What can I do with a PhD?

The PhD or Doctor of Philosophy is the most advanced degree you can earn in a field of study. The PhD is an academic marathon. Depending on program requirements and your work ethic, it typically takes 5-7 years to complete the degree. When you earn a PhD you become an *expert* in a specialized discipline; therefore, you are qualified to conduct and publish research as well as teach at the highest levels.

- **What if I'm not interested in a traditional academic teaching career?**

  The *research, writing, investigative* and *analytical* skills gained during your PhD are valuable! There are many opportunities, but *these will vary depending on your field of study*. A few examples:
  
  - Nonprofit organizations - i.e. American Civil Liberties Union, the Nature Conservancy
  - Federal government - i.e. research & analyst positions - check out [USA Jobs](https://www.usajobs.gov).
  - Private industry - i.e. medical & pharmaceutical research
  - Director or advisor in programs like the McNair Scholars Program
  - Leadership positions in higher ed. - i.e. Academic Affairs, Athletic Admin., Student Life

**Resources:**

- "Master's vs. PhD Programs"
- "Masters or PhD: Graduate Degree Options"
- "What is a PhD? And Why Should You Do It?"
- "What Can I Do With a PhD?"
- "Non-Academic Career Options for PhDs in the Humanities and Social Sciences"

- **Exploring career options will help you decide on the right graduate program.**

- **Where can I begin?**

  - The Occupational Outlook Handbook
    Outlines opportunities in a broad range of career fields; information on job responsibilities; graduate degrees required; average salaries; the outlook for job growth in particular fields; and field-specific resources for more information.

  If you can't find your specific field, try searching for a similar one. For example, those who are interested in translational science or biomedical research could scan through the section on Medical Science.

  - Graduate program web pages often list graduate student employment rates and job placements.

  - Check out academic and professional resources in your field. Some examples:

    - **Science and Medicine**
      - American Institute of Biological Sciences
      - Association of American Medical Colleges
      - Association for Women in Science
      - Biospace
      - Society for Neuroscience
      - Science Careers

    - **Economics, Math & Statistics**
      - American Economic Association
      - American Finance Association
      - American Mathematical Society
      - American Statistical Association
      - Worldwide Directory of Finance Faculty

    - **Education**
      - The New Teacher Project
      - Teach.org
      - Teach for America
      - NYC Teaching Fellows
      - NYC Teaching Residency

- **Schedule an appointment with your faculty mentor. Some questions you might ask:**

  1. Why did you decide to pursue a PhD?
  2. What did you find most challenging and most rewarding about your doctoral work?
  3. Why did you choose to pursue teaching versus other career options?
  4. If I don’t want to teach, what are some other career options for PhDs in this field?