EXECUTIVE SUMMARY RECRUITMENT MATERIALS IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

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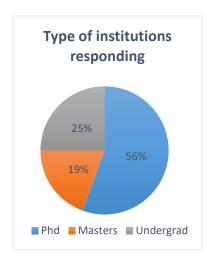
SUMMARY

- Applicants for academic positions in social and personality psychology are likely to be required to submit a cover letter, a CV, a teaching statement, and a research statement. Over the next few years, more positions will also request diversity statements. Preferred statement length is 2 pages.
- All materials should demonstrate that the applicant has "done their homework" and is familiar with the
 institution to which they are implying. In addition to distinguishing between teaching- and researchfocused institutions, candidates also need to demonstrate understanding of institutional mission (e.g.
 through referencing the strategic plan), the departmental needs (e.g. through carefully attending to the
 job description), and the institutional context (e.g. student demographics). Cover letters are expected to
 be tailored to the institution.
- As with research statements, in teaching statements and diversity statements, applicants should
 demonstrate understanding of the wider scholarship around teaching practice/pedagogy and diversity
 and inclusion issues in higher education, as well as, provide concrete examples of experience.

SAMPLE

The list of all positions posted to the SPSP Jobs Forum from March 2018-March 2019 was provided by SPSP. One hundred twenty three were for assistant professor (or equivalent) or open rank positions. Fifty-three were in personality or social psychology or a sub-discipline of personality and social psychology, with the remainder being positions in management/organizational behavior, marketing, developmental psychology, or quantitative psychology. Institutions that provided individual faculty contact information (e.g. a name and personal email address versus a recruiter@school.edu) were contacted to complete the survey. Seventy-nine individuals were solicited between April 25, 2019 and June 10, 2019. When an institution has posted multiple positions, once one person had completed the survey, no further solicitations were sent that institution. Thirty-eight surveys were started, with 32 completing the survey.

Six survey responders were asked to complete an interview via telephone.



A majority were at public institutions (65.71%) with over 20,000 students (56.76%). Nine were primarily undergraduate institutions (23.7%), seven were master's granting institutions (18.4%) and 20 were at PhD granting institutions (55.6%%). Two respondents did not report or provide the name of their institution. For purposes of analysis, totals for all respondents are presented, then responses are categorized into these three groups.

According to (https://grad.illinois.edu/careers/higher-ed) among institutions of higher education, 6% are PhD-granting, 16% are master's granting, and 18% are primarily undergraduate, with the remainder being associate's granting, special programs and tribal colleges. Thus, in this sample, PhD-granting institutions are over-represented. For some items, only one or a few schools responded. Thus, caution is recommended in interpreting the weight put on different elements of the application.

Number of Classes Taught per Academic Year

	PhD	Masters	Undergrad
3	65%	29%	0%
4	24%	0%	11%
5	0%	0%	44%
6	12%	29%	11%
7	0%	29%	11%
8	0%	0%	22%
9	0%	14%	0%

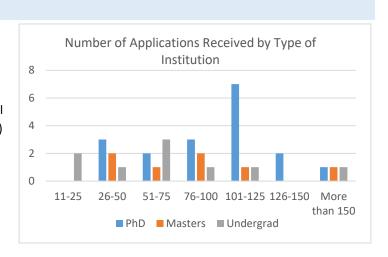
All respondents indicated that faculty had teaching responsibilities, ranging from 3 courses per year to 9 courses per year. Faculty at PhD institutions had the lowest teaching load, with 65% teaching 3 courses per year.

FINDINGS

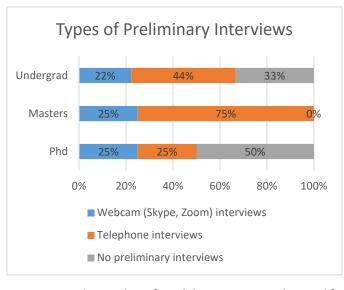
The survey focused on the types of application materials requested, the influence of different materials, and openended advice for applicants.

NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS

On average, PhD-granting institutions received more applications than master's institutions, which received more applications than undergraduate-serving institutions. There was also a positive correlation between institutional size and number of applications received (r (38) = .34, p = .048). In all cases, applications were submitted electronically with 83% submitted through an institutional portal and 17% submitted directly to an email address.



