

Executive Summary of Medieval Studies Academic-Positions Update **Job Market Data: 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 Academic Years**

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This report updates the executive summary published in October 2021 adding in two more academic year job cycles. It has surveyed and compiled data from the same six fields: History, English, Islamic Studies, Italian Studies, Art History, and Religion and Theology. Why each field was chosen, the collection methodology, and the potential undercounts remain the same, so please read the [original report](#) for further discussion. The trends in job ad descriptions continue as in the original report: the broadening of job ads in both temporal and geographic requirements for all six fields.

As first suggested in the October 2021 report, these two additional years may reflect hiring practices during the Covid Pandemic, which decreased the number of positions beginning in the 2020-2021 academic year. These numbers will hopefully experience some increase in the 2023-2024 academic year following the official end of the Covid emergency in May 2023.

Nevertheless, hiring has not returned to pre-Covid levels in most fields and job openings in almost all fields (English excepted and one year of Art History) are now below double digits. Moreover, given that some fields appear to have increased hiring from the pre-Covid baseline numbers in 2022-2023, there is no reason to assume these numbers necessarily reflect a Covid hiring reduction any longer. Unless the trends of the last three years are reversed, hiring in almost all fields of Medieval Studies has effectively disappeared.

History Job Market Update

The Medieval History Job market has not returned to its pre-Covid numbers (11-13 jobs per year). It had 5 job openings in 2022-2023 and 6 jobs in 2021-2022. As low as these numbers are, however, they are inflated, since in 2021-2022 2 of these jobs were specifically for Jewish history, which is open only to a select few candidates. The open job openings total **5** and **4** for those two years. Additionally, each of those years had a job that was part of a cluster hire initiative with specific requirements (“Medieval Representative Cultures, 1000-1400 CE” and “Medieval Science and Religion” respectively) reducing the total to under 5 in each year unless these specific requirements could be met. With one exception in each year, these jobs were either at R1s or elite SLACs. History jobs are now at the lowest they have ever been in the eight years this job data has tracked.

English Job Market Update

The English job market remains the most robust of the Medieval Studies jobs, but it too has taken a severe hit in the last two years. This field had **12** job openings in 2022-2023 and **15** jobs in 2021-2022 down from 20-21 jobs per year before Covid. The location of these hires is spread across R1s, R2s, and SLACs and, as with the earlier report, reflect a global requirement in many job ads. Except for universities with robust doctoral programs, these hires now tend to include all literature before 1800 (or even 1900) around the world. These jobs should be followed up on to understand if medievalists or early modernists (or later) were hired. English jobs are now at the lowest they have ever been except for the first two Covid years.

Islamic Studies Job Market Update

The Islamic Studies job market also has remained at its reduced Covid levels with job openings totaling **5** for 2022-2023 and **4** for 2021-2022. This is effectively the worst-case scenario outlined in the previous job market study, since numbers have not reached double digits in five years. Moreover, these positions, as they had in the earlier report, cover modern and pre-modern Islamic studies. Given these numbers, there appears to be effectively no field of premodern Islamic Studies at the moment.

Italian Studies Job Market Report

Italian Studies is perhaps the most surprising situation of those collected in this report with **5** openings for 2022-2023 and **8** for 2021-2022, returning at least in one year to numbers not seen for 5 years. The return to 5 jobs in the most recent year, however, represents the median number over the course of the original and updated report. The jobs in both years are higher than normal, since they repeated searches from previous years. On a positive note, both years are more specialized than earlier with medieval or Renaissance jobs in high numbers, rather than just Italian Studies in any period. A few more years of data are needed to know whether 2021-2022 represents a single outlier or whether the numbers will remain around 5 per year in the future as they had been in earlier years.

Art History Job Market Report

Art History is the other surprisingly robust report with **11** openings for 2022-2023 and **2** openings for 2021-2022. The 2022-2023 numbers are the highest recorded in any of the eight years in this combined dataset, which may represent a single year outlier or may reflect changes to the situation overall. It does reflect the bouncy nature of the jobs in this field which alternates between boom-and-bust years. These jobs, however, tend to cover broader fields with both Ancient and Medieval Art now included for all but 2 jobs (that remain medieval alone). It is uncertain from one year of data whether this represents an increase in the number of jobs or the merging of the ancient and medieval fields into one premodern field. If it is the merging of two fields, then this would simply mean more people applying for the same number of jobs.

Religious Studies/Theology

Religious Studies/Theology is another field with two differing numbers: **2** jobs for the 2022-2023 year and **9** jobs for the 2021-2022 year. The 2021-2022 represents the height of jobs in this data set, while the 2022-2023 year marks the low point in the data. Overall, this follows the pattern of the previous years in which these hires are focused on early Christianity and few (if any) medieval jobs. There remains effectively no jobs in medieval religion and theology.