 2011, p. 22).

On a scale of 1-5, how closely does this story describe you? Why?

Referring back to Valerie Young's list below of 7 perfectly good reasons why you may feel like an imposter, which do you feel most applies to you and why?

1. You were raised by humans
2. You are a student
3. You work in an organizational culture that feeds self-doubt
4. You work alone
5. You work in a creative field
6. You are a stranger in a strange land
7. You feel you represent your entire social group

Why?

Which of the coping and protecting mechanisms listed below resonate with you most? In what way?

- Over-preparing and hard work
- Holding back (never letting go of a project)
- Maintaining a low or ever-changing profile
- Using charm or perceptiveness to win approval
- Procrastination
- Never finishing
- Self-sabotage
- Perfectionism

Related to the list above, what does your behavior help you avoid?

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Related to the list above, what does your behavior protect you from?

Related to the list above, what does your behavior help you get?

What is the price you pay? Include emotional, physical, psychological reactions.

Identify a situation in which you were fabulously adequate in the past week.

When have you done something difficult, and survived?

What wise choices have you made?

Where have you created value (past, present, future)?

Write down your most ludicrous beliefs about yourself. Now put them in perspective. Are any of them real, or just a story you are telling yourself? Whom would you be without that story?

Write down 10 good things people have said about you:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.



## Worksheets and Sample Documents from Scaling the Ivory Tower

7.

8.

9.

10.

### Interview Checklist Worksheet

#### *Telephone*

- Know when call will be made
- Know who will be on the call
- Have quiet secluded place
- Have secure telephone connection
- Disable call waiting
- Glass of water handy
- Application materials nearby
- Comfortable, professional clothing

#### *Video (e.g., Skype, Zoom)—Special considerations*

- Camera and microphone tested and functioning
- Decluttered area within camera view
- Comfortable, professional clothing, tested for on-camera appearance
- Backup plan for failed technology
- For mobile phone (i.e., Facetime), small tripod or other means to keep phone steady

#### *In person*

- Know who is paying for trip and handling the reservations
- Have an emergency contact number in case of any uncontrollable problem
- Know when and where interviews with the various participants will be held
- Know the anticipated length of each on-campus interview
- Do research on the interviewers (all of them) in advance
- Look at schedule and plan for breaks
- Prepare for what is expected of you: research talk, class demonstration, graduate student meeting
- Have a technology backup plan
- Dress for success while traveling and while on site
- Respect your body and mind by sleeping, drinking water, and staying calm

**Interview—Basic Questions Worksheet**

*Focus on your answers, and be prepared to answer these questions at a bare minimum.*

What makes you unique?

Why are you a good fit for this position?

Tell us about your dissertation project. [Keep your answer to two sentences at most, and present it confidently. You really do know this stuff; now you have to make sure other people understand what you have been doing.]

What is your teaching philosophy? [Expect about 10 minutes for this.]

What is your research plan? This could include anticipated books or articles, grant proposals, new directions to take your research. [Expect about 10 minutes for this.]

**Interview—In-depth Questions Related to Other Duties Worksheet**

*How do you understand the mission of our school?*

*What does “service” mean to you, in this educational context?*

[Most universities say that promotions are based on teaching, research, and service.]

*How do you feel about administering [particular program]?*

*How would you recruit new students to our major?*

*How do you see yourself fitting into this department?* [An answer to this question is a good place to show you have some knowledge of who else is in the department, and if there are ways you might want to collaborate with them.]

*Are you aware our institution offers [certificate program, accelerated degree, remedial classes]? How can you contribute to that?*

**Interview—In-depth Questions Related to Research Worksheet**

*How you can bring your research interests into an undergraduate classroom or graduate seminar?*

*Why is this work important? Or, how does your work contribute to this field?*

*What changes do you anticipate for your field in the next five years?*

*How does your research align with [theory or theorist]?*

*What is your research agenda or next anticipated project?*

*How do you see yourself mentoring graduate students?*

*Where do you see yourself/your research in the next five years?*

Remember, if you are actually in a tenure-track position, you generally have 6 years to the point where the tenure decision is made, and 3 years to a review of your progress toward tenure. You may want to prepare a 5-year research plan in order to answer this question easily, while knowing all the while that it could change drastically depending on the answers to research conducted in the first year. That's OK. Scholars are not held to research agendas when the work takes them in new directions. You just want to have an idea of where your work might be headed.

**Interview—In-depth Questions Related to Teaching Worksheet**

*What do you consider your strengths/weaknesses as a teacher?* [Be careful here. Emphasize your strengths (connecting with students from diverse backgrounds, classroom engagement, promoting critical thinking) and downplay weaknesses. Speaking negatively about yourself, even if you see it as humility, is not useful in an interview context.]

*What best describes your teaching style?* [Committee is generally looking for an answer related to a mix of approaches, from lecturing, to in-class writing assignments, to small group discussions, to lab participation; answers may depend on your field.]

*Tell us how you would teach our students for undergraduate introductory courses or methods/core theory course for graduates.* [This requires you know something about the kinds of students who are generally attending the school, for instance, a high percentage of first-generation college entrants, or high percentage of community college transfers, or likely number of graduate students in a particular program.]

