

Engineering Graduate & Scholarly Talks: Academic Careers

Adam Burgasser & Christopher Theissen
UCSD Physics
Center for Astrophysics & Space Sciences

Overview

"Typical" academic path

Realities of academic career prospects

Necessary skills to develop

Other challenges

Discussion

What is the "typical" path toward an academic job?

Complete your PhD (4-7 yr)

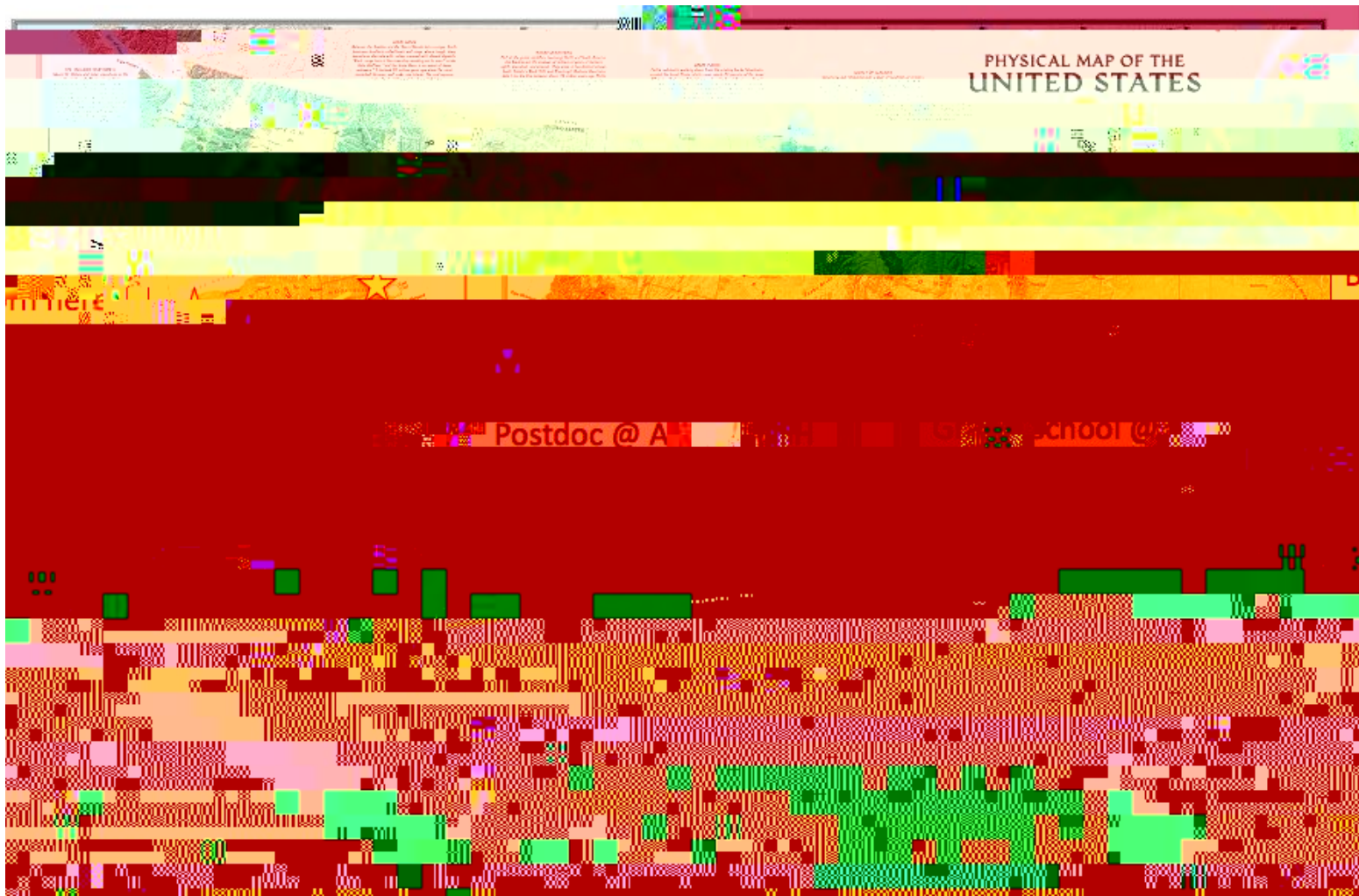
1-3 temporary postdoc positions (3-9 yr)

Untenured faculty/teaching/research scientist (3-6 yr)