NUMBER AND TYPE OF INTERVIEWS



	Phd	Masters	undergrad
Preliminary Interviews	6.25	7.83	8.40
Campus Interviews	3.25	3.17	2.80

Of potential preliminary interview options, no institutions reported conducting conference interviews. While half of the respondents from PhD granting institutions reported that they did not conduct any interviews prior to campus visits, all Master's granting and most undergraduate institutions did conduct some kind of preliminary interviews.

Among institutions conducting preliminary

interviews, the number of candidates interviewed ranged from 3 to 10. The modal number was 5 interviews, with undergraduate and master's institutions interviewing more candidates and almost all interviews conducted by phone. However, several respondents indicated that they would use webcam interviews in the future.

APPLICATION MATERIALS

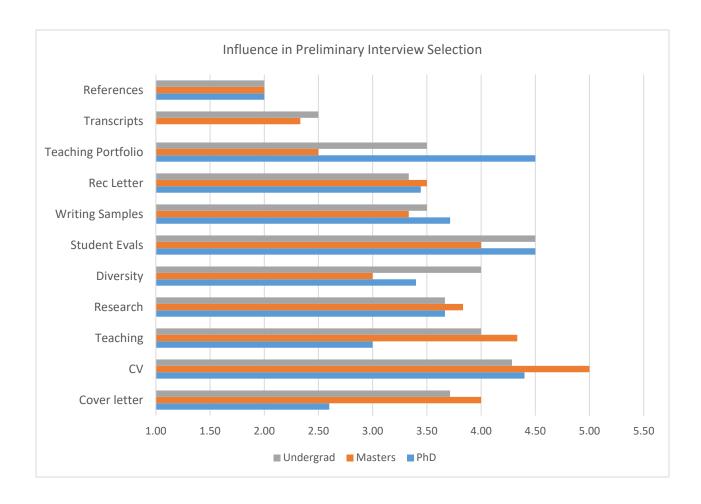
Elements of the Application	% of schools requesting
Cover Letter	100%
cv	100%
Research Statement	88.9%
Teaching Philosophy	83.3%
Letters of Recommendations	66.7%
Diversity Statement	36.1%
Writing Samples	41.7%
Student Evaluations of Previous Teaching	30.6%
List of references (not letters)	25%
Standardized Institutional Application Form	22.2%
Teaching Portfolio	19.4%
Transcripts	19.4%

Cover letter, curriculum vitae (CV), research statement and teaching philosophy were the most common materials to be requested, followed by letters of recommendations and diversity statements.

There appear to be differences in in how influential the different elements of the applications are at each type of institution.

Institutional size and number of applications correlated with the level of influence of different application elements and with number of interviews conducted.

		Institutional size	# of Applications	# Campus Interviews	Influence of CV	Influence of Cover Letter	Influence of Teaching Statement	Influence of Research Statement
Institutional size	r	1	.337*	0.313	0.155	-0.300	-0.153	-0.008
	N	38	35	35	24	24	21	21
Number of Applications	r	.337*	1	.532**	0.222	0.037	0.190	.510*
	N	35	35	34	23	23	21	20



CURRICULUM VITA

Although different types of institutions were equally likely to request the most common materials, the influence attributed to the materials differed by institution type. Master's granting institutions (MA) weighed the CV more than did PhD Institutions or undergraduate institutions, although PhD institutions weighed the CV more than any other materials. Undergraduate institutions placed more weight on diversity statements than other institutions, whereas PhD institutions place the least amount of weight on teaching statements, compared to other institutions. (Teaching portfolios were rated highly by PhD programs, perhaps because only a few schools (21%) that particularly cared about the content made the request and those portfolios contained student evaluations.)

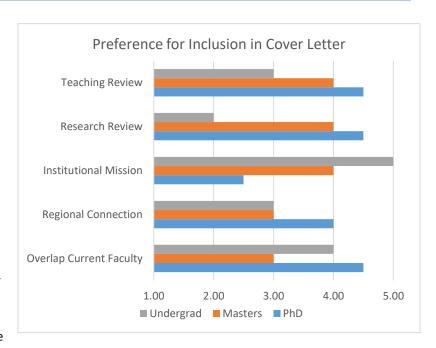
The reliance on CVs among the PhD institutions may reflect the ease with which elements of a CV can be quantified. With a glance, committees can count the number of publications, presentations, and on-going projects and this can serve may serve as a screening tool. As one respondent indicated, applicants are initially screened based on data that can be gathered from the CV, including appropriate degree, discipline, research productivity and teaching experience. When searches yield a large number of applicants, it is likely that a number of those applicants may be from disciplines not aligned with the search, lacking the necessary level of education, or no experience with research or teaching. Candidates whose CVs made it easy to evaluate their accomplishments were viewed more favorably. For example, separating citations for published work and in-progress work, clearly indicating when co-authors are undergraduate students, and distinguishing between courses taught and courses

one is interested in teaching, were all helpful strategies. Supporting this interpretation, institutions that had more applications were more likely to find the CV influential.