*Do you modify your teaching style based on class size? How?*

*How does your teaching philosophy play out in the classroom?*

*How would you teach [a big name in your field like Darwin, Marx, Shakespeare] or how would you teach the history of your field?*

*How do you get students excited about your topic?*

*In your experience, where are the areas students have the most difficulty learning with your topic? How do you address this?* [Could be anything from lab work to creative writing.]

*How do you deal with [controversial term, like feminism, creationism] in the classroom?*

*Tell us about an experience of classroom controversy and how you handled it.*

*How would you teach an introductory survey course versus a capstone course?*

Worksheets and Sample Documents from Scaling the Ivory Tower

*Tell us which of the courses we usually offer are of most interest to you.*

*What is your favorite course to teach? Why?*

*The teaching load here is [4-4, 3-2, or any other permutation]. What are your personal strategies for handling this?*

*How do you use technology in the classroom? How familiar are you with teacher-student interactive software [Blackboard, Moodle, Canvas]?*

*What on-line teaching experience have you had? Are you willing to teach/design online courses?*

*Describe your experience with handling diversity [code for race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, gender, sexuality, and/or disability] in and out of the classroom. [Best strategy: be aware of what is most likely to come up in the institutional context where you are interviewing, and address that directly.]*

**Interview—In-depth Questions Related to Writing Worksheet**

*Tell us more about the context for the writing sample you submitted. [Some search committees will have actually read whatever you provided to them and ask about why you included one theory/researcher and not another. You don't have to defend your choices, just explain them.]*

*What are your next writing projects [turning dissertation into a book; revising chapters for journal articles; new article, new book, new digital archive]? Be prepared to discuss at least two upcoming projects.*

*What helps you get a writing project finished? [You can discuss everything from daily habits to the rhythm of the academic year, for instance, "I write best over the summer" or, if the summer is spent in the field, "I generally write up my summer research during school break periods."]*

*Where do you plan to submit your material [traditional publishing houses, on-line journals]?*

*What grants have you successfully applied for in the past? What grants do you expect to help fund your work here?*



**Interview—On-campus Worksheet**

What will I wear (professional and idiosyncratic)?

Traveling to and from interview?

At the interview?

How will I know what to expect at interview (get agenda, schedules, etc.)?

What is my plan for redundancy with presentation materials, in case of a technology glitch?

What is my short research explanation for non-academic staff?

For academics outside my primary research area?

How will I project confidence and collegiality asking about others (Remember WIFT rule—  
“What’s In It For Them”)?

Whom do I want to talk to besides the interviewers?

What do I need to know about meal etiquette?

Are there other problems I need to address like allergies or the messiness of the food?

How will I stay refreshed and take necessary breaks during interview time?

Worksheets and Sample Documents from *Scaling the Ivory Tower*

How will I let interviewers know me at a personal level (what am I willing to reveal)?

How will I handle illegal questions or micro-aggressions?

How will I keep track of the people I meet (notes on appearance, etc.)

How will I track the important dates (application materials, letters, etc.)

How will I obtain clarity about the next steps for me in this process?

What is my plan for reconnecting with people I met?

How will I decompress after the interview (trusted confidante)?

**Interview—Videoconference (Skype, Zoom, or Other Service)  
and Telephone Considerations Worksheet**

What will I wear (for building confidence and visual impact)?

How will I test the set-up (connection, lighting, etc.)?

What is my plan in the event of technology failure (alternate phone number, etc.)?

What else do I need to do to prepare (restroom break, get water)?

How will I know who the interviewers are and who is speaking?

How long am I willing to tolerate silence?

How will I handle illegal questions or micro-aggressions? (We explain these later in the chapter).

How will I keep track of the people I meet (notes on appearance, etc.)

How will I track the important dates (application materials, letters, etc.)

How will I be clear about the next steps for me in this process?

What is my plan for reconnecting with the interviewers?

How will I decompress after the interview (e.g., trusted confidante)?

**Job Log Face Sheet—Optional Worksheet**

University of XYZ

Job Title:

Deadline for Application:

Job Location:

Paste in job listing here:

Materials submitted and when:

Correspondence (list by topic and date):

Phone calls, by date and type, including notes:

Interviews, by date and place, including notes:

Outcome:

Worksheets and Sample Documents from Scaling the Ivory Tower

<b>Job Log for Academic Position Search—Worksheet</b>								
<i>Institution</i>	<i>Contact</i>	<i>Area of expertise sought?</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Materials mailed (what, when, and how)</i>	<i>Responses</i>	<i>Interview schedule</i>	<i>Any other material</i>	<i>Thank-you letter sent</i>

### Job Search Timeline Worksheet

*Now that you have looked at the sample job timeline above, think about how you need to adapt it to your particular situation. What do you want to add? What can you leave out? What will you tweak? Below you can create your own monthly TODO list. Indicate priorities for the month with color coding.*

Job Search: [year]

June

July

August

September

October

November

December

January [target job start year]

February

March

April

May

June

July

August

**Key Competencies or Contributions to Research Worksheet**

*Think about the best way for you to succinctly describe your abilities and contributions for someone that has never met you, for use in a cover letter, elevator speech or at a conference. What do you bring that is unique? Use this space to brainstorm your ideas.*

