

IMN Ontario Webinar Series: Preparing for a Career in Academia

Chelsea Gabel, PhD

Canada Research Chair, Indigenous Well-Being, Community-Engagement and Innovation

Associate Professor

Department of Health, Aging and Society

Indigenous Studies Program

McMaster University

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Today's Session

- All about me! My Academic Trajectory
- Applying for an Academic Position
 - CV, Cover Letter, Teaching Philosophy/Dossier, Reference Letters, Research Statement, Writing Sample
- I'm Shortlisted! Now What?(!)
 - Job Talk, Panel Interview, One-on-One Interviews, Meeting with Students, Dinner
- I got an offer!
 - After the offer, before the deal: Negotiating a First Academic Job
- Should I do a Post-Doc?
- The Importance of Supports for Indigenous Hires and Mentorship Advice

All About Me...

- Bachelor of Arts in Political Science (Western University)
- Master of Arts in Political Science (University of Windsor)
- Internship: Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP) (Indigenous Focused Program)
- Policy Analyst & Researcher with the First Nations Inuit Health Branch (Health Canada) & the Assembly of First Nations in Ottawa, Ontario
- NEIHR Funded Student
- PhD in Political Science (McMaster University)
- 10 Month Post-Doctoral Fellowship in the Department of Health, Aging and Society (McMaster University)
- Currently, I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Health, Aging and Society & Indigenous Studies Program and hold a Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Well-Being, Community Engagement, & Innovation at McMaster University.
- Former Director, Indigenous Studies Program and the McMaster Indigenous Research Institute

My Life



My Research



Applying for a Tenure-Track Position

- Ask yourself: Why am I applying for an academic/faculty position?
- Requirements differ across job postings - Do your research!
 - Your CV: <https://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Writing-a-CV.pdf>
 - Your cover letter: Research, Teaching, Service
 - Your Teaching Philosophy/Dossier: https://www.caut.ca/sites/default/files/caut-teaching-dossier_2018-11_online_version.pdf
 - A Writing Sample
 - Find good references
- Give yourself lots of time
- Keep applying

I'm Shortlisted! Now What? (!)

The Job Talk

➤ Before “the Talk”

- Do your homework
- Practice, practice, practice!
- Typically 45 minutes with 15 minutes for questions
- Know your audience
- Have some supplementary slides

➤ During “the Talk”

- Communicate who you are as a person and scholar
- Build up to your research
- Discuss future research
- Don't read from your notes

➤ The Q & A

- Don't get rattled if something goes wrong
- Ask for clarification if needed
- Answer the question that was asked

Sample Interview Questions

- What makes this position appealing to you?
- Based on one or two of your courses, can you tell us about its strengths and weaknesses and how you might have improved it over the years? What class are you most proud of?
- How do you meet the needs of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners in the classroom?
- Could you describe for us in some detail your present research project(s) and any plans you have for future research projects?
- What is your sense of some of the current conversations and issues in “X” discipline? Are there scholars that have been particularly influential in your work?
- How do you situate yourself as an Indigenous scholar in your field? What sorts of relationships have you built with Indigenous communities in your research?
- Could you describe for us any relevant committee work you have been involved in?
- Do you have any questions for us?

One-on-one Interviews, Student Meeting & Dinner

- One-on-one interviews with the Chair, Dean, Faculty, Staff, and Others.
 - Be prepared to give an elevator summary of your research.
- Student meet and greet
 - How do you plan on supporting students?
- Dinner
 - While the dinner is more informal, it is still an important part of the interview process.

After the Interview

- Follow up by sending an email to thank the people you met with individually. Say something personal and individual about each meeting rather than writing a generic thank you, because this connection makes candidates more memorable.
- And then you wait...and wait...and wait

I got an offer!

After the offer, before the deal: Negotiating a First Academic Job

- What is a fair salary?
- Can I ask for moving expenses?
- Can I negotiate reductions in my teaching loads?
- What is a reasonable start up fund?
- Am I required to secure grants?
- How is travel for research and/or scholarly conferences covered?
- What are the requirements for Tenure and Promotion?
- Other important questions to consider

* https://epl.carnegiescience.edu/sites/dtm/files/AfterTheOffer_0.pdf

Should I do a Post-Doc?

Postdoc Pro's

- It will provide you with time to publish your dissertation
- You will have few teaching or administrative responsibilities, freeing you not only to publish, but to pursue further research
- You will receive additional training or mentoring
- You will have time, training and opportunity to write a grant
- You will have time to send in numerous job applications
- Some postdocs are renewed, so you may have a place to park yourself while you enjoy the above advantages, and wait for a better job market in your area
- You will have more time to think through what you want to do with your career

Postdoc Con's

- You may not earn as much money as you would as an assistant professor (in the social sciences, the median is \$45,000).
- You may not be given benefits
- You are not guaranteed to get the mentoring or training you need
- Some postdoctoral positions are really set up to take advantage of the postdoc as a teaching or researching workhorse.
- You might not get the level of independence that you wish (i.e. you may have to pursue your advisor's research interests)

Being an Indigenous Faculty Member

What does this *really* mean?

- Find a mentor
- Reach out to other Indigenous faculty on campus
- Set goals for yourself
- Set boundaries
- Say no

* Gabel, Chelsea. (2019) "Being an Indigenous CRC in the Era of the TRC: It's not all it's cracked up to be" *Aboriginal Policy Studies*, 7 (2), <https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/aps/index.php/aps/article/view/29356>

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PRO

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YOU WANT! EVERY DAY
IS A SATURDAY!



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CON

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Professional Activities that Define your Field

- Publications
- Professional Associations
- Networking
- Conferences
- Research Grants

Questions?

My Information

E-Mail: gabelc@mcmaster.ca