



April | Fraser Hof, Chemist

What do you do?

I am a Chemistry Professor at UVic.

Why is it important?

I teach hundreds of students in classes about chemistry, and my research students and I work on problems important to human health.

What does your research involve?

We are trying to make new treatments for certain, highly aggressive and deadly forms of cancer. We carry out chemical synthesis (making new drug candidates), biochemical testing (testing in a test tube if they block the action of a cancer-causing protein), and then pass along the best candidates to our collaborators, who are cancer biologists who can study their effects on cancer cells.

What got you into the field of chemistry?

I was fascinated by the chance that organic chemistry offers to make something that has never been made before... an astronomer can't make and test a new solar system, a physicist can't create a new subatomic particle, and a biologist can't make and test a new animal. But we invent something entirely new to humanity in the lab every day.

Did you ever want to be something else?

A fireman. Seriously.

What do you like most about your work?

I get to keep asking new questions and learning new things—from my collaborators, from my co-workers, and from my own students—every day.

What are three achievements/findings/other things in your life you are proudest of?

My kids (who are awesome), and the students I've trained and sent out into the world (who are awesome).

What was your first summer job?

Working at a golf course driving range when I was thirteen.

What 5 favourite artists/groups/pieces of music do you listen to on your ipod?

LCD Soundsystem, Modest Mouse, Rage Against the Machine, Built to Spill, Black Crowes

What's your favourite colour?

Blue, Pink

How do you get to work every day?

Bus or bike.

What are your favorite things to do when you aren't working?

Soccer, playing with my kids.

If you could meet one famous person for coffee who would it be?

Wayne Gretzky – cheesy, but true.

Why are you here at UVic?

I was drawn here by the fantastic people I work with every day.

What 5 words would you use to describe yourself?

Outgoing, Inquisitive, Loud, Creative, Generous

What advice do you have for a young person wanting to pursue a career in your field?

Chemistry, like all sciences, gets a lot better after middle school and high school. There is enormous room for creativity in the real world of research once you've learned all of the basics you need to know on the ground floor. Stick to it.



To learn more about Fraser Hof visit:
chemistry.uvic.ca/people/fh.php

