ARE Job Market Meeting Notes

Meeting hosted by Peter and Sofia, notes and typos by Leslie

Wednesday, June 9

The information package and forms are available online at http://areweb.berkeley.edu/job_resources.php

- Drop everything. No field trips. No additional data. No new projects or side papers. It should just be just you and your job market paper from now until November.

- You job market paper must be ready in September even though it won’t be mailed out until November. Give a draft to Sofia and Peter by August 1st.

- Prepare 2-minute, 5-minute, and 10-minute descriptions of your research. Write these down. They should be compact. There’s no time for weasel words, what you were once working on, etc. Practice these on everyone you meet, anywhere. Each of these must be accessible to non-economists, and must be interesting to economists who are not in your field. Whip these out every time you’re asked “so, what are you working on?”

- Ask your advisor if you are ready. Ask Peter and Sofia too.

- You can’t try out the job market to see how it goes. You can only go on the job market once with ARE department support. By September 8th, if you decide to go on the market, commit by signing the six forms in the packet: your commitment form, your advisor’s approval, reference forms, permission to release documents.

- Talk with your advisors and committee members constantly, in person as much as possible. You will soon be asking them for references, and they need to know your work well. Talk with them repeatedly about your progress on your paper. You’ll probably only get them to read one written draft carefully. Provide your advisors with cheat sheets with concrete details that highlight why your research is innovative, inspired, well-thought out, etc.; Sofia and Peter will give us examples.

- Schedule a practice job market talk for the early fall. Invite faculty members to come to your presentation. Present at least once in Giannini because our faculty is less likely to show up at seminars in other buildings. Don’t just present in field seminars; you want to make sure to also get feedback from faculty members who are not in your field.

- Prepare your website early. We need to follow the new department template (not last year’s template)

- Make sure to clean up all other websites, blogs, facebook pages, dating profiles, etc. At the beginning of the job market process, people are looking for any reason to not hire you.

- Prepare a one page single-sided CV. Carry it around. Give it to people.

- Join at least one of the constituent societies (AEA, AAEA, etc).

- Go to conferences (AAEA, environmental World Congress, etc) and ask your advisors to introduce you to people. When in public dress like a banker and drink only soda water.
• Put on extra weight. Think 200 lb gorilla. ;) You need to dominate the room when you present or discuss your work. You need to look like you can handle 400 undergrads in Econ 1a.

• When housing is available for the AEA meetings, get a room right away! You want to be as close to the headquarters and interview hotels as possible.

• Go to the econ job market meeting and figure out which student who’s not on the market will be holding the master list of interview rooms. Befriend that person.

• The world will end after Thanksgiving. It is very important that everything be sent in before the Thanksgiving rush. Anything sent afterward will be ignored.

• Anything late or incomplete will also be thrown away. Particularly this year, schools will be receiving piles of applications that are 9 feet deep. They will use any excuse to get to make that pile smaller.

• Apply broadly. Possible exceptions: theoretical econometrics or macro positions. If the advertised job sounds like an impossible mix of fields, apply.

• ARE will be in charge of filing faculty references electronically and, if need be, nagging faculty references about your reference letters. They are due to the department by October 6th. Keep this in mind when scheduling your presentation if your advisors won’t have had the chance to see you present your work before then.

• The introduction is the most important part of your job market paper. It should follow a very different format than any introduction for any other paper you’ll write. Work on the intro, polish the intro. The intro is what your supporters will use to promote you to others.

• Only deviate from the standard cover letter if there’s something really non-obvious (i.e. they’re advertising for someone with experience in India and even though your job market paper has nothing to do with India, you worked there for years before coming to grad school). If they’re looking for someone in development and you’re in development, you don’t need to send a special cover letter. The best reason to deviate from the standard letter is if someone here or there invites you to submit an application. If that happens, highlight it.

• During the interviews, don’t hang out with your classmates, it will just stress you out.

• Stay enthusiastic. Be excited about your research, even the 60th time that you discuss it. The job market is all about marketing.

• Recruiters want to know that you have other ideas, but...

• Only mention working papers if you can present such a paper immediately upon request, or you will be scorned for the rest of your academic career. Never make anything up, ever. Make sure that you only put in your vita things that you can back up, present about, etc.

• Also, be specific. Don’t say that you want for your next project to be “about climate change.”

• Having other papers on your website is generally a good thing, except that unpolished papers can hurt you. Check with your advisors if in doubt.

• Find out where you are in the market. If you have an offer that’s at your level, take it.

• You want offers, particularly early offers, because universities react to candidates with an offer like sharks do to blood.