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Worksheets and Sample Documents from Scaling the Ivory Tower

<b>Month by Month “To Do” List Worksheet</b>		
<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Action To Take</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>
Summer, June-August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Drafts or templates of the written materials</li> <li>- Request references</li> <li>-Set up application file tracking system with deadlines</li> <li>-Look for conferences to attend</li> <li>-Finish dissertation or write articles/book using dissertation</li> <li>-Support group and/or maintaining social connections</li> </ul>	
August-September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Review job listings (continue through May)</li> <li>Determine application strategy</li> </ul>	
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Write conference papers</li> <li>-Create cover letter template</li> <li>-Update CV</li> </ul>	
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Write teaching philosophy</li> <li>-Write research statement</li> <li>-Prepare job talk</li> <li>-Begin applying for jobs</li> <li>-Prepare “unofficial” evaluations for students</li> <li>-Start attending conferences</li> </ul>	
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Prepare course descriptions</li> <li>-Organize sample syllabi</li> <li>-Prepare sample class to teach</li> <li>-Apply for jobs</li> </ul>	
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Review official teaching applications</li> <li>-Review Rate My Professor</li> <li>-Determine response to criticism</li> <li>-Apply for jobs</li> </ul>	
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Make any needed adjustments to application materials</li> </ul>	



Worksheets and Sample Documents from Scaling the Ivory Tower

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Look for additional emotional support</li> <li>-Apply for jobs</li> </ul>	
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Apply for jobs</li> <li>-Attend job interviews</li> </ul>	
March-May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Keep checking job ads</li> <li>-Attend job interviews</li> <li>-Negotiate offers</li> <li>-Negotiate actual contract</li> <li>-Start moving plans</li> <li>-Determine financial structure until first paycheck</li> </ul>	
June-July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Pack and move</li> </ul>	
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Start new position</li> <li>-Get to know entering cohort group across the school</li> <li>-Begin a folder for collecting tenure materials</li> </ul>	

### Negotiating Your Job Offer Worksheet

*Below are some negotiation enquiries, depending on your issues.*

According to my research, a fair salary range for people in this position, taking into account the cost-of-living here is \$ \_\_\_\_\_. Can we come to an agreement that reflects this?

Comparable public salaries indicate \_\_\_\_\_ for starting assistant professors here.

You advertised for someone with \_\_\_\_\_ years of experience and \_\_\_\_\_ qualifications. In my time at \_\_\_\_\_, in addition to finishing my degree, I was responsible for \_\_\_\_\_ [teaching classes, running labs, writing program curriculum, organizing colloquia, conferences]. I also earned these professional credentials [license to practice, teaching certificate, honor society officer]. Based on my background, and the extent of my anticipated responsibilities, I would like to see a base salary closer to \_\_\_\_\_.

What is your flexibility in the salary offered? Or: Could you share with me what the range in the budget for this position is?

Is this a nine or twelve-month offer?

If nine, is a summer stipend offered?

If nine, what benefits continue through the summer [health insurance, office, access to library].

What is the anticipated teaching load for my first year? Going forward?

Are there any research, travel, professional development, office, lab or studio equipment funds as part of this offer?

Are there any restrictions on outside [consulting, expert witness] income.

What are the benefits associated with this position [health care; time off; faculty housing; office, lab, or studio space; sabbatical clock; cross-listings with other departments].

Are there any opportunities for my partner here?

What is the allowance for moving expenses?

How is the salary payment structured [monthly, twice a month]?

When will I get my first salary payment?

Is it possible to get an advance if necessary?

### Negotiation Checklist Worksheet

- Salary: Base [determine if 9-month or 12-month period] + benefits [health, retirement]
- Summer salary if applicable [1, 2, or 3 months]
- Any restrictions on outside income
- Moving expenses
- Orientation dates [may be earlier than official start date]
- Start date
- First paycheck date
- Email activation date
- Title [especially if you are cross-listed between department and/or academic centers]
- Housing
- Resources/employment for spouse
- Equipment and start-up funds [bookcases, computer, desk, telephone, laboratory materials or field equipment, renovations; indicate if these items are to be used solely by you or shared with others]
- Office space [your own or shared]
- Parking
- Course load and service assignments [check for pre-tenure release and family leave]
- Tenure clock/time to sabbaticals
- Assistants [graduate, research, technician]
- Funding for assistants
- Grant writing assistance [big universities often have offices for this]
- Research monies
- Professional development funds
- Travel monies
- Written, signed [by you and all necessary parties] dated agreement; email does *not* count as final contract, though it may be fine for negotiating purposes

Worksheets and Sample Documents from Scaling the Ivory Tower

<b>Networking/Connecting Worksheet</b>			
<i>Use this table to fill in the avenues you are exploring to make connections (aka networking).</i>			
What connection?	When contacted	Who?	When was follow-up?
<b>General</b>			
Coffee shop			
Co-workers (current and former)			
Current work supervisor			
Fraternity/Sorority			
Friends, family & neighbors			
Medical community (doctor, dentist, specialist)			
<i>Meet Up</i> (groups of special interest to you)			
Political connections			
Religious connections			
<b>Volunteer/charity work colleagues</b>			
HiEd related special interest groups (e.g., hearing specialists, modernist literature groups)			
Committee members or professors from your institution			
Committee members from outside your institution			
<b>Conference connections</b>			
Editorial board colleagues			

Worksheets and Sample Documents from Scaling the Ivory Tower

Former graduate students			
Graduate student cohort members			
Manuscript exchangers			
Nearby institutions, students & faculty			
PhD/MA supervisor			
Site visit accreditation teams			
<b>Social Media</b>			
Facebook			
LinkedIn			
Pinterest			
Twitter			
Other			

**Postdoctoral Position Worksheet**

What are the specific criteria for this position?

