

Course 1: The Strategic Postdoc
Module 1: Positioning Yourself for the Postdoc

Session 3: Build a Game Plan

Activity 3.1: Exploring Faculty Career Paths

There are three major pathways you can pursue if you want to become a faculty member:

- Research-focused faculty
- Teaching-focused faculty
- Research and teaching-focused faculty

Each position focuses on specific areas and places different values on qualifications or experiences. For each of the rows, write down how much of that type experience is required for the pathway in each column. To inform your responses, consider which qualifications are weighed more heavily to be competitive for each respective pathway. You can ask yourself questions like:

- How much teaching experience is required for a research-focused faculty position?
- Do you need high-impact publications to be eligible for a teaching-focused position?

We have completed the first row to give you a sense of what you can write down.

Qualifications	Research-Focused	Teaching-Focused	Research- and Teaching-Focused
Teaching Experience and Training	Significant teaching experience is not required or expected.	Significant teaching experience is required. Candidates should demonstrate ability to independently create and teach courses; be familiar with evidence-based pedagogy; be able to teach diverse student populations.	Teaching experience is expected. Candidates should demonstrate ability to independently create and teach courses; be familiar with evidence-based pedagogy; be able to teach diverse student populations.
Number of Publications	First author publications are expected and required. For more competitive positions, the applicant will have published in either Nature, Cell, or Science.	Publications are not emphasized or required.	A few first author publications from your PhD and postdoc are expected.
Impact Factor (journals) for Publications	High impact factor is expected.	N/A	High impact factor is not emphasized.
Research Plan	Candidates should be able to develop an	N/A	Candidates should be able to develop an engaging

	exciting and clear research plan timeline. Independent research plan.		and feasible research plan. Research plan should be customized for the institution's undergraduate population and infrastructure.
Teaching Statement	Not needed.	Required.	Often needed.
Student-Facing Roles with Undergraduates	Interactions with undergraduate students is limited; most student-facing roles involve graduate students/trainees.	Interaction with undergraduates is significant and occurs through courses and undergraduate research.	Interactions with undergraduates, masters students, non-PhD students through teaching and mentoring through undergraduate research programs is significant.
Grants (awarded during PhD or postdoc)	Candidates should have multiple grants or fellowships in PhD and postdoc to increase competitiveness.	Grants and fellowships not emphasized.	Candidates should have multiple grants or fellowships in PhD and postdoc to increase competitiveness.
Funding Plan	Research plan should be sufficient enough to be funded by an R01 grant.	N/A	Candidates should be able to suggest possible funding opportunities that align with the research plan.

Table 1: Faculty Pathways ([directly adapted from University of California San Francisco: Office of Career of Professional Development](#))