

# Checklist for faculty job-hunting in Stat/ML

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I went on the job market twice: once alone after my PhD (0 interviews, nice slap-in-the-face) and once with my partner after my three-year postdoc (25 interviews). Let's begin with an idealized timeline (if things go well).

- **Aug** — Write a complete research, teaching and diversity statements (or, at least, drafts) and get feedback from a few close faculty/postdocs/mentors. It's actually quite hard to write mature statements that sound like a faculty member (not like a grad student) so start early and iterate. You might want separate research statements for CS and Stat, but that choice depends on your area. Polish your CV and website.
- **Sep** — There are Stat/ML or data science positions within business schools or operations research departments, and their deadlines may be as early as Sep. Don't miss them if it sounds like a reasonable option: look early, and try to find out the differences between departments at the same school. Make a job talk, and give a practice job talk to your group, and maybe even at another university where you may not interview.
- **Oct** — By now, most of the job postings for Stat/ML jobs within traditional (Stat/Math/CS) departments would be posted. There are some central repositories, eg: maintained by UFlorida and UWashington for Stats, or by CRA for CS. There are also email lists like ml-news, and most jobs are posted on department websites as well. If you haven't already, make your own excel sheet of universities, deadlines, etc.
- **Nov** — If you missed the Sep deadlines, crunch time is here now. All statements, CV, website, cover letter format, should be final. I recommend a half hour zoom call with all your (3-4) recommendation letter writers. Take them over your CV and statements, with the dual aim of seeking final feedback and actually informing them of all the amazing things you have done and will do, so they can write a good rec letter.
- **Dec** — Most Stat/CS deadlines are in early or mid December (some Nov, some Jan). It can take a long time to fill each one, so don't push it till the end. If it's on MathJobs or AcademicJobsOnline, you're in luck. Submitting a bit early cannot hurt, and it may help. Make sure your letter writers know the deadlines but don't spam them (the websites usually contact them directly with an anonymous submission link).
- **Jan** — If you are lucky, you will hear a positive response back from most universities by the end of Jan (but negative responses can be very late) for Stat departments. These are usually for a full interview, but sometimes could be a phone-interview. I kept charge of my own flight schedules to stack together interviews geographically, but I let their admin assistants manage hotel or other local bookings.
- **Feb** — From mid-Jan to end-Feb, Stat department interviews will be in full flow, and the CS departments will start get back to you to schedule interviews in Mar. Your first job talk (and interview) will likely not be your best one, so try to not schedule your favorite university first if you have multiple interviews. If you're lucky, you might even get an offer by the end of Feb, potentially with a harsh deadline.
- **Mar** — After giving you an offer, some universities may call you back, with your partner, for a second visit. Others may set up calls to clarify additional questions about housing, schooling, etc. If you have a partner, in our outside academia, there may be an office that helps match them to a potential local employer. If you have CS interviews, those will be in full flow, but the Stat departments will start pressuring you to decide.
- **Apr** — If all has gone well, you will definitely be making a final decision in April, and you will have more than one good offer. If you have multiple, don't hold them all up, clarify immediately when you have dominating offers and keep it to at most a handful that you (and your partner) are seriously deciding between. In my case, my best five offers were CMU Stat/ML, Stanford Stat, ETH CS, UIUC Stat/CS and Caltech CMS.
- **May** — Urgently look for good housing, find movers and packers, etc. Reimbursements better be filed on time. Then, take a long holiday! I spent a week biking through rural Zambia to raise money for AIDS, and a week before and after in Ethiopia and Zimbabwe, checking out both history and wildlife.

This is why research productivity will be halved (at best) during your job-hunt year. More details to follow.