

Applied Careers in Sociology Roundtable  
SWS 2011 Meeting  
San Antonio, TX

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Outline of Topics

- Why Applied Jobs?
  - Where are applied jobs?
  - Where to look for applied jobs
  - Tips for Resume or CV
  - Preparing for the Interview
  - What to be prepared for in the job
  - Networks and Organizations
  - Explore Further
  - Advice and Thoughts by Mindy Fried on consulting
  - Sample Resumes/CVs (shown at workshop)
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Why Applied Jobs?

- Lack of academic tenure track jobs
- Career path that fits your lifestyle/needs (i.e. hours, pay, location, etc)
- Wanting to be applied/make a difference, etc.

Where are applied jobs?

- Non-profits
- Centers within Universities
- Government (local, state, federal and government agencies)
- Consulting (with others, on your own)
- Market research

Where to Look for Applied Jobs?

- Inside Higher Ed (<http://www.insidehighered.com/career/seekers>)
- Washington Post (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wl/jobs/home>)
- Local/State non-profit associations (for example, here is the MN one: <http://www.mncn.org/jobs/>)
- The Chronicle of Higher Education (<http://chronicle.com/section/Jobs/61/>)
- ASA also includes applied listings in their job bank (<http://jobbank.asanet.org/jobbank/index.cfm>)
- Feminist Majority Foundation (<http://feminist.org/911/jobs/joblisting.asp>)
- American Evaluation Association (<http://www.eval.org/programs/careercenter.asp>)
- Idealist.Org [www.idealists.org](http://www.idealists.org)
- Monster.com [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com)

*Some general places to look or keep in mind:*

- non-profit research organizations
- university public policy programs and/or research centers (related to your areas of expertise)
- working for legislators or in the public sector more broadly
- advocacy organizations (generally located in big cities)

#### Tips for Resume or CV

- Resumes generally are 1-2 pages
- Non-academic cover letters should aim to be one page
- Sometimes CVS are okay/wanted (see job ad)
- Have different resumes for different types of jobs (i.e. for a job that might be less activist orientated, you may not want to include some of your volunteer work or your teaching skills may be an asset to some jobs more than others)
- Think creatively about how to sell your “academic skills”
  - Teaching= communication skills
  - Writing a dissertation; research assistant, etc= project management skills
  - Writing groups/Reviewing manuscripts= editing
- Highlight your “tech” skills (if you know the basics of a data program, you can probably learn others quickly and efficiently)
- Some advice from March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007 *Hey Jane*  
“As sociologists we all know that presentation of self if always important. When applying and interviewing for applied jobs, be sure to present yourself in a way that matches the job description. Depending on the type of job you are looking for, you will need to move things around on your CV. You might need to cut some things out all together and, particularly in the non-profit and corporate world, you will likely need to create a resume that is much shorter than a typical CV. For many applied positions, you will want to emphasize your research experience and recent publications and presentations. Teaching, honors, and professional affiliations might be less important and depending on the job might not even be appropriate to include on your resume. ... It is also crucial to list references who can talk about the skills you have that are most related to the jobs you are seeking.”

#### Preparing for the Interview

- Read any and all materials you can find about the organization/generated by the organization.
- Have good questions for them about their mission.
- Emphasize your great skills (e.g., as a researcher, facilitator, communicator, writer)
- Share your commitment to making a difference (that you choose to do applied work, not that you had to because there aren't any TT jobs)
- Share your experience, including any volunteer experience you have that relates to the position
- Emphasize your research skills (which are often sorely needed in applied settings, even when the job isn't a research position)
- Emphasize your communication skills (i.e. both writing and being a team player)
- Some people have interviewed in which they were given a “problem” (i.e. a complicated logic problem with a diagram). The point is not that you get the answer right and right away, but that you attempt to figure it out.
- Highlight your willingness to be adaptable and to learn new skills and learn a new culture/work environment (i.e. you had the skills to get the interview most likely... don't act like a know it all as they may do things differently)

What to be prepared for in the job (i.e. applied vs. tenure track professor positions)?