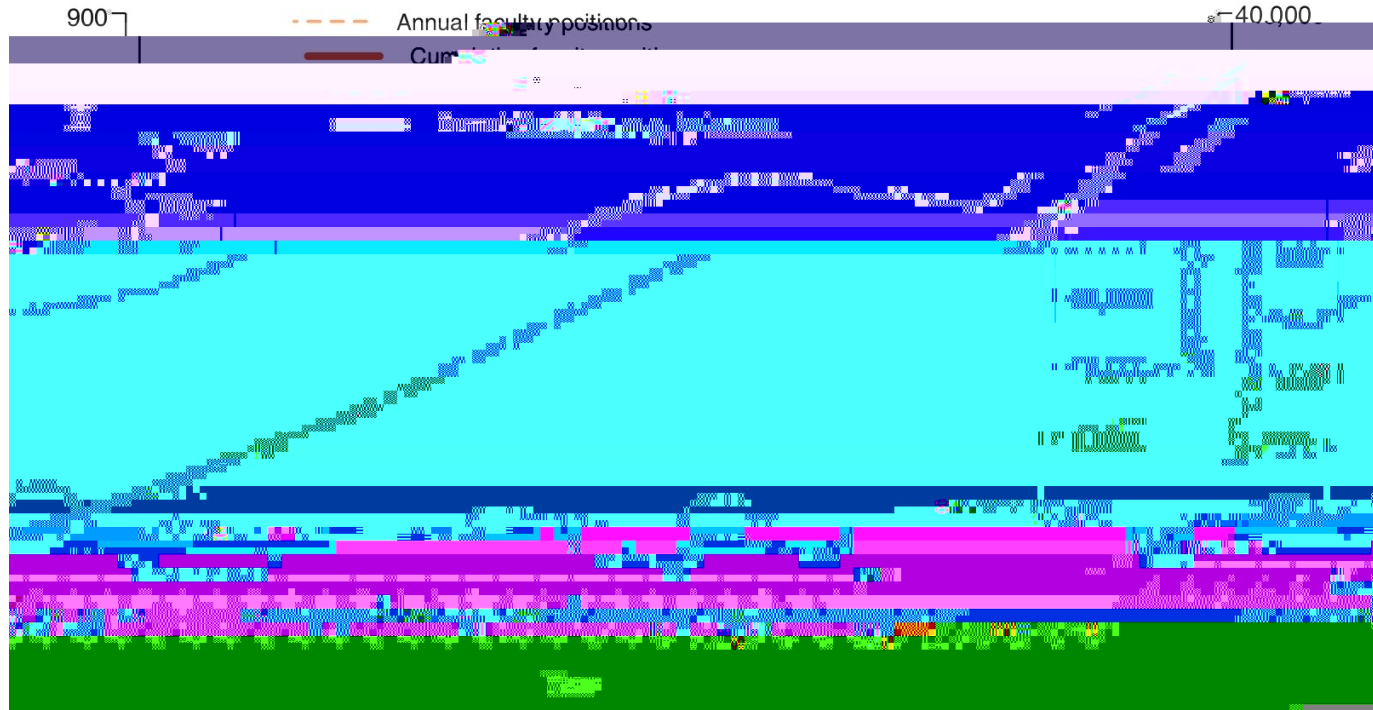
Tenured faculty/teaching/research scientist (hooray!)

This varies considerably for different fields and research areas!

Academic (physical) path



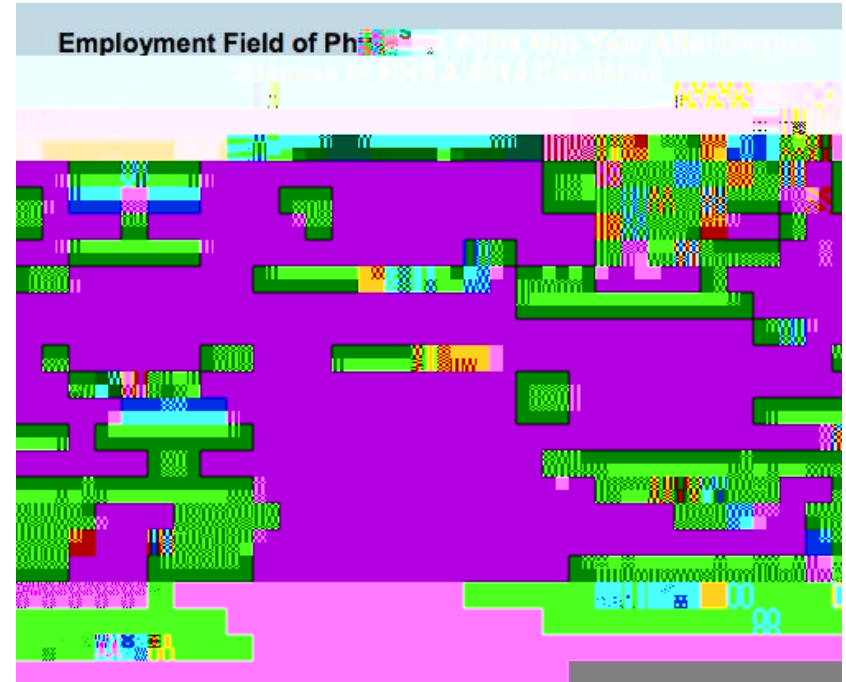
The reality of academic job availability



