

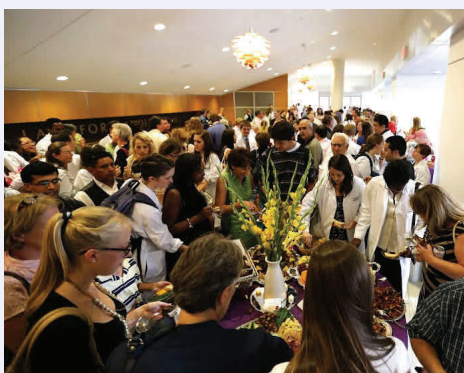
Message from Roger Chalkley

One of the major conclusions from recent workforce reports is that it is clear that all of our graduates will not become tenure track, NIH funded research scientists. These reports argue that much more should be done to help our graduate students prepare for a wide range of career opportunities. I expect that all training grant applications will soon be required to document the institution's plans in this regard. To this end, we welcome Kathy Gould to the BRET office where as Associate Dean she will lead our activities to support student development and career training.



The third Simple Beginnings ceremony welcomed new graduate students into the profession of scientific research on August 31, 2012. 104 Students and over 210 family members and friends attended the awarding of the White Lab Coats by Jeff Balser and Susan Wentz.

At lunch prior to the ceremony, the families and friends heard an overview of graduate student life from current students and faculty. Finally, there was a reception for the students and their families and friends. The occasion was pleasant and upbeat, and all
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reported this as a thoroughly enjoyable occasion.

A subsequent survey of the attendees indicated that this was a popular and much appreciated event. We believe that we are the only institution in the USA which has this type of ceremony for incoming graduate students, and we have recently begun to receive queries from our colleagues at other institutions about this activity. The event was funded by generous support from the VMAA along with support from over 100 faculty members within the biomedical research community here at Vanderbilt.



Each month, Claudia Cottingham sends me the most recent report on appointments and terminations for the postdocs. It really caught my attention when I saw that (a) we continue to see an annual increase our postdoc numbers, and (b) even more intriguing was the fact that almost 70% of the incoming postdocs are US Nationals. This is a dramatic turnaround from even 5 years ago when >50% of our postdocs were internationals. So at a time when it is increasingly hard to secure NIH funding, we are expanding the size of our postdoc pool. We all know that the workforce size is almost totally driven by R01 dollars, and at a time when these are not increasing, these numbers are sending a very clear message.

Late-breaking news: Dr. Stephanie Gamse who provided psychological counseling has stepped aside with the birth of her new child. We are pleased to announce that Dr. Mistie Germek has been appointed to this position and started on October 18th. Her contact information is posted on the BRET psychological counseling website: <https://medschool.vanderbilt.edu/bret/psychological-services>.

New BRET RCR Seminar Series



In 2010, the NIH issued directive [NOT-OD-10-019](#), which requires ongoing RCR training that covers the nine RCR areas of focus defined by the NIH. In addition, the NIH also has specified a need for faculty involvement in RCR training.

Working with Training Grant PIs, the BRET office is sponsoring a seminar series with small group, faculty-run discussions that will focus exclusively on RCR-specific topics for trainees funded by **training grants** and **F31/F32 (NRSA) fellowships**. The series will meet three times a year, and focus on a different one of the nine core RCR areas, as designated by the NIH. Although aimed specifically at the requirements for the trainees supported on T32 or F31/32 funds, all graduate students are welcome. At the end of each session, students will be provided the option to record their attendance. As a result, at any time, your students will be able to provide you with a transcript of events that they have attended.

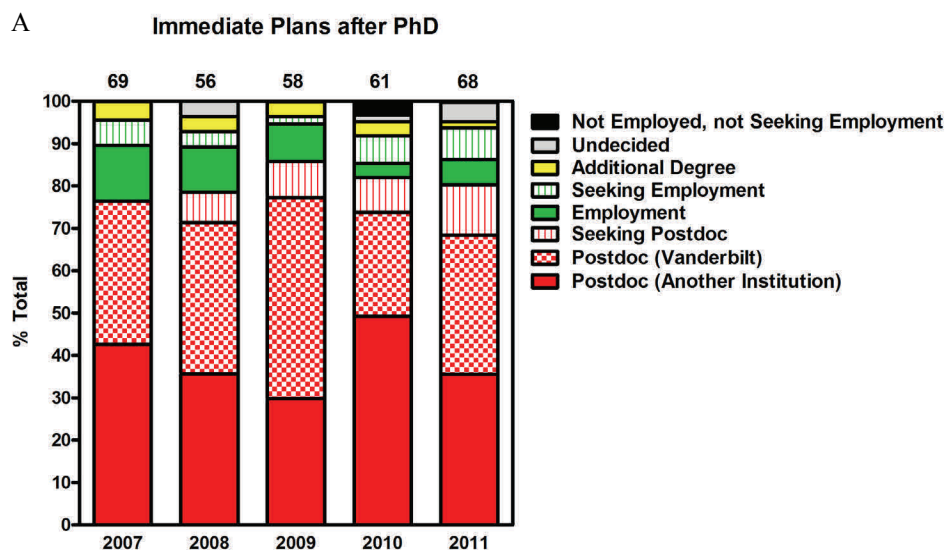
The first seminar was held on Tuesday, October 23rd. This seminar was given by Richard Armstrong, and focused on authorship and publication.

