

CAC/SCÉC Toronto 2015
APPROACHING CAREERS Friday, May 22
(Session 1: EM 119)

Speakers

Bonnie MacLachlan (chair): University of Western Ontario

Lisa Hughes (coordinator): University of Calgary

Myles McCallum (coordinator): St. Mary's University

Riccardo Bertolazzi: University of Calgary

Mary Deminion: University of Western Ontario

Michele George: McMaster University

Allison Glazebrook: Brock University

Alison Keith: University of Toronto

Approaching Careers with Graduate Degrees in Classics: A Roundtable Discussion

With the number of academic appointments decreasing, universities are increasingly faced with pressures to create new graduate programs and recruit students. As Classicists in Canadian institutions, are we acknowledging and/or equipping our graduate students with the transferable skills that open the possibility for success in varied career paths? This question is part of a larger national discussion, sparked by collaborators from McGill University in the "White Paper on the Future of the PhD in the Humanities" who advocate "that it is in the power of the university to transform the humanities PhD into a program able to train young scholars for a multiplicity of fulfilling careers, contribute formatively to the public good, and strengthen the academic institution of the humanities itself as a participant in the political world"(5).

The time is ripe not only to discuss, but also to implement institutional support for our students to discover a broad range of career paths. To explore these possibilities this round table discussion invites graduate students, faculty members, and administrators to create dialogue about how we can better meet the needs of a growing graduate student population and promote Classical Studies in Canada in new and creative ways. Participants will be asked to provide informative commentary on the basis of their personal experiences and in view of the select resources provided below. Our objectives are to address the following:

- institutional resources available to graduate students (e.g., Career Services, internships, etc.);
- curriculum initiatives (e.g., interdisciplinary degrees, coursework, Candidacy and thesis requirements);
- collaborative efforts between supervisors, graduate students, and those outside of the academy;
- opportunities available to graduate students outside of the academy;
- apprehensions faced by graduate students, faculty, and administrators with respect to careers outside of the academy.

The goal is not diminish or reduce the possibilities for graduate students in Classical Studies to pursue the professoriate, but rather broaden the career possibilities for our students in general.

**Approaching Careers with Graduate Degrees in Classics:
the view from a large graduate department.
Alison Keith, Victoria College, University of Toronto**

This paper addresses the challenge of identifying multiple career opportunities for graduate students of Classics outside the Academy from the perspective of a large Canadian graduate Department of Classics. I contextualize the ‘academic job market’ (not only in Classics but in the Humanities and Social Sciences more broadly) in the light of Marc Bousquet’s 2008 left-wing labour-market analysis of the tertiary education sector in the United States, in order to suggest why humanities departments offering doctoral degrees are now under pressure both to increase intake into their programs and to broaden the training of graduate students to include skills that are transferable to career paths outside the Academy.

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**Approaching Careers with Graduate Degrees in Classics:
the view from a large graduate department
Alison Keith, Victoria College, University of Toronto**

My paper kicks off our panel addressing the challenge of identifying multiple career opportunities for graduate students of Classics both within and outside of the Academy. I will speak from the perspective of a large Canadian graduate Department of Classics and contextualize the ‘academic job market’ (not only in Classics but in the Humanities and Social Sciences more broadly) in the light of Marc Bousquet’s left-wing labour-market analysis of the tertiary education sector in the United States, *How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low-Wage Nation*. My purpose is to suggest why humanities departments offering doctoral degrees are now under pressure not only to increase intake into their programs but also to broaden the training of graduate students to include skills that are transferable to career paths outside the Academy.

In his chilling account of *How the University Works*, an excellent 2008 analysis of the American academy subtitled *Higher education and the Low-Wage Nation*, Bousquet subjects the tertiary education sector in the United States to a left-wing labour-market analysis, beginning with an examination of how the term ‘academic job market’ came to be coined in the late 1960s and then popularized in the famous 1989 report on *Prospects for Faculty* by William G. Bowen and Julie Ann Sosa, respectively the President of Princeton University and a Princeton undergraduate, then Editor of the Princeton student newspaper.¹ Originally, as Bousquet points out, ‘the term “job market” described an annual face-to-face event’ at the Modern Languages Association convention, rather than ‘an ongoing systemic reality’ (192). Established in 1955 to