- Less autonomy than academia (you have a boss to report to; you may not get to do work in what you are interested in)
- Jobs outside the “liberal” spectrum of organizations can be challenging with a social science/feminist background.
- You don’t have the summers to travel and do research (you report to work); vacation time might be less flexible
- Some jobs you will more in teams; others you will be working more in isolation and might be the only one there who does what you do
- Still may work more than 40 hours a week, but may be less demand on work time than academic jobs

### Networks and Organizations

- Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology (<http://www.aacsnet.org/wp/>)
- American Evaluation Association (<http://www.eval.org/>)  
They have "topic interest groups" that promote networking with like-minded evaluators. Go to a regional or national meeting.

### Explore Further

- <http://careers.washington.edu/GradStudents/Beyond-Academia>
- [http://www.insidehighered.com/advice/leaving\\_academia](http://www.insidehighered.com/advice/leaving_academia)
- <http://versatilephd.com/>
- Hey Jane (March 26, 2007) <http://www.socwomen.org/about/career.html>
- [Sociology Practice & Public Sociology section of the American Sociological Association](#)
  - <http://www.socprac-pubsoc.net/>
- Your University’s Career Center (usually you have free access after a year after graduation)
- *ASA Footnotes*: “[Should New PhDs Consider Non-Academic Careers?](#)”:
  - [http://www.asanet.org/footnotes/jan11/careers\\_0111.html](http://www.asanet.org/footnotes/jan11/careers_0111.html)
- *ASA Research Brief*: “[Still a Down Market: Findings from the 2009-2010 ASA Job Bank](#)”
  - [http://www.asanet.org/research/2010\\_Job\\_Bank\\_Brief.pdf](http://www.asanet.org/research/2010_Job_Bank_Brief.pdf)
- *ASA Footnotes*: “[Applied and Clinical Sociology Careers by the Numbers](#)”
  - <http://www.asanet.org/footnotes/jan07/fn8.html>
- *ASA Research Powerpoint*: “[Beyond the Ivory Tower](#)” (lots of great information embedded in this!)
  - <http://www.uj.ac.za/EN/Faculties/humanities/departments/sociology/jobs/Documents/ASA%20Beyond%20Ivory%20Tower%20Slideshow.pdf>

*You’ve thought about starting your own consulting business... what to think about?*

Invaluable advice from Mindy Fried, PhD who owns and works at Principal, Arbor Consulting Partners (ACP):

You've thought about starting your own consulting business... what to think about? Invaluable advice from Mindy Fried, PhD who owns and works at Principal, Arbor Consulting Partners (ACP):

"I work as an independent consultant in a small social science consulting group. My partners are anthropologists, and we are committed to using social science skills to promote strengthened organizations and a social justice agenda. We are researchers, trainers and business people. Working as a consultant (which I've done for over 20 years) requires an interest in the business side (which includes marketing and maintaining the business.) I like this! But other people do not."

Pros to this work (by Mindy Fried):

- Autonomy, ability to be creative, fun to juggle different types of projects and work with a cast of characters.
- With partners who bring in work, I've been exposed to issue areas that were totally new to me (e.g., public health). Also a flexible schedule that works around family and/or personal issues. Compared to research work in a university research center, it's quite similar, but my overhead is smaller and I have hands-on engagement with just about every project I (or my colleagues) bring in.
- Also, I decided to pursue more teaching, and with this business, I was able to find really interesting work involving travel in which I teach research skills and partnership building skills.
- I can affiliate with other professional groups (aside from Soc), which is interesting.
- Opportunities to write for popular audience.

Cons to this work (by Mindy Fried):

- A consulting business takes awhile to get off the ground. No small matter...
- There's a lot of competition (better to get in on ground floor of someone else's consulting business, if possible - and if don't have your own contacts to begin with)
- Can be isolating (especially if you don't have ready colleagues that you're working with)
- Can feel a bit ostracized from the sociology world (although this is changing).
- There is an ebb and flow to the work. Especially if you're in the early days of doing independent consulting, there are (scary) down times. Once you're on your feet, this happens less, and when it does, you know the ups and downs and feel less anxious about them.
- Harder to find opportunities to write for academic audience, if that's important to you