



Fall 2025

CS 109: What's Next? Career Possibilities

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CS109: Where are we?

Late semester

Registration is now

Career prep is coming

Think Faire is coming

Then finals (not ours!) and you are done!



Things You Need to Know

- Adding classes late
 - Getting caught up is on you
 - Sometimes you should check before adding
- Canvas and your faculty
 - Assume benign neglect



What's Next?

Career Possibilities



Three Things to Consider

- 1) What you work on
- 2) What that work looks like
- 3) Where you work on it



1) What You Work On



What You Work On

What part of Computer Science do you like best? Or in your top three? Or ...

How do you find that part of Computer science?

- Academics: upper division electives, Concentrations, degree type (BS or BSA)
- Extracurriculars: student orgs, attending talks, FOCS events



2) What that Work Looks Like



What that Work Looks Like

- 1) Developers, Analysts, and Designers
- 2) PM
- 3) Researcher
- 4) Teacher



PMs

What is a PM?

It depends on the company.

Project Manager, Product Manager, Program Manager, ...

If you are interested in these roles:

- look for related internships
- conduct informational interviews with people in industry
- do a lot of group work
- join a student org that gives you experience



Researcher

Research is a process to discover new knowledge—pushing the boundaries of existing knowledge.

- This is not creating new software
- This is discovering or improving
 - Methods to create software,
 - Systems abstractions,
 - Algorithms,
 - ...



How Do I Try Research?

- CS 118H Introduction to CS Research
- DiRP (Directed Reading Program)
- CS 370 Independent Study
- CS 374H Advanced Undergraduate Research
- CS 379H Computer Sciences Honors Thesis



Teacher

- K-12
 - Certification needed
- Community College
 - Master's needed
- 4-year colleges/universities
 - All require Master's, many require Ph.D.



K-12: Getting Certified UTeach certificate!

What's UTeach?

The UTeach program is a close-knit community that allows you to explore the teaching profession and gain a secondary STEM teaching certification by the time you graduate.



Schedule an advising
appointment today!

Works well with both the BSA and the BS



TRY OUT TEACHING WITH UTS 101

UTS 101



1-credit hour course



Teach Austin-area elementary students



Serve your community through STEM

UTEACH PROGRAM



Transcript-recognized certificate



Exclusive scholarships & internships



Open to ALL majors



UTeach



Scan to RSVP

UTeach Info Sessions!



Come learn more about UTS 101, the first step to adding a secondary STEM teaching certification by the time you graduate!





3) Where You Work On It



Where You Work On It

- Industry
- Academia
- Government
- Non-profits



Learning About Academia

Look around you.

And ask us :)

Or any faculty member!



Learning About Non-Academia

[And preparing for the career fair...]



Common STEM Career Paths

- Academic
 - Principal investigator in a research-intensive institution
 - Research staff in a research-intensive institution
 - Combined research and teaching careers
 - Teaching-intensive careers in academia
 - Research administration
 - University administration
- Communication
 - Science education for non-scientists /science outreach
 - Science writing
 - Science policy
- Industry
 - Research in industry
 - Sales and marketing of science-related products
 - Support of science-related products
 - Drug/device approval and production
 - Scientific/medical testing
 - Data science & software development
- Education
 - Science education for K-12 schools
 - E-learning & instructional design
- Government
 - Public health related careers
 - Science policy
 - Conservation
 - Drug/device approval
 - Scientific/medical testing
 - Research & development
 - Research administration
- Intellectual property
 - Patent law
 - Technology commercialization
- Nonprofit
 - Conservation
 - Nonprofit management
 - Research & development
 - Data science
 - Think tank
- Clinical
 - Clinical research management
 - Clinical practice
- Business
 - Business of science
 - Finance
 - Entrepreneurship

A Bit About Graduate School

Essentially required to work in certain subfields right now (ML, for instance)

Required to work in certain locations (academia, most national lab positions, most research positions)

Degree Options

- Master's: coursework or thesis options, typically two years, certifies that you know the material at a deeper level
- Ph.D.: requires a dissertation, must contribute to the knowledge of the field, certifies that you are ready for independent research

Finances

- Master's: you typically pay the tuition, fees, etc. unless you receive a TA or RA position
- Ph.D.: typically paid with a monthly stipend and tuition and fees are covered. Most places guarantee funding for some number of years, but in practice you never pay



A Bit About Rec Letters

- Needed for scholarships, grad school applications, and a seemingly infinite number of causes
- So... get to know your faculty!
- Writers need to be:
 - Experts in the field
 - Familiar with you and your work
 - Plugged in to the community



No Matter What Skills

- Continuous learning
- Critical thinking
- Problem solving
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Process management
- Accept feedback
- Manage emotions
- Conflict resolution



How do you decide?

- Try it all!
- Be curious
- Talk to people
- Do not rule out an option based on rumor



Trying it all...

- Get internships
 - Watch for FoCS events
 - Network
 - Attend career fair!
- Explore research
 - CS 118H
 - Directed Reading Program (DiRP)
 - CS 370/374H/379H (after 429)
 - Research Experience for Undergraduates (REUs)



Mentoring Team

- Seek multiple mentors each with different
 - perspective on you
 - expertise
- Mentors may have ideas that you may not consider
- Help you correct and redirect



Story Time: dnp's career path

Take away:

You can always change!



Story Time: ans's career path

Take away:

Make them tell you “no”.

Don't turn you down for them!



Steps to Take Now

- Register carefully
- Join student orgs
- Attend FoCS events
- Keep your resume updated
 - Note that a *curriculum vitae* (CV) is an academic resume
- Create an elevator pitch



In other news...

Think Faire is soon!



Steps to a Successful Think Faire

- 1) Have an approved proposal
 - a) Revisions are due on 11/16
- 2) Create a Pecha Kucha for submission
 - a) Draft due on 11/23
 - b) Should have slides and your script
 - c) Practice before submitting
- 3) Refine based on feedback
- 4) Present!



What is a Pecha Kucha?



Coming Up

Assignments due:

Think Faire Proposal Re-submit
Career Reflection

Next week: Attend discussion section!



Coming Up

Career Fairs & Elevators
Think Faire



Thank you for coming!

It was good to see you :)