¹ M. Bousquet, *How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low Wage Nation*. New York and London: New York University Press, 2008. W.G. Bowen and J.A. Sosa, *Prospects for the Faculty in the Arts and Sciences: A Study of Factors Affecting Demand and Supply, 1987 to 2012*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989.

modernize and rationalize a hiring process that had hitherto been conducted informally (i.e., unprofessionally) by the old-boy network, the MLA 'Job Mart' (initially called the 'Faculty Exchange') was a two-room system: in one room, the Association collected the dossiers of all the job seekers for Department Chairs to peruse. In another room, job seekers waited for messages from Chairs requesting interviews. This system was replaced after 1969, when it had broken down because of the difficulty of locating not candidates but jobs. In 1971, having scrapped the Job Mart, the MLA initiated the Job Information Service, which published job listings rather than collecting candidate dossiers. As a result, Bousquet concludes, the 'job market' was no longer constituted as an event arranged by the association but rather had become 'an external system or force that the association was obliged to provide information about' (192-3). Classics, in this as in most things, followed in the wake of the MLA. When I was looking for a job at the 1987 meeting of the society formerly known as the American Philological Association, I sent in my CV for inclusion in the CV Book, which was made available to Departments using the Placement Service to look for candidates for their jobs—even though I also sent individual letters of application to over 50 schools, along with my dossier (including my CV). But I did get one interview at that convention with a university to which I had not applied, because the department reps in attendance had looked through the CV Book and identified me as a Canadian (that was back in the day when Canadian universities were legally obliged to look for Canadian candidates first).

Ironically, the institutionalization of the MLA's Job Information Service was the moment in which the market analogy was literalized, as the Modern Language Association (soon to be followed by the American Philological Association) deemed the traffic in positions something that needed to be reported on continuously to the academic community. The 1970 Orr report to

the MLA, 'The Job Market in English and Foreign Languages',² effectively created a new lens of analysis in terms of an 'academic labour market', by applying the language of supply and demand to the academy – supply of and demand for the 'product', viz. PhDs. This economic rhetoric enabled him and his successors to theorize about 'balancing' the market by 'controlling' or 'regulating' supply (195), even as they recognized the very real problem of increasing demand on the part of academic institutions for flexible (i.e., contingent) labour. Yet by 1980, the job market had been institutionalized as the focus of economic and sociological analysis of the academy, with the concomitant rationalization of the processes of casualization and contingency as 'fluctuations in demand' (199). As Bousquet well puts it, a circular and self-authenticating market rhetoric accounted for these fluctuations in demand: "because the system is a market, it naturally fluctuates; because the system fluctuates, it must be a market" (199). Since the 1980s, the MLA and the APA/SCS have charted 'the market', showing the hills and valleys of a kind of 'business cycle' in academic job opportunities and suggesting that it operates 'according to perfectly understandable and rational principles'. And the 1989 Bown report is 'in many respects the fullest development of this mode of thinking' (200), subtitled as it was 'A Study of Factors Affecting Demand and Supply, 1987-2012' (and hence its continuing relevance to us all).

This famous report assumed that retiring and other departing faculty in the 1990s and first decade of the new millennium would be replaced 'on a one-for-one basis' by PhDs (25, quoted in Bousquet 202), despite the evidence of nearly twenty years, even then (i.e., from 1970 to 1987), that part-time faculty had almost doubled in relation to full-time faculty. Moreover, even where faculty numbers remained constant, there had been a substantial increase in the number of students. More generally, however, the one-to-one replacement of full time faculty had taken (and continues to take) the form not of tenure-track professors but of sessional and adjunct

² D. Orr, 'The Job Market in English and Foreign Languages', *PMLA* 85.5 (October 1970), 1185-98.

instructors, to say nothing of other kinds of contingent labour, such as that supplied by graduate students. How could Bowen have gotten it so wrong, you ask? Precisely by excluding from his analysis the majority of academic workers—students, full-time lecturers, and part-time faculty, whose labour makes universities work by delivering just-in-time instruction to the ever-increasing numbers of undergraduates enrolling in post-secondary educational institutions. This is the trend that I see continuing in the academy.