Schillebeeckz & Lewis 2013, Nature Biotechnology 31, 938

<https://www.nature.com/articles/nbt.2706>

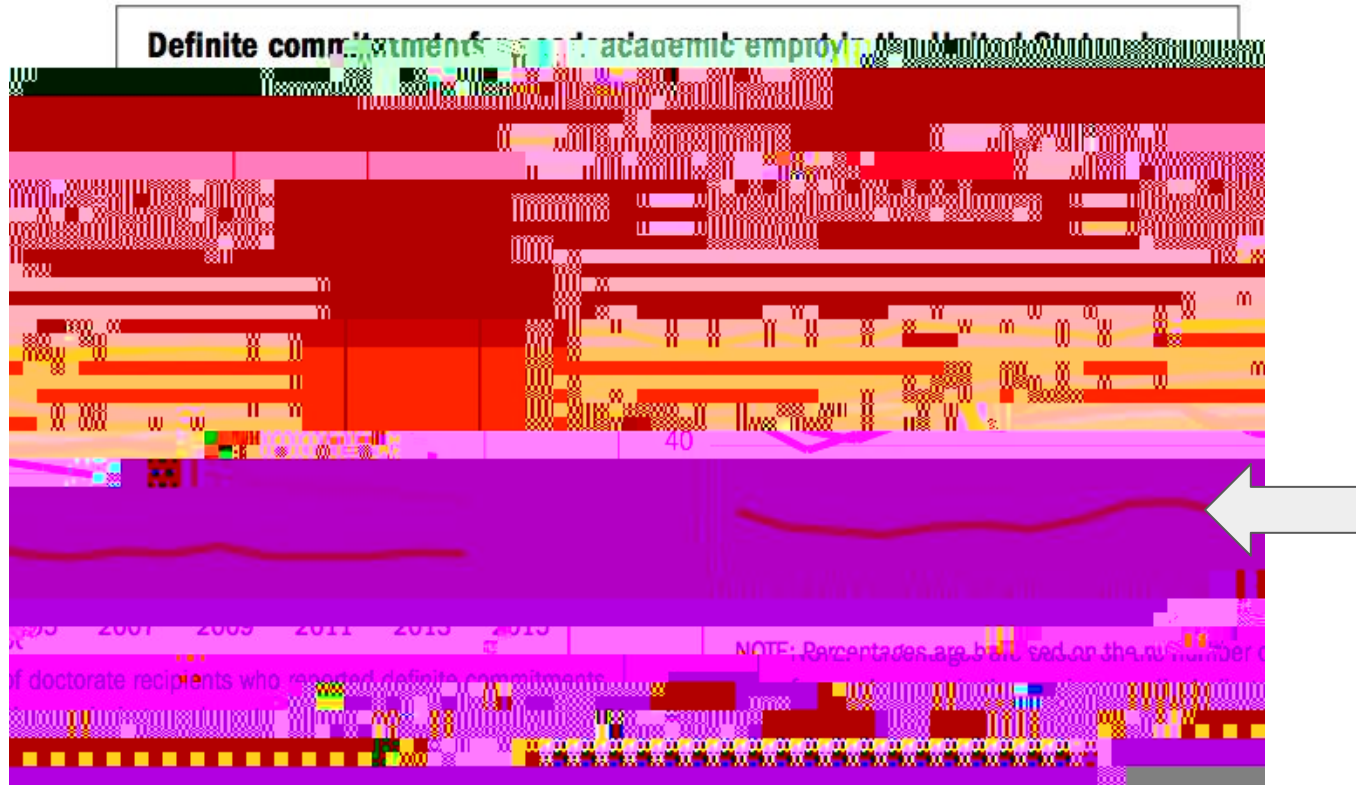
Statistics on Academic Careers - Physics