The CV was also influential for M1 and Undergraduate institutions, however interviews, suggested that while the *content* of the CV (e.g. the number of publications) may not have been as influential, other aspects of the CV could be. Specifically, several respondents suggested that the order of elements in the CV could signal fit. Listing teaching experiences and interests prior to listing research accomplishments indicated a better fit with teaching-focused institutions as did listing specific teaching experiences.

COVER LETTER

Importantly for potential applicants, cover letters were seen as equally influential as other application materials. There may be a perception among applicants that cover letters are a formality. However, interviews and responses to open-ended questions revealed that cover letters were extremely important, especially among M1 and Undergraduate institutions. In particular, M1 and Undergraduate institutions valued references to the specific institutional mission and information about teaching in the cover letters. Repeatedly, respondents urged applicants to "do their homework" on the institution, tailor cover letters to the



specific institution, be specific about what draws you to an institution, and address the details about the position provided in the job application. Applicants were advised to visit institutional websites to review not only the work of the other faculty in the department, but also the department, college, and/or university mission statement and strategic plans or other materials describing the institutional focus.

For teaching-focused institutions, signals of fit included starting the cover letter with information about teaching, including what courses the applicant was prepared and interested in teaching, as well as specific teaching experiences and pedagogy. While research was valued by such institutions, discussing research within the context of engaging undergraduate students was seen as a plus. Letters that focused exclusively on research were viewed unfavorably. With regards to discussing research, in general, candidates were advised to provide the committee "with the ability to categorize your research in some easy way" and provide a "theme that ties your main work together."

Several respondents stated that generic letters and signals that the letter was written for another institution were looked on unfavorably and could be disqualifiers. Although respondents preferred for cover letters to be 1-2 pages, respondents suggested that candidates "pretend like it is the only thing the committee will see" and show how they "fit and add value."

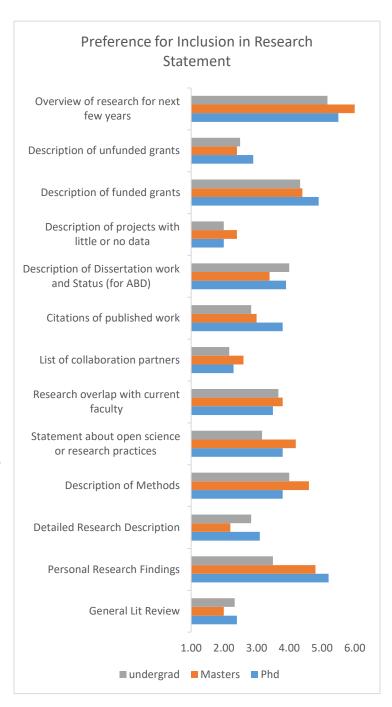
RESEARCH STATEMENT

All institutions preferred if applicants provided forward-looking research statements. Descriptions of research over the next few years, descriptions of funded grant proposals, and a generalized review of personal research findings were all viewed as influential. Within the generalized review of personal research findings, successful applicants created a coherent narrative that used their past accomplishments to show the committee what they would do in the next five years.

While lists of collaboration partners, descriptions of nascent projects, and detailed descriptions of all lines of research were not preferred, showing how the applicant could collaborate across disciplinary boundaries within the institution was seen as useful. In this way, research statements could demonstrate that how applicants would fit within the existing disciplinary groups, as well as the department. Demonstrating fit and awareness means explaining how research could be conducted with the resources available at the institution and ability to obtain additional resources. As undergraduate institutions, there may be constraints on resources, while at research-focused institutions, there may be a focus on obtaining grant-funding to support research and graduate students.

Although teaching-focused institutions placed greater emphasis on explaining how the research would appeal to and engage undergraduate students, research-focused institutions are concerned with how applicants may mentor, attract, and fund graduate students.

Beyond the content of the statement, respondents looked for language that was clear and understandable to a diverse audience. In interviews, respondents described large committees that might include students, members of other departments, and departmental colleagues whose disciplinary background is in a field other than social psychology. Communicating one's own research clearly and confidently (although without arrogance) was important.



