



EXPANDING YOUR OPTIONS: PURSUING JOBS IN ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION

Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Teaching Center

302 Philosophy Hall ▪ 212-854-1066 ▪ smintz@columbia.edu

There's more to working in academia than securing a tenure-track faculty position at a large research university. If you have found serving on university committees challenging and interesting, if you enjoy working with other people and helping students, or if you have grown disinterested in academic publishing, then you might be interested in considering a job in university administration.

Colleges and universities abound with career opportunities beyond teaching and academic research. When you hear the phrase "university administration" you probably think of department chairs, deans, and college presidents, but in addition to the positions, colleges and universities offer a wide range of employment opportunities. Here are a few:

- Admissions
- Advising
- Alumni Relations
- Business & Finance
- Career Counseling
- Fund-Raising & Development
- Human Resources
- Institutional Research & Planning
- Public Relations & Communications
- Residential Life
- Student Affairs and Services
- Teaching Centers

Given the harsh realities of today's academic job market, administration offers a way to remain in a campus environment.

WHAT DO ADMINISTRATORS DO?

Many faculty members regard university administration as a nuisance, or worse. Many dismiss administrators as paper pushers, failed academics, or bureaucratic drones.

But higher education would not function without committed, hardworking administrators who take a broad view of the institution's and the students' interests. What, then, does an administrator do?

1. Administrators are managers.

An administrator manages budgets, personnel, and policy.

2. Administrators shape institutional priorities and practices.

3. Administration coordinate and communicate.

Administration requires constant teamwork and communication. Faculty members set their own schedules and are used to working alone. Administrators don't. Meetings and one-on-one conversations aren't an interruption of your work; they are your work.

Each realm of academic administration has its own responsibilities. For example:

Continuing Ed

Continuing education programs may include everything from career preparation, licensing and certification, and English as a second language, to distance learning, college preparation, and adult literacy courses. It programs may be for-credit or non-credit. Responsibilities include program development, evaluation, budgets, and marketing projects.

Student Affairs

Student affairs deals with the sort of intense controversies that land institutions in the headlines -- racial tensions, student alcohol abuse, suicide, and rape. If you are fond of university life and like to build community, this might be an area to explore.

Teaching Centers

Teaching centers assist graduate students and/or faculty members with everything from course design to classroom management, effective lecturing to leading successful discussions and labs, testing and grading to learning assessment. Teaching center personnel conduct workshops and classroom observations and may be involved with other matters, such as educational outreach, educational research, accreditation, and grantwriting. As in many centers, teaching center administrators serve on curriculum, accreditation, and search and fellowship committees, leading institution-wide task forces, and generally volunteer whenever possible to keep their program visible.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

It's never too late to ask yourself: What do I want professionally? Perhaps you define yourself primarily as a researcher and publisher. Or perhaps you love working with students, or developing programming.

Also, consider your personality and temperament. Do you like working with others, or do you prefer to work by yourself? Do you enjoy meetings, or hate them?

It is, in short, important to align your talents and interests with your career choice.

PLUSES AND MINUSES

All career decisions involve trade offs. Research and administration occupy different worlds, and you need to understand the differences.

1. Academic administration may involve less stress, including freedom from tenure pressure and more regular work hours, but it also may involve less job security.
2. Academic administration is collaborative. You will work with people every day. In many positions, socializing is part of the job. Your demeanor matters, and success depends on maintaining productive relations with a host of other faculty members, staff members, and administrators.
3. Academic administrators tend to be more mobile than faculty members. Fewer spend their career at a single college or university.
4. Academic administrators have a less flexible and more structured work schedule.
5. Academic administration must dress up.

Be especially aware of issues relating to credibility and authority. Faculty members believe strongly in the doctrine of shared governance. In practice, shared governance is taken to mean faculty decision making in hiring and curriculum. Faculty members expect to be consulted on many other matters.

It is very important to be sensitive to this concern with shared governance—and to have patience and a sense of humor. Universities are highly hierarchical, status conscious institutions. If you become an administrator—at any level—it can't be about your ego.

HOW FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS DIFFER

The lives of full-time faculty members and full-time administrators are different in significant ways. Here are some of the most important differences:

A different academic calendar:

Unlike academic appointments, which are for a nine-month academic year, administrative appointments are year round. Don't expect to have the same vacations that faculty members take (at Christmas, Spring break, and Summer). Professors typically are paid a salary based on the nine months of the academic year. Administrators are typically paid a 12-month salary.

