

The Professional Side of Philosophy: Navigating Grad School, Writing a Dissertation, and Getting a Job

(This document is available online under the Useful Philosophy Links part of my homepage, or at the direct link:

<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelly/KellyNavigatingPhilosophyGradSchool.pdf>)

Disclaimer: What comes below is an opinionated take, and the opinions are largely mine. You can and will get conflicting advice on many of the issues addressed, including in some of the links I've listed. That's fine; there is no single optimal overall strategy or tactical package or set of guidelines here. Solicit as much advice as possible, understand the reasoning behind the different recommendations, take on board and put together a game plan that best works for you. Most important is **that** you thinking about this kind of thing, and that you are thinking about it early and often. – DRK

- I. Welcome to graduate school!
 - A. There is lots to do here, internal to the program and department, while you're taking classes and moving through Purdue's graduate student program
 1. Do well in classes, impress your professors with your philosophical acumen and work ethic and all-around brilliance, write good papers, and if you get encouraged to turn a good paper into a conference or journal submission: do that!
 2. Get involved, go to talks, join and participate in reading groups, be part of the social and intellectual life of the department and larger intellectual and social community at the university
 3. Work hard! Pursue your interests with passion and vigor!
 - B. Within the broader context of the discipline and profession of philosophy
 1. Eventually you will have to choose a research specialty, and a dissertation topic, and a dissertation committee, and I'll talk about those things more specifically below
 2. But even at the outset be casually thinking about and have an eye on the type of professional identity you're putting together for yourself as you go – it will be important for many reasons, but especially as you get closer to and make a run at the job market
 3. There's a useful quote (Stalin? Lenin?) about the benefits of learning to play chess when you are young because it teaches more general lessons about how to methodically marshal and strategically deploy a wide range of coordinated forces; the line of thought applies here too
 - C. Philosophy will and should take on a larger and more central place in your life and identity and sense of yourself
 1. This is great!

- a. You are less constrained by other things, and so relatively free to more fully devote your time and attention and self to ideas and the pursuit of truth and love of wisdom
- b. Take a moment to appreciate, and try not to lose sight of, how objectively awesome this is
 - i. It is a luxury, a privilege, and a wonderful opportunity
 - ii. Set your sights on sucking all the marrow out of it
2. Another side of that: being a graduate student is also now your **job**
3. So: do **not** think of graduate school as merely undergraduate+
 - a. It is **not** just a slightly ramped up continuation of what you were doing before
 - b. Graduate school is different in kind, not merely degree
 - c. The level jump will be slightly less drastic for those of you coming from MA programs, but the MA program > PhD program transition is also non-trivial (as I know from personal experience)
4. More generally, be thinking about yourself as an adult, and as being a member of and an actor in an intellectual & professional community
 - a. And so: conduct yourself accordingly
 - b. For a nice, thought provoking take on some of the less obviously things packed into that ‘accordingly’ this thread on twitter [isn't a bad start](#)
 - c. Another list [wisdoms for graduate students](#)
5. Be a good departmental citizen, an active participant in the intellectual life of the department and university and larger discipline
 - a. This includes within the physical confines of the department and offices, but it also includes interactions with other academics in forums that extend beyond official settings
 - i. Behave professionally
 - A. BPA has a good start here on how to do that here: <http://bpa.ac.uk/resources/women-in-philosophy/good-practice>
 - B. In general, be a collegial grown up who is sensitive to and respectful of other people
 - C. Cultivate the skills required to engage in the frank discussion of ideas in a non-asshole way
 1. Be able to converse/debate/disagree with your colleagues (and anyone else) without thereby offending them
 2. Without being dismissive, belittling, derisive, or a bullying jackass about it
 3. Dennett has some useful thoughts <http://www.openculture.com/2019/06/how-to-argue-with-kindness-and-care-4-rules-from-philosopher-daniel-dennett.html>
 4. Also, don't be a jerk: <https://aeon.co/essays/so-you-re->

[surrounded-by-idiots-guess-who-the-real-jerk-is](#)

