A Career at a Primarily Undergraduate Institution

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Presentation Overview

• Describe the position of professor at a Primarily Undergraduate Institution (PUI)

• Describe the benefits/drawbacks

• Discuss some recommendations on following this career path.
Responsibilities of a Professor at a PUI

- Teaching
- Research
- Service
Responsibilities - Teaching

- Two to four courses, including some labs
- Faculty teach upper-division labs, some freshman labs
- Development of lecture and lab materials
Responsibilities - Research

- Develop a research program involving students
- Write proposals to support research
- Write publications
- Talks at professional meetings, seminars
Responsibilities - Service

• Committees (recruiting new faculty members, assessing colleagues, etc.)

• Working with local schools

• Assisting local industry

• Assorted stuff to run a chemistry department
Benefits of a PUI Career

- Academic Freedom
- Ability to work with young people, help them reach their fullest potential
- TENURE!
- Ability to work in a variety of research areas
- As a faculty member, *theoretically* work on nine-month appointment
- Sabbatical
- Community of scholars
Limitations of a PUI Career

- Salary - typically in the mid $40k for a new assistant professor
- Often limited resources (manpower, equipment, supplies)
- Working towards TENURE
Career Path to a PUI - Graduate School

• Volunteer to teach lectures/courses
• Do some volunteer work in organizations such as SAS, Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR)
• Develop research plans appropriate for a PUI
• Consider teaching postdocs, Dreyfus Found.
• Be as productive researcher as possible
Career Path to a PUI - Applying

- Plan to invest time in application materials
- Develop teaching philosophy/plans
- Develop research plans for undergraduates
- Prepare a list of start-up costs
- Send these materials to your references to assist them in writing references
Career Path to a PUI - Tenure

• First year - get settled, teach courses
• First summer - get lab set up, write proposals
• Second year - refine courses, begin research, submit proposals, begin service
• Sixth year - submit materials for tenure
Career Path to a PUI - Post-Tenure

- Promotion to Associate Professor with Tenure
- Promotion to Professor 4-10 years later
- Administrative Positions - Department Head, Dean, etc.
Summary - PUI Career

• Allows considerable freedom to pursue personal interests

• After six years, offers job security

• Satisfaction in seeing student success

• Relatively low salary