What are the dates of the position?

Is this position renewable?

Will I be working with someone I respect and like?

What does this position pay?

Will the funding be enough that I won't ultimately feel used and resentful?

Will I be able to pursue my own research ideas or will I be working on someone else's project?

What will this position offer in terms of skill building, publications, recommendations?

If I have to move to take the post-doc, will the financial and educational benefits be more than the costs of moving and settling into a new city?

Worksheets and Sample Documents from Scaling the Ivory Tower

**Publishing—Continued Plan Worksheet**

*Now, consider where you want to take your publishing career. Assume you have already gotten a few articles or even a book out of your actual dissertation.*

<b>Journal A</b>  (Requirements, desired topics, prestige level, acceptance rate)	<b>Word Limit</b>	<b>Synopsis</b> or “what makes this interesting?”  (Will you tell your story using quantitative or qualitative data?)	<b>Journal B</b>  (Requirements, desired topics, prestige level, acceptance rate)	<b>Word Limit</b>	<b>Synopsis</b> or “what makes this interesting?”  (Will you tell your story using quantitative or qualitative data?)

**Publishing—Dissertation and Post-PhD Publishing Plan Worksheet**

*List other articles that you want to write during or after your dissertation. These may be a review article, a methods paper, or a pedagogical article. In the chart that follows, we have also made space for you to propose (to yourself) articles that may result from next research steps. If your previous work has led you to a new direction, you are going to have to find some new journals and new publishers to approach. Find the best match for your ideas, and you will have a specific audience to write for as well. Consider setting up this form as a landscaped document to give yourself more space.*

<b>Working Title</b> (New ideas for research areas, new theoretical approaches, anecdotal stories that would help tell your story)	<b>Type</b> (Trade journal versus academic journal? Popular magazine? Blog post? Web-only publication?)	<b>Journal A</b> (Requirements, desired topics, prestige level, acceptance rate)	<b>Word limit</b>	<b>Synopsis</b> or “what makes this interesting?”  (Will you tell your story using quantitative or qualitative data?)	<b>Journal B</b> (Requirements, desired topics, prestige level, acceptance rate)	<b>Word limit</b>	<b>Synopsis</b> or “what makes this interesting?”  (Will you tell your story using quantitative or qualitative data?)



**Publishing—Pre-PhD Plan Worksheet**  
**Coursework, Comps, or Preliminary Research**

*Enter papers that are not from a conference or your dissertation. Be realistic about how much work you think it would take to get the paper into publishable form. Consider setting up this form as a landscaped document to give yourself more space.*

<b>Paper &amp; Title</b> (Paper title and source: class papers, comprehensive exams, PhD proposal)	<b>Type</b> (review paper, pedagogical technique, research or lab technique, research data paper, theory paper, etc.)	<b>Journal A</b> (requirements, desired topics, prestige level, acceptance rate)	<b>Word Limit</b>	<b>Synopsis</b> or “what makes this interesting?”	<b>Journal B</b> (requirements, desired topics, prestige level, acceptance rate)	<b>Word Limit</b>	<b>Synopsis</b> or “what makes this interesting?”

**Publishing—Pre-PhD Plan Worksheet  
From Presentations and Conferences**

*Enter papers that are from a presentation or conference. Be realistic about how much work you think it would take to get the paper into publishable form. Consider setting up this form as a landscaped document to give yourself more space.*

<b>Paper &amp; Title</b> (Paper title and source: class papers, comprehensive exams, PhD proposal)	<b>Type</b> (review paper, pedagogical technique, research or lab technique, research data paper, theory paper, etc.)	<b>Journal A</b> (requirements, desired topics, prestige level, acceptance rate)	<b>Word Limit</b>	<b>Synopsis</b> or “what makes this interesting?”	<b>Journal B</b> (requirements, desired topics, prestige level, acceptance rate)	<b>Word Limit</b>	<b>Synopsis</b> or “what makes this interesting?”

### Recommendation Letter Worksheet

*On university letterhead*

Recommender department and direct phone number  
video name if applicable  
Email xxxxxxxxx@dept.edu  
Website www.ProfessionalWebsite.edu if applicable

Date

Dr. Janet Smith  
Chair, Search Committee  
Department Name  
XYZ University  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip

Re: Position number if applicable or description of position

Dear Dr. Smith,

The first paragraph of the recommendation letter explains why the recommender is writing and shows the connection to the person being recommended, including how you know each other, in what capacity, and for how long.

