Committee on Non-Academic Careers

2020–2021 Membership

Barak Krakauer, chair (2021)
Mark Barber, associate chair (2021; chair 2021–2024)

Mark Barber (2021)
Daniel DeLoma (2021)
Shane Wilkins (2022)
Martin Willard (2022)
Sherri L. Conklin (2023)
Jacob D. Heim (2023)
Report of the Committee on Non-Academic Careers
September 2021

2020-2021 Members

Barak Krakauer, Chair
Mark Barber, Associate Chair
Sherri Lynn Conklin
Eleni Manis
Shane Wilkins
Martin Willard

The members of the Non-Academic Careers Committee are nearly all non-academics: the Committee Chair, Associate Chair, and all but one of its members are non-academics. All of the Committee members are strongly committed to the goal of supporting graduate students and graduates who are considering leaving academia to begin non-academic careers.

In July 2021 two new members, Lynn Chiu and Gina Helfrich, joined the Committee. Like most of the other Committee members, Lynn and Gina have made the transition to successful non-academic careers, and both are very familiar with the challenges facing graduate students who are considering leaving academia. Also in July, Barak Krakauer’s term as chair of the Committee ended, and Mark Barber became the new chair of the Committee.

Activities This Year

The Committee generally meets every six weeks by videoconference. We have developed both near- and long-term goals, and we have been very active during the 2020-2021 academic year.

Perhaps most significantly, the Committee completed its revision of the 2016 edition of Beyond Academia. The new 2021 version of this resource, entitled Beyond the Academy, is now available on the APA website in a web-based format (thanks to substantial support from APA Deputy Director Mike Morris). Beyond the Academy went “live” on April 12, 2021, and both Daily Nous and Leiter Reports (Brian Leiter’s blog) posted about the release of Beyond the Academy.
In addition, the Committee organized three “APA live” webinars during the 2020-2021 academic year:

“Supporting Non-Academic Careers: What Can Faculty Do?” (10/6/2020);

“Launching a Non-Academic Career” (4/28/2021); and

“Professional Skills for a Successful Career: An Introduction to ‘Crossover’ Skills” (7/21/2021)

Near-Term Goals

The Committee is planning to organize at least two webinars each academic year on a “standing” basis. One, presented in March of each year, will discuss how to launch a non-academic career. The other, which generally will be presented in July or August of each year, will address what graduate faculty can do to support non-academic careers.

In addition, the Committee is initiating a new series on the Blog of the APA focusing on issues relevant for non-academics. The Committee will prepare at least six blog posts during the upcoming academic year. New blog posts relevant to non-academic careers will be linked to the Beyond the Academy web page.

Long-Term Goals

The Committee is developing course materials for a non-academic professional skills course. This course will track the model course syllabus that Committee member Shane Wilkins prepared for Beyond the Academy. In this connection, the Committee has contacted the Postdoc Academy (https://www.postdocacademy.org/) about relevant course materials they may have already created.

We also plan to incorporate a mentorship program into the Committee’s APA web page. Non-academics will be asked to volunteer for informational interviews with doctoral students and graduates who are considering leaving academia. The web page will facilitate the scheduling of such informational interviews.