During the spring and summer

If this will be your first time on the market, you should make sure you have talked with your advisor about the fact you plan to look for jobs (preferably talking over both timing--is this the right year in terms of dissertation progress, and any other personal factors?*and about what range of fields you could reasonably apply in).

You should start by giving some serious thought to what kind of jobs you would be interested in--not specific universities (which may well not have jobs during this particular year), but

*Whether there are geographical limitations to your search

*Whether you plan to apply for post-docs (more on this below)

*What kind of institution are you most interested in (i.e., liberal arts college, research institution, etc.)

*Are you also interested in non-academic jobs (or non-university teaching jobs)? (The Career Placement Center can help you explore these other options, alongside or in lieu of the academic job search, and to anticipate what the hiring cycle for such jobs is like.)

*Are you interested in applying to (and well-positioned for, by reason of citizenship or background) academic jobs in other countries? If so, the Placement Officer can try to help you get information about how the job market there works (or help you find interlocutors who know).

Once the job list presents you with concrete choices you may well find your earlier decision-making shifting a bit--but now is the time to start thinking about this, at least in the abstract.

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Advice for the Job Search Katie Trumpener

*You should draft your C.V., cover letter, and brief (2 page) dissertation abstract, sending the Placement Officer a copy as soon as you can. (see below)

Before the end of the summer, you should set up your dossier at career services, think through which professors to ask for letters (formal advisors to the dissertation, professors you have taught for, and anyone else whom you have done significant work with), and ask those professors to write for you.
(You should also make sure you and your advisors have a clear understanding of what your time-table to degree looks like [remembering that the fall will be partly taken up by job-related tasks and brooding--be realistic about what it will still be possible to write under these conditions!] so they can give clear signals in the letter they write for you--i.e.. plans to turn in the third or fourth chapter by x date, plans to graduate in Spring, 2027, etc.)
For any recommenders you have not worked with recently, you will want to supply them with your C.V., cover letter and/or 2-page dissertation abstract, to get them caught up with your current project.

And you should start working on a writing sample. Usually, it is best to send a piece of the dissertation. Opinions differ about this--but I think it's often wise to choose a finished and representative piece of the larger argument (because it probably represents your most complex and mature thinking) rather than, say, a former term-paper you have already published as an article, IF that does not directly reflect the dissertation work. Your advisor may be able to give you the most informed advice about this.
Most hiring committees will specify a page limit, usually 20-25 pages, but some will request something even shorter. You are STRONGLY advised to provide a writing sample of approximately that length! Some job seekers may have already

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published or forthcoming from their dissertations; in most cases, this is the obvious writing sample to use.

Others, however, will instead by excerpting from their dissertations. So, you either need a section of a chapter, or a combination of a chapter section and some introductory material.

You should select a piece that highlights your finest qualities as a writer and thinker--your most elegant prose, your most fluent and best-thought-through conceptualizations, something that will make the reader see the excitement of your dissertation project and your whole way of thinking....

Eventually, both your advisors and the Placement Officer should read the writing sample you have chosen.

Post-docs.

The MLA will have a list of post-docs on their job list. But you should also do some scouting on your own.

(i.e., the Humboldt Foundation's Bundes Chancellor fellowship for a year of post-doctoral study in Germany--that might be right for somebody.... There are also post-docs at several libraries; these typically do not involve teaching. See for instance: Newbery Library; Huntington Library; Library of Congress; New York Public Library; William Clark Library; Beinecke, American Antiquarian Society, etc. etc.)

The more general question is: why should you bother putting energy into applying for a post-doc?

Well, as you may well have realized, many new PhDs now get tenure track jobs only after a year or more of post-doctoral research/teaching and/or after a temporary position (i.e., a one-year sabbatical replacement job). Some will still

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get tenure track jobs right out of graduate school, but that is becoming less the norm. Hence its especially important to at least consider applying for post-docs.

Most Deadlines Are Early in The Fall

You need to think about this at the same time--and even earlier--than the job market properly. The good thing is that you do not need to wait until fall to find out what the story is; you can read the websites now and get any applications ready well in advance.

Most post-docs will require degree in hand by the end of spring (so will many jobs, but with the post-docs, it is imperative). That means that if you still have a fair amount of your dissertation to go, and you are more or less "testing" the market this year--i.e. going "out" on the market a bit prematurely, only applying to a few dream jobs, with the thought of a more complete search next year, if you don't land one of these dream jobs--then the post-doc applications might not make so much sense. But if you are almost finished or already have the dissertation in hand (in some ways, the optimal situation for the job market these days) it is important not to overlook these possibilities.

Most of the multi-year postdocs (i.e. at various times there have been postdocs at Chicago, Michigan, Princeton, Columbia, Stanford, Villanova, Cornell, Penn, and a host of others, including some liberal arts colleges and smaller comprehensive universities) require at least some teaching; often they combine teaching semesters and research semesters, gaining experience in the classroom with humanities center style intellectual exchange between fellows).

