Career Development Resources

Individual Consultations

The Career Development Specialist for CNS postdocs is Dr. Po-Tsan Ku. Po-Tsan has a PhD in cell and developmental biology from Harvard University, and also holds an MBA from the McCombs School of Business. He first came to Austin for his postdoctoral work, and started his corporate career at Ambion, Inc. He has 13 years of experience in the biotechnology industry, and has held senior management positions in multiple companies.

Po-Tsan is available for individual consultations with grad students and postdocs in all CNS disciplines. He can provide the following services:

- Career exploration
- Job/internship search strategies for non-academic jobs
- Academic job search (faculty and postdoc positions)
- CV, cover letter, research statement and teaching statement
- Identifying the skills that transfer to non-academic jobs
- Converting CV to Resume
- Resume and cover letter review and editing
- Interview Preparation
- Networking
- Offer evaluation and salary negotiation

You can schedule an appointment with Po-Tsan in two ways:

- Schedule online: https://utcns.joinhandshake.com/login
- Call the Career Services at 512-471-6700

Professional Development Seminar Series

CNS offers a monthly Professional Development Seminar Series for graduate students and postdocs. Seminars are held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month in NHB 1.720, from noon-1pm, with pizza and drinks served. The seminar primarily involves 3 main topics:

- Career Exploration and Professional Development for Non-Academic Careers
  - Panel Discussions with PhDs in a variety of careers
  - Seminars focused on: Job Search Strategies; Resume and Cover Letter Guidance; Interview Preparation
  - Networking and Recruitment Events
- Academic Careers Workshops
  - Helping students and postdocs prepare for the academic job market
- Responsible Conduct of Research Training
  - Sessions may cover: Research Misconduct; Responsible Publication/Authorship; Peer Review; Conflict of Interest and more...

The tentative seminar schedule for 2016-17 can be found here: PDF

MyIDP (Individual Development Plan)

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) has online career development and job search resources, and supports an online tool for personal career planning: MyIDP (Individual Development Plan). MyIDP will help you to learn how to leverage your expertise into a satisfying and productive career. It also helps you explore career possibilities and set goals to follow the career path that fits you best.

Versatile PhD

The Versatile Ph.D. is a tool that helps PhDs interested in non-academic careers explore the extensive range of available options.

It offers assistance to students in the humanities, social sciences and STEM disciplines, and contains free content available to anyone and premium content available by institutional subscription. The University of Texas at Austin’s institutional subscription makes available premium content to all current students, faculty and staff with valid UT EIDs.

Sign up here to begin using this tool.

Making the Right Moves: A Practical Guide to Scientific Management for Postdocs and New Faculty

Based on workshops co-sponsored by the Burroughs Wellcome Fund and HHMI, this book is a collection of practical advice and experiences from seasoned biomedical investigators and includes chapters on laboratory leadership, getting funded, project management, and teaching and course design.

Access this book online here.

Concentration in Teaching and Mentoring
The Texas Institute for Discovery Education in Science offers a 3-seminar course series for postdocs and graduate students interested in learning to teach and mentor effectively, and to build their teaching portfolios. The three zero-credit hour seminars include: Introduction to Evidence-Based Teaching (fall); Mentored Teaching Experience (spring); and Mentoring Undergraduate Researchers (spring or summer).

More info about the Concentration in Teaching and Mentoring can be found here.

Industry Site Visits

In the past years we have arranged industry site visit to local companies including Signature Science, Asuragen, Luminex, and Agilent Technologies. Each time we brought about a group of 15-20 postdocs to each company for tour of the facilities, journey discussion (how did you get here and where are you going kind of discussions in small groups), and general networking in informal non-structured setting.

Upcoming Events for Postdocs

For any upcoming events (such as seminars, workshops, industry site visits) please refer to CNS postdoc resources page.

Organizations that Promote Networking and Career Development

BioAustin is an organization that serves all in the central Texas life science community by promoting the growth and development of various life science industries. It provides opportunities for networking, professional development seminars, access to experienced life science professionals for mentoring and guidance and other benefits.

Women in Bio – Austin Area is an organization of professionals committed to promoting careers, leadership, and entrepreneurship for women in the life sciences. WIB focuses its activities on education, mentoring and networking, and on creating opportunities for leadership that can help its members to advance their career.

Austin APS (American Physical Society) Local Link is a local group of early career physicists who are in academic, national lab, and industrial settings. The goal is to meet on a regular basis (e.g. monthly) to share ideas, learn about research, build relationships, network, and potentially encourage recruitment of students and postdocs into industries.