



X. Hu

The author presented on this page has recently published his **10th article** in *Angewandte Chemie* in the last 10 years:

“Molybdenum Boride and Carbide Catalyze Hydrogen Evolution in both Acidic and Basic Solutions”: H. Vrubel, X. L. Hu, *Angew. Chem.* **2012**, *124*, 12875–12878; *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2012**, *51*, 12703–12706.

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Position:	Associate Professor, École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL)
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Education:	2000 BS, Peking University 2004 PhD with with Prof. Karsten Meyer, University of California, San Diego 2005–2007 Postdoc with with Prof. Jonas Peters, California Institute of Technology
Awards:	2010 Starting Grant of the European Research Council; 2011 Werner Prize
Current research interests:	Organometallic chemistry; synthetic methods; biomimetic and bioinspired coordination chemistry; electrocatalysis; artificial photosynthesis; catalytic materials
Hobbies:	Skiing; napping; facebooking

My greatest achievement has been ... getting paid to do what I do.

Guaranteed to make me laugh is ... the comedy series “Absolutely Fabulous”.

My biggest motivation is ... “the sun also rises”.

I can never resist ... “love, actually”.

I would have liked to have discovered ... “men are from Mars, women are from Venus”.

My top three films of all time are ... The Fellowship of the Ring; Four Weddings and a Funeral; Chungking Express (Chongqing Senlin).

My favorite song is ... “She Blinded Me with Science” (by Thomas Dolby).

My favorite quote is ... “If the facts don’t fit the theory, change the facts” (by Albert Einstein).

I like refereeing because ... “what goes around, comes around”.

The biggest problem that scientists face is ... “the day after tomorrow”.

My favorite piece of research is ... the discovery of electron spin, which says you don’t need to be a genius to make an important discovery.

I chose chemistry as a career because ... chemistry chose me. (In China when I was growing up, students often chose or were given a major before they developed a real interest. This happened to me and chemistry. But overall I also believe that even when one has choices, fate and coincidence have a lot to do with the decision.)

My not-so-secret passion is ... gossiping about science and scientists.

My 5 top papers:

1. “Amorphous molybdenum sulfide films as catalysts for electrochemical hydrogen production in water”: D. Merki, S. Fierro, H. Vrubel, X. L. Hu, *Chem. Sci.* **2011**, *2*, 1262–1267. (A simple yet efficient catalyst for hydrogen evolution.)
2. “Nickel-Catalyzed Cross-Coupling of Non-activated and Functionalized Alkyl Halides with Alkyl Grignard Reagents”: O. Vechorkin, X. L. Hu, *Angew. Chem.* **2009**, *121*, 2981–2984; *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2009**, *48*, 2937–2940. (The debut of “Nickamine”, a general and versatile nickel catalyst.)
3. “Functional Group Tolerant Kumada–Corriu–Tamao Coupling of Nonactivated Alkyl Halides with Aryl and Heteroaryl Nucleophiles: Catalysis by a Nickel Pincer Complex Permits the Coupling of Functionalized Grignard Reagents”: O. Vechorkin, V. Proust, X. L. Hu, *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **2009**, *131*, 9756–9766. (An alkyl–aryl coupling with an impressive scope.)
4. “A Five-Coordinate Iron Center in the Active Site of [Fe]-Hydrogenase: Hints from a Model Study”: D. Chen, R. Scopelliti, X. L. Hu, *Angew. Chem.* **2011**, *123*, 5789–5791; *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2011**, *50*, 5671–5673. (A structural model of a fascinating enzyme.)
5. “Copper-Catalyzed Cross-Coupling of Functionalized Alkyl Halides and Tosylates with Secondary and Tertiary Alkyl Grignard Reagents”: P. Ren, L.-A. Stern, X. L. Hu, *Angew. Chem.* **2012**, *124*, 9244–9247; *Angew. Chem. Int. Ed.* **2012**, *51*, 9110–9113. (The synthetic potential of copper-catalyzed alkyl–alkyl coupling is demonstrated.)

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