- ii. Keep an eye out for (and obviously don't engage in) blatant sexism, racism, ableism, or any other kind of explicit or overt discrimination
- iii. But also try to become mindful of micro-aggressions, micro-inequalities and other subtler but also damaging forms of disrespect and discrimination, and do your best to help stop those too
- b. Go to philosophy department colloquium talks
 - i. You should consider it to be **part of your job** as a graduate student to attend these
 - A. These kinds of talks are an important part of the currency of philosophy
 - B. Going to them is a good way to see what other philosophers are thinking and arguing about, and how they are thinking and arguing about it
 - C. Stay for the Q&A; it is usually the best and most informative part
 - ii. You'll be giving presentations like these in seminars and conferences and job talks of your own in coming years, so come see instances of how they can be done well (and perhaps more instructively, poorly)
 - iii. Also consider going to interesting talks offered by other entities and organizations at Purdue too
 - A. <http://www.purdue.edu/discoverypark/bioethics/>
 - B. <https://www.cla.purdue.edu/sis/phil-lit/p-1%20events.html>
 - C. There are tons of other events on campus, about which you will get many emails
6. Be aware of what's going on in the larger world of philosophy that you are working hard to be able to enter as a credentialed member
 - a. One good way to keep your fingers to the pulse is to check into some of the central blogs every few days, see what's up
 - i. Philosopher's Cocoon: <http://philosopherscocoon.typepad.com/>
 - A. This is a particularly useful, as it is aimed at early career issues
 - B. For instance, see a nice recent link on avoiding "grad traps"
 - C. <http://dailynous.com/2014/08/21/grad-traps-guest-post-by-daniel-silvermint/>
 - ii. Daily Nous: <http://dailynous.com>
 - iii. New APPS: <http://www.newappsblog.com/>
 - iv. Digressions&Impressions: <http://digressionsnimpresions.typepad.com>

- v. Leiter blog: <http://leiterreports.typepad.com/>
 - vi. Philosopher's Anonymous: <http://philosophersanon.blogspot.com/>
 - vii. The Philosophy Smoker: <http://philosophysmoker.blogspot.com>
 - b. Sign up to receive Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews: <https://ndpr.nd.edu/recent-reviews/>
 - c. Browse through and sign up to receive new publication notices from Philosophy Compass: [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1747-9991](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1747-9991)
7. Publishing stuff (Jacovides will talk much more about this)
- a. To be a competitive candidate when you get to the job market, you will almost definitely need at least one publication on your CV
 - i. It wouldn't be misguided to treat have 1 publication as a necessary condition to going on the job market
 - ii. Similarly, necessary to being competitive is having multiple conference participation lines on your CV
 - b. What about co-authored work, with other grad students, with professors, etc.—is it encouraged, okay, detrimental, or what?
 - i. Opinions differ on this
 - ii. Some co-authored stuff is great, largely because it is **presented** and/or **published**
 - iii. Certainly, though, you'll want at least some of your work to be singly authored
 - A. The heart of your dissertation project
 - B. Probably your writing sample (see below)
 - c. [Good advice](#) on crafting a paper for a specific venue, namely so that it can grow up to be an article in an academic **journal**
 - i. Written by a friend who is an editor of the journal it appears in & is nominally about (*American Ethnologist*)
 - ii. But a lot of the advice is portable, applies to any journal, including philosophy journals
 - iii. And reflecting on where it *doesn't* apply can be a useful and illuminating exercise, too
- D. It Takes a Village: Developing a mentor network
- 1. Finding your tribe
 - a. There are many sub-disciplines and specialty areas and smaller communities within philosophy at large
 - b. In all of them, it should go without saying: be professional
 - c. Tapping into these and getting to know their members is one good way to
 - i. Become professionally active and aware
 - ii. Do things to increase your professional visibility and earn recognition from other philosophers
 - iii. Learn the nitty gritty insider knowledge
 - d. Go to conferences

