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## The Current Study

- While on the job market, SPSP members often compete for the same open positions. However, they may have minimal access to information about how their research and teaching experiences compare to those of other applicants.
- In order to evaluate the needs of graduate students who are nearing the job market, and to improve Graduate Student Committee program offerings, we surveyed SPSP members on variables relating to the job market experience.

## Method

### Participants

- 237 Ps were recruited from the SPSP general listserv and GSC student listserv.
- Ps were either within 2 years of entering the job market, currently on the job market, or within the first 5 years of their post-Ph.D. career.
- Job Market Status:** not yet on market (**Pre-JM**; 43%), currently on market (13%), recently off the market (**Post-JM**, 44%).
- Due to the study being run in July and August, information for the "on job market" group was not as relevant as hoped. It is not used for any further analyses in this presentation.
- 206 Ps were retained.
- 39 U.S. states and Washington D.C. represented.
- Most-represented states: California, New York, Michigan, Illinois, and Ohio.
- 14 other countries represented (Most: Canada).

### Pre-Job Market (Pre-JM) Demographics

- Age:** 20-51 years old ( $M=28.93$ ,  $SD=3.96$ )
- Gender:** Female (77%), Male (23%)
- Ethnicity:** African American (1%), Asian (9%), Caucasian (86%), Hispanic (0%), and "Other" (5%)
- Year in Grad School:** 2-6+ ( $M=4.38$ ,  $SD=1.13$ )

### Post-Job Market (Post-JM) Demographics

- Age:** 26-50 years old ( $M=30.98$ ,  $SD=3.76$ )
- Gender:** Female (69%), Male (31%)
- Ethnicity:** African American (2%), Asian (4%), Caucasian (92%), Hispanic (0.1%), and "Other" (2%)
- Years Employed:** 0-5 ( $M=2.14$ ,  $SD=1.40$ )

### Procedure

- Members completed an online questionnaire on their own time in exchange for a chance to win one of five free SPSP memberships.

## Method (continued)

### Measures

#### Teaching Experiences

- Pre-JM Ps quantified the number of courses they had taught or with which they had assisted, as well as the number they expected to have when going on the job market. Post-JM Ps reported the number of courses they had taught while they were on the job market.

#### Presentations & Publications

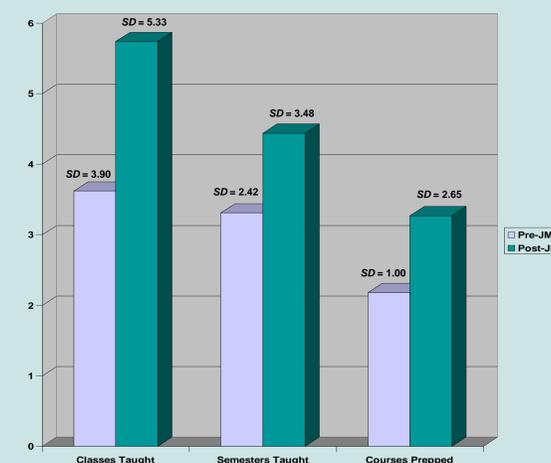
- Pre-JM Ps quantified the number of posters, talks and publications they currently had, as well as the number they expected to have when going on the job market. Post-JM Ps reported the number they had while they were on the job market. Other publication variables were also examined.

#### Job Hunt Experiences

- Post-JM Ps reported the number of jobs to which they applied, telephone and in-person interviews received, job offers considered, types of jobs to which they applied, sources for job announcements, start-up packages requested, and other variables relevant to the job search. Pre-JM Ps reported what they expected to do once they entered the job market.

