

# Finding Part-Time Teaching Opportunities

A Guide for Graduate Students and Postdocs



**UCHICAGO****GRAD**  
Helping you navigate your graduate and postdoctoral career

## OVERVIEW

This resource provides UChicago graduate students and postdocs with guidance on finding part-time teaching opportunities, particularly in the Chicago area. UChicago graduate students, postdocs, and alumni are welcome to schedule one-on-one consultations with staff from [UChicagoGRAD](#) and the [Chicago Center for Teaching](#) to receive feedback on their job search strategies and job-related documents, including CVs and teaching statements. To schedule, log into [GRAD Gargoyle](#) ([gradgargoyle.uchicago.edu](http://gradgargoyle.uchicago.edu)) with your CNetID and select “Advising Appointments.”

This guide focuses on three strategies for obtaining part-time teaching: (1) checking official job postings, (2) emailing potential employers, and (3) networking.

## 1. CHECK OFFICIAL JOB POSTINGS

### A. Search the websites of places where you would be interested in teaching.

Many universities have pages displaying current openings or sites dedicated to handling job postings and applications. A list of colleges and universities in the Chicago area is provided on pages 7-8.

### B. Search larger portals where many colleges and universities publish job listings.

HERC (Higher Ed Recruitment Consortium): <https://www.hercjobs.org>

Higher Ed Jobs: <https://www.higheredjobs.com/>

Chronicle Vitae: [https://chroniclevitae.com/job\\_search/new](https://chroniclevitae.com/job_search/new)

H-Net (Humanities and Social Sciences): <https://www.h-net.org/jobs/home.php>

*Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, Diverse Jobs: <http://diversejobs.net/>

Professional Association Websites: Put those membership dues to good use and take advantage of the job postings and career services provided by many professional associations (e.g. AAA, AAR, SAA, AHA).

## 2. EMAIL POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS

If you have a particular set of schools where you would like to work, but you haven't located any specific job listings there, you can send a "cold-call" email introducing yourself, your academic background, and classes you could teach in the event that a position opens up. These emails should be sent to the chair of the department. Very often, schools fill part-time positions informally. For example, some Chicago-area colleges regularly send emails to colleagues and department administrators at the University of Chicago when looking to fill adjunct positions. Cold-calling puts you ahead of that process. One caveat about cold-calling: it is a method for finding part-time employment, not tenure-track or visiting assistant professorships.<sup>1</sup>

Please find below some examples of cold-call emails. Note that these examples should be used as inspiration, not as templates.

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<sup>1</sup> For more on this, see this advice column by Karen Kelsky (The Professor Is In) in Chronicle Vitae from 2015: <https://chroniclevitae.com/news/1175-does-cold-calling-ever-work>

Dear XXX,

I am writing to inquire about any positions that may be available for an instructor in the XXX department at XXX. This past academic year, I was a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of English at XXX, where I taught freshman composition as well as courses on multiethnic and postcolonial literature, and digital literature and culture. I would be delighted to teach at XXX and am committed to working with traditional and non-traditional students from diverse backgrounds. Prior to teaching at XXX, I was an Adjunct Professor in the English Department at XXX. I have extensive experience teaching both composition and literature courses to student populations with a wide range of abilities and am eager to remain teaching on a full or part-time basis.

Please find attached my curriculum vitae. Professors XXX, XXX, and XXX are my professional references and can speak to my teaching and research qualifications. I can arrange to have their letters of recommendation sent upon request. I would also be happy to provide you with a cover letter outlining my teaching and research goals, my teaching portfolio, course evaluations, writing samples, and any other information that would be helpful. I can be reached by e-mail at XXX or by phone at XXX. I would love to have the opportunity to work with the students and faculty in your department and appreciate your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

XXX

Dear XXX,

I am writing to enquire about teaching positions at XXX. I am a recent graduate from the Department of Anthropology at the University of Chicago and have been living in New York for the past several years. I have taught in the Anthropology Department at XXX, and in the Department of Asian and Asian American Studies at XXX. I will be moving back to Chicago this summer and am now seeking adjunct opportunities in the area.