- i. Make sure to include some good, big conferences
 - A. Grad student conferences are **great**
 - 1. Places to get valuable feedback on your work as it develops
 - 2. Meet other budding philosophers with similar interests – develop a horizontal network of colleagues and friends
 - 3. And also faculty keynote speakers
 - B. But grad conferences shouldn't be the **only** thing that you're attending
- ii. Chair sessions
- iii. Respond to/comment on other people's papers
- iv. Give papers
- v. Make new friends
 - A. Schmooze with people between sessions
 - B. Get meals and drinks after sessions
- vi. <http://dailyous.com/2014/09/03/recurring-philosophy-conferences/>
- e. Again, take advantage of our department colloquium
 - i. Attend visiting speaker's talks when they give them, and go to the reception afterwards
 - ii. If someone is in your field or particularly relevant to your work, schedule an appointment with him/her while s/he is here, or at the very least go to the graduate student lunch if there is one
 - iii. Email the Colloquium Czar (Dan Smith this year) about setting up an appointment for coffee with the speaker if s/he is in your area etc.
 - A. Speakers usually have some down time the afternoon before the talk
 - B. Perhaps the next morning before s/he leaves
- f. Sit in on their courses at other universities, and get to know and impress the professor
- g. Take advantage of the graduate student exchange program we've got set up with KU Leuven in Belgium
<https://hiw.kuleuven.be/eng>
- h. Short sermon:
 - i. It's very natural to make a hard distinction between a) becoming a good philosopher and b) getting out on the conference and workshop circuit, but try to disabuse yourself of the tendency to do this. I get it: calling this latter sort of thing "networking" makes it sound like a grim but professionally necessary slog of Machiavellian inauthenticity and status jockeying. This is a bad way to think of it!
 - ii. Better way: what you're really doing is Finding Your People. There aren't terribly many of us in the world as interested and passionate and ultimately

knowledgeable about philosophy, let alone the corner of philosophy that you're trying to contribute to and develop an expertise in. So it's important to get out there and find those fellow travelers and make friends with them, see what they think, hear about and think through what their take is on the philosophical issues of the day. Moreover, conferences and workshops are where a lot of the important philosophizing gets done.

- iii. There's a vision of philosophy—the picture of [Descartes](#) mediating alone in his study looms large in Western philosophy's self-conception—as being a very solitary endeavor, and important parts of it certainly are. But just as important are the social parts: clearly expressing your thoughts in a way others can grasp them, getting comfortable presenting your work to others, developing the skills needed to defend your original arguments in the face of good faith objections, and getting good at tactfully offering thoughtful, constructive criticism to others', the whole frank discussion of ideas thing that lies near the center of the life of the mind. It's an art form, and one that takes practice and good sparring partners to get good at. Talking with professors and other grad students around the department is a good start. Conferences are the next step.
 - iv. The solitary and social sides of philosophy can, and ideally are, developed in conjunction with each other, and can fuel a virtuous circle, good kind of feedback loop: once you got your foot in the door of the conference circuit, you and other like-minded philosophers can see identify each other as kindred spirits and appreciate that you good at the philosophizing, which can lead to more invitations and conference acceptances, which lead to meeting more people and becoming more visible and getting better at the philosophizing, which lead to more opportunities, and on up.
2. Mentor Network: there are many practical reasons you will want to start developing a network of mentors, that's anchored here, but that also expands beyond your home department and institution
 - a. These will be people you can tap for invaluable professional advice as you move through the stages of your career
 - b. Another important one is for letters of recommendation
 - i. People who know you and your work
 - ii. People who will be willing to write letters of in support of various things you will apply for
 - iii. People who can go to bat for you in less formal ways

