

## TOPIC 2

# PROMOTION

THE IMPORTANCE OF A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

DIFFERING ACADEMIC NEIGHBORHOODS

PROMOTION

Pre-Promotion

Promotion (to tenure)

Post-Promotion (Advancement to Full Professor)

## 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, invitations e.g. SfN symposium or a Gordon Conference)
- Give new faculty a survival kit (tip sheet)
- When to meet out of the office over coffee

## ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENTS DIFFER

- Medical Schools
- Arts & Science Campuses
  - Biological 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
5. Mid-Career advice

### 1. Make expectations clear from day one

- What is Day 1 ?
  - Interview (at least foreshadow)
  - 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)

## 2. Formal and informal career advising

- Formal advising
  - Mentoring committees
    - Meet regularly (at least once/year)
    - Available any time
- Informal advising
  - Advising is not one-stop-shopping
    - Teaching
    - Research
    - Writing (grants/papers)
    - Work/family issues
    - Departmental/university citizenship
    - Moral support
    - Other non-tenured faculty

## 3. Essential elements of career advice

Timing is everything, so early on:

- Primary papers vs. reviews
- Getting grants out early (1<sup>st</sup> one before they arrive)
- Don't just think RO1...(Foundations/NSF/Early Career Awards/On Campus opportunities)

Saying 'No' is ok

- Say no to study section
- Say no to "extra" University service (consult with Chair/advisors)

## 4. THE BIG THREE

- SCHOLARSHIP
- TEACHING
- SERVICE

## SCHOLARSHIP

- Diversify your research portfolio
  - What is a "top-tier" journal in your field
  - Balance of bread n' butter papers and home runs
- Start early (put your flag on the mountain)
  - Let the field know you're at a new Academic zip code
  - The first paper doesn't have to be *Beowulf*
- Encourage increasing exposure (e.g., SfN, Gordon Conferences). Promote your new colleagues every chance you get.
- Avoid publishing with previous Phd/Postdoc advisors
  - The "line" on your CV that tenure reviewers will draw

## SCHOLARSHIP...continued

- The dual-edge sword of collaboration
  - Pluses: broadens impact, increases productivity
  - Minuses: the question of independence
    - So: don't be someone else's "technician"
    - Make sure your contribution is clear and distinct BEFORE you begin
- The thorny question of quality vs quantity
  - Again, balance is the key
- Publish at a steady pace: avoid "scalping" as a run-up to tenure
- Don't give up on a paper/grant
  - "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"

## TEACHING

- The importance of advising
  - 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
- Attitude
  - Not a nuisance, not a favor
  - Universities have two missions
- Possibility of teaching relief (e.g. in the first year)
- Try to establish courses that you "own"

## 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-CAREER 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

## PROMOTION

### 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
  - Some places, a third (independent) list generated at the Dean's level
- Seeking advise
  - Talk to the Chair
  - Talk to all advisors/mentors/other faculty who have recently gone through the process

## PROMOTION

### II. Promotion to tenure cont.

- Who's at the table?
  - Some places (my Dept at UCI) 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



## PROMOTION

### 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, on SABs, 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 (different e.g., in private and public institutions)
  - Continue to seek advice from all who were helpful in the pre-tenure years

The bottom line:

1. Careers never stop developing

2. Everyone benefits from advice at any stage in her/his career