Immediate Career Plans of Graduate Students & Postdocs

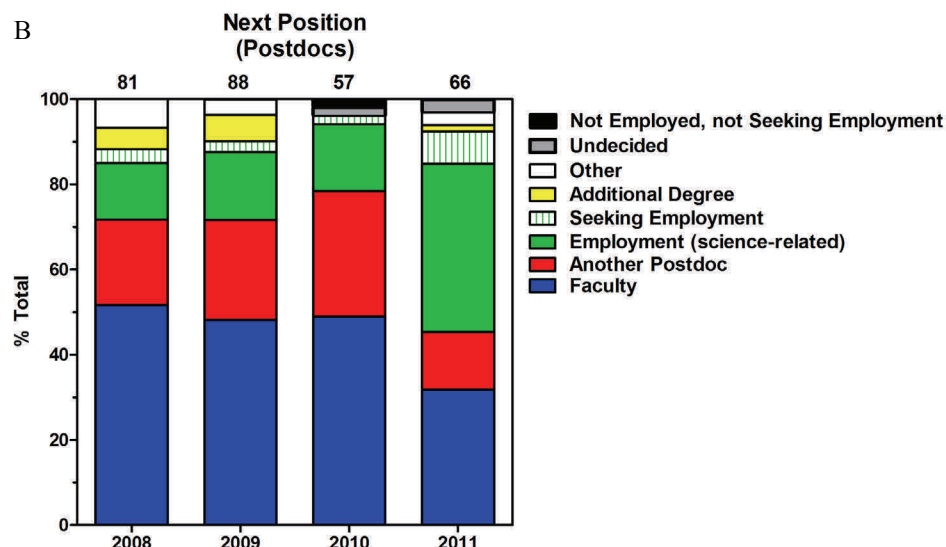
To learn the immediate career plans of students and postdocs after they complete their training at Vanderbilt, we examined responses on the PhD student exit survey and the postdoc exit survey. These two exit surveys are given on a rolling basis to all trainees in each group at the time that they complete their training. The graphs below were derived from responses to the PhD student exit survey (A) or the postdoc exit survey (B).

A: PhD Students. Each year, 75-85% of all students completing the PhD at Vanderbilt choose to start a postdoctoral position. While many students choose to do a postdoc at another institution, many choose to do a postdoc at Vanderbilt. Most of those continuing on to a postdoc in the same lab at Vanderbilt do so while they either look for a postdoc at another institution or have a postdoc lined up at another institution and are waiting for it to start. Other reasons for doing a postdoc in the same lab at Vanderbilt include: (1)

looking for a job (2) wrapping up projects in the lab or (3) waiting for a spouse to complete training at Vanderbilt.



B: Postdocs. For the first time in 2011, a majority of postdocs (55%) entered non-academic positions after completing their Vanderbilt postdoc. It is unclear at this time if this is a normal fluctuation or the result of the current economic pressures brought on by the end of ARRA funding and the changing NIH budget.