In this context, it is perhaps worth noting that Canadian universities are normally **required** to advertise their positions in the Canadian tertiary education magazine *University Affairs*, but only **encouraged** to circulate their advertisements to discipline-specific job information lists all of which are now electronic. Yet anecdotal evidence suggests that most Canadian job seekers are looking at electronic media rather than the national academic news magazine, even if *University Affairs* trumpets itself on its website as ‘Canada’s best academic job listing’ and prominently advertises not only a ‘Career Advice’ page but also, on its dedicated ‘Blogs’ page, a link to the ‘Careers Café’, a blog promising ‘to help you kick-start your career’.³ For that reason it is common to post openings in both *CCB* and the SCS/APA ‘Positions for Classicists’, both of which are electronic publications.

Given the paucity of jobs in Canada, and Canadian employers’ desire to advertise their positions internationally, it makes good sense to pay even closer attention to the SCS’ job information list, ‘Positions for Classicists and Archaeologists’.⁴ A new Placement Service web site was advertised in November 2011 on the APA website (available at the placement.apaclassics.org website address), as it then was, and billed as ‘permit[ting] both candidates and institutions to register and to submit scheduling information online and to see

³ *University Affairs*: www.universityaffairs.ca/; Career Advice: www.universityaffairs.ca/Careers.aspx; Careers Café: www.universityaffairs.ca/careers-cafe/.

⁴ http://apaclassics.org/index.php/placement_service/

their schedules filled out as specific interview times are assigned. Registered candidates w[ould] also be able to see new position listings as soon as texts of those listings [we]re received and reviewed'. Even as it was noted 'that this new web site for registered candidates [would] only supplement—[and] not replace—the traditional monthly listings of new positions that appear on the SCS and AIA web sites', candidates were assured that while the 'traditional listings perform a number of valuable functions for the field, [the APA] look[ed] forward to giving active job candidates *the earliest possible access* to new listings' (emphasis added). The unstated assumption that the earlier one sees the job posting, the faster one secures a job, reflects the profession's uncritical acceptance of the reality of an academic job market, but seems especially absurd in the context of the low number of tenure-track posts advertised this year.

Traditionally the April SCS/APA jobs list has a proportionately higher number of temporary posts than continuing positions, and we can expect more temporary positions to be advertised as the spring and summer continue. This annual rhythm, with tenure-track jobs advertised in the fall and temporary posts in the winter and spring, matches Universities' budget cycles, which typically see requests for tenure-track hires submitted to the central administration in the summer and approved in early fall, in time for the American research-intensive universities to interview candidates at the SCS/APA. The cycle supports the teaching needs and resource bases of the rich, mostly private, research intensive institutions; inconveniences poor, public and small private institutions, which often learn that they have teaching needs (and modest financial resources) for the following academic year only at the close of their budget year in April or May; especially disadvantages job seekers, all of whom must travel to the SCS/APA if they wish to network for the few jobs yet advertised; and pits graduate school against graduate school, friends at every rank against friends at every rank. The annual meeting of the Classical Association of Canada, coming at the end of the academic year, can be a less fraught setting for job seekers but

still has a role to play in networking, especially for the temporary positions that dominate the Canadian Classics landscape.

To sum up the trends in Classics that I have identified for job seekers and hiring institutions alike: continuing positions are few and far between; temporary posts proliferate while public post-secondary institutions see government funding shrink even as student numbers increase; and aging faculty are reluctant to retire when they see that normative lines (i.e., tenured and tenure-track positions) will be reallocated to business schools and faculties of management. Let me conclude, however, on a more optimistic note, and one that specifically addresses whether there might be both advantages and disadvantages to securing Limited Term Appointments (LTAs).

In this regard, the academic cultures of Canada and America diverge in certain respects, and the differences give me some cause for cautious optimism about the state of Canadian Classics. Despite the fact that far fewer tenure-track jobs are advertised annually in this country than in our great neighbour to the south, they tend to come with better benefits and higher pay, and these advantages are replicated at every level of the system from the professoriate to graduate instructors. LTAs in Canada too are not only better remunerated and resourced than in the States, but may also lead to continuing (i.e., tenure-track) employment in this country. One reason this is the case is that labour law is so much more robust in Canada than in the States. Whatever one may think of labour unions—and for all that academics conventionally view themselves as lefties, they nonetheless generally disavow the need to organize intellectual labour—it must be acknowledged that unions have secured consistently better employment conditions for academics in Canada than the vast majority of individual entrepreneurs who compete for jobs in the US, and this too goes for every sector of academic employment in Canada, from graduate student teaching assistants to part-time and sessional faculty, to the professoriate. Many part-time and sessional

