

From Chemistry Ph.D. to Career: Fall 2013 Seminars for Graduate Students & Postdocs

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The employment market for Ph.D. chemists has changed dramatically over the last decade, making it more difficult to find and keep steady, satisfying, and well paid employment. Postdoctoral positions can be great intellectual experiences, but they usually pay poorly and are not permanent. The U.S. pharmaceutical industry downsized and outsourced many former Ph.D.-level positions in the 2000s. The competition for tenure-track research active positions at universities has become more difficult as chemistry courses are increasingly taught by non-tenure-track lecturers. Keeping a tenure-track job is harder as federal funding is more difficult to secure and world-class research is performed in more countries. Many governmental agencies have cut chemistry-related positions in response to budget cuts. Increasing numbers of chemistry Ph.D.s are working in start up companies, sometimes ones they started themselves.

And yet, Ph.D. chemists still have a lower unemployment rate and better jobs than many professions. How do you navigate the complex environment beyond your Ph.D. into a fulfilling career that pays well? **This series of seminars is designed to get you started on planning for your post-Ph.D. employment. It is designed for a target audience of both chemistry postdoctoral research associates and senior chemistry Ph.D. students** (those who have advanced to candidacy by finishing courses and passing cumes).

You can attend any combination of seminars that you wish. You should also examine the course website which links to other resources and seminars on campus and beyond. Note that I have tried to avoid duplicating other efforts on campus.

Seminar dates: Thursday, 5:30 – 7:00pm in 4286 SES starting 12 Sept. 2013.

1. 12-Sept: Introduction, resources for developing your career plan & group discussion. Hosted by Luke Hanley.
2. 26-Sept: Expanding beyond your research: communicating, writing, working in a team, accounting, market awareness, networking, your online profile, and social media. Hosted by Prof. Hanley.
3. 10-Oct: Optimizing the postdoctoral experience: getting mentoring & cultivating sponsors: Hosted by Cynthia J. Jameson, Emerita Professor of Chemistry.
4. 17-Oct: Getting & keeping an academic position in a research active university: Hosted by Prof. Jameson.
5. 24-Oct: Getting & keeping a teaching position in a university, community college, or high school. Hosted by Donald Wink, Professor of Chemistry and Learning Sciences.
6. 7-Nov: Exploring the option of industrial careers: Panel of alumni moderated by Prof. Jameson
7. 14-Nov: Exploring government laboratories and other government careers: Panel of alumni moderated by Eric A. Gislason, Emeritus Professor of Chemistry
8. 21-Nov: Should you do an internship while still a graduate student? Panel of recent UIC graduate student interns, moderated by Prof. Hanley

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