

Our program provides career development exposure and opportunities to grad students and postdoctoral scientists by focusing on 10 broad career categories.



The Program



SEMINAR SERIES

What Can I Do
with my PhD?

*Meet alumni & other
professionals in weekly
panel discussions about
their career paths.*

- industry research
- consulting
- science policy
- communications
- finance
- outreach



MINI-COURSES & WORKSHOPS

*Complement your research
training & learn new skills.*

- team management
- leadership
- negotiation
- effective writing in the
sciences
- perfecting your elevator
pitch
- conflict management



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

*Take a deeper dive into
your career of choice.*

- part-time internships
- career-themed treks
- mentor network

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Impact on Trainee Matriculation and Current Trainees

What can I do with my PhD? weekly seminar series

- **3791** attendees
- **248** presenters
- **159** alumni guests

Examples

- Big Opportunities in Big Data
- Your Skills Applied to Strategic Marketing
- Careers in Clinical Services
- The Business of Pharmaceuticals



Highlighted mini-courses:

Beyond the Bench: The Business of Running a Lab

- **Faculty instructors:** Eugene Chang, Geoffrey Greene, Erin Adams, Sally Horne-Badovinac, Nicho Hatsopoulos, Vicky Prince (BSD); Yamuna Krishnan (PSD); Jeff Hubbell (IME)
- **100% surveyed said:**
 - The course provided specific steps they should take in order to prepare for an academic career
 - The course influenced their career trajectory

Selling Your Story: An Entrepreneurial Approach to the Business of Science

- Instructor: Nancy Levy
- **100% surveyed said:**
 - The course influenced their career trajectory
 - The course was a good use of their time
 - They would recommend the course to a friend or colleague



Our prospective and current trainees want this kind of personal development program

58% of 2018-19 PhD matriculants said myCHOICE motivated their selection of UChicago

79% of current grad students said myCHOICE improved their training experience

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Experiential Opportunities Lead to Job Placement

Part-time Internships

- **59** interns, **31** hosts (e.g., Polsky Innovation Fund, BSD News Office, Aspire Capital Fund, Institute for Translational Medicine, Research Computing Center)
- **100%** said internship would influence career trajectory
- **50%** said internship connected them with their first job or fellowship

Career-themed Treks

- **5 trek themes:** Science Policy, Data Science/Computational Biology Research, Biopharma/Biotech Research, Contract Research Organizations
- **39** trainee participants, including 7 from Argonne National Labs
- **72** alumni engaged during treks as site visit hosts and at networking events
- **100%** of trek participants (n = 26) reported that the trek would influence their career trajectory
- **50%** said trek *directly* connected them with first job or fellowship



Data Science Trek 2017
Illumina site visit
Host: Julie Collens



Biopharma Trek 2017
Novartis site visit
Host: Jay Bradner



Science Policy Trek 2018
Research!America Awards Dinner
with NIH Director Francis Collins
Host: Mary Woolley

The Value of the Program

myCHOICE has positively affected many metrics of success

Trainee sentiment and satisfaction

79% of current grad students said that myCHOICE improved their training experience.
4,000+ registered attendees at events across 5 years.

Recruitment and matriculation

58% of 2018-19 PhD matriculants said myCHOICE motivated their selection of UChicago.

Engagement with long-lost alumni

300+ new relationships through myCHOICE

Satisfying requirements for funding

T32 professional development requirement
Tracking trainees



myCHOICE Alumni Forum 2017
17 alumni on panels and 1-on-1 mentor sessions

Alumni Engagement

159 Alumni panelists in the “What Can I Do with My PhD?” career seminar series

274 Alumni TOTAL TO DATE across all programming

myCHOICE engages BSD alumni and increases positive sentiment towards the BSD

- 65% of seminar speakers
- 70% of trek site visit hosts
- New alumni contacts become University resources
 - Site visit host during trek Spring 2017
 - Seminar speaker in Autumn 2017
 - Committed donor Winter 2018
 - Sourcing myCHOICE to identify applicants for open positions at his company



Boston Biopharma Trek 2017
Leerink site visit
Host: Rene Mora



myCHOICE Biological Sciences
Alumni Forum 2016
Mentor: Enrique Beckmann



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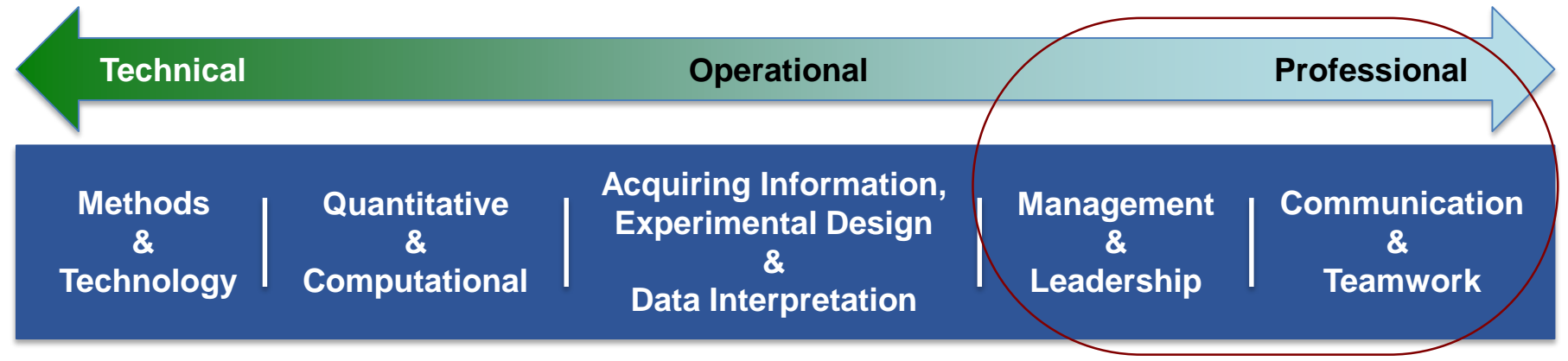
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myCHOICE directly satisfies T32 requirements for professional development

T32 programs must now provide technical, operational, & professional training



The Challenges We Face

Academic culture is a slow ship to turn.

“This kind of program doesn’t have any value for trainees who intend to pursue academic careers.”

Formal training in team and project management, science communication, negotiation skills, and leadership will benefit ALL trainees.

“Trainees will take longer to finish their training.”

Preliminary evidence from the BEST Consortium suggests the opposite; ***they become more focused and demonstrate better time management.***

“The program steals talented future scientists from pursuing careers in academia.”

We are preparing trainees for their future careers, including those who intend to follow the academic trajectory.

“Using this program as a recruitment tool will attract the wrong kind of trainee.”

The best and the brightest understand the value of professional development and that an academic career is not guaranteed. Longitudinal data is forthcoming.

The Future of myCHOICE



- Now that the BEST grants are ending???
- myCHOICE has developed strong support from divisional leadership and alumni advocates
- We are fully funded for academic year 2019-2020
- *"Distributed model"* within 3 years
 - 1/3rd from Biological Sciences Division Office of the Dean
 - 1/3rd from philanthropy (alumni relations & development)
 - 1/3rd from 'other sources'
 - other divisions with participating trainees
 - Inclusion in future training grants
 - Industry sponsorship
- *Ideal future*: endowment