In addition, there will be a host of one-year jobs advertised throughout the year on the job list. Some of you may have personal circumstances which render you less mobile--so such jobs may not make sense to consider. But as I know from personal experience (having had a one year job myself, at University of Iowa, at

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the beginning of my career), such jobs can be just great--chances to train on the job, and really turn yourself into a professor, a colleague, self-consciously equal to those interviewing you the next time around. Moreover, many places end up offering longer-term jobs to one-year visitors, who often function as inside candidates during future searches.

I am still friends with some of my colleagues (and for years were in touch with a few of my students) from that one-year job, 35 years ago, and at present they have proved an important part of my professional network!

CV, Cover Letter and Short Dissertation Abstract.

Attached to the end of this handout are the guidelines developed, years ago, by Janice Carlisle (and Pericles Lewis) for the English department on how to go about developing these documents. The materials of past jobseekers are also particularly good guides.

There are many unspoken but rigid conventions (punctuation, spacing, ordering, italics, etc. etc.) governing the formatting of the cv--this is why it is important to have both the Placement Officer and your advisor look over your draft, to make sure everything is as it should be.

The same outside eyes are also crucial for your cover letter and dissertation abstract. The cover letter is also governed by rigid unspoken conventions BUT (ironically) you must simultaneously manage to use these generic conventions to highlight what is most unique, interesting, fresh, arresting, and consequential about your own work.

Hiring committees are often looking through many, many applications at once--in fact, to be honest, they are often skimming, looking for effortless ways to eliminate most. Your task is to be so appealing and compelling that they will instead perk up when they get to your self-description!

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In the letter, you will spend one paragraph (usually the first full paragraph after your opening preamble) describing, concisely, the problem, texts, and context of your dissertation.

The dissertation abstract gives you the chance to spell these out in more detail. Yet even here, concision is all. This might involve a radical boiling down of your initial dissertation abstract*but in any case, should convey the excitement and stake of the project.

On campus visit

EVERYTHING (meals, greetings, wind-down, informal coffees) during your visit is part of the interview or could become part of the "record". So be a little bit guarded in what you say--be friendly, open, but do not let yourself be pulled into gossip (about Yale, about their department; there is a fine line between information and gossip of course!). Make it clear you are extremely interested. Someone should introduce the topic of salary, benefits, how the job is structured, and the timetable for decision-making. And if they do not, you can just ask one or the other to tell you in general terms how the position is structured (i.e., length of contract, insurance, job expectations).

Be sure to take your cue from the faculty--who might want to talk about their own work and interests, about the institution or about life there.

Do not be afraid to show your enthusiasm for the field and for any positive aspects of life at this institution you can espy.

For your job talk: ANYTIME you can take out details about your case (or quotations from other critics, or other "fussy" details more suitable for an article

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than a talk) and instead PUT in points of reference your audience will know, the better.

Make sure you make clear throughout (for those "stupider" oral ears) what the structure of the talk is, where it is going, where you are now in relationship to the overall argument.
Among other things, they will be using this talk to gauge what you would be like pedagogically, and if they cannot follow your line of thought (whether due to unfamiliarity of material or opacity of structure) they will imagine students having similar problems.

And finally. You must try your best throughout the summer (and indeed throughout the surprisingly draining and enervating period of the job search) to maintain any dissertation momentum that you can. You need to be able to FINISH and FILE your dissertation within a few months, if you are offered either a job or a post-doc.

In the best-case scenario, you will already, well before the job market begins, have begun sending out articles to journals to be published. (Our publication workshops this spring, after spring break, will help you get started, if you have not already.) This is also a crucial part of your professional self-presentation—that you are beginning to get your work into print (and can be counted on to keep on publishing). You do not want to be in the position of trying to send out a first article at the same time as your job applications, so use your summer wisely, to try to avoid bottlenecks in the fall.

Fall and Winter

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Advice for the Job Search Katie Trumpener

Throughout the Fall, the Placement Officer will hold a series of meetings about the Job Market (every month or so). These will cover a range of topics:

*How to parse the often-cryptic descriptions of the job list.

*How far outside your specialties does it make sense to apply

*How to strategize your job search if there is a domestic partner (either academic or non-academic) involved.

*Gathering information about the schools to which you are applying

*Whether and how to tailor your applications to jobs

*What to expect from the MLA interview

*What to wear at your job interview

The Graduate School also holds its own set of annual meetings about the job market. These are necessarily more general than our own field-specific discussions but may well contain valuable insights and advice.

At the end of Fall semester, anyone who wishes it will be given a mock interview—or even two. (In the past, we have held “practice” mock interviews, where groups of students interviewed each other, followed by formal mock interviews, with faculty playing the role of job committees

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Typical format of MLA interviews (in case you wondered):

--Shaking hands

-- "tell us about your dissertation" (good to prepare and rehearse until it sounds natural, a ca. 3-5 min. outline that you can shorten or extend at will

--More questions about dissertation OR move to discussion of teaching

*-"informercial" by committee about their job, teaching load, kinds of teaching

*Questions about your teaching interests (and/or experiences)

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*More discussion of the university, faculty life, etc
* "Do you have a question for us?"
*-"here's what our timetable for decision-making will look like."
*-farewell with handshaking...

