

Graduate Student Spotlight



Tim Paschkewitz

PhD - Chemistry

*BS, Chemistry - University of Wisconsin -
Whitewater*

**Winner of 2nd Place in the Math, Physical, &
Engineering Sciences Division at the 2007
James F. Jakobsen Graduate Conference**

Please describe your thesis project in a short sentence.

Development and optimization of nanopore electrode constructs (i.e. single pore and arrays of electrodes on a very small scale) for enhanced bioanalytical interrogations of neuronal type systems.

How did you decide to go to graduate school?

It was the next step in an area that I became fascinated with after taking general chemistry as an undergraduate. I did some undergraduate research in electroanalytical chemistry, and I always wanted to continue working in that direction – but to experience it on a larger and more impactful scale.

What made you decide to go to graduate school at Iowa?

Honestly, there were quite a few things. More than anything, it “felt right” and it had faculty I wanted to learn from and work for. An excellent graduate admissions advisor in the Chemistry department, Janet Kugley, was also by far the most informed and kind person I had met throughout all of my graduate school visits.

What are your long-term goals beyond your graduate degree?

I keep thinking about this on a daily basis. If I had to pick right this moment, I would teach analytical chemistry at a baccalaureate institution where I can inspire undergraduates to pursue higher degrees in chemistry.

How has being a graduate student at Iowa prepared you to achieve those goals?

I have had really excellent teaching assignments that have taught me as much as it did the students enrolled in the course! In addition, a challenging but very interesting research project that it might be, nanoelectrochemistry is very modern, useful, and still needs a great deal of work to make it a widely used analytical method. Research at Iowa is teaching me how to think critically, which will be necessary in any profession I take.

You are a winner of one of the top awards at the Jakobsen Conference in a previous year. What did you enjoy most about the Jakobsen Conference experience?

I really enjoyed learning about the research that happens on campus outside of the Chemistry Building. Better yet, the Conference provided the forum necessary to interact with the researchers and understand their work on a similar level of intellect.

Hometown: Hartland, Wisconsin

Advisor: Johna Leddy (formerly Don Cannon)

What are some of your interests outside of school?

Homebrewing, biking, music, singing

Are there any particular challenges you've faced as a graduate student at Iowa?

It's always difficult to learn how to balance a graduate student schedule when one is "first off the boat" from undergrad. It's all about learning how to work on your research while at the same time balancing teaching responsibilities with classes. It's hectic, but not something unique to Iowa – it's a strength exercise.

Do you have a particular mentor who has played an important role in the development of your thesis or your career trajectory?

There have been countless people who have helped me on my way – both faculty and staff. A few to note are Dr. Don Cannon, Dr. Johna Leddy, and Janet Kugley.

Please note any significant honors you've received .

2007: Federation of Analytical Chemistry and Spectroscopy Societies Student Poster Award, 2007: Outstanding Teaching Assistant – The University of Iowa Department of Chemistry, 2007: 2nd Place Math and Physical Sciences Division; Jakobsen Conference, 2007, 2006-2007: GSS and UISG Travel Funding/Scholarly Presentation Research Grant