The second paragraph of the recommendation letter gives some specific information about you to the person being addressed, including why you are qualified for the advertised position, and what you can contribute. Your recommender can include a lot of details about your research work here if it is known to them, and may actually go longer than one paragraph. It should include specific examples relating to your qualifications. For instance, a recommender might say: "Dr. So-and-So worked as a genetic researcher in my lab and discovered a previously unknown allele which bears further investigation. His exemplary research techniques were used as a model for other workers in this lab."

The third paragraph should actually include the statement, "I highly recommend Dr. So-and-So" or "I recommend Dr. So-and-So without reservation." Another possible phrase might be "I have no doubt that Dr. So-and-So will make a wonderful colleague and addition to your department's research mission." The positivity needs to be obvious.

The final paragraph should include an offer to provide more information if requested.

Best regards,

*Signature*

Printed Recommender Name

Position or Title

### Recommendations Worksheet

List 5 faculty members at your institution that you might ask for recommendations and add some notes about what you want each of them to address in their letters.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Now list 5 more people who are not at your institution whom you might also ask for recommendations and what you want each of them to address in their letters. These may be people you worked with to organize a panel at a conference, peers in your profession, faculty at a previous institution, or other professionals who may be able to comment positively about you, your teaching, or your research.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Ask each person if she or he will provide you with a positive reference.

1. Include the amount of turnaround time you anticipate each reference will need to write an initial draft or to tweak it for a specific job.
2. Note whether (and if so, where) you have a copy of the letters on file somewhere.

### Research Statement Worksheet

*Think about what the search committee is looking for in hiring you as you answer the questions below.*

What have been your accomplishments? If you have published your research, add citations.

What is your future direction? How will your research contribute to your field?

How do you approach research? In other words, how do you think?

Are you a linear or divergent, inductive or deductive thinker?

How are you an independent thinker?

Do you like to build on existing research or to start something brand new?

What are the major problems, theoretical or practical, you want to attack?

How does your research fit into or disrupt current theory in your field?

What is your potential for funding and where might you apply for funds?

How will your research be different, important, and innovative?

## Worksheets and Sample Documents from *Scaling the Ivory Tower*

How will your research fit with or expand the department or the program? For instance, how might you incorporate your research in the classroom or with graduate students?

If you will be expected to have graduate students, what is your ability to manage and support them as part of your research agenda?

What are your specific 3-5 year research goals?

What resources do you think you will need to be successful in your job? For example: A chemist may need lab space, chemicals, equipment, and a fume hood; an English literature professor might want a new computer with two monitors and a bookcase.

**Research Talk Questions & Answers Worksheet**

What story do I want to tell in my research presentation?

What's a good beginning that will get people's attention?

What graphics/slides or other show and tell can I bring that will keep my audience engaged?

What is the strong ending to my talk?

*Your audience may ask you questions related to your past or proposed research as well as things directly related to your talk. Below are some sample questions. These questions could be asked at your presentation, in individual meetings, or in small group settings, but you need to know your short, concise answers in advance. Take a few minutes to think through these additional questions about your research and in the space below, provide one to three sentence answers for each one. These questions may overlap with some of the questions in the research statement worksheet.*

What are your research accomplishments and their significance?

What is your 3-5 year plan for research (and why)?

What is your 10-year plan for research (and why)?

What type of research group do you envision forming (how many students, how broad, how interdisciplinary, experimental vs. theoretical or a mix, etc.)?

Worksheets and Sample Documents from Scaling the Ivory Tower

What research programs within the department will you create or strengthen?

What type of research environment would be your ideal in a department?

Why is your research field important and where is it going (i.e., what are the trends)?

How will you incorporate your research into your teaching?

What experience have you had obtaining grant funding? Note: If you have been exceptionally successfully getting funding, note the percentage of applications to awards. If you have not ever obtained any grant funding for yourself, be prepared to talk about where you would look for grants and funding.



**Research—Most Important Considerations to Me Worksheet**

The five most important things about me and my research and *why* they are important:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Now, think about how you will talk about your work to people who are not familiar with it. Think about your most important points, how you came to the topic, how you came to your conclusions, and what you brought to the table in terms of personal qualities or knowledge. Learning to tell your own story clearly will help you get prepared for the kinds of questions that may arise in any interview.

### Sample Academic Cover Letter

[On university letterhead]

**YOUR NAME**

Best phone number to reach you: xxx-xxx-xxxx; video name if applicable  
[xxxxxxxxx@gmail.com](mailto:xxxxxxxxx@gmail.com) [www.YourSiteName.com](http://www.YourSiteName.com) if applicable

Date

Dr. John Smith  
Chair, Search Committee  
XYZ University  
Department  
Address

Re: Position number if applicable

Dear Dr. Smith,

#### [The hook]

As a feminist geographer with a specialization in the social and spatial processes that constitute and shape cities, I am excited by the Lecturer in Human Geography teaching position at University XYZ. I have a personal interest in how geography shapes the human experience that dates back to my youth: I was involved in creating a soccer league for women and girls in Soweto a township of the city of Johannesburg in Gauteng, South Africa when my family was located there in connection with work being done by an international non-governmental organization (INGO). I know first-hand how the accidents of geography can shape the location and actions of social organizations.

