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Quick Start Guide for Using

# Humanities PhD Project Website

with Students

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**T**[he Humanities PhD Project](#) provides resources for both graduate students in the humanities and their faculty mentors. This quick start guide is intended to help faculty get started on using the site in conversations with students about their careers. If faculty can open such discussions, students feel welcome to continue working with you as they develop their plans. You can use the resources featured here to initiate conversations with students at different stages of their doctoral study.



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# 1 Getting Started

This [talk by Anne Crook](#) is a good place to start thinking about the challenges of mentoring, given ongoing concerns about the academic job market and evolving opportunities for PhDs outside academia. Drawing on years of experience mentoring graduate students, she very clearly addresses some of the fundamental obstacles to providing effective mentoring, as well as common barriers graduate students in the humanities face when thinking about their careers.

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## 2 Pre-Candidacy Resources

This section of the site is useful for graduate students in the early stages of their programs. Many students begin PhD programs with the assumption that they will become tenure-track professors, but they often have little understanding of what those positions entail or what the process of applying looks like. Others who have gone on to work outside the tenure track say they wish they had known about the variety of options and opportunities earlier in their careers.

- While the term “alt-ac” is restrictive and does not represent the full range of career options for humanities PhDs, a resource called [Alt-Ac or Bust](#) contains useful advice for graduate students to start thinking about and planning for diverse career paths early in their studies.
- [Investigating Academic Jobs](#) clarifies the differences among the types of institutions where students might teach and the variety of teaching positions they might pursue.

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## 3 Post-Candidacy Resources

As PhD students advance to candidacy, their questions and concerns about future employment are likely to become more pressing. The research and writing phase of doctoral study presents opportunities for students to reflect on areas where they thrive and to think about gaining skills or credentials that will serve them as they eventually move into the job market.

- [MLA Career Exploration Activity Packet](#) helps students think through the many skills they have gained as graduate students, determine what types of work align well with their values and strengths, and articulate them to employers within and outside the academy.
- [PhD Career Guide](#) describes some career paths people have taken after completing PhDs. It has a podcast featuring interviews with PhD professionals.
- [Student Voices](#) features blog posts by U of M PhD students who completed internships through the Mellon Public Humanities program. They discuss professional insights and perspectives they gained from these experiences.
- [Humanities in the World](#) showcases the career possibilities for humanities PhDs, and includes an [Alumni Voices blog](#) by U of M alums working in diverse areas.

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## 4 Job Search Resources

Many skills and steps lead to a successful job search: preparing a CV and a resume, understanding the language of job postings, preparing a cover letter appropriate to a specific setting, identifying useful sources of job information, preparing for different types of interviews, and crafting the job talk. These steps are not always built into graduate curricula, but effective mentoring can help bridge the gap between what students learn in the classroom and the practical knowledge they'll need to succeed in their careers.

- [The MLA has a useful guide](#) for extracting information from the CV and translating skills into a strong resume.
- [The Versatile PhD](#) features job listings, discussion forums, and networking tools to help graduate students connect with people and organizations that can broaden their professional possibilities.
- [The Higher Education Recruitment Consortium \(HERC\)](#) and the [Humanities, Arts, Science, and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory \(HASTAC\)](#) maintain databases of jobs openings and fellowship opportunities that are likely to be of interest to graduate students nearing completion.