

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY  
PLACEMENT PROCEDURES

Adopted by the Department 2008; slightly updated 2016 by Lindley Darden & Louise Gilman

The Department recognizes a responsibility to help its doctoral students to find suitable academic employment. A departmental Placement Officer(s) (PO) is appointed to organize this help.

Note that all deadlines mentioned in this document should be regarded as the latest possible. Wherever possible, students should aim to complete the various stages of the process well in advance of these deadlines.

1. Eligibility for placement assistance

To be eligible for full placement assistance for positions for the fall, a student who has advanced to candidacy must furnish the chair of his/her dissertation committee by September 15 with sufficient dissertation drafts to secure a recommendation of readiness for job candidacy. The following would normally be judged sufficient: a satisfactory complete first draft; something close to a satisfactory final draft of half the dissertation together with advanced work in progress on the rest. Students who do not fulfill this requirement by September 15 but do fulfill it by January 1 may receive placement assistance for jobs announced after January 1. (In such cases all deadlines set below will be modified accordingly.) A student who submits the required material by the deadline and does not get a recommendation from the chair of his/her dissertation committee may appeal. A committee set up by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) will then decide the matter.

2. Dossiers

Job candidates should consult with the PO(s) about their dossiers in early September. Each dossier will be in two parts, each discussed in more detail below: 2.1, the confidential letters, handled by the Department or by a commercial dossier service, such as Interfolio Inc (see [www.interfolio.com](http://www.interfolio.com)); and 2.2, the rest of the application, sent by the candidate.

2.1 Confidential Letters

2.1.1. The candidate must contact the PO to open this part of the dossier. Its main contents are confidential letters of recommendation. It should not include CV, writing samples or the teaching portfolio.

2.1.2. The candidate should request from the PO a waiver form, waiving their right to see the confidential letters. The candidate is advised to sign it. If the candidate chooses not to sign the waiver, then the candidate must inform each letter writer that the letter is not confidential. The cover letter from the PO in the candidate's file will inform letter readers that the letters are not confidential.

2.1.3. The candidate should request a minimum of three letters to be written, usually by his/her advisor and other members of the candidate's dissertation committee. One of the letters should explicitly mention the candidate's teaching ability. The request should be made in early September, informing the letter writer to send it to the appropriate Departmental representative by October 1. Letter writers should be given two to three weeks to complete the request. (If the candidate is using a commercial service, the candidate should arrange for his/her completed

dossier to be sent to the PO, who will screen it for suitability and advise the student if any changes are recommended.)

In requesting letters of recommendation, candidates should keep the following in mind: the importance of information about the candidate's primary area of interest and general philosophical ability; the importance of information concerning their teaching skills; abilities in areas of philosophy outside his/her specialty and dissertation; the desirability of a letter of recommendation from a philosopher of stature outside the Department (which needs to be organized well in advance).

2.1.4. It is the responsibility of the candidate to request updated and additional letters in a timely fashion after the original dossier is established.

2.2. Part of Application sent by Candidate (other than confidential letters)

2.2.1. Items to be prepared for sending with job applications: a cover letter, a curriculum vitae, a research statement (2-4 pages), a teaching statement (2-4 pages) one or two samples of the candidate's philosophical writing, and evidence of teaching performance.

2.2.2. The CV should include a current date on the front, name, address, telephone number, email address, URL of web site (if any); Area of Specialization (AOS) and Areas of Competence (AOC), graduate education (last first); undergraduate education; publications (omit if none); talks given (omit if none); employment record (only relevant employment); prizes, fellowships, awards; dissertation topic, advisor, brief dissertation abstract (written for a general audience; maximum one page; attached at end); teaching experience (course name, course giver, date); graduate work done (course name, course giver, date, grade optional); and a list of references with title, mailing address, and email address. Each page should be numbered and the candidate's name should be next to the page number on each page. The CV should be presented to the PO(s) for review.

2.2.3. One writing sample should be a paper in the AOS, usually extracted from a dissertation chapter and polished as a stand-alone paper or a published paper from the dissertation. A second paper may be included, such as a previously published paper. In preparing the writing sample from the dissertation to send with job applications, the candidate is advised to keep in mind that a second paper should be prepared as the basis for a Departmental colloquium talk and for job interviews.

2.2.4. Two different packets of teaching materials should be prepared, a short one to go with all applications and a larger teaching portfolio. The short packet should have syllabi of 2 or 3 courses taught (or that the candidate would like to teach), compiled results and a few pertinent comments from course evaluations from two courses taught. The full teaching portfolio should be mentioned in the application letter, with an offer to send it if requested. A full teaching portfolio contains a statement about the candidate's view of teaching, more syllabi and course materials from courses taught (and/or that the candidate wishes to teach), more compiled course evaluation data and comments, and possibly other materials, such as letters from former students, letters from visitors to the candidate's classes, statements about electronic resources used in teaching, etc.

### 3. Applying for jobs

3.1 Start checking job advertisements when the dossier is complete. The most important source is [philjobs.org](http://philjobs.org), but depending on your specialization, there may be other places worth checking as well, such as the Chronicle of Higher Education.

3.2. In applying for a job, candidates should write a cover letter stating their wish to be considered for the job and stressing whatever is relevant to show how their interests and skills meet the requirements for the job. Along with the cover letter, the candidate should send only those parts of the dossiers handled by themselves that are appropriate to the particular advertisement. They should state that their confidential letters will arrive separately.

3.3 Candidates should request that the confidential letters be sent to places to which they apply. No guarantee is made, especially during the summer months, that more urgent requests can be honored. This service will be available to job candidates for three years, after which the candidate must make other arrangements for the management of confidential letters.

3.4. In 2016, Louise Gilman handles the confidential letters for candidates using the Departmental service. Request from Louise a spreadsheet template that you must fill out with the relevant job information and submit by the deadlines she provides. You should always cc the placement officers when you send Louise your spreadsheets listing the jobs to which you are applying. You may also wish to cc your advisor to ask for help with specific jobs.

### 4. Preparation for interviews

The candidate should request that the PO(s) organize a preparatory mock interview with members of the Department. Candidates should also present to a Department colloquium (or an ad hoc forum) the papers they expect to read when invited for on-campus visits by prospective academic employers.

5. Candidates should keep the PO fully informed of the progress of their candidacies; they should discuss any appropriate follow-up efforts after interviews, and notify the PO of any changes in plans. Please inform the PO of the following items: number of applications, number of interviews (at meetings, via electronic media, on campus), number of job offers [let's be optimistic!], and the offer accepted.

6. Each candidate may secure the full placement services of the Department for a period of three years. The candidate should request updated or new letters from letter writers in years two and three.

7. Throughout their professional careers, the candidate is asked to keep the Department informed of current employment for posting on the Department web page.