

# 2015-2016

ACADEMIC JOB LISTINGS  
IN COMMUNICATION REPORT



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.

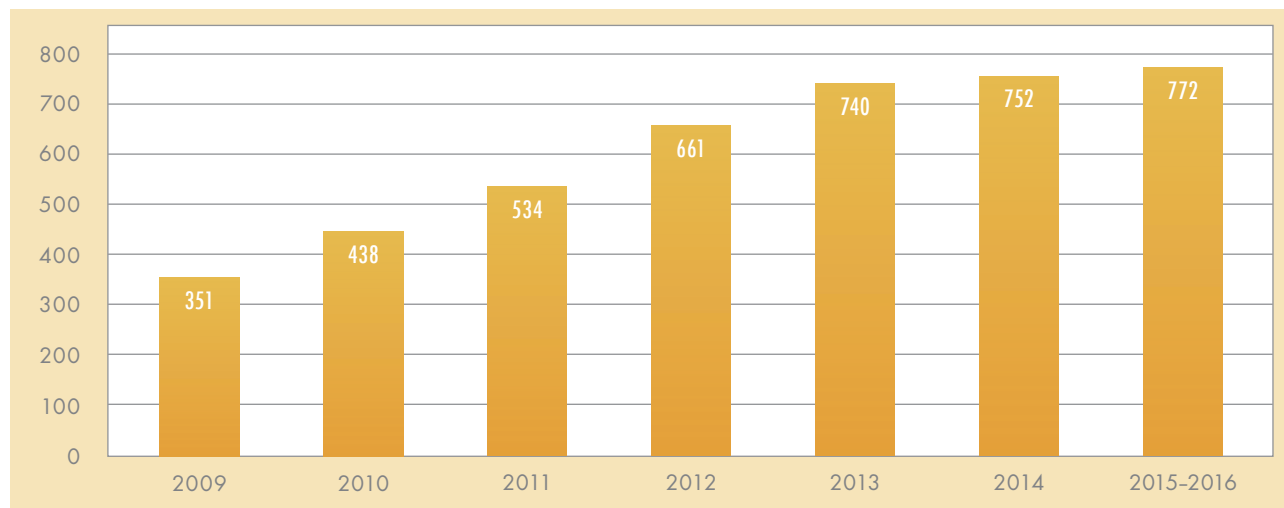
This report provides a descriptive account of the academic Communication job market over the last seven years, as well as a comparative analysis with other humanities and social science disciplines. We also offer a detailed assessment of jobs posted during the period of September 1, 2015 through August 31, 2016 with respect to areas of research and teaching specialty as well as rank or type of position.

In past years, NCA has completed this analysis by calendar year. This report, however, is the first to provide job data over the course of an academic calendar year. For some fields, only 2015 data are available, while for others, 2015-2016 data are provided. Beginning with the 2016-2017 jobs report, data will reflect the academic year only.

## 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 2015-2016. Figure 1 shows that there were 351 jobs advertised in 2009, followed by steady, year-by-year increases to 772 jobs advertised during the 2015-2016 academic year.

Figure 1. Number of Advertisements for Academic Positions in Communication

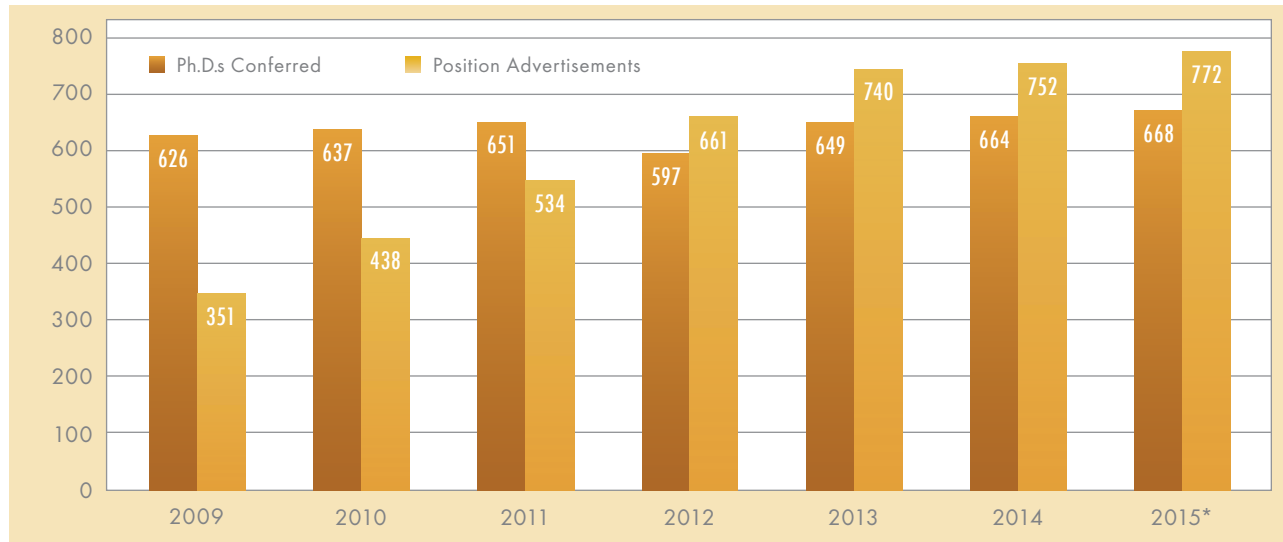


## Ph.D. Production and Job Openings in Communication

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, 664 in 2014, and 668 in 2015.