TEACHING STATEMENT

Some institutions requested teaching portfolios, some requested teaching statements, and some requested nothing regarding teaching at all. Within teaching statements, respondents to the survey and interview questions emphasized the need to have specific examples of teaching experiences and activities. If potential applicants did not

Preference for Inclusion in Teaching Statement by Type of Institution

	Phd	Masters	Undergrad
Specific courses	4.00	5.00	4.33
Statement of Pedagogy	4.00	4.00	4.33
Experience with online	3.00	4.00	3.33
Specific Examples from Classroom	3.00	5.00	4.00
Student Success	4.00	4.00	4.00
Past Student Demographics	4.00	4.00	4.00
Expressed interest in teaching	3.00	4.00	3.67
Reference to High Impact Practices	3.00	4.00	5.00
Connection between teaching and research	5.00	5.00	4.33

experience as an independent instructor, respondents from teaching-focused institutions wanted to see demonstrations of teaching interest, such as attending workshops about teaching, guest lecturing, or teaching at other institutions (e.g. at a community college). In particular, one interviewee stated that they would like to see some evidence that the applicants understood that there is scholarship about teaching of psychology and that applicants were familiar with that research and were making pedagogical decisions based-on that scholarship.

While general statements about interest in teaching and about pedagogical beliefs were viewed positively, specific examples of classroom practices were more useful to committee members. Continuing the theme of demonstrating understanding of the institution to which they were applying, in interviews respondents discussed the importance of addressing the job description and any courses listed in the job description. One respondent noted at small schools, there are often only one section of a course offered each year or every two years. In such cases, it is important that the applicant be clear about their flexibility in teaching classes (and possibly sharing a class with another instructor). Similarly, another respondent indicated that the teaching statement should provide some evidence that the applicant is qualified to teach specific needed courses, if their degree or research is not closely aligned. Finally, connecting teaching and research was viewed favorably. Particularly at teaching-focused institutions, explaining how one could apply or integrate their research into the classroom or how they could mentor undergraduates in their research stream was valued.

Three institutions asked for teaching portfolios. In those cases, they asked for a philosophy of teaching and student evaluation scores. Two of those institutions also asked for narrative summaries of student evaluations and sample syllabi.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Diversity statements are a relatively new statement to be included with application materials. Fifteen institutions requested diversity statements and several respondents indicated that they either wish their committee had requested them or that they would be requiring diversity statements moving forward. As with cover letters, interviewees and survey respondents indicated that applicants needed to convey that they understood the institutional context and student demographics. Similar to the teaching statements, interviewees and survey respondents preferred specific examples of activities, approaches, and experiences that promote diversity and inclusion. Mentoring students from different backgrounds and ability to speak to and address the specific issues of non-dominant groups were valued. The prevalence of generic and abstract endorsements of diversity and inclusion

and "canned" or generic statements led some respondents to see diversity statements as non-influential. In general, "more weight is given to concrete actions taken in the past than to intentions for the future."

INCLUDING ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

All respondents were asked about the application materials that they did not require or request and whether it would be helpful to the committee if applicants included additional material. Responses were mixed. Some institutions indicated that out of fairness and equity concerns, all applicants needed to be reviewed based on the same information, so additional materials would not be considered. Similarly, respondents with large numbers of applicants indicated that additional materials would not be considered in the initial stages since there was just too much information to sift through. Several respondents indicated that they did not request or review student evaluations because of known biases in student evaluations, while others felt that student evaluations might help committees identify potentially problematic applicants.

Diversity statements also yielded mixed results. Several respondents who did not requests diversity statements were impressed by applicants who provided them anyways, some respondents indicated that they would like to have seen diversity and inclusion integrated throughout the application materials (and perhaps particularly in the teaching statement), and some interviewees who require diversity statements found them to be unhelpful in the decision process.

APPENDIX: SURVEY ITEMS

Advice for Graduate Students: Application Materials

Q1

Thank you for sharing your wisdom with SPSP Graduate Students. As members of recent hiring committees from a variety of institutions offering a variety of positions, your insights and advice are extremely valuable.

In this first survey, we're asking about the materials that candidates prepare for an application for a tenure-track assistant professor position - which vary greatly by institution.

Information you provide will be shared with SPSP members through multiple outlets.

