PhD & Master’s Students: Timetable to Invest in Yourself During Your Graduate Studies

Lana Smith-Hale, UCSB Career Counselor

UCSB Career Services: career.ucsb.edu
Grad Student Recourse Center: gradpost.ucsb.edu

Thanks to UCSD Career Services

**FIRST YEAR OF PROGRAM (START EARLY!)**

**Increase Your Skills & Experiences**
- Join campus clubs and organizations, and take a leadership role
- Obtain teaching assistantships
- Serve on departmental or campus committees
- Attend a conference in your field
- Take a grant & fellowship writing class
- Consider volunteering, internships, part-time work, or summer jobs
- Read *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and science/AAAS’s Career Magazine

**Create & Develop your CV or Résumé**
- Attend a Résumé or CV workshop for grad students
- Look for areas to gain experience & accomplishments

**Attend Workshops & Panel Discussions**
- Sign-up for the GradPost to stay connected to all graduate student activities
- Become familiar with UCSB Career Services and workshops available for graduate students
- Consider attending Graduate Student Resource Center (GSRC) workshops on funding, writing, and professional development

**Broaden Your Network**
- Join LinkedIn or Academia.edu to network
- Read articles in your field and contact authors of interest by email
- Build network of contacts through community presenters at UCSB, relationships you make through community-based research, and advisor’s connections
- Join national and campus professional associations in your discipline and be active at events

**Consider Your Options**
- Create a timeline for completion of your degree, discuss with your advisor, update goals annually
- Consider meeting with a career counselor and taking career assessments to evaluate your values, personality, and/or interests and strengths

**MIDDLE OF PROGRAM (YEARS 2-3)**

**Practice Sharing Your Research**
- Present at conferences and within your department
- Practice your 1-minute elevator pitch to describe what you do

**Apply for Funding Through Grants, and Fellowships**
- Consider attending a funding workshop through the GSRC to learn about opportunities
- Speak to your advisor, peers, graduate student advisor to discover possibilities

**Pay Attention to What You Like Doing**
- Are you energized by the classroom or the bench? Do you enjoy researching archives and in the library? Do you enjoy the responsibilities of your program?
- If you enjoy conducting research and writing, focus on gaining publishing and research experience to pursue academic research position
- If you enjoy the classroom & mentoring students, gain further experience; consider teaching as a career
- If you don’t enjoy the responsibilities of your program, consider what elements you do enjoy and how they could fit in a career path
- If industry interests you, identify and develop relevant skills; Consider direct experience (through an internship or part-time job) which can be invaluable and make you a competitive applicant

**Build Your Career Knowledge**
- Attend workshops on career-related topics to learn more about your options and what is the best fit
- Utilize job descriptions as a resource to help inform you of what skills are needed
- Look at job search websites and identify job areas, companies and positions of interest
- Continue to increase skills & experiences & evaluate what you like or dislike about these opportunities

**Continue to Build Network**
- Keep in touch with contacts & nurture relationships
- Conduct targeted informational interviews with faculty, alumni, & industry professionals to make personal connections

**END OF PROGRAM (YEARS 4+)**

**Expand Your Strategy**
- Utilize career development resources offered by Career Services, GSRC, your department, professional organizations, and scholarly societies
- Develop your professional narrative (how you describe who you are and what you do)
- Identify specific job listings, companies, universities of interest
- Read Chronicle of Higher Education (Versatile PhD is helpful for industry jobs) and search for informational articles, first person accounts to understand going on the job market

**Network**
- Academic jobs: network at conferences and build relationships for post-doc opportunities, if necessary
- Industry jobs: attend campus career fairs, employer information sessions, industry panels to build connections, check on GauchoLink for positions
- Utilize your network and reach out to prospective relationships to let them know you are actively on the job market

**Conduct Your Job Search**
- Industry jobs: the job search process is on-going, year-round so continually search for openings
- Academic jobs: applications open fall quarter, so prepare your documents 2-4 months in advance
- Sign up to receive “saved job search” email announcements from your favorite job search sites
- Target application materials (e.g., résumés, cover letters OR CVs, teaching/research statements) to specific positions you are applying to
- Prepare for interview questions and consider coming to Career Services for a mock interview or practicing a job talk to your department