- A. Come job market time
 - B. But also in other ways
 - 1. Tapping you to comment on papers
 - 2. Eventually to referee papers for conferences and journals
 - 3. Perhaps even to participate in research projects and get you plugged into the profession in various ways
3. Social media, and managing your public vs private selves online
- a. Figuring out how to do social media while developing a professional identity is not easy, but here are some thoughts:
 - i. <http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/2018/08/do-young-philosophers-really-need-to-be-on-social-media-for-professional-reasons.html>
 - ii. Which links to: <https://blog.apaonline.org/2018/08/01/women-in-philosophy-social-media/>
 - iii. <http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/2018/10/more-than-half-of-us-law-schools-look-at-social-media-presence-of-applicants.html>
 - b. I haven't thought about it systematically enough to be sure which bits of advice there I'd endorse or disagree with
 - i. At this point, you are digital natives in a way many of us faculty members are not
 - ii. Having grown up online, you may be considerably savvier about this sort of thing than any of us
 - iii. But with respect to philosophy and your social media presence, how you're going to engage and present yourself to the world is probably something that you should put some deliberate thought into
 - c. It is certainly the case that
 - i. Being on social media **can** help raise your visibility, help you stay connected with other philosophers, remain abreast of what's being published and what people are talking about
 - ii. Doing social media **badly** can actively hurt a nascent career
 - d. It is probably the case that
 - i. **Not** being on social media at all will **not** actively hurt a nascent career
 - ii. Though abstaining foregoes the potential positives as well as the potential negatives
 - e. Certainly be careful
 - i. The first principle applies here as well: Do No Harm
 - ii. Though that can be [tough](#), I realize
4. Teaching
- a. I've got more on this in the [teaching document](#) that goes out with teaching assignments before each semester, so see that

- b. But much of it suggests using Purdue's [Center for Instructional Excellence](#) to grow your teaching chops
 - c. And to get accredited and certificated, so employers know you're serious about being a good teacher of philosophy
 - d. But mainly so you become a better teacher of philosophy
5. Letters of Recommendation
- a. These are among the most important components of the dossier and professional identity you will be developing as you move through graduate school
 - b. Job listings will typically ask for three letters – **consider that a bare minimum**
 - i. Successful candidates often have around 6 (or more)
 - A. Note that this strictly complies with the requested 3 letters
 - B. It just adds a few more, and thus considerably more firepower to your dossier
 - ii. A friend of mine coming out of graduate school had 18 letters, from top people all over the world
 - A. This is of course ridiculously extreme
 - B. It also led to an extreme outcome, namely a job at a top 5 program
 - c. Letters from people in other departments are particularly valuable – especially from top people in your area
 - d. Typically you will have four “for free”
 - i. Three members of your dissertation committee
 - ii. Outside reader
 - e. Who to ask, and how
 - i. <http://chronicle.com/article/How-to-Ask-for-a/235968>
 - ii. Ask if they would like a “Brag Sheet” something that distills the main bullet points and virtues of your total job market dossier onto a single sheet of paper

E. Your writing sample(s)

- 1. Often this will be a chapter of your dissertation, but not always
 - a. It could be e.g. a polished descendant of a seminar paper
 - b. It can also be a paper that you've recently published
- 2. Whatever you choose to send as a writing sample, it will be a very important, if not the most important, part of your dossier
 - a. Job ads will typically ask for one writing sample
 - b. If possible, you might consider sending along more
- 3. In deciding what to send, consult with your committee and mentor network, but also imagine the situation of the person reading applications and deciding whose to look at more closely
 - a. S/he probably will have at least 100 applications to read
 - i. An important part of what your writing sample needs to do is quickly give him or her a reason to **keep reading it**
 - ii. It should certainly fail to repel

- iii. For some general thoughts on good writing: <https://www.brainpickings.org/2015/11/05/david-foster-wallace-dictionary-writing/>
 - b. So include, perhaps
 - i. Something short, flashy, really interesting
 - ii. A longer more in-depth piece
 - iii. If you only send a longer piece, include some grabby, engaging material in the first few pages
- 4. Even if you don't send two papers in your application dossier, ideally you should have two polished papers that are nearly ready to go by the time you apply
 - a. If you get a campus invite, you'll likely be asked to give a research job talk
 - b. Your job talk will ideally be different than your writing sample – avoid being labeled a one trick pony