Late Winter (after the first-round interviews are mostly over)
--One final meeting will discuss the etiquette of the on-campus flyouts.
At this meeting (as at some of the previous meetings) we will also discuss strategies for stress reduction, managing the psychic fallout from the job search. (And how to walk away and keep on going if this hiring cycle has not yielded the desired results…)

Do not forget that EVERYTHING is (potentially) part of the interview. that means not only any formal interviews you may be having with dean, chair or further faculty members or students, BUT also the meals, moments when someone starts gossiping about people at their institution, Yale or in the field, moments of small talk, including time in the car if someone in the department is picking you up from the airport or taking you to the train station.

Throughout your time on campus, you want to see yourself as a participant/observer, alert for texture and information about what this campus and faculty and job is like, friendly, warm, collegial yourself (i.e. your usual self) BUT a little wary of being trapped into any kind of unbuttoned statement (i.e., gossip about your home institution or mutual acquaintances, personal revelations) which you might regret (because it IS finally a formal, evaluative occasion).

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Make sure, when meeting with small groups of people or provosts or students over meals, to ask positive, curious questions about how things work and where things are going. They will be trying to imagine you on site and helping to bear the load of everything... and if you seem open, curious, and ready to fit in, that can only help your cause!

Also: remember that they already know you can teach your dissertation, and that they will be looking to figure out what else you can do, what range of issues, texts, literatures, and methods you can help impart.

Some of you will find yourself waiting to hear something long after the chair SAID he/she would get back in touch with you (one of the many indignities of the job-hunting process, I'm afraid).

If you get an offer, you can immediately solicit more information from anyone you are waiting to hear from. But it is considered bad form to query short of that.

IF THINGS HAVE NOT GELLED POSITIVELY BY AROUND SPRING BREAK:

*DON'T forget to keep looking at the MLA job list. Whatever did or did not happen with/at MLA, the job season is NOT over for the year, and there are both long- and short-term jobs coming up even now (even some late-deadline post-docs). So do keep looking! This is even more important this year, as some places may have had jobs authorized or re-authorized too late for MLA.

*Some of you may be hearing soon from those you interviewed with, others of you will be waiting, waiting, and waiting.... Many interview committees will not be empowered to act at all until they have met with their departments

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after the start of classes, whenever that is (THAT you can look up on their departmental websites).

In the interim, please TRY to avoid the temptation to obsess over what transpired at your interviews [what is done is done, and a barrage of instant replay cannot help or change anything]. As I was reminded during one season of MLA interviews for Comp Lit, indeed, interviews can go very well* and still not lead to the next step. The reasons are obvious, but worth remembering: anxieties about "fit" or "need" for the particular interests of the candidate still persist; there is too much overlap with what the candidate does and what the home team already does; the candidate's way of construing the field is interesting, but nonetheless out of step, somehow or other, with that of the hiring dept., etc. etc.) If you thought of it as going very well and it nonetheless leads to nothing, it is NOT that your memory of the good atmosphere or rapport was mistaken *merely that you do not have the whole picture (and never will). But if you felt rapport, that may well mean that those who interviewed you will remember, recommend and/or reencounter you later in your professional career, and may be in a position to do you a favor, invite you to be on a panel or in an edited volume... a long term dividend of sorts!

The Placement Officer is also available throughout the year (and throughout late winter and spring) to discuss particular concerns in your job search—and, in the case of a happy outcome, the conditions of your job contract (if you care to discuss them), whether/how to “negotiate”, and what important questions to ask.

Important Proviso about the Process as a Whole

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Advice for the Job Search Katie Trumpener

The Job Market is, for better or worse, not the ultimate test of your worth as a scholar, teacher, or person. It is a large, impersonal, often bewilderingly or maddeningly random way of matching applicants and jobs.

In my view, it is still better than the “old boy” one-professor-calls-another method that preceded it—but it has all the disadvantages of impersonality too.

You need to keep remembering that this is not (or barely) about you—and to do all you can to shore up your morale, reserves of calm, and if possible, some degree of Zen or fatalism about the outcome.

In the process, you will at least learn more about professional life—and the extremely variegated map of university life in North America! (and beyond).

Every interview and round of interviewing is typically much easier than the one before it. Like everything else in graduate school, practice helps a lot.

“In retrospect, I should have been braver about downplaying my research in favor of teaching in my letters to smaller or more teaching-oriented institutions. My impression is that there are a lot of schools that in the run-up to the MLA would have been willing to take my research/intellectual qualifications for granted (especially because I had decent publications and a decent writing sample to show them), but that would have really wanted me to show that I was strongly focused on and excited about teaching and being at a teaching institution, even if I didn't have an enormous amount of practical experience. Going after R1 jobs is well and good, but a lot of people are going to need to pursue liberal arts jobs aggressively as well, especially as first jobs and especially in the dismal job market that everyone predicts for next year.