#### [More on professional qualifications]

My research program links social, urban, and feminist geography with an empirically rich and community-engaged qualitative research practice. My scholarship has attended to the spatial logics of sport-centered urban policies and the social geographies and mobility of marginalized communities, with an emphasis on women. I completed my PhD at the University of XXX in 20xx and am currently hold the [XYZ] Fellowship in Gender & Urban Studies at ABC University. I have published in *Gender, Place and Culture*, *Social & Cultural Geography*, and the *Journal of Leisure Studies*, as well as contributed chapters to edited volumes such as *Planning for Marginalized Groups' Participation in City Recreational Facilities* (20xx, publisher name). My research agenda has been funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council and several internal research groups at the University of XXX. During my fellowship, I have focused on urban studies through research, writing, and teaching.

My recent research project, “[Insert idea here or name of actual study you may be working on]” involves the development of an oral history archive and an analysis of these and other stories of the city (such as social policies and participatory planning schemes) to tease apart the

relationships between the lives of women and girls and the rapidly changing urban social geographies of a growing city. The project is an inquiry into the spatial and temporal factors that make social difference visible, while paying heed to the material effects of social difference.

One of my strengths as a teacher is to bridge theory and practice in a classroom setting. Currently, I teach an advanced seminar that brings together diverse literatures and fieldwork assignments to generate a praxis for social inclusion in the city. The course is an opportunity to think broadly about how, and for whom, cities work, via academic scholarship (especially feminist geography, urban studies, and planning theory), policy briefs, INGO-centered research, artistic interventions, and students' own reflections on their experiences in urban spaces. Students use participatory methods to design and produce an outreach activity intended to investigate and address how people imagine and construct a relationship to their cities. With these strategies, I aim to demonstrate an integrated engagement with urban social inclusion while helping students develop tools for qualitative inquiry that they may draw upon in and beyond the classroom.

**[Show you know something about their organization here; i.e., what you can do for them]**

I have over ten years of university teaching experience at all levels, from introductory survey classes to small advanced seminars and independent studies. I have developed social geography, urban studies, qualitative methods, and population geography courses. These and other courses are readily adaptable to fit the course coverage required in this position, and I would be excited to develop other courses in political and historical geography to fit the needs of the Geography Department.

I am committed to developing links between research and teaching as a way to create an active pedagogy and mentorship opportunities for burgeoning student researchers. My planned project on [insert here] may allow the opportunity for a partnership and urban oral history projects for undergraduate students.

My experience with community-engaged research and university-community partnerships will directly contribute to the diverse academic and student communities of the University XYZ. For instance, my involvement in the [insert project] gives me immediate access to additional resources for studying urban geographies. I am actively involved with various professional organizations, where I have participated as an organizer of [panels, workshops, anything else]. In my presentation entitled [insert title here] to the Association of American Geographers conference, I set out an analysis of my research data showing how service location matters in urban planning.

**[Wrap it up in a proactive way]**

As requested, three reference letters are being sent to your attention. Please contact me if I can provide any additional materials in support of my application. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Worksheets and Sample Documents from Scaling the Ivory Tower

Signature  
Your name typed

Enc.: CV

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Sample Job Log for Academic Position Search								
Institution	Contact	Area of expertise sought?	Deadline	Materials sent (what, when, and how)	Response	Interview schedule	Any other material	Thank-you letter sent
Illinois Wesleyan University	June Williams, Chair Dept. of History IWU PO Box 2900 BloomingtonIL 61702-2900	Early European civilization	12/1/17	CV, cover letter emailed. Requested letters from Prof. Long, Prof. Chin, & Prof. Guthrie.	1/10/18	AHA-1/8/2018 Interviewed with Prof. James Winn & Prof. June Williams	12/11/17 Emailed teaching video link, conf. paper, journal article.	1/13/18
University of Nebraska at Kearney	Dr. William Potter Chair of Search Committee, History Dept. UNK Kearney, NE 68849 (308) 865-8509	Not specified	11/24/17	CV, cover letter, journal article, statement of teaching philosophy syllabi from 113 & 114 sent by USPS. Requested letters from Prof. Long, Prof. Chin, & Guthrie.	11/12/17	AHA-1/9/2018 Interviews w. Amy Potter, Steve Smith	N/A	1/14/18

### Sample On-campus Interview Schedule

#### Day 1

- Arrive night before (airline, date and time); pick up and drop off at hotel by administrative assistant
- 8:00 AM Breakfast alone or scheduled with search committee member
- 9:00 AM Meet with Provost
- 10:00 AM Informal meeting with faculty and graduate students in lounge area
- 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM Lunch with Department Chair or Dean or both
- 1:30 PM Time alone to prepare for presentation (1<sup>st</sup> job talk) on your research
- 2:00 PM Presentation (1<sup>st</sup> job talk) in Conference Room A
- 5:30 PM Dinner with search committee member(s)

#### Day 2

- 8:00 AM Breakfast alone or scheduled with search committee member
- 9:00 AM Tour of campus
- 10:30 AM Time alone to prepare for demo class (2<sup>nd</sup> job talk)
- 11:00 AM Presentation (2<sup>nd</sup> job talk) in Classroom 202
- 1:00 PM Lunch with school President or Dean or both (whoever you have not yet met)
- 3:00 PM Meet with full committee in Room 312
- Depart (airline, date and time); drop off by Search Committee chair.