II. Thinking about a Dissertation

A. The Big Transition—Year Three

- 1. From being a student
 - a. Reading what is on a syllabus prepared by a professor
 - b. Writing papers
 - i. Based on the syllabus
 - ii. Sometimes based on prompts
 - iii. To be assessed (mainly) by a single reader
 - c. Success is measured by the grades you get in courses
- 2. To being a researcher
 - a. How to manage and navigate the literature
 - b. Choosing your own things to read
 - c. Deciding the level of engagement to take with respect to different material you'll come across
 - d. Defining a research agenda
 - i. Identifying questions [worth asking](#)
 - ii. Debates worth engaging in
 - e. How to organize your own time
 - f. Setting writing habits, goals
- 3. Try to make this transition less abrupt by thinking about potential dissertation areas/topics/projects as you move through coursework
 - a. Be talking to professors
 - b. Be talking to older graduate students
 - c. Keep your eyes and ears open in general

B. The content of your dissertation

- 1. As you're slowly trying to sort through possibilities and areas and zero in on a dissertation topic, intellectual/philosophical considerations should obviously carry the most weight
 - a. What you're interested in, what captures your imagination and commands your attention
 - b. Where you can make a new and significant contribution to some debate or focal point of research in that specific area

2. But some extra-philosophical considerations should also go into the equation, and should be on your radar screen (to mix metaphors) relatively early in the process
 - a. What will be more or less likely to get you a job
 - i. Why that matters? Because as the saying goes: Getting a Ph.D. is hard; getting a **job** is much harder
 - ii. Your dissertation topic will dictate what you can reasonably claim as an AOS (Area of Specialization), which will dictate what jobs you will apply for
 - iii. With this in mind, you might also consider developing a marketable AOC (Area of Competence) to go with your AOS
 - iv. What each is signaling, roughly:
 - A. AOS: You have published/are publishing in this area; can teach a seminar in it
 - B. AOC: You know the literature and would be competent to teach a 300ish level course in this area
 - b. When thinking about, whittling down, and trying to get more specific about the content and focus of your dissertation, be aware of what people in that area of philosophy are excited about and interested in
 - i. Sign up with the Purdue Library (or directly with the publisher) to get emails announcing publication and table of contents of new issues of journals
 - ii. Sign up for a free subscription to get daily emails from Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews: <https://ndpr.nd.edu/recent-reviews/>
 - iii. Browse through and keep an eye out for recent articles in Philosophy Compass
 - A. This is an excellent resource for getting up to speed on topics and trends in different areas of philosophy, in part because the articles aim to provide state of the art overviews of particular areas, identify open questions, and suggest topics for further research:
 - B. [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1747-9991](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1747-9991)
 - iv. Go to conferences
 - A. Here is a list of recurring conferences in philosophy and nearby fields:
 - B. <http://dailyous.com/2014/09/03/recurring-philosophy-conferences/>
 - c. See what direction the area is moving, and anticipate
 - i. Don't try to write a dissertation that is 50 years ahead of its time
 - ii. Start writing a dissertation that is 4-5 years ahead of its time

- d. For some perspective on the issue of broader relevance:
 - i. Dennett's 'Higher order truths about chess'
 - ii. <http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelly/DCDCChess2006.pdf>
 - iii. Some other stuff in that area: <http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelly/KellyPhilLinks.html>

C. Format

1. Talk to the (anticipated) chair and other potential members of your dissertation committee, and think carefully about the pros/cons (both intellectual and pragmatic) concerning the form of the dissertation you are going to write
2. **Option 1:** A few (usually three or four) loosely thematically related but basically standalone papers, often including an introduction and conclusion that situate them in the larger project, make the thematic connections explicit
3. **Option 2:** Traditional integrated book type proto-monograph

D. Putting together a dissertation committee

1. Again, intellectual and philosophic subject matter type factors will be very important to this
 - a. Areas of research and expertise of potential members
 - b. Meshing with your own anticipated research, different aspects of your project
2. But also again be aware of and take into consideration other extra-philosophic dimensions, too
 - a. Different people have very different personalities and management or mentoring styles, especially w/r/t overseeing dissertations, providing feedback, and being (both constructively and less usefully, alas) difficult
 - b. Have some idea about who is and is not connected and willing to be active in "working the phones" for you when you get to the job market, and during your build up to it
 - c. The most important person will be your chair
 - i. Consider his/her expertise, obviously
 - ii. But also his/her management and mentoring style and whether and how it will respond to and interact with your own personality type and MO
 - A. Micromanagers and control freaks: lot of attention, lot of care, lot of help and input
 - B. Laissez faire hands-offers: not as helicoptering or directive, but also provide less guidance, less clear signals to steer by
 - C. Close readers, careful and thorough commenters on written work
 - D. Debaters, sparring partners in conversation
3. Also, consider suggesting* an external reader who is good, well known, will give you useful feedback along the way, and who will eventually write you a good letter