“Younger students need to be reminded that publications are crucial”—and to take some time, during the dissertation-writing, to start publishing their work.

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*-Publications, he stresses, free you to pivot and orient yourself towards a greater range of jobs.

The schools where I was a finalist would NOT have given me serious consideration had I not presented myself as someone capable of scholarship--but if I were doing it all over again, I would write some schools letters that just spend half a page or so (starting around the bottom of the first page) showing how stunningly brilliant and interesting my research is and otherwise talk in very concrete terms about my experiences as a thoughtful, dynamic, life-changing teacher.
It is a lot easier to justify spending your letter on teaching issues if you have a forthcoming publication in a good-quality journal. It is a lot more efficient to cite someone else's endorsement of your work rather than spending a paragraph convincing the reader of your work's value.

I gave talks on my research at both campuses that I visited, but both schools emphasized that this was to be an informal talk that would appeal to a broad audience, not the sort of formal conference paper that candidates give at Yale. Similarly, in retrospect I should have been braver about downplaying my research in favor of teaching in my letters to, say, the College of Charleston. My impression is that there are a lot of schools that in the run-up to the MLA would have been willing to take my research/intellectual qualifications for granted (especially because I had decent publications and a decent writing sample to show them), but that would have really wanted me to show that I was strongly focused on and excited about teaching and being at a teaching institution, even if I didn't have an enormous amount of practical experience. Going after R1 jobs is well and good, but a lot of people are going to need to pursue liberal arts jobs

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aggressively as well, especially as first jobs and especially in the dismal job market that everyone predicts for next year. I know that you know all this, but there are plenty of students here whose advisors have had very sheltered academic careers...and there is a place for giving students a bit of a reminder that there is a world outside of Yale that works differently.

The younger students need to be reminded that publications are crucial. I don't think there would have been any point in my trying to publish something that I wrote in my second or third year--I just wasn't there yet--but I got the impression that having articles coming out in journals (SEL and ELH) with titles recognized outside of my field was crucial to my getting first-round interviews at the MLA. It may seem obvious that publications matter, but I feel like some smart, organized classmates get wrapped up in their dissertations at the expense of getting papers out/accepted by their fifth year.

I think that you are right to some extent about research people being in teaching jobs--my letters worked for UMW and Mansfield after all, and clearly neither school would have given me serious consideration had I not presented myself as someone capable of scholarship--but if I were doing it all over again, I would write some schools letters that just spend half a page or so (starting around the bottom of the first page) showing how stunningly brilliant and interesting my research is and otherwise talk in very concrete terms about my experiences as a thoughtful, dynamic, life-changing teacher. Here actually is a more recent letter (which might or might not have turned out to be successful) that tries to do this. It might be worth mentioning to students that it is a lot easier to justify spending your letter on teaching issues if you have a forthcoming publication in a good-quality journal. It is a lot more efficient to cite someone else's endorsement of

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your work rather than spending a paragraph convincing the reader of your work's value.

*Previous job seekers found it both unnerving and helpful to consult the job seekers' "wiki" to see peer-provided, anonymous information about the process of the job search in a range of fields.
advantage: more information (relatively reliable) about where different institutions seem to be in their search, particularly helpful in learning about places that have gone on to the next stage of a search without you, but without ever letting you know; no need to pine and wonder why they haven't contacted you.
disadvantage: not entirely dependable because peer-provided; could feed frenzy for constant obsessing about progress of job search in place x or y.
upshot: you might wish to shun the wiki; use it only in case of emergency (i.e., cannot wait any longer to learn your fate re: job Q or f); or carefully ration your uses of it.
In any case, here is the address (general portal, then you search by subfield), for your probable future use:

http://academicjobs.wikia.com/wiki/AcademicJobSearch

--and finally, a wonderful resource in trying to learn about university openings outside of American academia.

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Advice for the Job Search Katie Trumpener

If you decide to apply for jobs in other countries, there are often faculty to hand who can help give further advice about how these job markets work [including in some cases different protocols for the application itself).

From a recent jobseeker: Below is a list of my most useful weblinks for the job search, with a few explanations for the graduate students.
https://sites.google.com/view/apply-academic-positions/faculty-positions

I have some more exotic (and therefore less useful) info and links that I may upload later. It is also possible to expand the site using Google's tools into a wiki style site and a repository of useful files for downloading. Right now, I have it set as open to the public, but it could be locked down as needed. But the list below may well prove to be enough. Hope it helps.

Association of Canadian College and University Teachers of English (updated every month or so)
https://accute.ca/category/job-postings/

Canadian Association of University Teachers (updated daily)
http://www.academicwork.ca/

The Association of Commonwealth Universities (sparse for humanities, but can sometimes prove useful - NZ and Australian jobs can sometimes appear here)

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https://www.acu.ac.uk/about-us/work-with-us/

Times Higher Education (UK equivalent of "The Chronicle". Jobs updated weekly, and come from all over the English-speaking world, although with less emphasis on North America. Find UK, Irish, many Australian & NZ, some European and East Asian posts here. Even South African Universities advertise here. Also useful as a window into British university life, though watch out for a different academic lexicon! Will provide translations if necessary....)
https://www.timeshighereducation.com/unijobs/

Becoming much more important is the site http://www.jobs.ac.uk/ which is updated daily and covers much of the same geographical area and the Times site listed above.