A different daily schedule:

Your day to day schedule is fixed. It may not be 9 to 5. It may be longer. You are expected to be in your office, and people notice if you are not there. Your daily activities are structured by various meetings and deadlines. Don't expect to have the freedom of faculty life.

A new organizational role:

Faculty members work in isolation, but administrators work collaboratively. Also, if you are an administrator, you have a supervisor who you report to on a regular basis and who will—in addition to providing advice, support, and suggestions—will evaluate you regularly. If you decide to go into administration, it is essential that you enjoy working collaboratively.

Different relationships:

An administrator or staff member is not a faculty member, and don't expect to be treated by faculty as a peer.

Also, unlike faculty members, administrators must get along with many fellow workers: your supervisor, other administrators, staff members, faculty and students.

You have to make decisions:

Administrators must make decisions and sometimes those decisions will provoke criticism. As an administrator, you also have a responsibility for resolving conflicts. The best advice: Get used to criticism—and share credit.

Source of fulfillment:

Instead of counting success in terms of lines on the vita or good course evaluations, you must look for rewards in terms of institutional change or innovation. You will also become more interested in national academic organizations

THE HIRING PROCESS

1. *Get a sense of the administration jobs that are out there.*

See what skills, degrees, and experience are required.

Note: Some jobs may well disappear as a result of outsourcing, while others—notably distance ed, continuing ed, and for-profit institutions—will likely grow.

2. *Look before you leap.*

Consider taking a part-time job or an internship in some facet of administration. Find out what the job entails on a day-to-day basis, and whether you'd be happy doing that.

3. *Make it clear that you know what the job entails and how your skills apply.*

Unlike academic job ads, which tend to be highly general, administrator job ads are much more specific, listing responsibilities and priorities. Tailor your application to those priorities.

You won't get a job if it appears that this is just a “stop-gap” until something better comes along.

4. Convert your academic c.v. into an administrative resume.

Keep your resume brief. Adopt a “need to know” approach: Include only what is relevant for the position to which you are applying. Include your contact information, your educational credentials, any administrative functions you have performed (for example, curriculum projects or assessment and accreditation). Summarize your publications, fellowships, scholarly achievements, and teaching awards and insert specifics about any administrative assignments and duties.

5. Note that an administrative interview is very different from an academic interview.

A search for an academic administrator is very different than a search for a faculty member. You must be well prepared and knowledgeable and indicate that you have some relevant experience. Focus on the position. Be prepared to ask the right questions, especially about the expectations for the position.

Lists of job qualification usually omit the most important: fit. Fit is central in every search. Search committees are also looking at the human factors: collegiality, temperament, professionalism.

CAN YOU HAVE IT ALL?

Can you be an administrator and a teacher-scholar? When you enter administrator, are you saying good bye to research, publication, and teaching?

It depends. Some administrative jobs will allow you to teach. And if you are well organized, energetic, and driven, it is possible to continue to publish.

But academic administration is a full-time responsibility. Working in administration requires you to shift priorities. Networking and meetings are essential, including attending national meetings with other administrators. Grant writing might also be required. Your success as an administrator requires you to keep your eyes on your primary job responsibilities.

FINDING A POSITION

Job Listings

- **Academic Careers 360**
www.academic360.com

A meta-collection of Internet resources that have been gathered for the academic job hunter. It includes links to faculty, staff, and administrative announcements and is not restricted to teaching positions.

Go directly to a college's Human Resource page -- includes the 50 states and 13 Canadian provinces. **This is a great time saver** - rather than locating a college webpage and hunting for its HR page, this site takes you directly to the HR page.

- **Academic Careers On-Line**
www.academiccareers.com

Includes teaching and administrative jobs ranging from Pre-Kindergarten through colleges and universities and is available 24-hours a day, every day, from anywhere in the world.

- **Adjunct Nation**
www.adjunctnation.com

Adjunct Nation's JOB-LIST focuses on faculty job postings within higher education. In particular, the AdjunctNation.com JOB-LIST contains listings for both part-time, as well as full-time temporary college faculty appointments. Faculty jobs listed may be for part-time, adjunct, full-time temporary, visiting, sabbatical replacement and full-time regular (tenure-track/tenure) faculty. Non-faculty jobs are listed, as well. These jobs are primarily posted by companies looking to recruit workers with graduate degrees in specific disciplines (i.e. college textbook publishers). There are also postings for temporary faculty posted by

universities throughout Canada, Mexico, Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Australia and Africa.