- a. * “suggesting” because the dissertator doesn’t choose the 4th reader on his/her committee
- b. The DGS makes the formal appointment, but it is often done in consultation with the dissertation director

III. The Job Market: Presenting your Dissertation

- A. When you get to the job market, your application dossier will need
 - 1. Attached to your CV, or separately (or both), a dissertation abstract, i.e. a description of your Ph.D. thesis
 - 2. This is important
 - a. It should be clear, well informed, engaging and make your thesis sound interesting and important
 - b. It should be **extremely well written**
 - c. Even consider including two abstracts
 - i. A one page thesis abstract attached to (or really just the last page of) the CV
 - ii. A longer, more detailed chapter by chapter prospectus
- B. Writing these will also help you be able to **talk** about your dissertation
 - 1. Have a 30-45 second “elevator speech”
 - a. Explain your work to people who aren’t familiar with it
 - b. “People” here includes anyone and everyone
 - i. Not just your committee
 - ii. Not just people in the department
 - iii. Not just other grad students and academics
 - c. Be able to quickly, engagingly – and so without a ton of jargon – state what you’re doing and why it’s worthwhile
 - i. The initial intent at this point is exclusively communicative (rather than self-expressive or argumentative)
 - ii. No one else can read your mind ever, but doubly so when your mind has been marinating in and trying to push the boundaries of some abstract philosophical topic for a couple of years
 - 2. Be able to expand on the elevator speech, so it can easily transition into a more detailed 5ish minute “cocktail party” conversation
 - a. Again packaged & deliverable in a snappy accessible way
 - b. Conveys what you're trying to do, what you’re arguing for, and why it's interesting and important
 - c. Vivid concrete illustrating examples tend to be effective
 - 3. In similar vein, as you’re getting close to the job market, you should also do as many **mock interviews** as you can
 - a. Develop the ability to answer questions on your feet
 - b. Be able to easily move between levels of detail in response to interruptions and (sometimes whacky) questions
 - i. While keeping your bearings
 - ii. Without losing control of the conversation
 - iii. The hyperlink metaphor is a good way to visualize the “easily move between levels of detail” skill

- c. Get feedback in a friendly environment on how to improve and fine tune all of this
 - 4. Have something to say about where you see your research going after you finish graduate school and your dissertation
 - a. Don't get blindsided or left speechless by the inevitable "where do you see yourself in 5 years" question
 - b. Have something coherent to say about what type of post-dissertation research you might want to do
 - i. Keep in mind that no one is going to hold you to what you say here
 - ii. But you need an articulate and plausible answer
 - iii. It's often useful to make yourself think through it
 - C. These may seem rather distant at this point, but beginning to develop these kind of "presentation" skills (for use in both casual conversational and more professional formal settings) now and as you move through graduate school will pay dividends when you get to the job market
- IV. Publishing, jobs, and your dissertation
 - A. A large part of the reason I was initially asked to do this is because I published a polished descendant of my dissertation as a book, but: I'd actually advise **against** trying to – or at least planning on – publishing your dissertation as a book, at least right off the bat
 - 1. Even if you write a proto-monograph (Option 2 above), have a sense of how you might chunk it into stand alone journal papers
 - a. Why? Your immediate priority will be to get a **job**
 - i. Writing a dissertation you plan on turning into a book doesn't immediately help with this
 - ii. Option 2 could, if you don't have a good grip on how to chunk your material into stand alone parts, inhibit your ability to get a job
 - b. Even on the happy event that you land a (ideal, non-adjunct) job, your next priority will be to get **tenure**
 - i. It's generally not a good idea to start totally new research projects while the tenure clock is ticking
 - ii. Even if you'd prefer to publish your dissertation as a book, write it such that you **can** get a couple of tenure-securing articles out of it if need be
 - A. Keep your options open here
 - B. Don't put all of your tenure eggs in a single, gotta-get-a-book-contract basket
 - 2. If eventually, you do decide you want to shop your dissertation around as a book manuscript:
 - a. Ask around for who might be an appropriate publisher, including if there are any series your work could fit with
 - b. Write an email to the acquisitions editor
 - i. Email addresses of these people can typically be found on the website of the publishing house
 - ii. In the body of the mail, introduce yourself, your professional details, and what you've got