My interdisciplinary training in anthropology and history has equipped me to design and teach a wide range of courses that I think would be very well suited to the XXX Department/Program at XXX. I have taught courses that ranged from human evolution to the modern period, and am well prepared to teach introductory classes in all four fields of Anthropology. I am also able to design and teach numerous courses focusing on South Asian culture and history, as well as survey and topical courses dealing with more general themes of World History. I have taught on several study-abroad and field-school programs, and my academic background has included the intensive study of languages, as well as an in-depth examination of sociocultural theory and its relevance to the study of anthropology, archaeology, and history.

I have experience teaching diverse student bodies with a wide range of academic abilities and backgrounds, and I have developed a number of different teaching styles as a lecturer, seminar leader, and as an instructor online and in the field. My teaching evaluations have been consistently excellent, and I have received much positive feedback from both the students and faculty at XXX and XXX.

I appreciate your consideration for any available teaching opportunities in your department. Please find enclosed with this letter a copy of my CV outlining my professional experience and a copy of my teaching evaluations from XXX. Please let me know if you would like any additional information.

Sincerely,

XXX

### **3. NETWORKING**

#### **A. Reach Out to Your Network of Supporters**

Some part-time teaching opportunities are advertised by word of mouth. Be sure to let your faculty mentors, departmental administrators, and other professional contacts know that you are seeking work. You can also ask your supporters to put you in touch with any contacts that they have at area institutions.

#### **B. Get Involved in Local Academic Communities**

Attend conferences, lectures, workshops, or receptions that provide you with opportunities to meet people outside of your department and campus. Workshops at The Newberry Library, for instance, draw in faculty and graduate students from a variety of local institutions. While it is not likely that any single new connection will yield a teaching offer, over time you will expand your professional network and increase the likelihood that you will hear about relevant openings. You can use an online network such as Academia.edu or LinkedIn to keep track of those you meet.

#### **C. Contact UChicago Alumni at Local Institutions**

UChicago alumni can be found working at nearly all Chicago-area colleges and universities. These alumni are great sources of information on potential openings and individual campus cultures, and they are often willing to speak with fellow UChicago students about their career paths. You can identify relevant alumni by using UChicago's alumni database (<https://www.uchicagoalumni.org/>) or LinkedIn (use the "find alumni" feature on UChicago's company LinkedIn page). You can also find alumni by searching the faculty directories of local colleges or universities (see p. 7-8). Target those who share your background and/or are working in departments relevant to your teaching interests. You may wish to set up conversations with these alumni whether or not your outreach directly leads to a teaching position. These contacts can provide application advice and on-the-ground knowledge that will improve your applications for future part-time and full-time faculty positions.

Cold emails to alumni will differ from those that you send to department administrators to inquire about potential openings. Rather than emphasizing your qualifications, your aim will be to set up an informational conversation—one in which you can learn about the alum's career path as well as inquire about possible opportunities for part-time teaching at her institution.

Please find below an example of an appropriate cold-call email to an alum. This example should be used as inspiration, not as a template.

Dear XXX,

My name is XXX and I am currently a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at the University of Chicago. I learned through UChicago's alumni database that you are currently teaching Spanish and Portuguese at XXX. I am reaching out today because I am interested in teaching at a liberal arts college like XXX after finishing my degree, and I would love to learn more about your current work and your path from UChicago to this position. Would you have any time to meet for a quick coffee or tea in the next few weeks? I am happy to meet you at a convenient location near campus. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

XXX

\* Rather than asking to meet for "a quick coffee or tea" you could also ask: "Would you have 20 minutes sometime in the next few weeks to chat over the phone or Skype?"