faculty unions, as well as faculty unions, in this country have negotiated clauses in their contracts that require the full-time / part-time faculty ratio to remain within a certain fixed horizon and therefore necessitate the transfer of part-time faculty into full-time positions when the ratio exceeds the agreed-upon horizon. In addition, employment law has tended to recognize the de facto tenure of long-serving sessional instructors (five years and more), seeing them as continuing members of the faculty (though that is one reason why so few universities will employ an LTA for longer than three years any more). Furthermore, unlike in the States, where incumbents are not always the favoured applicants for a tenure-stream post—whatever one hears about ‘inside’ candidates—in Canada, incumbent sessional instructors often have a distinct advantage over outside applicants when a department can secure the funds for a continuing line.

For these reasons, I remain cautiously optimistic about the academic labour market in Canada. Reading Marc Bousquet’s sophisticated analysis of the American academic labour market is admittedly a sobering experience, not only for graduate students and recent PhDs but also for experienced administrators who wish to improve the teaching environment for their faculty and graduate students, and the learning environment for their graduate students and undergraduates. But it is a particularly schizophrenic experience for Canadians, because his panacea—labour solidarity across academic hierarchies—looks a lot like our university workplaces. Thus he sees ‘at the forefront of [the] nonmarket or market-regulation approach’ (that he advocates) ‘to the “job crisis” ... the union movements of graduate employees and adjunct academic labor’, which I witness on a daily basis at the University of Toronto, and especially this past academic year when the threat of strikes by both the TA union and the sessional union **at the same time** brought considerably strengthened job security to the latter.

In this context, humanities departments offering doctoral degrees are now under pressure not only to increase intake into their programs but also to broaden the training of graduate

students to include skills that are transferable to career paths outside the Academy.

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Approaching Careers with Graduate Degrees in Classics: Alt-Ac Careers

**Mary Deminion, PhD Candidate
University of Western Ontario**

Tips for Making the Alt-Ac Transition

- Recognize that most graduates will not land tenure track jobs (and that doesn't mean failure!)
- Get support from a mentor or career sponsor
- Broaden your focus: academia can be very insular and isolating
- Think about your interests, experience, and skills – recognize that you have much to offer employers beyond academia
- Update your CV and your résumé simultaneously

Transferable Skills

- Communication skills (in multiple languages)
- Presentation skills
- Problem solving
- Analytical abilities
- Research
- Teaching

Professional Development Opportunities:

- Departmental/Faculty workshops and courses
- Universities career counseling centres
- Networking
- Volunteering
- Committee Work
- Student Leadership Positions (e.g. Student Union, Teaching Assistants Union, Graduate Affairs Committee Representatives, etc.)

Resources

Websites:

My Grad Skills

<https://www.mygradskills.ca/>

The Versatile PhD

<http://versatilephd.com/>

From PhD to Life

<http://fromphdtolife.com/>

The Professor Is In

<http://theprofessorisin.com/>

Sellout: A Resource for PhDs Considering Careers Beyond the University

<http://www.ironstring.com/sellout/>

Non-Academic Career Options for PhDs in the Humanities and Social Sciences

<http://www.careereducation.columbia.edu/resources/tipsheets/non-academic-career-options-phds-and-mas>

Your PhD, What Next?: Non-Academic Jobs

http://www.prospects.ac.uk/your_phd_what_next_non_academic_jobs.htm

Alt-Ac Career Resources

<https://davidjdrysdale.wordpress.com/alt-ac-career-resources-alternative-academic-careers/>

Books:

"So What Are You Going to Do with That?": Finding Careers Outside Academia
(2007) Susan Basalla and Maggie Debelius, University of Chicago Press.

The Professor Is In: The Essential Guide To Turning Your Ph.D. Into a Job
(2015) Karen Kelsky, Three Rivers Press.

**Approaching Careers with Graduate Degrees in Classics:
Professional Development
Michele George, McMaster University**

My task today is to handle questions about ‘Professional Development’ for grad students, and what that means in the current challenging job market. Please know that there will be tenure-track jobs; there just won’t be very many of them. So, as you get up every morning and face the horrors of writing a thesis, what should you also be doing in terms of ‘professional development’ to prepare yourself for the harsh realities of the job market? A few ideas, and hopefully fodder for discussion.