Immediate Career Plans of Exiting Postdocs

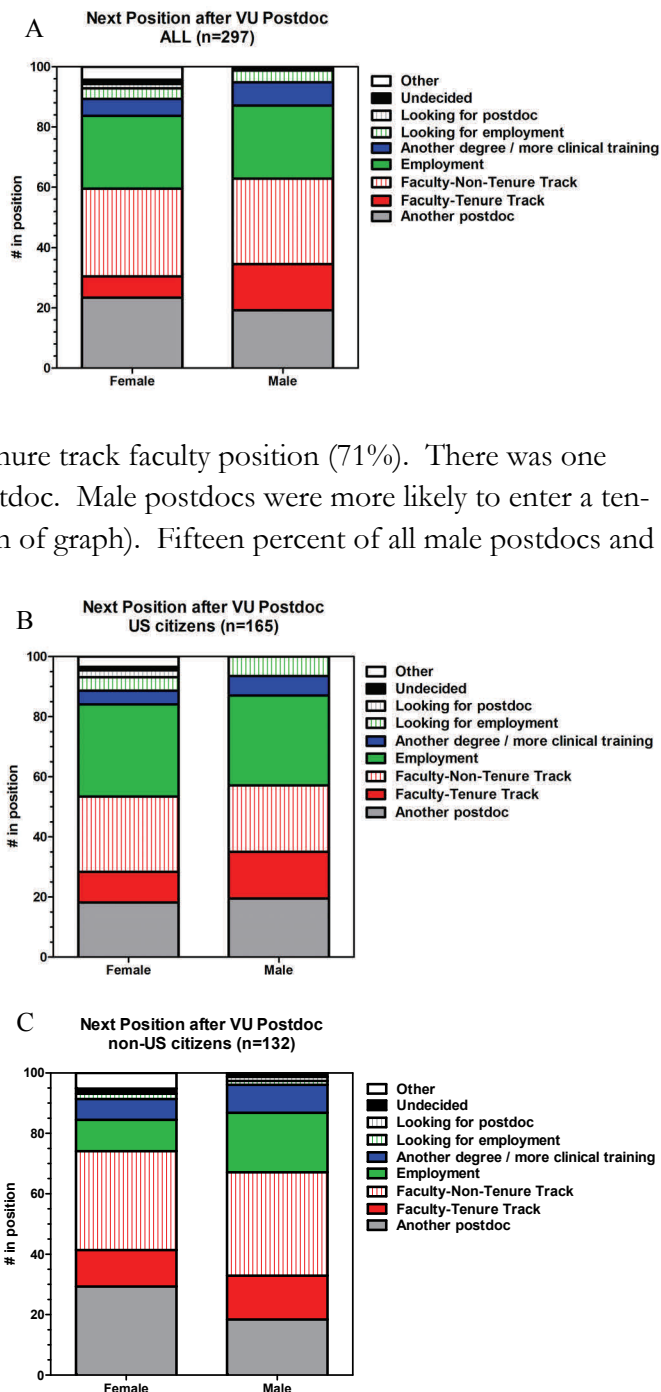
In January of 2008, the BRET Office of Outcomes Analysis began administering the online postdoc exit survey to all postdocs as they completed their postdoctoral training at Vanderbilt. As of September 2012, 297 postdocs had completed the survey (156 male postdocs, 141 female postdocs, 163 US citizens/permanent residents, and 134 non-US citizens).

A: Next Position after VU Postdoc. When asked on the exit survey for their next position after completing their Vanderbilt postdoc, 119 exiting postdocs said that they had accepted either a tenure track faculty position (29%) or a non-tenure track faculty position (71%). There was one noticeable gender difference in career choice after the VU postdoc. Male postdocs were more likely to enter a tenure track position than were female postdocs (solid red portion of graph). Fifteen percent of all male postdocs and seven percent of female postdocs chose to enter a tenure track faculty position. Otherwise, the profile of next position after postdoc completion was similar between men and women.

In looking at the type of institution where postdoc alumni took faculty positions, two-thirds started faculty positions at predominantly research institutions, and one third started faculty positions at four-year colleges (data not shown). Female postdocs were more likely than their male colleagues to take faculty positions at four-year colleges. Fifty-three percent of all female postdocs entering a faculty position did so at a four-year college, while only 23% of all male postdocs entering a faculty position did so at a four-year college (data not shown).

B: Next Position, US Citizens. After completing their postdoc, US citizens and permanent residents of both genders were more likely to enter the employment sector than their non-US citizen colleagues (solid green portion of graphs B and C). There were no gender differences among US citizens/permanent residents entering the employment sector.

C: Next Position, non-US Citizens. Non-US citizens were more likely



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Immediate Career Plans of Exiting Postdocs *cont...*

than US citizens to enter a non-tenure track faculty position after completing a postdoc (vertical red striped portion of graphs B and C). Significant gender differences observed within the non-US citizen group include: [a] female postdocs were more likely than their male colleagues to enter another postdoc position (solid gray portion of graph) and [b] female postdocs were less likely than their male colleagues to enter the employment sector (solid green portion of graph) after completing their postdoc at Vanderbilt.

PhD Career Connections

Vanderbilt PhD Career Connections is a monthly seminar series about career options for PhD scientists. Speakers from a diverse range of exciting scientific careers present their career path and share insights from their professional experiences. The series is run by VUMC PhD students and postdoctoral fellows and sponsored by the BRET Office of Career Development. **Advance registration is requested for all seminars.** To register, visit the [PhD Career Connections website](#).

Month	2012—2013 Seminar Series Topic
October	Technology Transfer and Patent Law
November	Drug Development
December	Science Journalism
January	Teaching
February	Medical Communications
March	Entrepreneurship
April	Consulting
May	Pharma Industry

Upcoming Events for Fall 2012

- **October 25-26, November 15-16, December 6-7:** MSTP interview weekends
- **October 30 (5-7pm, 305 Light Hall):** Postdoc Halloween social
- **November 10-11:** Southeast Medical Science Symposium for MSTP students

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