

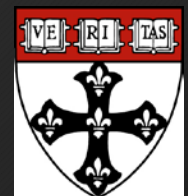
Hard v. soft money: Deciding what type of faculty position is right for you

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No disclosures



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Who am I?

- ScD: Nutritional Epidemiology
 - Harvard School of Public Health
 - Focus: CVD
- Post-doctoral fellowship / instructor
 - HSPH
 - BWH/HMS
 - K99/R00 NHLBI
- Assistant Professor (2012 – present)
 - BWH/HMS
 - Focus on nutritional/lifestyle predictors of CVD/arrhythmias
 - Epidemiology
 - 100% salary through grants - “Soft money”

Hard v soft money: What do we mean?

- Hard money: tuition, endowments
- Soft money: external funding agencies (NIH, AHA, etc)
- Research: raise money for research costs
- Salary: Is your salary covered or do you need to raise money for your salary

Job types: Academia

- Soft money positions
 - E.g. Research institutions / Medical schools
 - 80-100% salary via grant funding (yours or your colleagues)
 - Primary responsibility is research
- Hard money position
 - E.g. State Universities
 - All/most salary covered by the school in return for teaching, research, and service
 - Raise money for research costs
 - 50% Research / 40% Teaching / 10% Service
- Clinician - researchers

Pros & Cons of soft money positions

Pros

- 100% time for research
- Independence
 - Choose who to work with and what to study
 - Motivated and forces me to work on problems important enough to receive NIH funding
- Control your career

Cons

- Dependent on getting funds
- 30% effort on an R01
- No clinical/teaching time to cover gaps
- Worry about funding/salary
- Expectation for teaching/service

Hard money

- Salary is covered
 - 9 month
 - Supplement income with grants to cover teaching or research over the summer
- Time commitment in teaching/service can be high
- What classes will you teach
 - grad seminar v undergrad survey course
- Successful getting grant: buy out teaching time
 - Departmental views about buying out time

Finding the right institution to conduct research

- Supportive of junior faculty
- Resources
 - Career development
 - Research: grant writing, collaborations
 - Financial: start up, cover gaps
- Supportive mentor(s)
 - Supportive of YOUR career trajectory
 - First authorship, PI on own grants
 - Find mentees
 - Help you get funding
 - Cover your gaps

Small fish in a big pond

Pros

- Established research institutions
- Excellent environment - + for funding
- Available data
- Established investigators
 - Good mentors
 - Collaborators
 - Funding to cover gaps

Cons

- Gain independence
- Develop niche
- Stand out from the crowd

Big fish in a small pond

Pros

- Expert
- Novel research to the institution
- Collaborations
- Advancement

Cons

- Collaborators/data elsewhere
- Hard to get funding
- Will you have the resources to build a research program

What to consider: Your personality

- How do you handle pressure?
- Are you motivated to write grants?
- Entrepreneur
 - Small business owner
 - Boss of post-docs, students and assistants
- How do you want to spend your day
 - Research and grants
 - Teach
 - Advise/mentor
 - How is success evaluated?