Expectations

If you entered grad school expecting a job in a Classics department, adjust your expectations immediately.

[Most of us enter a PhD with the intention/hope of making scholarship and teaching our profession for the rest of our lives. The chances of that happening are less now than they were before. Although this sounds very dire, it is, in my humble opinion, better to face squarely the worst-case scenario than to pretend otherwise.]

Educate yourself

a) for a job inside academia

i) Websites for academics:

University Affairs (Canada)

Chronicle of Higher Education (USA)

Inside Higher Ed (USA)

Times Higher Education (UK)

- importance of developing a broad perspective, across Humanities & in Classics
common problems, e.g., declining enrolments, small language classes, Open Access, innovations in teaching & the ramifications (e.g., online courses, ‘flipped’ classrooms, etc.)

ii) professional development courses offered by your grad school or department

iii) The university job market, virtual and real

(e.g., attending annual meetings of the CAC & SCS for training sessions & intel on the job market)

‘networking’ is not a bad word, i.e., the importance of developing an ever-widening circle of professional friends and acquaintances

b) jobs outside of academia

[This is a topic for which most of the panelists here are least qualified, for obvious reasons]

i) hottest topic in grad schools across the country: take every relevant training session aimed in this direction.

ii) develop a non-academic CV

[A doctoral degree earns you excellent skills of various kinds; they may seem insignificant to you, because everyone in your office has them, but do not underestimate them; not everyone in the labour force is equally equipped]

- research skills, such as data gathering, manipulation, and analysis;
- a high quality of written expression (editing, rhetorical manipulation,

- etc.); the ability to work independently;
- teaching experience, in small and large groups;
- knowledge of several foreign languages

Approaches to Graduate Careers Program level: Administrative Perspective
Dr. Lisa Hughes, Associate Dean, Policy, FGS, Associate Professor, Classics and Religion

lahughes@ucalgary.ca

Twitter: LAHughes68

Recommendations

Program:

- Michele George outlines some key points about Graduate Students educating themselves
 - I would add Social Media in a strategic manner to highlight your professional side
 - Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn (under utilized by Humanities' students and faculty)
- Professional development should also be part and parcel within the culture of a department
 - Course offerings or supplementary workshops are a necessity. Traditionally, when we do offer these they are taught at the student's admission year. This should be ongoing process that develops throughout the academic program (milestones).
 - Envision how you see your Graduate students making a broader impact as global citizens (start early, even promoting at the undergraduate level –Myles McCallum)
 - Emphasize how transferable skill sets (critical thinking, communication, creativity) can be applied to careers not only related to the professoriate but also outside of the university
 - Make use of Alumni support in the form of mentorship (guest speakers, networking possibilities)
 - Instil a culture of success and not failure (see Mary Deminion). This is especially important for students who may wish to pursue careers outside of the professoriate. Supervisory support is crucial.

Institutional support:

- seek out administration (e.g., Faculty of Graduate Studies or equivalent) to implement support systems (extremely important for new programs – see Allison Glazebrook)
- Some departments may not have the resources (people or time) to continue further mentorship
- Have students seek out partners on Campus (e.g., Career Services, Writing Centre, Faculty of Graduate Studies or equivalent) to supplement training
- As a Graduate Program Director or Head advocate for additional programming targeted at Graduate students
- Professional Groups
 - CAC

- Instil a model much like that of the Society for Classical Studies (former APA) Placement Service
 - We promote job openings, but more could be done
 - Modify website to include a page that focuses on resources for Graduate Students enrolled in Canadian institutions
 - Highlight current research
 - Mentorship opportunities
 - Job opportunities outside of the academy
 - Tips for professional development
 - Advice for International students

Select Resources:

- AA.VV. "MLA Task Force on Doctoral Study in Modern Language and Literature." May 2014.
<http://www.mla.org/pdf/taskforcedocstudy2014.pdf>
- AA.VV. "White Paper on the Future of the PhD in the Humanities." Institute for the Public Life of Arts and Ideas, McGill University. December 2013
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Twitter (to get you started and see M. Deminion for corresponding websites):

#PhDChat i(f you just want to check out some of issues and conversations)

Chris Humphrey @ChrisHumphrey; also see his JobsOnToast.com

Jennifer Polk @FromPhDtoLife

Versatile PhD @VersatilePhD