Pold & Mulvey: Physics Doctorates Initial Employment, AIP Statistical Resource Center (2016)

<https://www.aps.org/careers/statistics/upload/phdintemp-0316.pdf>

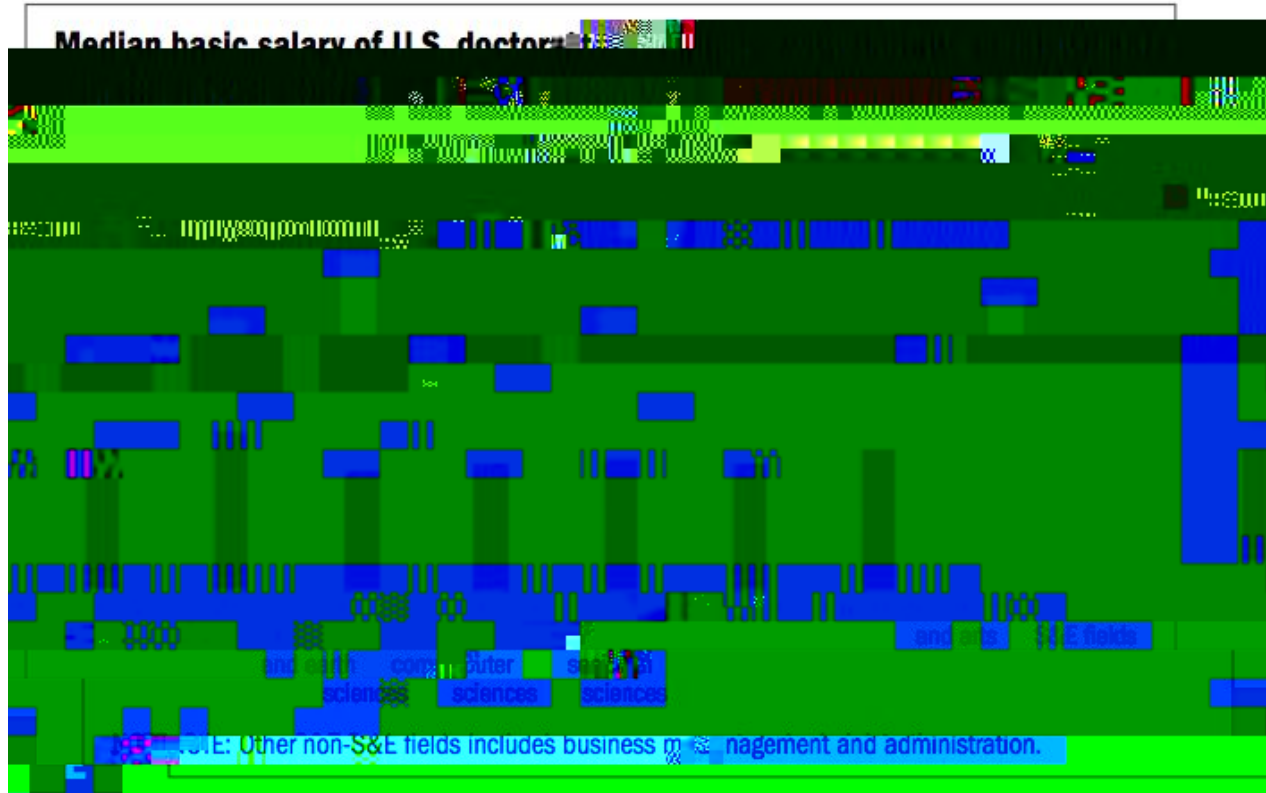
Academic employment across fields



2015 NSF Report: Doctorate Recipients from US Universities

<https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/2017/nsf17306/report/about-this-report.cfm>

Salaries across fields



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Make sure you have a back up plan!

What other opportunities are there in industry, government labs, private research institutions, etc. to have a fulfilling

Critical skills to prepare for academic position

Strong research portfolio = publications (esp. independent of PhD work/advisor)

Teaching experience & skills: TAing, guest lecturer, teaching training (e.g., CAE workshops)

Networking: Conferences & Talks; also, do you have an up-to-date professional webpage? An up-to-date LinkedIn page?

A vision for your academic career: what do you want to do as an academic?

Other considerations

Diversity portfolio: increasingly important component of academic careers; get involved in outreach and equity initiatives, learn more about equity issues in your field

2-body problem: this can be a challenge - and an opportunity; seek advice on how to navigate dual hires, discuss with hiring AFTER an offer has been made

Academia Industry, Industry Academia: ease of these transitions depends greatly on the field; again, mentors are important for this