## 4. LIST OF CHICAGO-AREA COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

### Universities<sup>2</sup>

Aurora University (Aurora, Illinois)\*  
Benedictine University (Lisle, Illinois)\*  
Chicago State University (Chicago)\*  
Concordia University Chicago (River Forest, Illinois)\*  
DePaul University (Chicago)\*  
Dominican University (River Forest, Illinois)\*  
East-West University (Chicago)  
Governors State University (University Park, Illinois)\*  
Illinois Institute of Technology (Chicago, Wheaton)\*  
Indiana University Northwest (Gary, Indiana)\*  
Judson University (Elgin, Illinois)  
Lewis University (Romeoville, Illinois)\*  
Loyola University Chicago (Chicago)\*  
Midwestern University (Downers Grove, Illinois)\*  
National Louis University (Chicago)\*  
National University of Health Sciences (Lombard, Illinois)  
North Park University (Chicago)\*  
Northeastern Illinois University (Chicago)\*  
Northern Illinois University (DeKalb, Illinois)\*  
Northwestern University (Evanston, Illinois)\*  
Purdue University Calumet (Hammond, Indiana)\*  
Purdue University North Central (Westville, Indiana)  
Resurrection University (Chicago, Evanston)  
Robert Morris University (Chicago)\*  
Roosevelt University (Chicago)\*  
Saint Xavier University (Chicago)\*  
Trinity International University (Deerfield, Illinois)  
University of Chicago (Chicago)\*  
University of Illinois at Chicago (Chicago)\*  
University of St. Francis (Joliet, Illinois)\*  
University of Saint Mary of the Lake (Mundelein, Illinois)  
University of Wisconsin–Parkside (Somers, Wisconsin)\*  
Valparaiso University (Valparaiso, Indiana)\*

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<sup>2</sup> Schools marked with an asterisk (\*) are those where University of Chicago graduate students and/or graduates have taught or are currently employed (as full or part-time faculty or administration). Information supplied by the University of Chicago Alumni Association.

## Colleges Granting Bachelor's Degrees and Above

Calumet College of St. Joseph (Whiting, Indiana)\*  
Carthage College (Kenosha, Wisconsin)\*  
Columbia College Chicago (Chicago)\*  
Elmhurst College (Elmhurst, Illinois)\*  
Hebrew Theological College (Skokie, Illinois)  
Lake Forest College (Lake Forest, Illinois)\*  
Moody Bible Institute (Chicago)\*  
North Central College (Naperville, Illinois)\*  
St. Augustine College (Chicago)  
Saint Joseph's College (Rensselaer, Indiana)  
School of the Art Institute of Chicago (Chicago)\*  
Shimer College (Chicago)\*  
Telshe Yeshiva (Chicago)  
Trinity Christian College (Palos Heights, Illinois)  
VanderCook College of Music (Chicago)  
Wheaton College (Wheaton, Illinois)\*

## Community and Junior Colleges

City Colleges of Chicago:

Harold Washington College\*  
Kennedy-King College\*  
Malcolm X College\*  
Olive-Harvey College\*

Richard J. Daley College\*  
Truman College\*  
Wilbur Wright College\*

College of DuPage (Glen Ellyn, Illinois)\*  
College of Lake County (Grayslake, Illinois)\*  
Elgin Community College (Elgin, Illinois)\*  
Harper College (Palatine, Illinois)\*  
Joliet Junior College (Joliet, Illinois)\*  
MacCormac College (Chicago, Illinois)  
McHenry County College (Crystal Lake, Illinois)  
Moraine Valley Community College (Palos Hills, Illinois)\*  
Morton College (Cicero, Illinois)\*  
Oakton Community College (Des Plaines and Skokie, Illinois)\*  
Prairie State College (Chicago Heights, Illinois)\*  
South Suburban College (South Holland, Illinois)  
Triton College (River Grove, Illinois)\*  
Waubonsee Community College (Sugar Grove, Illinois)