CONSENT NOTICE - Advice for Graduate Students

NAME OF RESEARCHERS - Camille Johnson, PhD. San Jose State University, School of Management, camille.johnson@sjsu.edu

PURPOSE - To gather information about typical and current faculty and post-doc recruitment processes in psychology.

PROCEDURES - 30 minutes video or telephone interview and/or complete a survey of recruitment processes **COMPENSATION**- None.

CONFIDENTIALITY - You will be contacted to seek your consent if we wish to attribute specific quotes to you or your institution. Otherwise, your identity will remain confidential.

YOUR RIGHTS - Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You can refuse to participate in the entire study or any part of the study without any negative effect on your relations with San Jose State University or SPSP. You also have the right to skip any question you do not wish to answer.

AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE - Your completion of the study indicates your willingness to participate. Please keep this document for your records.

Dana Danak

Page Break

Q44 What is the name of your institution?
Q20 Carnegie provides different classifications for institutions in the US. Please indicate which descriptors best fit your institution
Public University
Private University
Primarily Associate Degree granting
Small Liberal Arts (grants few master's degrees, primarly residential undergraduates)
Undergraduate serving institution, non-residential
M1 (institution grants at least 50 master's degrees per year, primarily undergraduate students)
R1 (very high research activity - more than 30 PhDs per year with at least \$5 million in research expenditures)
R2 (high research activity - fewer than 30 PhDs per year an less than \$5 million in research expenditures)
Faith-related institution
Historically Black College or University
Military Institution
Women's College
Q7 Institutional size
fewer than 2500 students
2500-5000 students
O 5000-10000 students
10000-20000
20000+ students

Q46 Where is your institution located?
O Country
O State
O City
Q4 How many class sections a year does an average faculty member teach at your institution?
Оз
O 4
O 5
O 6
O 7
O 8
O 9
O 10
Other
Q47 Approximately how many graduate students are in the social or personality psychology program at your institution?
O Number of terminal master's students
O Number of PhD students
O Enter N/A if you are unable to estimate.

Q28 How many applications did you review for each tenure/tenure-track position in your department?
O Fewer than 10
O 11-25
O 26-50
O 51-75
O 76-100
O 101-125
O 126-150
O More than 150
Q21 The following questions are about the application package.
Q3 Which of the following documents do you require in your <i>initial</i> application packet?
Cover Letter
cv
Teaching Philosophy
Research Statement
Diversity Statement
Personal Belief Statement
Student Evaluations of Previous Teaching
Writing Samples
Letters of Recommendations
Teaching Portfolio
Transcripts
Standardized Institutional Application Form
List of references (not letters)

Q5 How are submissions sub	mitted?				
O Via email to a conta	act email addre	ess			
O Through an instituti	ional portal or	other software p	latform (e.g. Ir	nterfolio)	
On paper via mail					
Q10 What kinds of prelimina	ary interviews o	did your committ	ee complete?		
Conference intervie	ews				
Telephone interviev	WS				
Webcam (Skype, Zo	oom) interview	S			
No preliminary inte	rviews				
Q22 How many people, per	tenure/tenure	-track position of	fered. did vou	interview via pho	one/webcam?
▼ 0 Other		регенти			
Q23 How many candidates,	per tenure/ten	ure-track positio	n. did vou inte	rview on campus	5?
▼1 Other	per terrar e, terr	are track position	, a.a , cac		
Q8 The following questions a	ask about how	different parts o	f the applicatic	on were used by	your institution.
Q9 In your latest search, your de	epartment/inst	titution required	the following i	tems to be subm	litted by candidates.
How influential was each ele	ement in deteri	mining who to in	terview via pho	one or webcam?	
If you did not complete preli on campus?	minary intervi	ews, how influen	tial was each e	lement in deterr	nining who to interview
	How i	nfluential?			Additional comments on how it was used
Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely	Answer 1

Q13 Was there anything	g about candidates' m	aterials that would autom	atically exclude them	from consideration?
Q11 After the phone intervie invite for an on-campus		search committee refer b	ack to these materials	to choose who to
If you did not conduct a materials after the on-c		interview, how much did	the search committee	refer back to these
	A little	A moderate amount	A lot	N/A
Cover Letter	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\circ
CV	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
Teaching Philosophy	0	\circ	\circ	\circ
Research Statement	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
Diversity Statement	0	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ
Personal Belief Statement	0	\circ	\circ	\circ
Student Evaluations of Previous Teaching	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Writing Samples	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
Letters of Recommendations	0	\circ	\circ	\circ
Teaching Portfolio	0	\circ	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
Transcripts	0	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc
Standardized Institutional Application Form		\circ	\circ	\circ
List of references (not letters)	0	\circ	0	\circ

In your application process, you DID not ask for the following items.

