Boalt Boot Camp

Berkeley Law Academic Placement Committee
August 9, 2013
(Final) Countdown to an Academic Career

- Who’s this talk for?
- Broad Goals
- Narrow Needs
- Ways to Get There
- Questions?
Who’s this talk for?

• Those 2+ years away from the market
• Those gearing up to gear up (1 yr. away)
• Those going on the market now
Broad Goals: Develop your brand

- Broadly: Develop answers to:
  - Who am I as a scholar?
  - Who am I as a teacher?
  - Who’s on my team?

- Overall:
  - Qualified
  - Interesting
  - Reliable
Narrow needs

• You’ll need to produce
  – Written work, most importantly a job talk
  – Research Agenda (umbrella with 3-4 ideas)
  – Teaching Package
  – Set of references
Broad: Who am I as a scholar?

• Probably the most important:
  – What’s my field? Sub-field?
  – What’s my methodology?
  – Whom do I want to emulate?
  – Why am I qualified to do it?
    • (and how can I grow?)
Broad: Who am I as a teacher?

• Less emphasized, but worth it to have done some thinking about it:
  – What courses will I teach?
  – What kind of teacher will I be?
  – What materials am I likely to use?
  – How can I show I’m a low risk proposition in front of a room of 1Ls?
  – What do I think about legal education?
Broad: Who’s on my team?

- Who’s going to go to bat for me, and what are they going to be able to say?
- How can I get them invested in me?
A few years out...

• Some action items
  – Self-reflection. Why do I want this job?
  – Develop expertise in your field.
  – Write every day...even if it’s bad.
  – Idea file/research diary
  – Contact mentors ASAP – get them involved
  – Consider a fellowship/VAP
  – Consider adjunct teaching
A year out...

• Hone in on your job talk. Keep writing.
• Turn your idea file into an RA
• Keep mentors involved and invested
• Raise your academic profile
  – Conferences, presentations, meetings
• Hone in a little more on teaching ideas
Edging up to the market

• Finish the job talk *paper*.
  – Draft by mid-summer
• Hone the RA – first paragraph is key
• Teaching – specific plans (book, etc.)
• Keep your mentors in the game
• Practice, practice, practice
  – The job talk: expertise and accessibility
  – AALS: a mini job talk—sell your *brand*