For jobs in the Netherlands (many of which are in English and require no teaching in Dutch) go to
https://www.academictransfer.com/en/jobs/

They have just reworked their site, and it seems complicated now, but you should be able to navigate to the humanities section.

https://www.higheredjobs.com/
https://www.higheredjobs.com/career/SiteListings.cfm Search Firms
https://www.higheredjobs.com/search/profiles.cfm Institutional Profiles

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Advice for the Job Search Katie Trumpener

Yale OCS
https://ocs.yale.edu/resources/checklist-for-job-seekers-from-the-mla/

Notes from a 2009 Bill Rando's talk on preparing the teaching paragraph, statement, and portfolio for the job market.

TEACHING PARAGRAPH in the cover letter. You should tell the reader what you have done and what you can do, including examples or anecdotes to give the reader a sense of you as a teacher and HOW you teach.
This should be more than listening; you are telling the reader about what kind of teacher you are and assure them that you know how to reach students.
This is a part of the letter you might want to customize a little, at least for some of your top jobs, taking your cue from the wording of the job ad (i.e. mentions of interdisciplinary teaching; freshman program; writing, etc.): how could your skills be relevant for those kinds of teaching.

TEACHING STATEMENT—up to two pages max.
Among other things a writing sample, so vivid, exciting writing is in order.
This teaching statement levels the playing field for graduate schools (like Yale) where PhD students typically do not have years of stand-

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alone teaching experience. BUT a good writer can convey something exciting about her/his practice/potential as a teacher—and then amount of experience is not the decisive fact.

You want to give the reader a window into who you are as a teacher. You are not telling the reader how to teach nor how everyone should teach. You are explaining, as concretely and vividly as possible, how you teach.

This is what matters to me; these are some of the things I do: "take a look!"

Ads may ask for "teaching philosophy" but they are not looking for something abstract. Do not be afraid to say "I… I…I…I" (or even to use a lightly playful or humorous tone if that is your writerly voice).

It is a personal essay, may be a little bit inspirational; should shed new light on things people care about.

Readers should be able to SEE you teaching, see you reaching students, doing what you do.

SHOW DON'T TELL.

Students ("my students") should be present and palpable in the essay.

Present yourself as a colleague, NOT a student.

Forget the fact that you may have done this teaching as a TA.

You are a teacher and present yourself simply as such. End of story. (for the purposes of this statement).

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Statement does not have to be completely focused on a single line of explication but should use examples as a platform to articulate your approach (and essay should have some real cohesion).

Best kind of teaching story

—challenge in/from students, something they are not getting or having trouble with. So that the reader can see you seeing the students and with what they are struggling.

*Your (creative) response to their struggle. Give reader a window into your thinking. (I noticed, I remembered, I thought about//I saw that they were stuck because they were thinking this way about a concept)

*Then I decided to do this. (i.e., to bring in this new angle of approach, this new material), and I asked students to do THIS with it, and what happened was…

Students started to let go of their misconception; one student even raised her hand and said…

Formula: Challenge/you are responding/asking students to do something/(so what?) result

Ideally, reader will say silently: “Aha! Clever idea! Let me try that myself!” (and with this, you have potentially begun a collegial dialogue…)(implicit notion: one is hiring new colleagues not least as a kind of general resource, to be on hand, with interesting ideas, when one has one’s own pedagogical impasses or problems!)

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To find the right anecdote or episode, think back to various kinds of teaching, if necessary, read old notes.

Rando even advocates starting a folder on your computer, labeled My Teaching—and putting into it a brief dated entry every time you have a class session that goes unusually well, something interesting happened, things turned around. Such self-recording could be of use later in your career (promotions, tenure) when you will again be asked, potentially, to describe your impact as a teacher.

Assumption of job committee to PhDs coming from Yale: that they could not instruct our students, that they have never had to cope with students who are unprepared, bored, unmotivated, have never worked with a student who is struggling.
Your statement can show that you do know how to help struggling students (if only during mid-semester slump).

Over the course of the anecdote: Teaching I have done has not always been easy/ Here I/we hit a barrier/I think I have figured out a way around it.
That is what teaching is: figuring out a way to read, think, explore, despite misconceptions, anxieties, lack of preparation.

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Ask yourself as you write: Does this make for a good essay? Essays about teaching are immediately dull when they are too abstract (easy to fall into platitudes), so quickly move to (or better yet, open with) the concrete.

Do not be afraid to mention books and authors under discussion. Name book, passage, quote under discussion, get as detailed as possible.
Talking about the thing you did like yours does not have to be a universal discovery.