\${	Q3/	'ChoiceGrou	p/l	Jnsel	lected	Choices
-----	-----	-------------	-----	-------	--------	---------

Would you recommend inclu	ding additional i	tems with the ap	oplication?		
O Not at all					
O Maybe					
Oefinitely					
Q27 Why or why not would y	ou recommend	including additic	onal items?		
Q24 Candidates want advice questions pertain to the Cove				-	s. The following
Q18 Please rate the following information?	g potential eleme	ents of a cover le	etter. How influentia	l do you find ir	nclusion of this
		A little	A moderate amount	A lot	A great deal
Overlap with current faculty	0	0	0	0	0
Attraction/connections with the region	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Reference to the specific institutional mission.	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Review of research program.		\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\bigcirc	\circ
Review of teaching.	\circ	\bigcirc			
Other	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\bigcirc

Q34 What is your preferred length for a cover letter?
1 page single-spaced
2 pages single-spaced
3 pages single-spaced
Other
Q43 What general advice do you have for applicants writing cover letters?
Q29 Regarding teaching, what documents did you ask candidates to submit?
Teaching Portfolio
Teaching Philosophy/Statement
O No specific document about teaching
Q30 Your search committee asked candidates for a teaching portfolio. What did you expect to see in the portfolio?
Teaching Philosophy
Numerical summaries of student evaluations
Narrative summaries of student evaluations
Letters of recommendation regarding teaching
Peer observation reports
Samples of lecture slides
Sample syllabus
Sample student assignments
Other

Q31 Please rate the following potential elements of a teaching statement. Please rate how positively this information/element would influence your evaluation of the candidate.

	Extremely negative	Moderately negative	Neither negative or Positive	Moderately Positive	Extremely Positive
Information about specific courses they would like to teach	0	0	0	0	0
General statement of pedagogical beliefs (e.g. "student-centered")	0	0	0	0	0
Experience with online instruction	\circ	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ	\circ
Specific examples of activities/assignments	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Mention of student success	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Description of types of students taught	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Description of interest in teaching (e.g. I have a passion for teaching)	0	\circ	0	0	0
References to high impact teaching practices (e.g. flipped classrooms, use of technology, service learning)	0		0	0	0
Connection between teaching and research	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Other	\circ	\circ	\circ		\circ

Q33 What is your preferred length for a teaching statement?
1 page single-spaced
2 pages single-spaced
3 pages single-spaced
Other
Q45 What general advice do you have for applicants preparing teaching statements? Is there something about your type of school/location that influences what you want to see in a teaching statement?

Q32 Please rate the following potential elements of a research statement. Please rate how useful this information would be in evaluating the candidate.

_	Not at all useful	A little useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Extremely useful
General literature review					\circ
Generalized description personal research findings Detailed descriptions of all	0	\circ	0	0	\circ
lines of research including hypotheses, methods, results	0	\circ	0	\circ	\circ
Descriptions of methods employed in research Statement regarding open	0	\circ	\circ	0	\circ
science or best research practices Description of research	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
overlap with current faculty	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
List of collaboration partners	0	\bigcirc		\bigcirc	
Citations of published works				\bigcirc	
Description dissertation projects and status (for ABD)	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Descriptions of projects with minimal data collected	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
Descriptions of funded grant proposals			\bigcirc	\circ	
Descriptions of unfunded grant proposals Description of program of	0	\circ	\circ	\circ	\circ
research over the next few years	0	\bigcirc	\circ	\circ	\circ
Q35 What is your preferre 1 page single-spa 2 pages single-spa 3 pages single-spa	ced	ch statement?			

Q36 Your search asked candidates to submit a diversity statement. These are relatively new and students have many questions about them. What did your committee look for in a diversity statement?
Q38 What is your preferred length for a diversity statement?
1 page single-spaced
2 pages single-spaced
3 pages single-spaced
Other
Q41 Thinking about errors you have seen, stand out applications, and general experience of being on a search
committee, what advice do you have for candidates as they assemble their applications for academic positions?

Q42 Can we contact to you to follow up on particular questions or gather additional advice?
O First name
O Last Name
Email address