**Sample Postcard/Email Application Follow-up**

*Tweak this form to suit your needs.*

Name: [your put your name here]

Position applied for [you fill this in]

Dear [Hiring Committee Head]: I would be grateful if you could let me know how my application stands by checking off the items below, and returning this already-stamped postcard. Thank you.

Date: [you enter date you are sending request]

Is the application you received complete?     Y     N

If any documents are missing, please check below:

- CV
- Research statement
- Teaching statement
- Sample syllabi
- Other, list:
- Recommendation from Dr. \_\_\_\_\_
- Recommendation from Dr. \_\_\_\_\_
- Recommendation from Dr. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Sample Publishing—Publication Plan Worksheet**

*To begin, list papers that are not from a conference or your dissertation. Think about how much work you think it would take to get the paper into publishable form.*

<b>Paper &amp; Title</b> (class papers, comprehensive exams, PhD proposal)	<b>Type</b> (review paper, pedagogical technique, research or lab technique, research data paper, theory paper, etc.)	<b>Journal A</b> (requirements, desired topics, prestige level, acceptance rate)	<b>Word limit</b>	<b>Synopsis</b> or what makes this interesting? What will I have to do to make this into a publishable article?	<b>Journal B</b> (requirements, desired topics, prestige level, acceptance rate)	<b>Word limit</b>	<b>Synopsis</b> or what makes this interesting? What will I have to do to make this into a publishable article?
Possible title: How to get your article published	Technique	Topic: ABD survival guide Need to query ABDSG editor	500-1500	Needs outline, then writing..	No idea. Need to research.		



### Sample Recommendation Letter

*On university letterhead  
Department and contact information of recommender*

February 11, 20XX

Dr. Janet Smith  
Chair, Search Committee  
Department Name  
XYZ University  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip

Re: Position number if applicable

Dear Dr. Smith,

I am writing to enthusiastically support the application of MacKenzie Brown, who is currently a senior graduate student in my laboratory, as an assistant professor. She joined my group five years ago and will defend her dissertation in about a month, March 20xx.

MacKenzie graduated from the University of Southern California where she received a BS degree in Astronomy in 20xx. In her specialty area, the formation of planets, MacKenzie has tackled all aspects of her work, whether technical or intellectual, with determination and has successfully presented it to her committee. She has been recognized with awards and scholarships. A manuscript on her main project will be submitted to PQR [journal] this coming month. She has already co-authored one study and I expect at least one more manuscript to come from her work in 20xx. She is an exceptional student, one of the best it has been my privilege to know. I am confident that she will excel as a scientist, teacher, and mentor at XYZ University.

While working on her dissertation, MacKenzie was also a teaching assistant for two undergraduate courses and participated in mentoring programs for high school students, arranging field trips to our local planetarium for them. She engaged the students, directed work and/or class, and had great insights into what worked well in teaching. She is a delight to work with, and I believe you will find her to be an excellent colleague. She is mature, independent, and resourceful, knowing when and where to seek advice and help. She is full of enthusiasm with a genuine interest in teaching and in science. I would expect her to continue developing ideas for her own research in planetary science.

In summary, I have no doubt that MacKenzie would be an excellent addition to your department. Please do not hesitate to call or email me if you have any further questions.

With best regards,

Dr. Sam Jones

Worksheets and Sample Documents from Scaling the Ivory Tower

Associate Professor

### Self-Care Worksheets

#### Sleep

Describe your current sleeping habits:

How many hours of sleep do you get on the average?

What time do you go to bed?

What time do you get up?

Is your sleep restful and restorative?

What disturbances, if any, intrude on your sleep?

What do you want to change to improve your sleep?

What steps do you need to take to do this?

#### Nutrition

Describe your daily nutrition. How much of each of the following do you get in an average day:

Water: glasses or ounces

Protein: servings

Fruit: servings

Vegetables: servings

Healthy fat:

Fiber:

Non-sugar carbs:

Sugar:

Caffeine:

Other (list):

What changes, if any, do you want to make in your daily nutrition?

What steps will you take to make these changes?

### **Exercise**

How much aerobic exercise do you get in a week?

What activities do you use to get aerobic exercise?

What strength or flexibility exercise to you get weekly?

What changes, if any, do you want to make to your exercise regime?

What steps will you take to make these changes?

### **Social Time**

Whom do you like to spend time with and what do you like to do during your social times?

How do you feel about the amount of social time in your daily or weekly life now?

What changes, if any, do you want to make in terms of social time?

What steps will you take to make these changes?

### **Fun**

What do you do for fun?

How do you feel about the amount of fun time in your daily or weekly life now?

What changes, if any, do you want to make in terms of fun?

What steps will you take to make these changes?

### **Mindfulness or Spiritual Practice**

How important is mindfulness or a spiritual practice to you?

What changes, if any, do you want to make in terms of mindfulness or spiritual practice?