- **After College Ph.D. & Post-Doc Jobs**

www.aftercollege.com/jobseekers

Job listings in academia and non-academic settings (health care, business, environment, sciences, etc.)

- **American Association of Community Colleges (AACC)**

<http://www.aacc.nche.edu/>

AACC is the primary advocacy organization for over 1000 two-year degree granting institutions. The CareerLine is a collection of online job announcements from the AACC *Community College Times*. The emphasis appears to be on upper-level administrative positions. Be careful that you don't bookmark the actual CareerLine page, the location changes with each update.

- **American College Personnel Association (ACPA)**

http://www.myacpa.org/car/car_op.cfm

ACPA is one of the oldest and largest student affairs professional associations. They sponsor a very well-organized placement service at their annual convention that attracts several hundred job seekers and employers. Their web site's extensive Ongoing Placement Service is an attempt to provide some of these same services year-round.

- **Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU)**

<http://www.ajcunet.edu/jobbank/homepage.htm>

Provides information on employment opportunities at Jesuit institutions through The Jesuit College Job Bank. Announcements include job title, category (admin, faculty, dean, etc.), school, position start date, and application deadline.

- **Association of Fraternity Advisors Jobline**

<http://www.fraternityadvisors.org/>

A new service provided by the Association of Fraternity Advisors. The page of job listings is restricted to association members and requires a user id and password.

- **Boston Consortium for Higher Education**

<http://www.boston-consortium.org/>

- **California State University Jobs**

<http://csucareers.calstate.edu/>

Links to positions at 24 California state universities.

- **Canadian Student Affairs and Services Job Inventory**

<https://www.cacuss.ca/en/jobs/jobInventory.htm>

Maintained by the Canadian Association of College & University Student Services (CACUSS), this site provides links to individual Canadian colleges and universities and maintains a subscribers only database of job announcements.

- **Chronicle of Higher Education - Career Network**

<http://www.chronicle.com/jobs/>

A listing of faculty, administrative, executive, and research positions from *The Chronicle of Higher Education's Academe This Week*. Focus is primarily on US institutions. Subscriber-based user ID and password are required to view current job listings. New jobs are posted every day and remain posted on the web for 30 days. One of the largest collections of higher education employment opportunities on the Internet.

- **City Colleges of Chicago**

http://ccc.edu/HR_Level2_Jobs.shtml

Full and part-time faculty positions at Daley, Harold Washington, Kennedy-King, Malcolm X, Olive Harvey, Truman, and Wright College

- **Collaboration for the Advancement of College Teaching & Learning**

<http://www.collab.org/>

Lists teaching and related higher education jobs at institutions in Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin, and at historically black and tribally-affiliated colleges and universities around the country. Offered as part of The Collaboration's commitment to supporting and enhancing student learning, this listing includes faculty, administrative, and student services employment opportunities at institutions that are members of The Collaboration.

- **Community College Job Board**

<http://www.collegejobs.com/>

Contains a moderate size collection of faculty and administrative positions at community colleges. Users also have the opportunity to post their resume online. The site is maintained by Schindler & Associates, an executive search/organizational development firm that focuses on the community college sector.

- **Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCU)**

<http://www.cccu.org/>

A listing of administrative and faculty job announcements provided by the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. Position openings are listed as either faculty or non-teaching/administrative and include both member and non-member affiliated institutions.

- **Diverse Issues in Higher Education Job Page**

<http://www.diverseeducation.com/>

Diverse Issues in Higher Education (formerly Black Issues in Higher Education) has been at the forefront for the past twenty years. Leaders from academe, industry and public policy have all come to rely on this award-winning news magazine to stay abreast of the trends and issues that go to the very core of the future of this country and its place in an ever-changing world.

- **Educareer**

<http://www.educareer.com/>

A web site focusing on employment opportunities in higher education. The site offers three different addresses for their listings: [GradAsst.com](#), [Post-Docs.com](#), [UJobBank.com](#)

- **HigherEdJobs.com**

<http://www.higheredjobs.com/>

Lists over 5,000 faculty and administrative positions at over 600 colleges and universities. One of the largest collections of higher education positions on the Internet. New jobs are added daily. Job seekers can register to receive job postings via email. They can also save their resume/vita and apply for positions electronically. The service is free for job seekers.