## Results

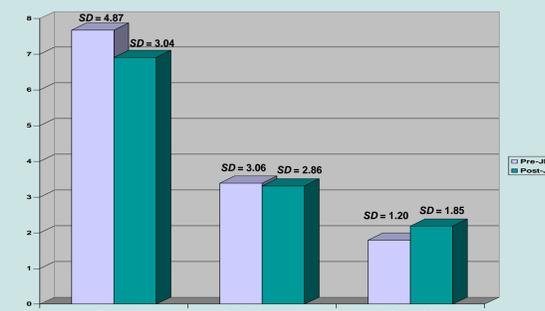
### Teaching Experiences



**Figure 1.** Mean number of classes taught, semesters taught, and courses prepared (**existing** numbers for pre-job market Ps, **on the job market** numbers for post-job market Ps).

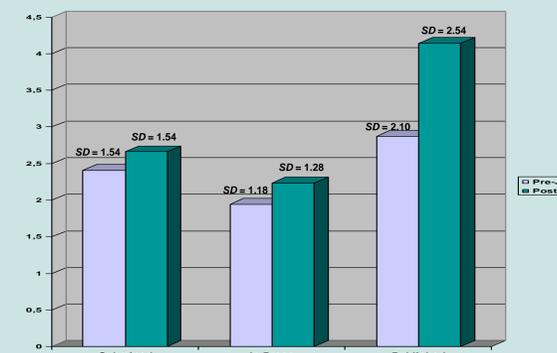
## Results (continued)

### Presentations



**Figure 2.** Mean number of poster presentations, papers presented, and symposia given (**existing** numbers for pre-job market Ps, **on the job market** numbers for post-job market Ps).

### Publications



**Figure 3.** Mean number of manuscripts submitted for review, in press, and currently published (**existing** numbers for pre-job market Ps, **on the job market** numbers for post-job market Ps).

### Job Hunt Experiences

- Top 3 **types of jobs** Pre-JM Ps expected to apply for: Post-doctoral fellowships, academic tenure-track, non-academic.
- Top 2 **types of jobs** Post-JM Ps actually accepted: Academic tenure-track, post-docs (only 5% took non-academic jobs).
- Fields in which jobs were sought:** Majority of Post-JM Ps applied for jobs in social/personality psychology or another area of psychology (62% took jobs in the social/personality psychology field).
- Top sources for job announcements** were the SPSP listserv, word-of-mouth from one's advisor, and e-mail from one's department.
- Pre-JM Ps' (projected) **most influential factors for accepting a job:** Location (personal reasons), research/teaching requirements, salary.
- Post-JM Ps' (actual) **most influential factors for accepting a job:** Location (personal reasons), experience they would gain, resources offered, colleagues at new job, lack of alternatives.

## Results (continued)

- Manuscripts were most commonly submitted to JPSP and PSPB. Psychological Science and JESP were the next most popular.
- Pre-JM Ps expected to request **basic start-up packages** including lab space, software, equipment.
- Post-JM Ps requested teaching reductions, summer salary, relocation costs, travel funding, lab furniture, research funding, educational seminars, and subject pools, in addition to what Pre-JM Ps would request.
- Mean starting salary** was \$56,542 ( $SD=\$17,105$ ).

## Discussion

### Conclusions

- Pre-JM Ps are moderately prepared to enter the job market within one or two years, if compared to Post-JM Ps' qualifications while on the job market. However, they may be unrealistic and uninformed about what to expect out of the job search process.
- Importantly, students who had not yet entered the job market reported that they **felt uninformed about start-up packages** and did not know what types of benefits could be negotiated.
- These findings provide a snapshot of SPSP job applicants and their job market experiences and will **help graduate students make better-informed decisions** regarding their future career paths, **prior to entering the job market**, while **increasing realistic expectations**.

### Limitations and Future Directions

- The current study was cross-sectional and did not follow up at future time points to assess the variables over time.
- Also, this study was conducted in between academic "years," from July to August 2008. We originally intended to capture a third group, those who were currently on the job market, but most of these Ps had gone on the job market too recently and could not provide adequate information.
- Future research should examine these variables using a longitudinal study design or by simply sampling across one year.

### Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the **SPSP Executive Committee** for funding participant incentives. Surveymonkey resources were donated by Megan O'Grady and C. Raymond Knee.



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 Presented at SPSP 2009 on Saturday, February 7, 2009