Getting Started in Academic Careers: *On the Cutting Edge* Resources for Graduate Students, Postdoctoral Fellows, and Early Career Faculty

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What Your Graduate Students and Postdocs Want to Know

'*On the Cutting Edge*,' the professional development program, offers online resources and allied day-workshops for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows interested in pursuing academic careers and for early career faculty in the geosciences. Pre-workshop surveys reveal that both groups have many questions about teaching, research, and career management. Graduate students and postdocs also have questions about jobs and the job search process. Many of their questions show a lack of familiarity with the nature of academic positions at different kinds of educational institutions and with the fundamental nature of the academic job search process.

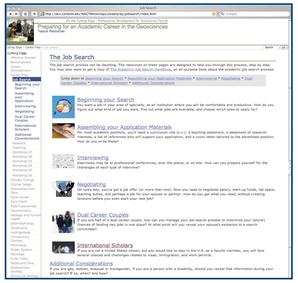
Common Questions on Academic Jobs and the Job Search Process

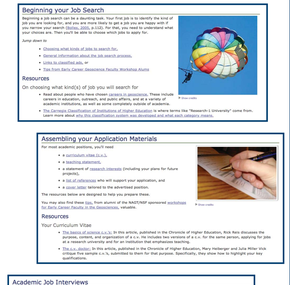
How can I tell if I'll be happy at a particular institution?
What educational setting will best fit my career goals?
How do teaching loads and research expectations vary by institution?
Where can I find job listings? *
When should I begin? Do I need to do a postdoc first?
How can I stand out as an applicant? How should I prepare for interviews?
When I'm offered a job, what is negotiable?

** Note: this has been the most common question in recent years.*

Resources on the Cutting Edge website

http://serc.carleton.edu/NAGTWorkshops/careerprep/jobsearch/index.html



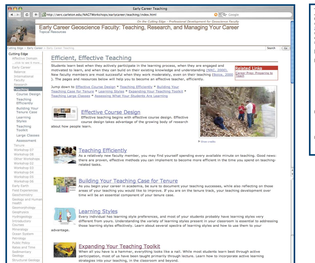


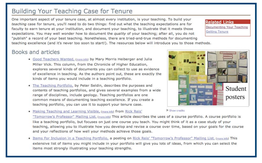
Common Questions on Teaching

How much time should I expect to spend on teaching? What's a normal load?
What teaching strategies are most effective, and how can I implement them?
How do I develop, plan, and prepare a new course, efficiently?
How can I keep students engaged in large-enrollment courses?

Resources on the Cutting Edge website

For early career faculty members
http://serc.carleton.edu/NAGTWorkshops/earlycareer/teaching/index.html





For graduate students and postdocs preparing for an academic career
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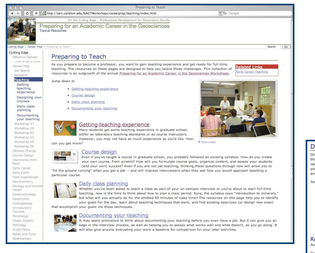

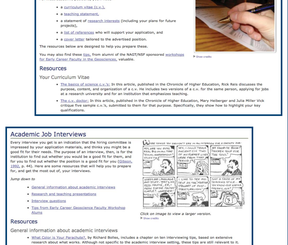

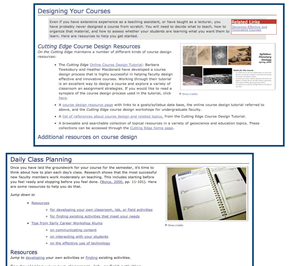

Common Questions on Research

How can I develop a research program that goes beyond my PhD?
Where can I get funding? How much do I need? How hard is it to get?
How much time should I expect to spend on research?
How do I go about setting up & managing a lab and recruiting good students?

Resources on the Cutting Edge website

For early career faculty members
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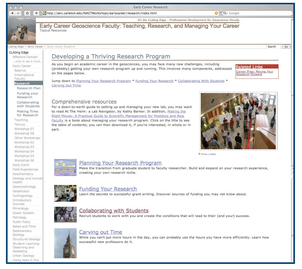

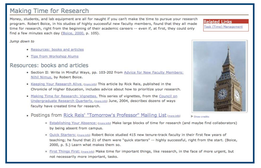

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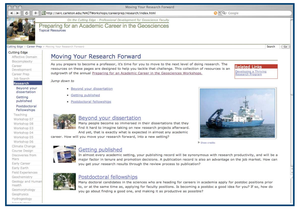

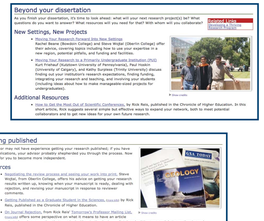

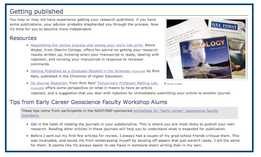

Common Questions on Career Management

How can I balance my teaching and research responsibilities?
How can I balance my professional responsibilities with my personal life?
What do I need to do to get tenure? How much is "enough"?

Resources on the Cutting Edge website

For early career faculty members
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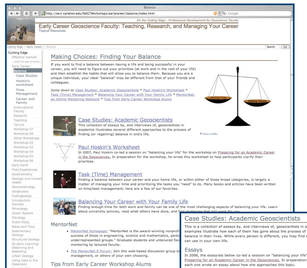
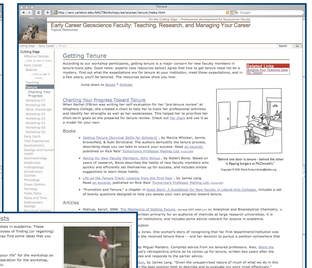
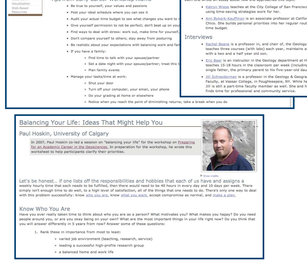
http://serc.carleton.edu/NAGTWorkshops/earlycareer/tenure/index.html







Conclusions

We encourage graduate student advisors, postdoc supervisors, and mentors of new faculty members to include this kind of information in your mentoring efforts, if you don't already, and to encourage your colleagues to do the same.

Acknowledgements

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