

Positioning Yourself for a Job in a Two-Year College

Tips for CV and Cover Letters:

Cover Letters

- Tie your cover letter directly to the announcement; discuss your background & skills in accordance with what they want, but don't stretch for a connection.
- Committees are interested in your teaching: use the letter to explain your teaching style, philosophy, and classroom environment.
- Show that you understand what a community college is looking for in an applicant; know the institution, the student population and the curriculum.

CVs

- Have clear, well-defined categories: education, teaching experience, college service or committee work, publication, presentations, grants & awards, related areas of interest or community involvement.
- Don't bury your education and teaching experience—on the first page, please.
- Include the range (and number) of courses taught (10 sections of Comp I, 3 sections of Basic Writing).
- Include any special course features, like service learning, themed sections, online courses.
- List everything you've done for a college, including things like, norming, assessing exit/entrance exams, the booth at the literary festival.

Preparing a Teaching Portfolio:

Use a large binder as your **main portfolio** to collect and store materials. Then for each interview, you can create individual comb-bounded portfolios with a representative sample of handouts, documents and current information tailored to each position. Copies are relatively inexpensive and can be given to each member of the search committee.

Include:

- A copy of your CV
- Your teaching philosophy
- An example syllabus
- Major assignment information sheets
- Description of the process for a particular assignment or course
- Handouts of effective classroom activities based on revising, peer review, group work, critical thinking, modeling, editing, etc
- Copy of a student paper with comments and a grade
- Samples of student and/or departmental evaluations
- Letters of recommendations
- Copy of transcripts
- If asked to do a teaching demonstration, the portfolio can include the rationale, instructions and handouts.

Before the Interview:

- If you've not taught in the department before, prepare a **mock syllabus** based on that department's program.
- Most departments have some sort of course guidelines or syllabus requirements. The chair may be able to give you a copy of these documents before an interview.
- A visit to the bookstore's website should show which texts are used for Basic Writing, Comp I & Comp II.
- Some faculty members' syllabi should be on the department's website.