

Job Seekers' Café
ISA-Midwest
Saturday, November 9, 8:15-10:00 am

Chair: Cameron G. Thies, Arizona State University

Participants:

Marijke Breuning, University of North Texas
Ralph Carter, Texas Christian University
Paul Diehl, University of Illinois
Cooper Drury, University of Missouri
Patrick James, University of Southern California
Sara Mitchell, University of Iowa
Marc O'Reilly, Heidelberg University
Jeffrey Pickering, Kansas State University
Carolyn Shaw, Wichita State University
James Scott, Texas Christian University
Harvey Starr, University of South Carolina

This activity was designed to be a service to ISA-Midwest members who are preparing for, or currently on the job market. This session was modeled on the APSA Methods Café. Senior faculty, including current and former department chairs, were stationed in a room, so that job seekers could come and seek advice on a variety of topics. The topics included formatting their CVs, writing samples, statements of teaching, research and service, cover letters, how to "fit" a job advertisement of interest, and any other kind of general or idiosyncratic question one can imagine.

We had a large room at the hotel that allowed us to set up triads of chair around the outside of the room. We stationed two faculty members in each triad with the third seat for the job seeker. We grouped faculty by the kind of academic institution they were at: research university, mid-tier MA granting institutions, and liberal arts colleges. The chair then directed job seekers to the triad that best met their interests. We allowed job seekers to go to several triads, so they could get feedback from different kinds of institutions. Most job seekers spent about 10-15 minutes with the faculty before leaving or moving to a new group.

Feedback from both the senior faculty and the job seekers was very positive. We had approximately 25 graduate students attend this event. I know that they will be sharing their experiences with other graduate students, so we expect this event to recur and be even bigger next year.