

Why Consider an Academic Career in a Teaching-Centered Institution?

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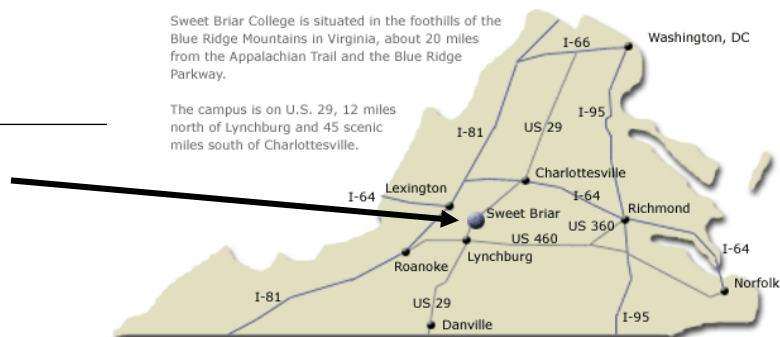


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Why Consider an Academic Career in a Teaching-Centered Institution?

Sweet Briar College is situated in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Virginia, about 20 miles from the Appalachian Trail and the Blue Ridge Parkway.

The campus is on U.S. 29, 12 miles north of Lynchburg and 45 scenic miles south of Charlottesville.



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Overview

- ❑ My perspective/background, **WARNING!**
- ❑ Overview of teaching oriented colleges
- ❑ What is it like teaching at a primarily undergraduate institution?
- ❑ Application/interview process

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Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (PUIs)

- ❑ Many different types of PUIs!
 - Focus on teaching undergraduates
 - Small (600 students) to large (5000+) institutions
 - Different objectives
 - Wide variety of expectations (teaching, research, service) of faculty
 - Perhaps MS programs
 - ~259 doctoral institutions, ~1268 PUI's in U.S.

- ❑ A potential misconception: *no research is expected from faculty at teaching oriented colleges*

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What to expect once you get your job (is this what you really want?)

- ❑ Close interaction with students
- ❑ Possibility to focus on 4 years of development of majors
- ❑ Ability to shape what is happening in your department
- ❑ Close collaboration with faculty from other disciplines
- ❑ No *significant* pressure for grant funding
- ❑ Opportunity to grow as a teacher and scholar
- ❑ Scholarship/research defined more loosely than at R-1's

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What to expect once you get your job (is this what you really want?)

- ❑ You'll likely need to be a generalist
- ❑ You'll teaching load may be high (...*compared to your PhD advisor*), 9-15 contact hours/week
- ❑ May or may not have significant expertise overlap with other faculty
- ❑ Level of support for research is likely very different than at your graduate school

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What to expect once you get your job (is this what you really want?)

- Faculty involved in many non-teaching, non-research activities you might not have realized

- Juggling different responsibilities
 - Research, teaching/course development, committee service, personal life

Applying for jobs

- Teaching statement, research statement, CV, cover letter, transcripts

- Don't look like your interest in their school is because you can't find an R-1 job!

- Do you need postdoctoral experience?

Teaching statement

- Hard to write an excellent one but easy to write an awful one
- If possible try to know something about current state of the art in education arm of your discipline
- Make sure to talk about your philosophy of teaching, don't just highlight what you have already done
- Have someone who has read many of these read yours!
- Let your personality out...

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Research Statement

- Make sure your research plan is in line with department/college
 - Start-up costs
 - Time requirement for maintaining equipment
 - Involvement of undergrads critical
 - Describe specifically how and why your work is appropriate for undergraduates
 - Talk about mentoring undergrads if you have done this...
 - Search committee may not have expertise in your exact field
 - Be realistic!

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So you got an interview, what now?

- Do research on the department/faculty
 - Level of research accomplishments, teaching areas, etc.
- On campus, dept/college interviewing you
 - Presentation – research, teaching or combined research and teaching
 - Meet Dean, Chair, faculty, students, etc.

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So you got an interview, what now?

- You interviewing the dept/college
- *What are the expectations of department/college?*
- Are the stated goals of department inline with resources available?
- How much time do they spend on average teaching, doing research, etc.?

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Other details...

- start up funds
- lab space
- office space
- technical help
- administrative help
- grants officer
- travel money
- matching money for NSF/NIH etc.
- mentoring
- sabbaticals
- pre-tenure sabbaticals
- journals
- support for summer work with students
- departmental cohesiveness

Current science/engineering job openings at SBC

- Open Rank, Tenure-Track Position in Engineering Science
- Assistant Professor of Chemistry (physical or organic)
- Assistant or Associate Professor of Biology (Vertebrate Biologist)

Resources

- Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR)
 - www.cur.org
 - How to series...
 - How To Get a Tenure-Track Position at a Predominantly Undergraduate Institution
 - How to Get Started in Research
 - How to Mentor Undergraduate Researchers
 - Article: How to Get a Teaching Job at a Primarily Undergraduate Institutions, A. Malcolm Campbell, American Society for Cell Biology

Questions?

- Feel free to email me with questions:
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