

# Research on the Job Market: What Does It Tell Us?

There are many jobs at teaching-intensive institutions.

In an increasingly precarious job market, it helps graduate students to know where most of the tenure-track or full-time jobs are located. The research indicates that many of these positions are available at teaching-intensive institutions. What kinds of schools does this category name exactly and what is expected of a new hire at these institutions?

The label “teaching-intensive institution” refers to community colleges, regional comprehensives, and liberal arts colleges, where most students study, but it can also name some institutions typically referred to as “research-intensive” universities. In positions at these institutions, new faculty can expect to teach outside of their period and/or specialization, while also participating in extensive committee service. Jobs in these undergraduate institutions tend to carry heavier teaching loads than those required of faculty in positions where research is the primary criteria for tenure. The combination of ‘course load’ and research requirements differs from institution to institution and even between institutions in the same category. Finding the balance that suits your career goals is important, and so determining what standards prevail for junior faculty at each institution is an important part of the interview process. In other words, do not hesitate to ask about what is expected of you in the position you will assume.

What about research? Because of the extensive amounts of teaching expected of faculty members at teaching-intensive institutions, faculty members pursue their research during summer months. Faculty are often also encouraged to develop projects that can use undergraduate research as help,

whether that means writing annotated bibliographies, tracking down relevant archival material, or in the case of the sciences, conducting experiments.

To help our graduate students prepare to apply for academic jobs and to transition to teaching-intensive jobs and institutions, the Center for Teaching and Learning offers a number of programs and workshops. Last year, the CTL teamed up with Career Advancement to organize and implement academic treks. These treks expose graduate students to different types of academic institutions –from research universities and small liberal arts colleges to religiously affiliated schools and even community colleges –and to help them understand what it means to teach and work in distinct academic settings. The first trek took place in September of 2013 to the St. Louis area, and the next will take place this September in the Chicago area.

As part of the Preparing Future Faculty Series, a national effort to educate doctoral candidates about particular types of academic positions and institutions, the CTL also regularly invites faculty from small liberal arts colleges in the area to speak with graduate students about their institutions over lunch. In addition, both the Office of Graduate Affairs and the CTL invite alumni and other faculty to campus for conversations with advanced graduate students about their experiences at a range of institutional types. Finally, the CTL’s Certificate in University Teaching prepares students for teaching at all types of colleges and universities. Students interested in learning more about the differences among academic positions and institutions can sign up for the CTL listserv at <http://teaching.uchicago.edu>.

Some of the advice and statistics cited in this report come from Paula Krebs, “Training Ph.D.’s to Teach Where the Jobs Are,” [https://chroniclevitae.com/news/241-training-ph-d-s-to-teach-where-the-jobs-are?cid=at&utm\\_source=at&utm\\_medium=en](https://chroniclevitae.com/news/241-training-ph-d-s-to-teach-where-the-jobs-are?cid=at&utm_source=at&utm_medium=en).