

Academia

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Introductions

Vic

- Associate Professor, Department of Epidemiology
- Has taught introductory epidemiology since 1980
- Director, UNC Minority Health Project

Ahinee

- Doctoral Student, Department of Epidemiology
- Prior to entering PhD program served as Biostatistician (7 years)



Vic's background

- Harvard College, 1961-63
- First National City Bank, NY programmer-analyst
- BS, Econ., Columbia Univ School of General Studies
- MSc, Econ., London School of Economics
- Part-time programmer-analyst, UNC at Chapel Hill
- MSPH, Health Education, UNC School of Public Health
- Transcendental Meditation teacher training course
- PhD, Epidemiology, UNC School of Public Health
- Postdoctoral fellowship, UNC Epidemiology and Health Services Research Center



What does an academic researcher do?

- Design, conduct, present, publish research principal investigator, co-investigator
- Generate funding
- Teach courses and give guest lectures
- Advise/mentor students
- Serve on and chair dissertation committees
- Departmental and university committees
- External service: manuscript and proposal review, consultation, committees, ...



What must an academic researcher do well?

- Maintain strong scientific and quantitative training, epidemiological methods, and expertise in one or more areas
- Write (and speak) very well
- Be entrepreneurial
- Manage effectively research projects, staff, students
- Collaborate with colleagues, outside partners
- Achieve and maintain balance



Benefits and drawbacks

Benefits

- Intellectual stimulation
- Collegiality
- Satisfaction from helping others
- Appreciation / respect
- Idealism
- Intellectual freedom
- Day-to-day autonomy

Drawbacks

- Challenge
- Overcommitment
- Ideals vs. reality, soft money
- Constant evaluation
- Faculty are also employees



Ahinee's background

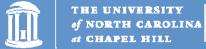
Academic Career

- Entered PhD in Epidemiology Program in the Fall of 2006
 - Completed Interdisciplinary Certificate in Health Disparities
- MS, Biostatistics UNC- Chapel Hill (2001)
- BS, Mathematics Spelman College (1998)
 - Magna Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa

Professional Career

- Worked as a Biostatistician
 - UNC Lineberger Cancer Center
 - Institute of Health, Social, and Community Research at Shaw University
- Researched various topics surrounding minority health and health disparities

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Experiences as a PhD student

- Reasons for entering PhD program:
 - Acquire additional research skills
 - Study Design
 - Epidemiologic Methods
 - Grant writing

Current Experiences

- Opportunities to engage with faculty on various research projects
- Flexible schedule
- Engage in collaborative work with fellow students
- Demands self-discipline and motivation
- Continue to utilize statistics skills and expand on research skills
- Future plans?



Career goal

Engage in interdisciplinary research to inform policy changes that will eliminate health disparities, advance social justice, and promote health and opportunity for all

"Epidemiology is fundamentally engaged in the broader quest for social justice and equality." (John C. Cassel, M.D., first permanent chairperson, UNC Department of Epidemiology

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Some resources

- AAAS: http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/
- Job search: http://scjobs.sciencemag.org/JobSeekerX/Search JobsForm.asp
- www.epimonitor.net
- http://acepidemiology.org/announce/jobs.asp (some of the links may be defunct). One good one is the Emory University School of Public Health job database

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Questions?

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