

PROMOTION:

A discussion of 'best practices'

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PROMOTION

A discussion of 'best practices'

mentoring developing faculty

General outline:

THE IMPORTANCE OF A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

DIFFERING ACADEMIC NEIGHBORHOODS

PROMOTION

Pre-Promotion

Promotion (to tenure)

Post-Promotion (Advancement to Full Professor)

Departmental physiology:

**What's wrong with homeostasis and
negative feedback control systems**

A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

- Foster a faculty culture that communicates to young colleagues that they are the future of the place
- Find ways for new faculty to "own" the department
- Keeps all doors open (advice/collaboration/just plain coffee)
- Celebrate successes (papers, grants, awards, speaking invitations)
- Give new faculty a survival kit (tip sheet)
- When to meet out of the office over coffee

(This is one of Tom's slides)

ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENTS DIFFER

- Medical Schools
- Arts & Science Campuses
 - Natural Sciences
 - Social Sciences
- Private/ Public
- ❖ **For promotion, one size does not fit all**
 - **Different cultures**
 - **Different rules/regulations**
 - **Different expectations (e.g. about teaching)**
 - **Different means of assessment**

PROMOTION I: Pre-Promotion

1. Make expectations clear from day one
2. Formal and informal career advising
3. Essential elements of career advice
4. The Big Three (research, teaching, service)
5. Mid-Career advice

1. Make expectations clear from day one

- What is Day 1?
 - At Interview
 - At Second visit (provide details)
 - When on board (provide *written* guidelines)
- Provide a written (user friendly) guideline
 - Substantive steps
 - Timing (can't do everything at once)
 - Make the guideline supportive (clear articulation of the kinds of advising the new faculty has available to her/him)
 - E.g., a one year plan, a 3 year plan, ...

(note: the term "written" is from Tom; I don't do this)

2. Formal and informal career advising

- **Formal advising** (whose job is this?)
 - **Mentoring committees** (who is this?)
 - Meet regularly (at least once/year)
 - Available any time
- **Informal advising** (junior faculty need to feel comfortable with this!!)
 - **Advising is not one-stop-shopping** (but who do they turn to?)
 - Teaching
 - Research
 - Writing (grants/papers)
 - Work/family issues
 - Departmental/university citizenship
 - Moral support

3. Essential elements of career advice

Boils down to expectations!! What are they and how do you go about exceeding them

and

Saying "yes" and "no" to the correct things

Special issues of tenure clock:

- Different at different places
- Tied to promotion to associate professor?
- Pauses in clock?
- Move in and out of tenure stream?

4. THE BIG THREE

- SCHOLARSHIP
- TEACHING
- SERVICE

SCHOLARSHIP

- publication quality vs quantity issue
 - What is a "top-tier" journal in your field
 - Balance of quality and quantity
- start publishing early
 - Let the field know you're at a new place and are on your own
 - Stake claim to some turf
 - It's more important to get that first paper than to make it super-substantial
- Encourage exposure (e.g., SfN, Gordon Conferences). Advertise your new colleagues every chance you get.
- Issue of publishing with previous Phd/Postdoc advisors
 - Avoid at all costs?
 - The "line" on your CV that tenure reviewers will draw

... more SCHOLARSHIP

- The dual-edge sword of collaboration
 - Pluses: broadens impact, increases productivity
 - Minuses: the question of independence
 - don't be someone else's "technician"
 - Make sure your contribution is clear and distinct BEFORE you begin
- Publish at a steady pace: avoid "scalping" as a run-up to tenure
- Don't give up too easily on a paper/grant (i.e., how to read and respond to reviews)
 - "No" does not always mean "no" (the notion of a "soft reject")
 - The art of responding to reviewers of grants and papers
 - "In this game you don't just need a strong mind. You need a strong stomach"

(another of Tom's slides)

TEACHING

- **Attitude - quality teaching is important!!**
- The importance of getting help and advice (from multiple sources)
 - Don't assume you know how
 - Use departmental resources (advisors, invite a colleague to sit in)
 - Use campus resources
 - Go watch a good teacher
 - The first time is the hardest (and most time consuming)
- Possibility of teaching relief (e.g. in the first year)
- Try to establish courses that you "own"
- What are the expectations regarding teaching and promotion

SERVICE

- **Within the Department**
 - Try to find a learning experience for new faculty (e.g. a committee on which that they can learn policies/procedures)
 - Have the chairs of those committees see themselves as mentors to new faculty
 - Start out light
- **University-wide**
 - Avoid early over-commitment
 - But take the opportunity to become known outside your department (e.g. at the School level, or the University level)
 - The importance of balance

MID-WAY to TENURE EVALUATION

- Should be a formal evaluation
 - Some places mandatory
 - Who's at the table during discussion of a candidate's mid-career status (the value of young faculty learning by seeing how other mid-career colleagues are evaluated)
- Should be supportive but candid
- Steps for improvement should be clearly spelled out (in writing)
 - Point out areas that need improvement
 - Provide clear steps to implement that improvement
- The importance of follow-up
 - Set a time line
 - Meet regularly after mid-career evaluation (at least twice/year)
 - *There should be no surprises*

(another of Tom's slides)

II. Promotion to tenure

- Preparing the file
 - Look at previous files (both successful and not successful)
- Choosing outside reviewers
 - The candidates list
 - The Committee's complementary list
- Seeking advice
 - Talk to the Chair
 - Talk to all advisors/mentors/other faculty who have recently gone through the process

Promotion to tenure, continued

- Who's at the table?
 - Some places (my Dept) have all faculty sit in on a tenure discussion
 - Listen to the committee report and subsequent discussion
 - Extremely valuable learning experience (demystifies the process)
- Going up early
 - Strong case: go for it. Up side: increased rank, stature, salary.
 - If case could be stronger (often the case) wait
 - Risks:
 - The problem of repeated requests for outside letters
 - The psychological impact of a deferral or turn-down

(another of Tom's slides)

III. Promotion to Full Professor

- After tenure
 - Now go on study section
 - Now accept more professional responsibility (e.g. in Scholarly societies, on Editorial boards, etc)
 - Now become a more engaged University citizen (serve on task-forces, Academic senates, etc)
- Going to full professor
 - Learn the local culture of promotion
 - Continue to seek advice from all who were helpful in the pre-tenure years

The bottom line:

1. Careers never stop developing
2. Be aware of expectations - both what others expect of you and what you expect of yourself
3. Everyone benefits from advice at all career stages
4. Life-long process of being mentored and being a mentor