

Teaching in the Undergraduate Institution

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Types of positions

1. Junior College

- Advantages: No research expectations
- Disadvantages: you may be the only microbiologist or even biologist at the school
 - You may have to teach a broad range of biology courses
 - You may be teaching only allied health courses (i.e. pre-nursing, med tech etc) which requires different skills than teaching majors.
 - Difficult to get full time positions
 - Often resource strapped

Types of positions

2. Small liberal arts schools.

- Advantages: little or no research expectations
- Disadvantages: you may be the only microbiologist or even biologist at the school
 - Little opportunity for research collaboration or colleagues to bounce ideas off
 - You may have to teach a broad range of biology courses
 - Due to high tuitions usually have very good facilities and resources

Types of positions

3. Non-Research 1 university or college

- Advantages: usually less research expectations than RO1
- Disadvantages: you still may be the only microbiologist or even biologist at the school or in your program
 - Little opportunity for research collaboration or colleagues to bounce ideas off
 - You may have to teach a broad range of biology courses
 - You may have to teach primarily lower division service courses
 - Sometime resource strapped

Types of positions

4. Research 1 university or college, medical, veterinary, dental school

- Advantages: Ample opportunity for research collaboration & colleagues to bounce ideas off
 - Large amount of research money usually leads to good facilities and resources
- Disadvantages: You are expected to bring in a lot of grant money
 - Difficult to get promoted without large research program
 - Education is often second to research in university priorities

Disclaimer

- Position requirements vary greatly from institution to institution
- Important to think about what you want from the job, and look for a type of institution that will meet your goals.
- Important to work out all of the details about your position before you take a job

How I prepared for this job during grad school

- Ph.D in Molecular Biology and Biochemistry
- During graduate school TA'd biochemistry laboratory for 2 years paid then biology of AIDs for 3 years (unpaid for experience)
- Served as the Departments Graduate Teaching Assistant Training Coordinator who trained and mentored all the incoming GTAs for the department for 3 years
- Served on the 2 education related university committees, the committee on Educational Policy and Instructional Development
- Participated in many education related activities at UCI such as discussion groups

Next stop Post doc

- I had no guidance how to find a non-traditional position, so I took the traditional route and got a post doc
- After 6 months I knew I needed to make a change
- I sent my application to programs in Colorado that had Biology programs to see if they were looking for instructors.
- My advice, this is not the best way to do this, it was my only option as my husband is a lawyer and changing states is very hard for lawyers.

Good Luck

- University of Northern Colorado Greeley really needed a Micro professor.
- They offered me part time, I was in a full time post doc with benefits, so I turned them down.
- They matched my current salary and benefits.
- I taught microbiology and the labs both semesters, human biology one semester and molecular genetics and lab the next semester.
- I thought I had found the perfect place for me, a school focused mostly on undergraduate education.

Bad Luck

- UNC Greeley wanted to hire a full time micro professor, I applied but was not chosen, as I did not have a large enough research resume.
- They did not like my idea of doing a collaborative research project with my graduate PI, a very famous retro virologist none of them were familiar with.
- This is a common problem, schools that are not really set up to be RO1 schools, but have unrealistic expectations of what faculty can do with their very limited resources.

Lesson Learned

- Make sure you really look at what the position is, not what you want it to be, or think it should be, and decide if you can live with what it really is.
- At the time I was devastated, I thought "I am perfect for this position"
- In hindsight, I would have been miserable there, as they were not being true to their mission and I would have been constantly fighting that.

Good Luck

- The Dept chair at UNC saw an add for an instructor at CSU she encouraged me to apply .
- I did, the position was already filled, but the dept chair asked the dean to create another position for me, and they did. I was hired as a non-tenure track special appointment assistant professor.

Why do I think I got this position?

- 1. My resume stood out
 - I had more teaching experience
 - I had shown a true commitment to teaching excellence by participation in programs outside of normal GTA activities

This Position

- Pretty much like a traditional faculty member only more teaching less research
- 80% teaching, 15% research, 5% service.
- I do research in a large group I don't have to get my own grants
- This has benefits and draw backs
 - Don't have the stress of getting grants
 - Don't have control over getting grants some summers I don't have funding

How much teaching is 80%

- From going to lots of education meetings I can tell you that depends on the school.
- My teaching load at CSU
- Fall
 - General Micro lecture,
 - Virology and cell culture Lab,
 - 1/3 of virology Lecture
- Spring
 - General Microbiology,
 - Honors Microbiology,
 - Capstone Microbiology
 - helping in medical Bacteriology.

How to get a job like this?

- 1. start prepping now, even if you are not sure this is what you want to do, very hard to get teaching experience once you leave grad school.
 - time hard to find
 - pay per class is awful
- 2. Much easier if you are willing to move around the country.
- 3. Look in places like the Chronicle of Higher Education
- 4. Networking, Networking, Networking!!!

Is their room for advancement in a position like this?

- After 6 years I was promoted to an associate professor.
- After 11 years my department told me they decided I was essential and had created a tenure track position for me, I was granted tenure in July of 2008.
- I am currently up for full professor, I will tell you in a year if I got it...
- However, for an RO1 university my type of position is rare.

How to get promoted in a position like this...

- A. Be an active member of your university community,
 - serve on committees
 - Take on leadership roles
 - Mentor lots of students
 - Mentor new faculty

How to get promoted in a position like this...

B. Strive to be a great teacher,

- try new teaching techniques,
- constantly improve,
- don't do the bare minimum
- Read the education literature for new ideas

How to get promoted in a position like this...

C. Even if you have no research requirements contribute to the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL)

- Go to education meetings
 - ASM Conf. for Undergrad. Educators weekend before general meeting
 - HAPS (Human anat. Phys. Society)
 - NABT (national association of bio teachers)
- Publish papers about what you are doing
 - ASM Microbe Library visual collection (photos and animations)
 - ASM Journal of microbiology and biology education (JMBE)
- Serve as a reviewer of educational materials and publications
- Get involved in your professional societies education activities (ASM has a very active education division (W) and board we always need new volunteers!)

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