- **Hercjobs.org**

www.hercjobs.org

- **Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education**

<http://www.hispanicoutlook.com/listings.htm>

Published bi-weekly for the campus community, the web site provides a listings of employment opportunities in higher education categorized by geographical region.

- **Jesuit Association of Student Personnel Administrators (JASPA)**

<http://jaspa.creighton.edu/>

JASPA web site provides a small listing of student personnel positions at JASPA member institutions.

- **Job Guide for Humanities & Social Sciences**

<http://www.h-net.org/>

Positions for professors and instructors in History and the Humanities, Social Science, and Rhetoric and Communications

- **Jobs in Women's Studies**

<http://www.nwsa.org/employ/wost.php>

Employment opportunities in women's studies or related fields/positions, from the National Women's Studies Association

- **LGBT Resources**

<http://www.lgbtcampus.org/jobs/>

The National Consortium of Directors of Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Resources in Higher Education maintains a small collection of job opportunities

- **Minorities' Job Bank**

<http://www.iminorities.com/>

Carries an extensive listing of private, public, and academic sector positions. The site includes the opportunity to post resumes, browse employer/member profiles, and read career-related articles. Special sections provide additional information for African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Native-Americans, and Women.

- **NACE Job Wire**

<http://www.naceweb.org/jobwire/>

National Association of Colleges and Employers job page for positions in college and university career centers.

- **Midwest Ace Job Page**
- **Eastern ACE Job Page**
- **Mountain Pacific ACE**
- **Southeastern ACE**
- **Southwestern ACE**

- **National Academic Advising Association**

<http://www.naspa.org/career/default.cfm>

Positions for academic advisors listed by 11 regions.

- **National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)**

NASPA is a professional organization consisting of faculty, staff, administrators, and graduate students at higher education institutions. Vacancy announcements submitted to the NASPA web site have included a wide range of positions in the academic sector and can be accessed by job category or specific job title

- **National Association for College Admission Counseling**

<http://www.nacacnet.org/CareerDevelopment/Pages/default.aspx>

Job Listings for high school College Counselors and Advisors, and college/university Admissions and Enrollment counselors

- **NationJob's Education Listings**
<http://www.nationjob.com/education/>

A privately-held corporation based in Des Moines, Iowa, provides a weekly listing of educational positions ranging from kindergarten through college with a wide-range of higher education positions. The focus is primarily on the Midwest.

- **Non-Academic Employers Who Hire Ph.D.s**
<http://www.phds.org/jobs/nonacademic-careers/nonacademic-employers-that-hire-phds/>

- **Positions in Counseling Centers**
<http://www2.kumc.edu/people/l/long/picc/>

A clearinghouse for job opportunities at university & college counseling centers, sponsored by the Association of University & College Counseling Center Directors

- **The Registry (California Community Colleges)**
<https://www.cccregistry.org/jobs/index.aspx>

The California Community College Faculty and Staff Diversity Registry was created in 1989 to help with the diversity efforts of California community colleges. The Registry is a computerized database that provides colleges with names, addresses, and qualifications of candidates interested in higher education positions. Additional resources for the public include the Registry JobBank and a complete listing of all California community colleges with URLs, phone numbers, and addresses.

- **Sell-Out**
www.ironstring.com/sellout/

A resource for PhDs considering careers beyond the university

- **StudentAffairs.com**
www.studentaffairs.com/jobs/

Created by, and for, people with a student affairs background, the employment section allows you to search by category, state or province, institution, region, or keyword.

- **University Job Bank**
www.ujobbank.com/index.html

Faculty/staff positions, post-doctoral positions, student employment, non-academic positions

- **University of Minnesota - Ed Jobs U Seek**
education.umn.edu/jobs

The University of Minnesota College of Education and Human Development provides this listing of education-related positions in the US. Vacancies are listed under five categories: Administration, Higher Education, Human Development, Licensed, and Teaching.

- **Women in Higher Education**
www.wihe.com

Monthly journal carries announcements from schools that are actively seeking qualified women candidates for faculty and administrative positions. The web site allows you to search by job title and/or geographical region.