- iii. Attach something like two documents I mentioned above (short and long descriptions)
 - c. My sense is that the rules of submitting stuff are slightly different with book manuscripts than with journals
 - i. With the former, you don't have to do it serially
 - ii. You can have several of these soliciting emails out to different publishers at the same time
 - iii. You might even be able to have parts of the manuscript itself out to several different publishers at once before you've signed a contract
 - A. I've heard conflicting things about the relevant norms on this, and they could be shifting
 - B. Might ask around, including the editor you are corresponding with
 - 3. Philosophy Cocoon has some informative threads on this issue
 - a. <http://philosopherscocoon.typepad.com/blog/2014/06/book-publishing-tips-and-advice.html>
 - b. <http://philosopherscocoon.typepad.com/blog/2013/11/one-readers-experience-obtaining-a-book-contract.html>
 - c. <http://philosopherscocoon.typepad.com/blog/2014/04/dissertations-that-became-books.html>
 - d. <http://philosopherscocoon.typepad.com/blog/2013/04/publishing-a-book.html>
 - 4. Perhaps more concretely, I got my hands on a Proposal Guidelines sheet from Princeton University Press
 - a. <http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelly/PrincetonUniversityPressBookProposalGuidelines2018.pdf>
- B. In general: Perfectionism can be your enemy
- 1. With both book projects and journal submissions, getting something into print is a process that moves glacially, and will probably involve at least one round of revisions in light of referee comments
 - 2. The comments you get back
 - a. Will sometimes be useful, can help improve the paper
 - b. They will sometimes be overly terse, or uninformed, or agenda driven, or just mistaken about your thesis/argument
 - i. Referees are fallible, alas (especially the mythic, dreaded [Review #2](#))
 - ii. Sometimes read papers too quickly and not so carefully, and so don't always "get" them
 - c. What to do about such comments is often not clear
 - i. Even those referee comments that misunderstand your paper can be helpful in highlighting the ways in which your paper is unclear and susceptible to being misread – and so can unintentionally point the way to improving it
 - ii. On rare occasions (and when you are not dealing with a revise and resubmit, but moving onto the next

- journal on your list) referee comments are off base through no fault of your own and so are best ignored
3. An upshot of this is that the whole process takes a **long time**
 - a. Different publishers and journals have different norms, track records and reputations w/r/t turnaround time
 - b. Be aware of journals' typical issues and acceptance rates of course, but also of the expected Submission to Final Verdict time, and take it into account when deciding where to submit
 - i. Ask people around the department, and the broader mentor network you're developing
 - ii. Google around – different blogs compile information on this kind of thing
 - iii. Here are a couple of (somewhat dated) links
 - A. http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/2004/11/philosophy_jour_1.html
 - B. <http://www.andrewcullison.com/2009/09/journal-review-time-comparisons/>
 4. If a paper gets a Revise and Resubmit, when you resubmit it, include with the revised work a **detailed cover letter** to the editor
 - a. In this cover letter, clearly and thoroughly explain
 - i. Where and how you made changes in response to referee comments in the places you did
 - ii. Where and why you didn't
 - A. If you thought the comments were wrong or misguided, this is where you can explain why, and make your case to the editor
 - B. If there were multiple referees whose comments pulled in different directions
 1. You might just point this out
 2. Tell the editor you take them to have cancelled each other out
 - b. Why? The function of this cover letter is to make it **very easy** for the editor (and perhaps the referees) to accept the revised draft as it is, without further revisions
- C. A good piece of advice I heard many times while in graduate school was this: Anything worth publishing at all is worth publishing three times
1. Don't publish the same thing verbatim, of course
 - a. In general, cutting and pasting material from previous papers without alteration is self-plagiarism, which is: **bad**
 - i. Try to avoid it completely, but if you do it, definitely cite the original source
 - ii. For how **not** to do it, see: [Lehrer, Jonah](#)
 - b. If you want to reproduce something smaller (a paragraph) from another paper, it might be possible to lift – check the relevant editors about copyright issues, though
 2. With those caveats noted: if you have a view, or a line on an issue, or a well-defended claim, there's no reason not to push it into several