Teaching Portfolio

(in Canada often called the teaching dossier, sometimes also called "evidence of effective teaching")

Could be thought of as centered/prefaced by TEACHING STATEMENT
Pulling together a range of evidentiary materials, each of which should be labeled and annotated (i.e., make clear at outset of each (stapled, discrete) piece of evidence WHAT it is, Circumstances [of course, time, place, who you taught for].
In each case you want to create a document infused with a narrative and YOUR voice.

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Materials could include:

1. Courses Taught & Teaching Materials
2. [Steps you have taken towards] Teaching Improvement (i.e., list of courses taken, sessions attended on pedagogy at national conferences, even books read)
3. Sample Syllabi or Course Plans. Annotations can be as important as text selections. You can use examples of both planned and taught; of courses you would ideally like to teach.
4. Not necessarily week by week readings, but how you go about building up the course, block by block; books, assignments; specify what the level of the course is.
5. You might have one course that was introductory: one advanced course.
6. Student Evaluations. Bill advocates sending full SETS of teaching evaluations (i.e., NOT just choosing only strong evaluations, suppressing negative ones). He believes it is justifiable to suppress/omit evaluations ONLY if they are obscene, ranting, practical jokes [i.e., would distract from serious evaluation]. But thinks it important to include negative or ambivalent evaluations [1) honest course of action, unvarnished truth; 2)ALL teachers sometimes get negative evaluations; experienced teachers will know to expect this, and will not give it undue weight, but their absence will make the rest of the file less “believable”)

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7. That said, you might well only send complete sets of evaluations from a few courses, specifying up front WHY you have chosen the sets you have. i.e., the three most recent courses I have taught; OR one example of a poetry course, one example of a drama course; one example of a period course, one example of a genre course; two literature courses, one expository writing course.
8. Testimonials. Unsolicited thank you letters from former students. Solicited letters from former students. Letters from colleagues who have seen you teach. {Although these might be better off, in confidential form, in your recommendation dossier.]

ON CAMPUS

If you are asked to teach a class as part of your on-campus interview/flyout.

You need to know ahead of time: Is this a "real" ongoing class? Or random undergraduates/administrators pretending to mimic a class? If a real class: you need to find out as much as possible (i.e., talking to the professor in advance) about where they are/what they are doing, where are they going. How are they being evaluated in class? (i.e., about to author a paper, soon to write a midterm?) Are they seniors or freshmen? A chatty class? What is their dynamic?

Your rhetoric to professor: "I want this to work for you and your students."

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To class: “For the last 3 weeks, I know you have been doing x. Today, I am going to be…”

Do not teach in a vacuum!

Made-up class: You need to take control of the group, explain to them who they are, what they have been doing before, prepare them for their role-playing. Recreate the class you want to be teaching.
Take control of the room. Use pedagogic theatrics!
Do not be timid or hang back; take control of the situation.

In either event show off your best stuff. Not just what you know but demonstrate that you are interactive. You can include some lecturing, some close reading, even some student work in small groups, whatever you think will create a dynamic atmosphere.

Show your love and enthusiasm for the material (without going overboard and privileging content over process; NOT “all I know about this topic”).
DON’T see this as a second job talk. (Students will be polled afterwards about whether they liked/learned from the class.)

Unless you are told otherwise, try to use/showcase many of your skills.

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BUT do not try to do too much. Ideally, you would teach material you know well, even if you had taught before.

Advice on Letters of Application, C.V.'s, Dissertation Abstracts, Dossiers, and Teaching Portfolios Janice Carlisle and Pericles Lewis

Letter of Application

Your letter of application should be no more than two pages in a readable (12 point) type with one" margins, and you should try to convey a sense of both your scholarship and your teaching in a way that is as engaging as possible. The form of such letters usually involves an introductory paragraph followed by a separate paragraph or two on your research and another on your teaching. The final paragraph, which typically involves the expected statement about your plans to be available for an interview at MLA, should also include something specific to the particular job for which you are applying, so it cannot be written until you know what the job is and have had a chance to consult the department's Web site.

In addition:

1. In the first paragraph, I reproduce the language of the *JIL* closely. Many faculty also suggest that you include the name of your advisor(s) in the first paragraph.
2. Print your letter on department stationery (plain second sheet). Do not use heavy paper.
3. Put your last name and page number on second page.
4. Be sure that you do not reproduce in your letter the language of your dissertation abstract.

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5. Be careful about tone: do not say, “I know that I am qualified for X job”-it is the responsibility of those reading your letter to make that call.

Curriculum Vitae

Your C.V. should present information in the most legible and, therefore, the clearest and simplest form possible. To that end:

1. Format the document in a standard-sized font (12) and use 1” margins. (Remember that the person reading your C.V. may be trying to go through many files at one sitting, and eye strain sets in quickly under those circumstances.)
2. Try to avoid what I call typographical intensification. You can use bold for your name and headings but resist it in other places. Italics should be used only for the names of periodicals and books; the title of your dissertation, since it has not yet been published, should be in quotation marks.
3. Place the date (say, September 2007) at the top of the C.V.-adding it after your address, phone number, and e-mail address is fine. Put your name and page numbers as headers on the upper right of each subsequent page.
4. Try to finish putting all the entries in a particular category on one page; if you must split a category between pages, be sure that its title does not end up at the bottom of one of them and avoid putting one entry on two pages.
5. Give standard bibliographic information for all publications, including volume numbers, dates, and page numbers for periodical publications.
6. Course titles should not be in quotation marks.
7. Put “Graduate fellowship, Yale University, 200-200-” under Awards or Honors.
8. List your work as a panel chair under Service or Professional Activities, not under Presentations.

