



Sigma Delta Epsilon-Graduate Women in Science

October 2012

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### Info Needed for Omega Chapter Website

Have you won any awards, published a manuscript, gotten a grant funded in the past year? Send us the details and we will place it on the Omega Chapter website as a way to promote the accomplishments of women in science. Send your questions or contributions by clicking [here](#).

### Hello Omega Chapter Members,



Now that the academic year is in full swing, hopefully each of us has gotten back into the groove of things. Whether you are teaching or taking classes, we understand just how busy this season is for us all. Despite our commitments, please take a moment to scroll down and browse the content of our second newsletter of the academic year, which includes a welcome to our newest members and some great articles on job applications and making yourself a standout employee.

Perhaps, for some of you, it has not been easy this year to transition back into classes, teaching, or research after summer break. For some reason, I have found the transition difficult this time around. How can we address the balance between school and social life, work and family? The support of my family and friends has gotten me through, and knowing when to take a break and have some fun. Sometimes this means forcing myself to leave work earlier than I normally do (averaging a 10-hour workday everyday is not always healthy). Other times it means asking myself if I am taking on too much, and then paring down some of those commitments to make room for "me time". One of the benefits of membership in SDE-GWIS is that you belong to a large network of like-minded women. We can bounce ideas off one another regarding our research or teaching or perhaps offer encouraging words and advice. Be sure you are taking advantage of this network by interacting with other SDE-GWIS members on our Facebook and LinkedIn social media sites. You can also consult our membership directory for other members who may be located near you (see the Quick Links section, bottom of sidebar).

As the newest member of the Omega Committee, I would like to thank the other members for their hard work last year in bringing you an Omega chapter website. Please check it out by clicking [here](#). Our website is a dynamic project, so we encourage you to make suggestions regarding things you would like to see on the website. We have plans to include

## Brain Teaser of the Month



Did you know that a shrimp's heart is located in its head or that ants do not sleep? Click [here](#) to read these and numerous other fun science facts!

## Science: It's a Girl Thing!

Last month we told you about a controversial video released by the European Commission (EC) that was designed to encourage girls to become interested in science. In case you missed it, you can see the video by clicking [here](#). The accompanying article suggested that many viewers deemed the video as offensive and inappropriate. However, [one informal survey](#) suggested that girls aged 9-13 years old were more interested in science careers after viewing the video than they were before watching the video.

We subsequently asked for your thoughts: Is the video as offensive as some claim? Is it targeted to a particular age group, and does that justify the style? Dr. Melissa Wilson Sayres, one of our very own Omega chapter members, has written a blog post on the topic, and you can read it by clicking [here](#).

If anyone else has any thoughts regarding the appropriateness of the EC video, feel free to tell us your thoughts by clicking [here](#) so we can continue the discussion.

links to grant and employment opportunities as well as articles on balancing career and life, so feel free to email me your favorites by clicking [here](#). Do you have ideas and contributions for upcoming issues of the monthly e-newsletter? Feel free to email those to our editor by clicking [here](#). The Committee members would love to hear from you so we can do our best to serve you. Enjoy this issue, and we look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,  
Harmony Hancock  
Omega Committee Member

## Our Newest Members

Please help us welcome the following member who joined Omega Chapter during the month of September:

Dr. Melissa Mullen; Independence, OH

## Featured Omega Member of the Month

Unfortunately, no one volunteered to be the Featured Member of the Month. If you would like to be featured in November (or any month), please request the biosketch template by clicking [here](#). The biosketch and headshot are due by the 21st to be featured the following month. The biosketch is very brief, so we hope everyone will eventually participate!

## Crafting your Faculty Job Application

by Allie Coffin, PhD

Do you read *Science*? The "big red" issue is coming...the one with the thick section full of academic job postings. Yep, it is job search season!

Most tenure-track job ads ask for the same major components: cover letter, research statement, teaching statement, CV, and letters of recommendation (or names of references). But, what belongs in each of these components and how do you decipher the nuanced wording of each ad? Here, I will briefly talk about the academic job application package and how to maximize your chances of landing an interview. Next month, I will talk about the interview process--how to prepare and what to expect.

1) Finding job postings. The back section of *Science* is a great place to start, as is [sciencecareers.org](http://sciencecareers.org). Most professional societies such as the [Society for Neuroscience](#) or the [American Society for Cell Biology](#) also have their own job pages with ads targeted to researchers in specific fields, although some require that you be a member of the society to access their job search features. The best way to find job postings is often word of mouth--let your network know that you are on the market, and job postings will often find you! This works even better if someone in

## Omega Chapter is Growing!

We currently have 197 members spread across the United States as well as Canada, Ghana, Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Japan, Madagascar, Argentina, Italy, England, and Nigeria.

## SDE-GWIS Membership Directory Now Online

Do not forget, you can now access our Membership Directory online. Simply go to the SDE-GWIS home page, click the Membership Directory link in the right-hand sidebar, and enter the username and password. If you do not know the login information, please contact Dr. Laura Ramsey, Omega Chapter President, by clicking [here](#).