Figure 2 compares the number of advertisements for academic positions in Communication with the number of Ph.D. graduates in Communication. 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, 2009-2015



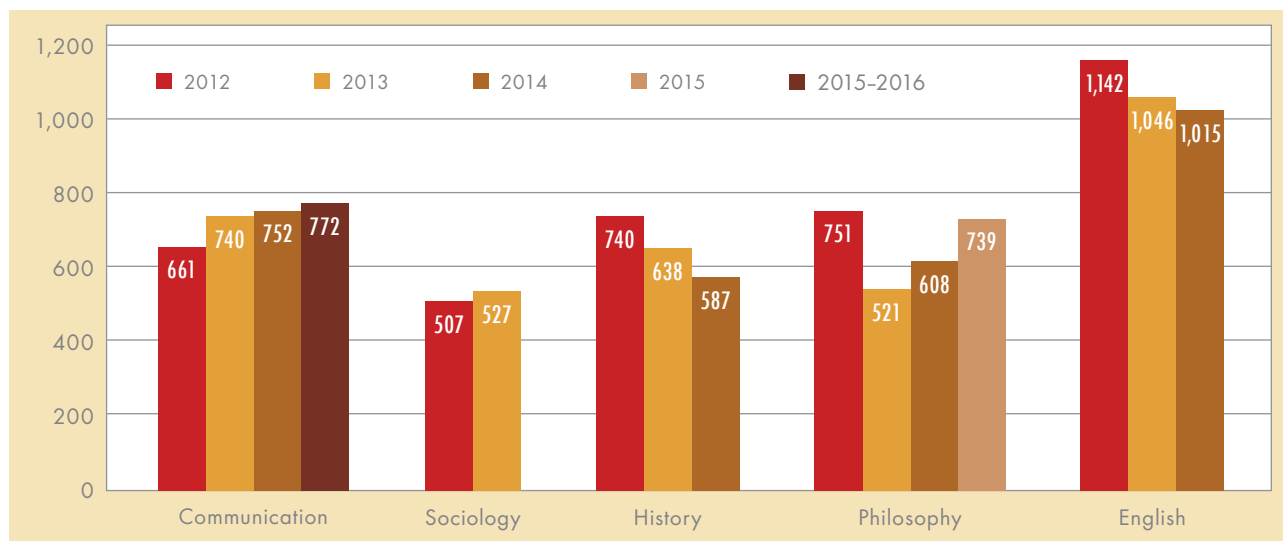
\*Note that because the SED reports data on a calendar year basis, this figure reflects the total number of Communication doctorates conferred in 2015, as reported in the SED, while positions advertised include the total number of advertisements during the 2015-2016 academic year.

## 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.”<sup>1</sup>

Figure 3 compares academic Communication job postings with similar disciplines. Not all disciplines have released their job data for 2015. 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, 2009-2015



Sources: American Historical Association, Modern Language Association, American Philosophical Association, and American Sociological Association.

<sup>1</sup> 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://jeffreagroen.weebly.com/uploads/4/2/9/0/42906623/groen\\_ttd\\_oct2014.pdf](http://jeffreagroen.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 2015-2016, there were 174 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 150 mentions, and mass communication/media studies, with 138 mentions. These postings are followed in frequency by advertisements seeking specialties in journalism (72), organizational (68), digital/new/emerging media (50), rhetoric (42), interpersonal (41), and health (40).

Table 1. Primary Research/Teaching Specialties Requested in Job Advertisements, 2015-2016

Generalist	174	17.01
SPECIALTY	JOBS ADVERTISED	
	Number of Jobs	Percentage of Total
Communication Education	1	0.10
Basic Course	4	0.39
Performance Studies/Theatre	4	0.39
Science	4	0.39
Sports	4	0.39
Visual	4	0.39
Communication Technology	6	0.59
Environmental	6	0.59
Communication Theory	8	0.78
Risk/Crisis/Conflict	10	0.98
Research Methods	12	1.17
Political	13	1.27
Debate/Forensics	16	1.56
Intercultural/International	18	1.76
None Specified	32	3.13
Health	40	3.91
Interpersonal	41	4.01
Rhetoric	42	4.11
Digital/New/Emerging Media	50	4.89
Organizational	68	6.65
Journalism	72	7.04
Other	106	10.36
Mass Communication/Media Studies	138	13.49
Strategic/Public Relations/Advertising	150	14.66

# Job Advertisements by Rank or Type of Position

Figure 4 shows that 511 of the 2015-2016 job postings (66 percent) sought individuals for tenured or tenure-track positions, with 321 of those postings specifically seeking an assistant professor. Non tenure-track positions accounted for 232 (30 percent) of the 2015-2016 job postings. Sixty-nine postings (9 percent) sought individuals for administrative positions (some of these positions are tenure-bearing), which included advertised department chair positions.

Figure 4. Number of Communication Job Postings by Rank or Type of Position, 2015-2016