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9. List of lectures that you have given as a T.F. under Teaching Experience, not under Presentations. (They are not really invited lectures, but they are important because they reveal what the professors in charge of lecture courses have asked you to teach.) You might also want to use the term *teaching assistant* rather than *teaching fellow* because the latter at most institutions means an instructor with full responsibility for a course; the title *instructor* could be used for your experience teaching English 115 or 129, for instance.

10. A C.V. differs from a resume in that the former does not include descriptions of positions that you would find in the latter, so do not add explanations unless they are necessary. (You may want to retain parenthetical descriptions of prizes, however.)

Topics usually included (order may vary):

Personal information, date of C.V.

Education

Dissertation (title, with advisors' names; may be included under Education)

Awards, Fellowships, and/or Honors

Publications (put on first page if possible)

Presentations

Teaching Experience

Research and Teaching Interests

Professional Activities (or Academic Service or both)

Memberships

Languages

References

Dissertation Abstract

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Your dissertation abstract should be no more than two single-spaced pages in a readable (12-point) type with one" margins; and it should not quote or be quoted in your letter of application. The abstract usually includes a chapter summary, but its most important goal is to communicate your sense that you are doing work that is exciting and important. Placing your work within the ongoing debates in your field is crucial. (One caveat: do not begin the abstract with "My dissertation . . . ." Members of search committees see that formula so often that it may immediately induce a lack of attention.) Put your last name and the page number on the second page.

Dossier

By the end of the summer, be sure to open a dossier with Interfolio. You need between three and five letters (two to four on scholarship, one or two on teaching), depending on how many fields you will apply in. You may certainly ask a potential referee if he or she can write you a strong letter of support. Ask your advisors to indicate specifically when you will finish the dissertation. All your referees will need the dossier service's form signed by you. Choose to keep the letter confidential-many readers simply discount letters that are open to the candidate's perusal. If this is your second year on the job market, be sure to ask all your referees to update your letter by the middle of September.

Note: dossier in this context and in job ads means primarily your letters of reference. You do not need to put your C.V. or writing sample on file with the dossier service.

Teaching Portfolio

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Some departments want proof that you will be an effective teacher, so be ready to share with them a file that includes:
statement of teaching philosophy (one page, formatted as diss. abstract is)
List of courses taught.
sample syllabi and writing assignments.
evaluations-one full set
A few departments request this material with the application; others are willing to accept it during the MLA interview.

Interviewing at MLA-Some Advice*

Some of this advice will seem to you insultingly basic-that should be the case-but all these points are worth repeating, even if only one of them strikes you as worth reading.

Before the Interview

1. **Dress**. An outfit with a jacket is appropriate for both male and female candidates. Do not wear any clothes or accessories that you will need to adjust during the interview.
Note on mock interviews: Wear the clothes that you plan to wear for the MLA interview so that you can be sure that they are comfortable.

2. **Materials**. Carry copies of your C.V. and dissertation abstract in a case (briefcase or portfolio) so that you can produce them if asked. If you have a

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syllabus for a course that you have taught or are going to teach, bring copies of them with you. You will not need any of these materials, but it is better to be prepared than not.

3. **Questions**. Be ready for a wide range of questions. Be sure that you can elaborate on any information in your materials: if you have said, for instance, that you would like to teach a particular course, be sure you know in some detail how you would like to teach it.

Teaching: Know the courses in your field that are taught at the committee's institution and be able to discuss how you would approach them.

Research: Be ready for questions on your dissertation that reveal that not all members of the committee have read carefully your abstract or writing sample, but also prepare for questions that are very specific: you may be asked, for example, to summarize the argument of your dissertation or to discuss your reading of a particular text or passage in it. Think about the contribution that your dissertation makes to literary studies and its relation to major critical and theoretical works in your field. Know in advance how you will respond to a question about the research that you plan to undertake after your dissertation is published.

Your questions: Have inquiries specifically tailored to the institution so that you can ask them when you are invited to do so. These should not, at this point, include questions about salary. If the institution has a humanities center, for instance, you could ask if members of the department are active in it. You can inquire about the kinds of students whom you would be teaching or the courses that you could be expected to be asked to offer.

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4. Location. Ask the chair of the search committee about the hotel in which he or she is staying. At the conference you should phone the hotel and ask the operator to send your call to the chair's room so that he or she can give you, its number. Try to make this call around meals or early in the evening so that you will not be interrupting the other interviews that the committee is conducting. Place this call well before the time of your own interview-a day before it if possible.