## Suggestion Box

Do you have any questions about Omega Chapter or national SDE-GWIS? Do you have suggestions for fostering or enhancing interactions among Omega members or strengthening the presence of Omega Chapter within the national organization? We want to hear from you! Please send us any and all suggestions by clicking [here](#).

## Quick Links...

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your network (like your PI) can alert a colleague on a search committee to look for your application package.

2) Craft your research statement. Read the job ad carefully--do they want a 2-page statement describing your past research accomplishments or a 5-page outline of your future research plans? Either way, be sure to include your ideas of what research will be conducted in your lab and what agencies you will apply to for grant funding. I divided my research statement up by general thematic areas then, for each, described a bit of background, hypotheses my lab would test in each area, and what students would learn by working on each project. This is particularly important for institutions that primarily focus on undergraduate education since they want to see that your research program can be accomplished with eager 21-year-olds!

3) Craft your teaching statement. Some schools request a teaching philosophy, others require a statement of teaching experience, or a description of your teaching interests. Each of these requires different information:

a. Teaching philosophy: How do you approach teaching? How do you engage students and assess learning? The [Chronicles of Higher Ed](#) has a good piece on the subject.

b. Teaching experience: What subjects have you taught? What did you learn about teaching?

c. Teaching interests: What classes do you want to teach at University X? This is where you consult their course guide, mention how you would approach teaching a course or two they already offer, and briefly describe an exciting new course you would design if hired. Many job ads will mention specific courses they need the new hire to teach, so be sure to include these courses in your description of teaching interests!

Many job ads ask for a hybrid teaching statement--some philosophy and some interests--so be sure to give them what they request. The [McGraw Center](#) at Princeton has good resources for this part of your application.

4) Craft your CV. This is the easiest part of the package--just a list of your education and accomplishments. Here, the biggest thing to note is to order your sections based on the type of institution. If you are applying to a liberal arts college, your teaching experience should be listed close to the top. If applying to a large R1 institution (research is the primary focus of the faculty), put your teaching experience near the end and list publications, conference presentations, and research awards up front. The bottom line: place the items they care about most in a prominent location.

5) Write your cover letter. This is the place to really personalize your application package for each school. Highlight your research and teaching accomplishments specifically as they relate to University X. How does your research complement their existing faculty? Who on the faculty is a natural fit for collaboration? What aspect of their institutional mission draws you in, and how will you contribute to fulfilling that mission? [Inside Higher Ed](#) has a good piece on cover letters, as does the [Career Center](#) at Berkeley.

In my opinion, the biggest mistake applicants make with their application packages is the tone. Remember, you are applying for a faculty position, so write like it! Talk about your research program rather than the next experiment, and discuss the work that students will conduct in your lab rather than just what you will do. Ask a friend (and your PI) to read your application materials for you. Above all else, apply with confidence! Sure, it is a tough job market but you will never succeed if you do not try. Happy job hunting!

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## Eight Qualities of Remarkable Employees

by Melanie L. McEwen, PhD

Jeff Haden of [Inc.](#) describes great employees as "reliable, dependable, proactive, diligent, great leaders, and great followers, possessing a wide range of easily-defined-but hard to find-qualities." However, remarkable employees will also possess the following eight traits:

1. They ignore job descriptions.
2. They are eccentric...
3. ...but they know when to dial it back.
4. They publicly praise...
5. ...and they privately complain.
6. They speak when others won't.
7. They like to prove others wrong.
8. They are always fiddling.

You can Jeff's article in its entirety, which includes detailed descriptions of each trait, by clicking [here](#).

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## Google Uses Algorithm to Assess Problems Recruiting and Retaining Women

by Melanie L. McEwen, PhD

Google has generally been considered to be a company where women who specialize in the field of technology could thrive. However, only one third of Google employees are women, and many of the women in the upper management positions were being lost to competing companies such as Yahoo!, IBM, and Facebook. As a result, Google executives decided to create algorithms to determine why the company was losing women, how to keep them, and how to recruit others.

The data revealed that women who applied for jobs at Google did not make it past the phone interview. These women did not "flaunt" their achievements and were therefore judged as unaccomplished by the interviewers. They also ensure that women who participate in a face-to-face interview meet with other women employees rather than just men. The company also found that women were not being promoted within the company at the same rate as men. Employees must self-nominate for promotions, and the data revealed that women were less likely to do so, causing them to miss out. As a result, senior women employees at Google now host workshops to encourage women to nominate themselves. Google also found that attrition rate for women who had just given birth was twice that for other employees. Google subsequently lengthened the maternity leave from 3 months to 5 months, and increased the maternity leave pay from partial pay to full pay. As a result of their actions, the attrition rate following childbirth decreased by 50%.

You can read the entire article by clicking [here](#).

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Stay happy and healthy, and we will "see" you in November.

Sincerely,

Dr. Laura Ramsey, Omega Chapter President and National Omega  
Committee Chair

Dr. Allison Coffin, National Omega Committee Member

Harmony Hancock, National Omega Committee Member

Dr. Melanie McEwen, National Omega Chapter Liaison, Omega  
E-Newsletter Editor, and *Bulletin* Editor

*"United in Friendship through Science."*

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