- different conversations or debates in different literatures – get your message out, get as much dialectic mileage out of it as you can
- a. You'll have to do work to situate it differently when you're using it to score points in different debates
 - b. Or pull out a different implication that's relevant to the context you're inserting it into
 - c. Or shape a good new dialectic structure to plug it into
3. In general you want to be identified with the claim or the view
 - a. So it is most definitely in your interest to show how that claim is, or make it, relevant to a range of things that philosophers care about
 - b. Yale asst prof cautionary tale
 - i. Had exceeded the publication requirements for tenure
 - ii. But with papers whose subject matter was scattered across a variety of topics
 - iii. Was denied tenure on the ground that he'd failed to carve out any niche that people associated with him, or stake a claim or interrelated set of claims that he was identified with

V. Errata

- A. Other people at other schools have documents similar to this one, aggregating advice on navigating graduate school
 1. Hanti Lin at UC Davis:
 - a. https://docs.google.com/document/d/128nK28AQIH_XJEzLQmKtzCGmOHRjE0KsWxk3Fui98IU/mobilebasic?pli=1
 - b. And a discussion of it on several blogs:
 - <http://philosopherscocoon.typepad.com/blog/2015/02/online-doing-a-phd-and-getting-a-job-in-philosophy.html>
 2. Aidan McGlynn at the University of Edinburgh:
 - <https://sites.google.com/site/aidanmcglynn/adviceforwannabephilosophers>
 3. Brian Keeley's piece in *Inside Higher Ed*:
 - https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2011/06/20/advice_column_on_becoming_a_philosophy_faculty_member
 4. Allen Wood's advice in the APA blog:
 - <http://blog.apaonline.org/2016/01/05/advice-for-applying-for-academic-jobs-in-philosophy-indiana-university-bloomington/>
- B. Purdue's Grad school offers some relevant 2 credit P/NP courses
 1. There are two courses
 - a. Each course meets just 2 hours a week
 - b. Past students said they were helpful, recommend taking them early in your graduate student career to maximize benefit
 2. The first provides guidance and resources to help look for academic jobs
 - a. (PFF = "Preparing Future Faculty")
 - b. <http://www.purdue.edu/cie/certificates/pffp.html>
 3. The other for non-academic jobs
 - a. (PFP = "Preparing Future Professionals")

- b. <https://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/gspd/pfp.html>
 - c. The APA now has resources concerning this as well
 - i. <http://www.apaonline.org/?page=beyondacademia>
 - ii. I've made available it available here as well:
<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelly/BeyondAcademiaAPA2016.pdf>
- C. Unrelated to the Purdue course, but a handful of other links related to thinking about leaving academia or looking for non-academic jobs
1. <http://philosopherscocoon.typepad.com/blog/2016/01/zachary-ernsts-goodbye-academia.html>; this has links to the following:
 - a. <http://goodbyeacademia.com/wordpress/>
 - b. <http://philosopherscocoon.typepad.com/blog/2016/01/its-not-giving-up.html>
 2. <http://dailynous.com/category/non-academic-jobs-2/>
 - a. <http://dailynous.com/2015/04/02/a-site-to-help-with-non-academic-employment/>
 - b. <http://dailynous.com/non-academic-hires-2013-14/>
 3. <http://www.apaonline.org/?nonacademic>
 4. <https://www.gradsquare.com>
 5. <http://www.philskills.com>