5. Timing. Try to schedule your interviews so that there is a good deal of time between them-even an hour or more-so that you will be able to go from one hotel to another if you need to do that.

6. Verbatim from Heiberger and Vick: “Don't check anything important through on the airplane. Bring all the essentials [including your interview outfit] in carry-on luggage” (150).

At the Interview

1. Shake the hands of the members of the committee. You may also want to do that when you are about to leave the room if it seems appropriate to do so.

2. Relax. Take a breath before answering questions. Remember the James-Lange theory of emotion: do the action and the feeling will follow; if you conduct yourself as if you were confident and energetic, then you will be confident and energetic. Some interviews will be quite formal, and others may be more casual, so try to adapt quickly to the interviewing style of the committee. Make eye contact with every member of the committee, even those who have not asked you a question. Avoid any distracting gestures, though using your hands to emphasize a point is a tactic that can be resorted to in moderation.

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3. Try not to use any sounds and words to fill in silences as you speak: “um,” “like,” “I mean.” A formal level of diction is also appropriate: “yes” rather than “yah.”

4. Feel free to ask your interviewers to rephrase or explain their questions, though you may not want to do that too often. Turn the question in a direction that will help you respond to it, but don't bluff: if you don't know an answer, that's fine; you are, after all, at the beginning of your career, and you can't be expected to know everything.

5. Be aware that there are certain questions that by law committees are not allowed to ask-those pertaining to your race, sex, age, religion, national origin, or disabilities-and you are within your rights to evade any such questions by asking how they are relevant to the position being filled. Marital status is another matter. You may answer inquiries about it if you feel that doing so would be to your advantage.

6. Turn off your cell phone long before you walk into the room. Better yet: leave it in your hotel room.

After the Interview

Send the chair of the committee a brief thank-you note by e-mail or by snail mail, depending on the formality of the interview. [This is not necessary, but opinions vary. KT]

*Several of the above points have been adapted from The Academic Job Search Handbook by Mary Morris Heiberger and Julia Miller Vick (3rd. ed., 2001), which is available in the departmental lounge.

Addendum to Advice on Interviewing

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Advice for the Job Search Katie Trumpener

Here, in no order, are some points to be added to the earlier handout of advice about interviewing: they reflect comments by the assistant professors who met with us last week and points made by the faculty during the first set of mock interviews.

Answer questions as if you were a potential colleague of the interviewers, not a graduate student, or try at least to strike a balance between the two roles. Differ with the assumptions of an interviewer's questions, if necessary, but do so tactfully.

An answer to the question about teaching a specific course should include:

1. an indication that you know about the course as it is taught at the interviewer's institution.
2. . . . that you have thought seriously about teaching.
3. . . . that you can adapt your previous teaching experience to the requirements of the institution's course.

Another way of defining a satisfactory answer to that question:

1. Start with a statement of what you want to instruct the students in the course.
2. Give titles of only three or four books, preferably including the first and the last.

Before the interview, you may ask the chair of the committee for the names of those who will be interviewing you, not so that you can mention their work during the interview, but so that you will know their names and their fields. Chairs sometimes do not know exactly who will be at a particular interview, so do not be

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put off if the list you were given does not match the people who end up in the room.

Do not speak from notes. (This bit of advice should be obvious.)

Be ready to answer this question: How would you describe the changes in your field in the last ten years?

Before your interview read your writing sample with an eye to the questions that it raises.

On attitudes: Don't be defensive. Be respectful of even stupid questions, but do not be too compliant either.

You probably won't be asked for a teaching portfolio at an interview, but you might want to bring two copies of yours with you-one to give to the committee chair who requests it and a second to photocopy if you have more than two interviews (in order not to be left without one if all the interviewing committees ask for one).
A teaching portfolio typically includes syllabi with sample assignments such as paper topics, a statement of teaching philosophy, a list of courses taught, and a set of course evaluations.

Job-Application Process

Early May Consult advisor(s) to decide whether to search for a position.
If searching in the coming year: notify JPO; notify all referees (4-5),
asking them to identify materials needed for writing letters.

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Placement Officer to provide guidelines for C.V., letter of application, and dissertation abstract.

Summer

- Submit drafts of C.V., letter of application, and dissertation abstract to Placement Officer (PO)
- Submit draft of writing sample to PO.
- Submit revisions of C.V., letter of application, dissertation abstract, along with teaching statement, to PO and advisor(s).

Late August Establish dossier with Interfolio. (Information available via Graduate School and Office of Career Strategy websites.
https://ocs.yale.edu/channels/references/

Provide referees with materials, reminding them of mid-September deadline.

September 1st week First meeting of job candidates (and every 3-4 weeks thereafter).
MLA *Job Information List* available online;
Identify openings, along with fellowship opportunities; consult with advisor(s) and JPO to establish list.

Mid-September Check with Interfolio to make sure dossier is complete.

October-November Deadlines for applications; submit each one at least two weeks before its deadline.

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December Mock interviews with faculty.

December 27-30 MLA interviews.

January-March On-campus interviews (job talk and/or sample class)

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