Connexions module: m15815

WHAT ARE SEARCH COMMITTEES LOOKING FOR*

Rice ADVANCE

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Abstract

This is a conversion of a presentation given at the Negotiating the Ideal Faculty Position Workshop given on October 14-16, 2007. This presentation was compiled by Seiichi Matsuda, Chemistry; Kathy Ensor, Statistics; Joff Silberg, Biochemistry; Jennifer West, Bioengineering; and Ken Whitmire, Chemistry.

1 Applying for a Position

- "Cold" applications
 - · Usually need to have connections to the department
- Responding to an advertisement
 - · Consider level and areas requested
- Solicited applications
 - · Be sure to present at the most relevant conferences. Hopefully this visibility will lead to contacts with hiring departments

2 The Application

- Cover letter
 - · Summarize your qualifications and interests
- Curriculum Vitae
 - · Academic credentials
 - · Research experience
 - · Publications
 - · Honors, awards, grants, etc.
- Research interests statement
- Teaching interests statement
- References

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- May include reprints/preprints
- -Some variability in details and format between fields.

-Get feedback on your application package from a mentor.

3 Research Statement

- Remember that the search committee members may be in areas peripheral to your research
- Describe two or three research proposals
 - · Usually one that is related to your prior work that is clearly feasible
 - · One or two projects that demonstrate your ability to think beyond your current work

4 What to Include

- Statement about the problem
 - · Key unanswered questions in field
 - · How will your work contribute?
- Description of research plans
 - · Break into specific aims
 - · Include figures
 - · Be both creative and realistic

5 Teaching Statement

- Describe your philosophy towards teaching and experiences that led to this
- Discuss courses within the core curriculum that you could teach
- Propose development of a new course

6 What to Emphasize in your Application

- Find out about the department/school
 - · Importance of teaching vs. research
 - · Areas of interest/growth
- May want to customize your application materials for different positions
- Brag about your successes!

7 What is Makes an Application Stand Out

- Varies between departments/institutions
- Strong publication record
 - · Most important factor!
- Exciting research plan
 - · Creative and innovative while also feasible

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- Great reference letters
 - · Evidence of innovation, creativity, hard work, etc.
- Interesting and innovative teaching plans
 - · Highlight your experiences and capabilities
- Other experiences
 - · Experience writing a grant, etc.

8 Recommended Reading

- Making the Right Moves: A Practical Guide to Scientific Management for Postdocs and New Faculty
 - · Howard Hughes Medical Institute
- At the Helm: A Laboratory Navigator
 - · Kathy Barker, Cold Spring Harbor Press

9 Compiled by

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