

Assignment 4

Interview with Professor James Martin

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Q1: In your opinion, what is a successful PhD student?

The essence of Professor Martin's answers is "Early decisions".

1. Early decision on career goal

Successful PhD students should know fairly clearly what they want to become for their career in the early phase of their PhD study.

After graduation, usually a PhD student will either work in industry or work in academia. Jim mentioned in his experience at CU, about 1/4 of PhD students went to academia and about 3/4 chose to work in industry. These two career paths have different requirements. A major difference is that a PhD student who wants to work in academia should have more publications. Based on different choices, students would have different plans of PhD study.

2. Early decision on PhD topic

Successful PhD students should know what their research interests are as early as possible. Some students, who did not know what to do after prelim-exam, could not succeed in the PhD path.

Q2: What do you think of CS future? I personally fell CS is really an exciting field, while in Software Engineering class, people mentioned jobs are going to India and fewer kids in high school plan to study CS.

People think software as commodities and don't really care about where they are from. Jim said that he knows some people think CS was down. He doesn't know when the trend will turn around. But there are still many good opportunities around.