What steps will you take to make these changes?

### **Handling Inquiries from Others about the Job Search**

How do you feel about inquiries from others about your job search?

What kinds of communications and how often would work best for you?

What concrete things would you like your family or friends to do to be supportive of you during your job search?

How and when can you best communicate with your family and friends about the job search?

How you would like them to show their support for you during the search?

List some stock phrases you can use to answer their questions about your job search before you have a contract for a job you want:

### Syllabus Worksheet

Course title:

Course description:

Course purpose:

Instructor information:

Name

Office location

Office hours

Best way to communicate with me

Course topics (adapt to fit semester or quarter system) with required readings:

Course textbook(s):

Additional readings:

Course requirements:

Grading procedures:

Other expectations (often dictated by the institution):

Attendance

Late papers and missed exams

Ethical behavior (includes warning about plagiarism)

Professional behavior

Resources to help students succeed:

Other: (include policies if you have them, such as “cell phones will be left at the door.”)

**Teacher Evaluation Form (Your Own) Worksheet**

1) Are you getting what you expected out of this course?

-If you answered “yes,” what do you see as your most important learning?

-If you answered “no,” What did you think should be different?

2) How do you see me as a teacher?

3) Do you feel comfortable approaching me either in class or privately with any concerns you have related to this class?

4) Are my expectations of you clear?

5) What would you like to see done differently or the same?

6) Add anything else you you’d want to comment on.

### Teaching Philosophy Statement Worksheet

*Here are some additional questions to consider as you prepare your teaching philosophy statement. Take a moment and use the space under each question to give an honest answer to each one. It will help you write that teaching philosophy statement.*

1. What do you believe about teaching?
2. What do you believe about learning?
3. How do those beliefs play out in your classroom?
4. How do student identity and background make a difference when you teach?
5. What do you struggle with in terms of teaching and student learning?
6. What don't you like in a teacher?
7. How do you assess your students' learning needs?
8. How do you see your identity as a teacher? (e.g., expert, learning coach, cheerleader, challenger of ideas, guide?)
9. What is your approach to subject matter? (e.g., key concepts, content organization, methods of presentation, learning activities, desired learning outcomes?)
10. How do you evaluate student progress?



Worksheets and Sample Documents from *Scaling the Ivory Tower*

11. What are your expectations about out of class interactions with students?

12. What have you learned from your students about teaching?

13. How do your research interests figure into your teaching?

14. How would you mentor both graduate and undergraduate students?

### Telling My Story Worksheet

*Use this worksheet to help you prepare more deeply for the academic interview and authentically tell your own story.*

What are the major assertions I will make for the unique value contribution of my research?

What brought me to the point of believing this was the topic I wanted to investigate (context)? (4-5 sentences)

Why is it important?

What are the most likely questions people will ask about my research? (Most doctoral students have had to answer this in seminars or with an advisor already, so it should be easy to come up with 2 or 3 possibilities).

How will I describe the role of my major advisor in fashioning my research questions, and how did I make the research my own?

What are the best personal attributes I bring to the interviewing institution? (Examples include collegiality, leadership, or mediator.)

How will these qualities contribute to the interviewing institution? (Example of how you mediated disagreement among colleagues approaching a funding agency or how you worked with graduate students and faculty emeritus to create a survey instrument. Speak using “I” statements: “My most gratifying moment as a mediator occurred when I...” Be specific!)

What will I do to project a vision of myself teaching at this institution? What classes do I hope to teach, using what textbooks, incorporating my own research, with what pedagogical style?

What example will I use to reveal my flexibility and willingness to adjust to changing circumstances, from uncooperative students to a change in research direction?

How will I project myself as a colleague rather than a graduate student? What narrative shows me ready to step into a new role?

**Transferable Skills Acquired or Sharpened in Graduate School Worksheet**

<u>Skill</u>	<u>Rating</u> <u>0 (none) → 5 (high)</u>	<u>Steps I am</u> <u>willing to take</u>
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Communication:

Collaboration:

Quantitative literacy:

Intellectual self-confidence:

Digital literacy:

Planning:

Writing:

Research:

Other (list):

<b>Website Evaluation Worksheet</b>	
<i>Use this table to note your thoughts about how you might use the website for your benefit.</i>	
Academic Jobs Wiki	
Chronicle of Higher Education	
Inside Higher Ed	
Versatile PhD (VPhD)	
Other	

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



*Hillary Hutchinson*, MA (social anthropology) and MEd (higher education administration), lives and works near Charleston, SC. She has been coaching academics for over a decade. She helps overwhelmed professors who need to pull it all together and enjoy their academic life. This includes working individually with academics at all stages of their careers to transition to the next phase on a well-defined career path, as well as with those academics that want to transition out of academia.



*Mary Beth Averill*, PhD, lives and works in Eugene, OR. She's been coaching writers for over 30 years and specializes in working with academic writers. As an academic writing coach, she offers support through both individual sessions and weekly groups for ABD students and for faculty who would like to get articles finalized and submitted or books written. With a doctorate in Biology from the University of Oregon and an MSW several years later, Mary Beth has been an academic writer since the late 1960s herself.