



2015

ACADEMIC JOB LISTINGS IN COMMUNICATION REPORT

MARCH 2016



NATIONAL
COMMUNICATION
ASSOCIATION

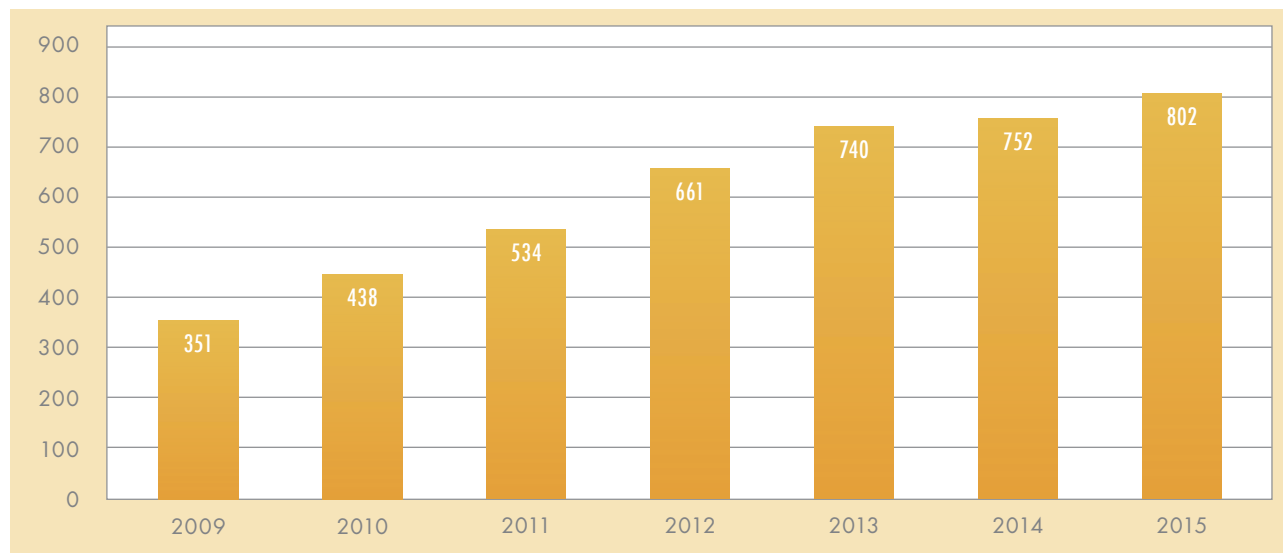
The National Communication Association (NCA) conducts an annual analysis of college and university searches to fill academic positions in Communication. We collect data from job postings in the online NCA Career Center, CRTNET, and *Spectra*. CRTNET is a disciplinary listserv to which employers may post position announcements. *Spectra* is NCA’s magazine. If a job is posted in more than one outlet, it is counted only once.

The following report provides a descriptive account of the academic Communication job market over the last seven years, as well as a comparative analysis with other humanities and social science disciplines. We also offer a detailed assessment of jobs posted in 2015 with respect to areas of research and teaching specialty as well as rank or type of position. Finally, we provide information on the geographic distribution of jobs available in Communication in 2015.

Multi-Year Trends

Academic employment opportunities for Communication faculty continue to increase. The total number of advertised academic Communication positions more than doubled from 2009 to 2015. Figure 1 shows that there were 351 jobs advertised in 2009, followed by steady, year-by-year increases to 802 jobs advertised in 2015.

