

**AMST 590: SEMINAR IN AMERICAN STUDIES – THE ACADEMIC JOB
MARKET**

FALL 2016 – THURSDAYS 2:50-5:40 P.M. – CUE 114

Professor Lisa Guerrero

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(E-mail is the preferred method for reaching the professor. It is also the method that will yield the quickest response.)

Office Hours: Tuesdays 12 p.m.-2 p.m., and by appointment

This graduate seminar will prepare students to enter the academic job market. The course will focus on: identifying relevant job and fellowship opportunities; positioning oneself with consideration to both the market and one's own professional goals; preparing essential documents for a professional academic dossier; practicing and fine-tuning interview skills; and improving writing strategies. The course will be largely be run as a workshop that will require consistent student contribution and participation.

Required Texts (listed alphabetically by author):

1. Maggie Berg and Barbara Seeber. The Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy
2. Karen Kelsky. The Professor Is In: The Essential Guide to Turning Your Ph.D. into a Job

Recommended Texts (listed alphabetically by author):

1. Susan Basalla and Maggie Debelius. "So What Are You Going to Do With That?": Finding Careers Outside of Academia
2. Paul Silvia. How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing
3. Paul Silvia. Write it Up: Practical Strategies for Writing and Publishing Journal Articles

All texts are available for order online, and as e-books.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- (1) Improve students' understanding of the landscape of the academic job search
- (2) Introduce students to the expectations of applying for academic jobs
- (3) Develop students' writing strategies and productivity
- (4) Draft a complete academic dossier

Course Requirements:

• **General Requirement**

Students are expected to do course readings prior to class and come prepared to

participate in course discussions and activities. Class is run in a workshop style with the expectation that students will actively engage in the in-class assignments and drive the discussions.

- **Participation (10% of final grade)**

Your attendance at each meeting is required. You need to arrive on time and participate in an informed and consistent manner. You are expected to be **present intellectually as well as physically** in the classroom. This means that not only must you attend, but that you must endeavor to contribute to the flow and body of the course. You will be expected to prepare carefully for each class by completing any required readings by the day on which they are listed in the course schedule, reading and commenting on any peer's work to be discussed during particular classes, and submitting your drafts in a timely manner so that your peers may read and comment on your work. This course asks you to think about and contribute your own questions about academia and the academic job market, to respond critically to course readings, and to participate actively in class discussion and debate. If you do not: 1) participate in an informed manner, (in other words, in a way that is not merely personal opinion or conjecture, but rather demonstrates you have both done the reading and critically considered it); or 2) participate at all, your grade will be significantly affected.

- **Job and Fellowship announcements (10% of final grade)**

Each week each student is responsible for bringing a hard copy of 1-2 current job and/or fellowship announcements to class. Students will briefly introduce the opportunities to the class. Students will turn in the hard copies with the link clearly identified at the top of the announcement for credit. The professor will collect the weekly links in a file on Blackboard for everyone's future reference.

- **Dossier Documents and Peer Review (20% of final grade)**

Throughout the term students will be writing and fine-tuning the central documents that will form their professional academic dossiers. These documents include: cover letter; teaching statement; and research OR diversity statement. The drafts of each of these will be due to the professor via email on a designated **Wednesday** before class meets on Thursday. The professor will randomly forward each student's draft to another peer in the class. In class on Thursday students will bring **2 copies** of comments on their assigned drafts, one for the professor, one for their peer, and will spend time in class workshopping their drafts with one another.

- **Teaching Demo and Job Talk (10% of final grade)**

In the second half of the term each student will present a mock teaching demonstration and a mock job talk. For the mock teaching demonstration students will be assigned a topic and/or reading relevant to the job opening they have chosen to focus on during the term. After having been assigned a topic, the student will prepare a 40-minute teaching demonstration that they will present to the rest of the class on their scheduled date. During each student's teaching demonstration the rest of the students will be the audience. The professor will assign particular behaviors and personalities often

encountered during teaching demonstrations to each non-presenting student the day of the presentations.

For the mock job talk each student will prepare a 30-minute presentation on some aspect of her research project or area of research. After the presentation each student will respond to a 15-minute Q&A. Like the teaching demonstration “the audience” will be assigned personalities and particular questions typically encountered during academic job talks.

• **Weekly writing goals and weekly writing session (20% of final grade)**

Each week students will be responsible for setting a writing goal for the week. The first weeks’ goals should be easily attainable with each subsequent weeks’ goals expanding in ambition as students become more aware of their consistent writing practices. Each weeks’ goals will be written down and turned in, with progress/achievement toward the goal recorded and discussed the following week.

In addition to these larger writing goals, students will engage in a sustained 15-minute writing session in class each week. Again, a goal will be set for each 15-minute session. This exercise will aid in creating consistent writing practice, as well as gaining a stronger sense of what can be accomplished in shorter stretches of time and how to organize writing into smaller parts.

• **Complete Dossier (30% of final grade)**

At the end of the term you will submit a complete dossier connected to one of your chosen job announcements. Your dossier **must** include the following:

1. Cover letter
2. Teaching Statement
3. CV
4. Writing sample (minimum 15 pages – maximum 25 pages)

Your dossier **may also** include the following:

1. Research statement
2. Diversity statement
3. Your request letter to your letter writers

Complete dossier is due on Friday, December 16, 2016 by 4 p.m. to my mailbox in Wilson 111.

Course Policies:

Written Work

• Written work to be graded should be typed using a 12-point font, double-spaced (unless otherwise specified), spell checked, and proofread.

