



# Finding your place at a liberal arts college

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# Life at a liberal art college

- Liberal arts colleges “sell” **accessible faculty** (to students and parents)
  - Students will take a lot of your time.
  - Many colleagues do the bulk of their research on breaks.
  - This might be a great fit for you, if...
- You will likely be in a dept. w/o others in your field
  - Be prepared to travel for collaborations or look for overlapping research interests.
- Teaching load often 2 to 3 courses/term.
  - Class size ~ 10 to 30

# Applying: Cover Letter

- \*Make it clear that you know something about liberal arts colleges\*
- Highlight any teaching awards or unusual experiences.
- Mention any faculty whose research might align with yours.
- Address all requests/questions posed in the job announcement.

# Teaching Statement

- We look for people who think/care deeply about teaching. Chances are, if you do, you've done interesting things in the classroom. We want to hear about them.
- Highlight innovative techniques you've tried (or things you would like to try)
- Demonstrate how you solved a problem/overcame a difficulty in teaching.

# Letters of Recommendation:

- Have your letter-writers visit your class.
  - Ask for feedback afterward.
  - We'd like them to address your teaching with details and concrete examples.
- Have *more than one* writer address teaching.
- Have (at least) one writer address research potential.

# Research Statement:

- Give a compelling introduction readable by non-experts.
- Since you might be isolated in your field, show that you have a plan for sustainable future work.

# Other things we'd like to know about you:

- Can you include undergraduates in your research? We love that!
- Tell us about your interest in or experience with undergraduate research & potential projects
- Do you have other interests or connections with other departments (double undergrad major, perhaps)?
- Many schools have writing-across-the-curriculum courses.

# The interview

- Make your job talk **accessible!**
  - All of it (if possible)!
  - To undergraduates (and not just the seniors)!
  - It need not contain all of your cutting-edge research.
- You might teach a class. It's important.
  - Including something interactive or collaborative is a plus.
- Be ready to explain your research to people (including the president) outside of the math dept.



Good luck!