Figure 1. Number of Advertisements for Academic Positions in Communication

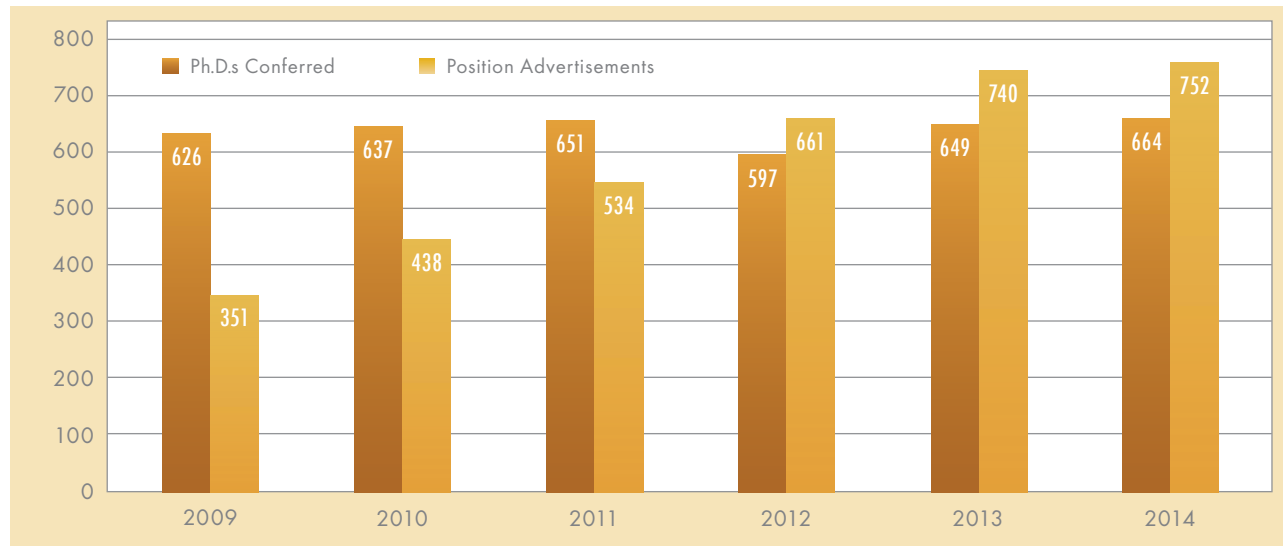


Ph.D. Production and Job Openings in Communication

One method of examining the job market in a discipline is to explore the production of Ph.D.s relative to position availability. Much attention has been paid to the seeming over-production of Ph.D.s relative to the evolving academic job market. To explore this concern, we use the National Science Foundation’s *Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED)*. The *SED* reports that 626 doctorates in Communication were conferred in 2009, 637 in 2010, 651 in 2011, 597 in 2012, 649 in 2013, and 664 in 2014.

Figure 2 (next page) compares the number of advertisements for academic positions in Communication with the number of Ph.D. graduates in Communication. This information is available only through 2014, which is the year of the latest *SED* report. These data reflect only the availability of traditional academic positions as advertised in NCA sources.

Figure 2. Number of Advertisements for Academic Positions in Communication and Communication Doctorates Conferred, 2009-2014

