Talk Summary: Undergraduate and graduate students in the physical sciences are challenged to make key career decisions have some experience about what an academic career would be like but little to no experience about what an industrial career in R&D would be. This presentation will be a discussion of what industrial R&D is and compare to academic R&D, giving some actual examples from the speaker’s 30 years as a process R&D chemist in an industrial setting.

Biographical sketch: Rob joined The Dow Chemical Company in 1990 and has been involved in a variety of activities in the pharmaceutical space, covering both active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) and excipients for drug formulation. In his 30 years as a process R&D chemist, Rob has been involved in small-molecule and polymer development, scale-up, manufacturing support and commercial manufacturing launch for both his parent company and 3rd party contract manufacturers. In this role, he has had the opportunity to support manufacturing in three continents. Through merger with Dupont and subsequent 3-way company spin-offs, Rob is now a DuPont employee in their Nutrition & Biosciences division as of 2017.

Rob received his B.S. degree from Hope College in 1986 and his Ph.D. in physical organic chemistry from The University of Chicago in 1990 under Prof. Phillip Eaton. He has more than 30 patent applications (12 granted), 12 external publications and has made more than 20 external conference presentations.

His interests outside of work includes golf, track and field, gardening, cooling, and time with family and new grandson.