

ADVICE FOR THOSE SEEKING TEACHING POSITIONS

A lot of jobs are beginning to open up around the country, and if you're serious about pursuing teaching positions, you ought to be getting the materials ready that will allow you to jump on an opening when you see it.

You also ought to be taking regular looks (every two weeks or so) at at least four core job information lists:

THE AWP JOB LIST: available online using the user ID and password supplied to you by AWP.

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION: free access online

THE MLA JOB INFORMATION LIST: available by going to ade.org, to Job Information List, to Search the Job Information List, to sign-in [ID 4634, password 230ah]. Then you pick your categories or territory and view results.

HIGHEREDJOBS.COM: free access at <http://www.higheredjobs.com/>

Your basic set of materials should include:

- A boilerplate letter addressing your readiness to teach composition, creative writing, and contemporary literature. Your boilerplate letter will not be the letter you actually send; you will customize it according to the pertinent elements of a specific job description. Think of your letter as a short essay, 1-2 pages, with a thesis paragraph and with body paragraphs that include topic sentences relating to the various components of a job description. Your concluding paragraph encourages the reader to ask for more material, set up an interview, or otherwise take your application seriously.
- A vitae that will summarize all your qualifications for a teaching position by categorizing academic background, teaching experience, professional activity and publication, and other significant items.
- [For follow-up, not part of the application letter package unless specifically requested] Letters of reference from at least three faculty. Think of the threesome as a group that can address multiple concerns: one of the recommenders should be someone who's observed your teaching and can talk about it, one should know your writing well and be able to talk about it, and one should have a global a sense of contributions you've made as a student and colleague in the program. Sometimes these views will overlap in the same persons, of course.

- [For follow-up.] A teaching philosophy. Your teaching philosophy will be implied already in your letter, but this may be a more direct statement, perhaps with more anecdotal information offering support.
- [For follow-up.] A writing sample.