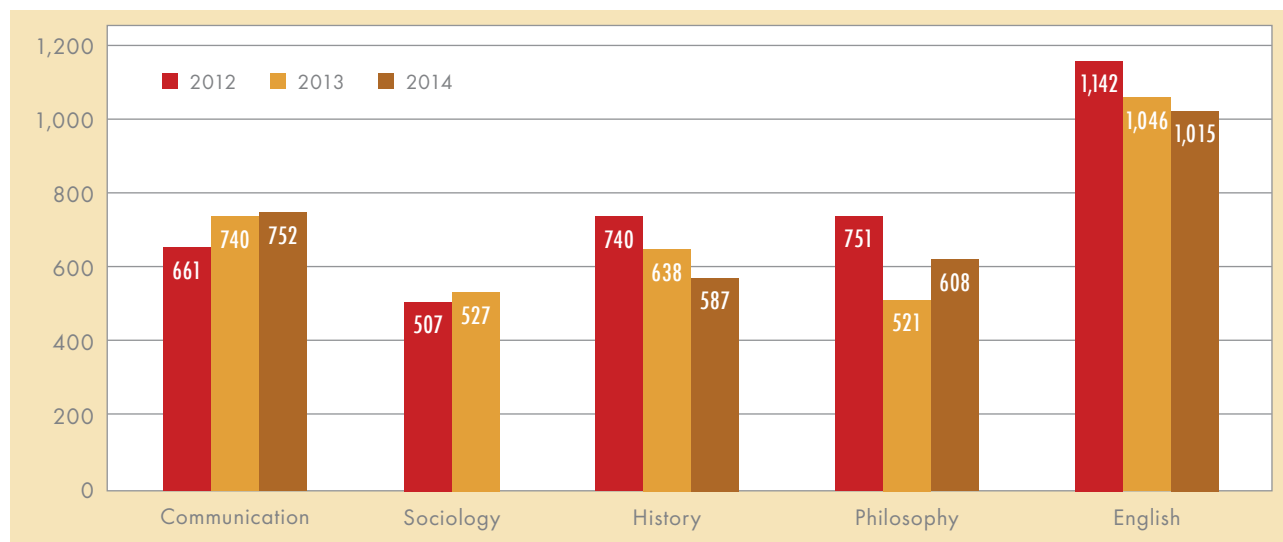


Communication in Comparison

Higher education news media regularly cover the annual rate of job growth (or decline) as reported by individual disciplines. Despite concerns about relying on job postings as an exclusive measure of academic job markets, higher education economists and researchers have concluded that such analyses are nonetheless useful and positively correlate with the “set of variables that plausibly should influence the demand for new Ph.D.s.”¹

Figure 3 compares multi-year trends in academic Communication job postings with similar disciplines. As a result, the data reported reflect what is currently available from the other learned societies.

Figure 3. Number of Job Postings in Communication, Sociology, History, Philosophy, and English, 2012-2014



Sources: American Historical Association, Modern Language Association, American Philosophical Association, and American Sociological Association. Note that Sociology has not yet released 2014 job data.

¹ See <https://www.amacad.org/content/research/dataForumEssay.aspx?i=21673> and Jeffrey A. Groen, “The Impact of Labor Demand on Time to the Doctorate,” *Education Finance and Policy*, forthcoming. A recent working paper version is available at http://jeffreygroen.weebly.com/uploads/4/2/9/0/42906623/groen_ttd_oct2014.pdf. See also Ronald G. Ehrenberg, Harriet Zuckerman, Jeffrey A. Groen, and Sharon M. Brucker, *Educating Scholars: Doctoral Education in the Humanities* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009).

Distribution of Jobs by Research/Teaching Specialties

Not all academic jobs in Communication have requirements that align with the backgrounds of all Communication Ph.D.s. Thus, the number of advertised jobs by sub-field or specialty is also of critical concern to job seekers and employers. Specialties are presented in Table 1.

More than one specialty may appear in any given job posting. In fact, many postings advertise for individuals who possess more than one specialty. Table 1 indicates that in 2015, there were 198 postings for generalists, more than the number of postings recruiting candidates with any particular area of specialty. The most common research/teaching specialties sought in position postings were strategic/public relations/advertising, with 155 mentions, and mass communication/media studies, with 126 mentions. These postings are followed in frequency by advertisements seeking specialties in organizational (82), digital/new/emerging media (72), journalism (68), interpersonal (48), and rhetoric (43).

