

# Career Options for Doctoral Students

*Latasha W. Lane – Panelist*

*Wednesday, March 24, 2010*



## Overview

### QUASI-PROFESSIONAL SHAKE UP!

1. Period of Re-Assessment and Re-Evaluation
2. Goal Setting – Write It Down!
3. Gaps in Experience
4. Making Deliberate Plans to Kill Two Birds with One Stone
5. Identifying Career Options B through Z
6. Read, Select, Act!
7. Participate in Training Workshops and Self-Improvement Seminars
8. Build Collegial Partnerships and Mentorships
9. Join Relevant Professional Organizations and/or Academic Societies
10. Preparation for Full-Time Employment

## MY QUASI-PROFESSIONAL SHAKE UP!

*Personal experiences and observations helped me to reassess/re-evaluate what I was doing and why I was doing it.*

- 2 of my 3 mentors were abruptly dismissed from their positions.
- They both had families to support and just some real situations to handle.
- This episode significantly raised my anxiety level and opened my eyes to the realities of the harsh realities of even PhD folk
- It was at that moment when I knew I needed to make my degree **more valuable** and my **experience worthwhile**.

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## 1. Period of Re-Assessment and Re-Evaluation

- I knew that I needed to use this time to get the **experiences** and **exposure** I needed to be successful and knowledgeable
- I needed this experience to help me **add** to my existing experiences and **gain** knowledge on unfamiliar topics and different perspectives.
- Identify **natural links/connections** with my degree program, minor and other interests.
- It was important for me to **pinpoint** my existing competencies and list those that are missing
- Next, to **examine my goals** (career and academic) and begin to identify the skills I needed to have

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## 2. Goal Setting – Write It Down!

- Be mindful of your time
- Day-to-day, week-to-week; month-to-month
- Semester-to-semester (Fall, Spring, Summer)
- Year-to-year (and beyond)

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## 3. Gaps in Experience

- Needed to know the KSAs (**K**nowledge, **S**kills and **A**bilities) employers/colleagues were seeking.
- **ACTION:** Looking at job announcements provided a really good perspective of the **knowledge, skills and abilities** that were sought in ideal candidates.

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## 4. Making Deliberate Plans to Kill Two Birds with One Stone

**Meaning:** *To succeed in achieving two things in a single action*

Began to think about the connections between my academic responsibilities and experiential roles

*Example*

### **Community College Presidential Fellowship Assignment**

- Exposure the Institutional Effectiveness and Research and Educational Affairs
  - Community College environments
- ACTION:** Took courses aligned with these topics
- ACTION:** Joined organizations that support and advocate for these areas - *Association for Institutional Research* and *American Association for Women in Community Colleges*
- ACTION:** Sought active and highly respected mentors in the field

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## 5. Identifying Career Options B through Z

- Teaching classes on a college/university campus
- Consulting work/independent business owner
- Tangential work – Corporate, non-profit, government, academia

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## 6. Read, Select, Act!

- Departmental email blasts for opportunities and announcements
- Vacant positions, fellowships, grants and scholarships frequent the email airwaves
- Speakers, workshops and seminars
- Association/organization websites, list serves and print publications

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## 7. Participate in Training Workshops and Self-Improvement Seminars

- Typically are free
- Offered on campus, in the city or regionally (OH, MI, IN, PA, IL, KY)
- Various topics/issues
- Short-term involvement (day-long, half day, or a couple hours)

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## 8. Build Collegial Partnerships and Mentorships

- Fellow students/program peers
- Within your department and at other institutions
- Pay attention to those people and organizations who support you as a student

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## 9. Join Relevant Professional Organizations and/or Academic Societies

- Reduced member rates for students
- Reduced conference fees for students
- Local, regional and national ways to participate
- Opportunities for involvement (volunteering, committee membership, etc.)
- Avenues for exposure (mentoring, presenting, facilitating)

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## 10. Preparation for Full-Time Employment

- Look early (and often) at job announcements in your field to see what the basic requirements and the most favored preferences are
- Save money! (for conference travel, job interviewing, etc.)
- Update resume/ CV and cover letters
- Identify geographic preferences

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## Recap

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## Final Thoughts

- Try to relax and rejuvenate
- Be pleasantly persistent and patient
- Be flexible in your goal setting
- Find sources of professional and personal nourishment
- **WORK TOOL**: Use the resources and professionals right here at UT!

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**Thank You!**

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