• **I WILL NOT ACCEPT THE FINAL DOSSIER VIA EMAIL. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Late Assignments: Late assignments must be negotiated with the professor. I will not accept late dossiers.

Incompletes: I reserve “Incompletes” **ONLY** for students who are on their deathbeds or are experiencing a comparable catastrophic event. Everyone else will receive a grade

in my class. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Communicating in the classroom: While it is obvious that we should avoid abusive and hateful speech, given that we must deal with plenty of that everywhere else, I also want to encourage you to exercise your academic freedoms in thoughtful, intellectually honest discourse. So, speak your mind. Just remember as you do so, people can disagree without being disrespectful.

Plagiarism: Really? I would hope that in a graduate seminar I would not have to remind people that academic dishonesty of any sort, particularly plagiarism, will NOT be tolerated. The penalty for academic dishonesty is at the professor's discretion. In the case of my graduate seminars, if any academic dishonesty is discovered it will result in an automatic "F" in the course. No discussion. Period. Accordingly, make sure you are familiar with the university's policies on plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty so you are well informed as to what constitutes a violation. Finally, be aware that plagiarism includes not providing proper citation for ANY work including information found on any website, book, pamphlet, etc., as well as copying in full or part someone else's work, (including fellow students AND yourself from a previous essay or project without proper citation.).

Grade Problems: During the semester use my office hours to talk to me about any problems you are having with your progress and/or evaluations for the course so we can try to fix any bad situation **early**, before it's too late. You must communicate any problems you may be having that are affecting your coursework early on so that I am aware of the situation as I continue to evaluate your work. Any explanations for poor performance, relevant or not, will not be accepted at the end of the semester and will have no effect on your final grade. Please do not come to ask me to change your grade after you have failed the course. Also, do not come to ask me to give you an "I" because you are failing or have failed the course.

Disability Accommodation

Students with Disabilities: Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please either visit or call the Access Center (Washington Building 217; 509-335-3417) to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations MUST be approved through the Access Center. Please notify me during the first week of class of any approved accommodations needed for the course.

Campus Safety

Washington State University is committed to maintaining a safe environment for its faculty, staff, and students. Safety is the responsibility of every member of the campus community and individuals should know the appropriate actions to take when an emergency arises. In support of our commitment to the safety of the campus community the University has developed a Campus Safety Plan, <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu>. It is highly recommended that you visit this web site as well as the University emergency management web site at <http://oem.wsu.edu/> to become familiar with the information provided.

[Your continued enrollment in this course after the first week means that you have read and understand the information contained within this syllabus, and that you agree to follow the procedures and rules explained within it.]

• **Grade Breakdown:**

By Grade Point:

A = 4.0

A- = 3.8

B+ = 3.5

B = 3.0

B- = 2.8

C+ = 2.5

C = 2.0

C- = 1.8

D+ = 1.5

D = 1.0

F = 0

By 100 Point Grading Scale

94-100 = A

90-93 = A-

87-89 = B+

83-86 = B

80-82 = B-

77-79 = C+

73-76 = C

70-72 = C-

67-69 = D+

63-66 = D

60-62 = D-

0-59 = F

CLASS SCHEDULE

[Schedule subject to change. Any modifications will be announced in class.]

Thursday, August 25:

Introductions

- **Setting up course structure**
- **Writing “examples” assignment for September 1**
- **Writing strategies**

Thursday, September 1:

The Academic Profession

- **Why?**
- **Expectations vs. realities**
- **Professional priorities**

Thursday, September 8:

The Job Search – Where to Begin

- **What type of job am I looking for?**
- **Am I a fit for this job?**
- **Who else is applying for this job?**
- **Post-docs**
- **Tailoring documents**

READ: *The Professor Is In* – Parts I, II, and VIII
DUE BY 5 PM, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14: Letter of Intent/Introduction due to professor via email

Thursday, September 15:
The Job Search – The Documents: Letter of Intent

READ: *The Professor Is In* – Parts III and IV
DUE BY 5 PM, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21: Teaching Statement due to professor via email

Thursday, September 22:
The Job Search – The Documents: Teaching Statement

DUE BY 5 PM, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28: Research OR Diversity Statement due to professor via email

Thursday, September 29:
The Job Search – The Documents: Writing sample; Letters of recommendation; CV; research statement; diversity statement

READ: Handouts on diversity statements

Thursday, October 6:
The Job Search – The Interview: Preparing

- phone/skype interview
- conference interview
- campus interview

READ: *The Professor Is In* – Part V

Thursday, October 13:
The Job Search – The Campus Interview: The Teaching Demo

Thursday, October 20:
The Job Search – The Campus Interview: The Teaching Demo

Thursday, October 27:
The Job Search – The Campus Interview: The Job Talk

Thursday, November 3:
The Job Search – The Campus Interview: The Job Talk

SIGN-UP FOR POTLUCK

Thursday, November 10:

The Job Search – The Campus Interview: Meals and Social interactions

IN CLASS POTLUCK

Thursday, November 17:

NO CLASS

Thursday, November 24:

NO CLASS – Thanksgiving break

Thursday, December 1:

To Be, Or Not To Be...a Professor

- job offers
- negotiating
- how long to stay on the market
- alt/ac

READ: *The Professor Is In* – Parts VII and X

Thursday, December 8:

You're a Professor...now what?

READ: *The Slow Professor*

Friday, December 16, 2016

**Complete dossier due in professor's mailbox in Wilson 111 by 4 p.m.
(No assignments accepted via e-mail. No late papers will be accepted. No exceptions.)**