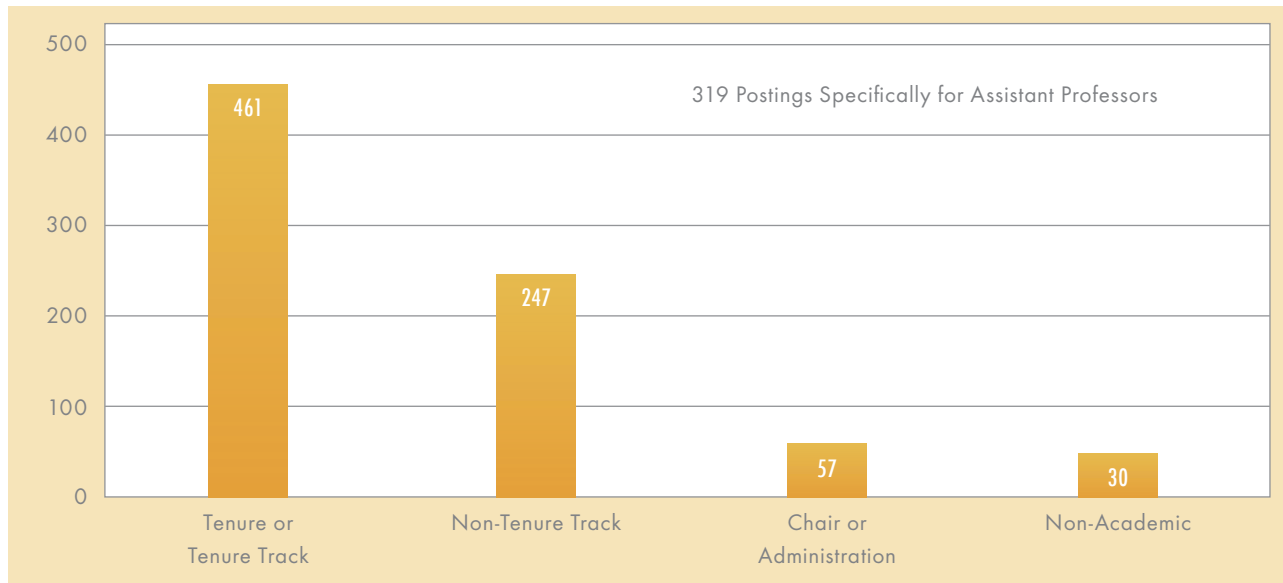
Table 1. Primary Research/Teaching Specialties Requested in Job Advertisements, 2015

PRIMARY SPECIALIZATION	2015	2014
Generalist	198	209
SPECIALTY		
Strategic/Public Relations/Advertising	155	151
Mass Communication/Media Studies	126	72
Organizational	82	54
Digital/Emerging/New Media	76	56
Journalism	68	44
Interpersonal	48	45
Rhetoric/Public Address	43	56
Health	32	48
Intercultural/International/Global	24	29
Debate/Forensics	20	24
Political	14	15
Basic Course	11	6
Performance Studies/Theater	9	5
Communication Theory	8	6
Visual	7	4
Environmental	4	5
Communication Education	1	0
Persuasion	0	6

Job Advertisements by Rank or Type of Position

Figure 4 shows that 461 of the 2015 job postings (57 percent) sought individuals for tenured or tenure-track positions, with 319 of those postings specifically seeking an assistant professor. Non tenure-track positions accounted for 247 (31 percent) of the 2015 job postings. Fifty-seven postings (7 percent) sought individuals for administrative positions (some of these positions are tenure-bearing), with 21 of those postings seeking a department chair.

Figure 4. Number of Communication Job Postings by Rank or Type of Position, 2015



Job Advertisements by Geographic Region

While job seekers are certainly interested in information on the numbers and types of jobs available, geography is also a concern for many job seekers, especially new Ph.D.s and those in dual-earner households. Of the 802 jobs advertised in 2015, 51 were international, with institutions spanning 15 different countries posting advertisements with NCA. Of the domestic positions advertised, the Central region posted the most advertisements, with 221. The Central region was followed by Eastern (195), Western (178), and Southern (157).

Figure 5 shows the geographic distribution of the 2015 job advertisements. We used each state's placement within the four regional Communication associations in completing this breakdown.

Figure 5. Percentage of Job Postings by Geographic Region, 2015

- Central
- Eastern
- Southern
- Western
- International

