

TIBBS Career Blitz Career Profile Questionnaire

1. Please provide your name and employer:
 - Corinne Kiessling, King's College (Wilkes-Barre, PA)
 - King's College is a private liberal arts college that primarily serves undergraduates.
2. What is your current title and how long have you worked in your current job?
 - Assistant Professor (tenure track), 4 years
3. Where did you get your PhD and what discipline was it in?
 - Binghamton University, Behavioral Neuroscience
4. Did you do a postdoc?
 - Sort of- It was not a traditional research-based postdoc position. I had a 4-year teaching-focused postdoc in the Freshman Research Immersion Program at Binghamton University. During that time, my primary responsibility was teaching research methods courses and neuroscience laboratory techniques to students with no neuroscience background. I was also able to establish an independent research agenda in this position.
5. What are your main daily responsibilities?
 - Teaching (4 classes/ semester): creating lectures, assignments, exams, grading, delivering content, meetings with students.
 - Service to the department & college: attend open houses, meet with students as an academic advisor, serve as the faculty advisor to the Neuroscience club, check on students who are not performing well in courses, and serving on committees or participating in departmental meetings.
 - Research: (in a teaching capacity)- training undergraduates to perform neuroscience research techniques. Leading lab meetings, article discussions, supply inventory and ordering, data analysis and interpretation, scientific writing.
6. What are the keys to success in your career field?
 - I'm not really sure. Networking, multitasking abilities, grant funding, and a bit of luck.
7. What were the most important factors in choosing your career path and current employer?
 - Geographical location. Work-life balance. Variety in daily tasks.
8. What activities (if any) did you participate in that helped you be successful in obtaining your job?
 - My teaching post-doc was very useful in helping me gain my current position. I attended training meetings where I was able to learn about and practice innovative teaching techniques. I also was able to establish my own research agenda/ line of inquiry while at that position.
9. What 1 or 2 pieces of advice do you have for people who want to land a job like yours?
 - If you want to have a career primarily teaching, you need to get as much teaching experience as possible. A research-based post-doctoral program won't help get a job at a teaching-focused college.

- You need to be willing to move where the positions are located. Tenure-track teaching positions are hard to come by and getting one in your preferred geographic location can be very difficult.
 - If you are applying for positions where you will be performing research in some capacity, having a clear plan for your research lab is important. In addition, flexibility/ creativity in the plan to match low, medium, or high budgets is also useful (this will depend on the type of position you are applying for).
10. How is the work/life balance in your career field and how much of a factor was that in your career choice?
- The amount of time “off” was a huge selling point for this type of position. Not having to work over the summer or winter break was one of the biggest considerations when I was choosing a career path.
 - Work-life balance as a tenure-track assistant professor is ok, but not great. We have the illusion of flexibility, but the position is less flexible than I had been hoping. I am lucky in that I can choose which days to offer my courses. I generally set my schedule up so all my courses are offered on the same day. This gives me 1 or 2 days/ week without face-to-face teaching obligations. I set my schedule up this way because I have young children who inevitably get sick and wanted a few days where I could easily call off without having to cancel classes. Coming up with alternate plans for classes when my kids are sick has been incredibly difficult.
 - A lot of course prep/ exam creation/ etc. can be done at home or at odd hours. This means I can be home in time to make it for my kid’s soccer games. The downside of this is that I am frequently grading or making lectures late at night to stay caught up. In addition, several times throughout the semester there are weekend obligations (talking with prospective students at open-houses, alumni events, etc.).