



How I Succeeded on the Job Market as an Assistant Professor in Denmark: Choice and Luck

ZHANG Yunran Serena



I am Serena, and I was a Ph.D. student at the Department of Sociology (CUHK) from 2015 to 2020. I will join Aalborg University as an Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology and Social Work on May 1, 2023. Previously, I worked as a research associate at CUHK for a year, followed by an 11-month postdoctoral stint at PolyU.

I visited the University of Copenhagen as an exchange student in 2019. I enjoyed the working atmosphere there. Professors and PhD students often gather in a conference room for lunch. They sometimes share their miserable rejection experiences by journals after 3-4 rounds of Revise & Resubmit or some exciting findings from their research or the books they read. I also had some rather pleasant experiences in Denmark, such as getting two conference grants, publishing my first SSCI journal article, and meeting several European drug scholars who were interested in Chinese drug studies (my research topic). These factors encouraged me to keep an eye on the opportunities in European job markets. Hong Kong is also a nice place to me because I love the food and the warm winter here. As I have lived in HK for almost eight years, I have several close friends here with whom I can share my ups and downs. Due to these, HK and Europe were my main focus when it comes to job search.

Since I started submitting job applications in 2020, I have made a list of the applications I submitted to different countries. There are 20 records in that list, which means I failed 19 times and finally got one offer. I suffered in the application process because I got many rejections in these two years, especially in such a competitive job market as HK. Meanwhile, there were not many people I could ask for suggestions. To keep myself comforted, I often told myself that I had chosen a road less traveled, so I would encounter more difficulties and feel lonely at times. This worked very well, and even now, I am still quite clear about what I want and what risks or responsibilities I should take for the decision I make. I am quite lucky to receive this AP offer from my dream country after struggling in the job market for two years.

Individuals' experiences can vary a lot, so I am unsure whether mine applies to you. Also, a success or failure cannot be explained by only personal efforts/faults. Many complicated factors function in this process. Therefore, don't blame yourself too much when you fail, and be grateful to the universe if it offers you what you want. May all your dreams come true ;-)

My Exchange Experience in Princeton University

ZHAO Mengke

The chance to visit Princeton University was an invaluable experience for me, offering a unique blend of academic and cultural learning that was both enriching and challenging. Stepping outside of my familiar Hong Kong lifestyle, I was introduced to a slower, more peaceful pace of life at Princeton.



Photo by Clément Proust

One of the most striking aspects of my time at Princeton was the stark contrast between the peaceful surroundings and the hectic tempo of academic life. Despite the calmness of the town, I was engaged in countless academic activities relevant to my interests every day. Interacting with renowned scholars and students from diverse backgrounds, I gained a wealth of new knowledge and perspectives. These interactions were instrumental in broadening my own academic horizons and provided valuable insights that helped me shape my own research interests and goals.

In addition to academic opportunities, I also engaged with professors and students personally. Through these conversations, I gained valuable feedback and reflections that helped me frame my studies and develop my ideas further. Having the opportunity to study and live in a different academic and cultural environment has been truly transformative for me, broadening my perspective and challenging my assumptions in ways that will benefit me for years to come.

Overall, the exchange program at Princeton University was a valuable opportunity. It allowed me to come out of my comfort zone and experience life in a completely different and unfamiliar environment. The combination of academic rigor and cultural immersion was truly unique. It helped me develop my independence and adaptability skills while also deepening my appreciation for the diverse perspectives and approaches found in different academic and cultural environments.

Awards

Li Lulu. Gender Studies Outstanding Thesis Award. PhD Thesis: Women's Non-Conventional Career: Entrepreneurship between State and Market in Inland China. Advisor: Prof. SONG Jing

Gu Yuxuan. Gender Studies Outstanding Thesis Award. MPhil Thesis: Exploring the Relationship Between Gender Inequality and Female-Victim Intimate Partner Homicide in China via Hierarchical Models and Data Mining Approach. Advisor: Prof. ZHONG Hua Sara

ANNOUNCEMENTS

✓ Job Ads

- Assistant Professor, Open Rank Faculty Position in Computational Social Science, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen. **Deadline for Applications: May. 10, 2023** [[See the ad](#)]
- Postdoctoral Fellow, The Centre for Family and Population Research, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, National University of Singapore. **Deadline for Applications: May. 25, 2023** [[See the ad](#)]