



# The Academic Job Search: Adjusting to Your First Year as Faculty

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# Presentation Goals

- Getting Going
  - Transition: graduate student to faculty member
  - The First Month
  - The First Year
  - Beyond the First Year

# The Transition-Teaching

## ■ Graduate Student

- Teaching experience likely to vary (none, TA, labs/ discussion sections, independently taught a course)
- Typically, graduate research provides no preparation for teaching
- No advising responsibilities.

## ■ New Faculty Member

- Expected to be “teaching ready”.
- Now has responsibility for quality, course material, grading, student issues, office hours, and general course preparation.
- Will be asked to advise and mentor students, both graduate and undergraduate.

# The Transition- Research

## ■ Graduate Student

- Research was only task
- Responsible for **doing** research
- Maybe no experience setting research agenda
- Proposal writing ability?
- Should be expert

## ■ New Faculty Member

- Research not their only responsibility
- Must now **direct** vs. perform research
- Must develop a research agenda
- Must recruit UG & G students
- Must publicize and sell their research

# The Transition- Service

- Graduate Student
  - Likely none at all
  - Some may have experiences in serving GSO, tenure & promotion, search committees
- New Faculty Member
  - Must decide how to integrate service with other tasks (which committees to serve)
  - Must actively participate in professional society committees
  - Must become more actively involved with campus culture



# The First Month - Questions You Need Answered by the Department

- Who are good contact people I can go to with questions or problems?
- Where would I go for lunch? Where do I receive my mail, how do I mail things from the department? How should I dress?
- How do I get my computer hooked up? Who do I call when there's a problem?
- Who is the department administrative officer? What is his or her responsibility? How is the department organized? How are decisions made? How do you get things done in the department?
- What can I expect from the support staff? What are the jobs of the support staff and the departmental personnel?
- Is it worthwhile to prepare technical reports and send them to colleagues elsewhere?



# The First Month - Questions You Need Answered by the Department

- How is lab space prepared/allocated? How is equipment maintenance paid for? How is equipment/software/hardware updated?
- Should I give talks within the department/college? How often? How should I publicize my work within the department/college?
- What conferences should I go to? Do I need to have papers accepted to go? Are there quantity/quality standards for promotion? How do journals, chapters in edited collections, and conference presentations compare? Should I write or edit a book? A special issue?
- How visible should I be in the department/college? How is working at home viewed?
- What do I need to know about advising students?
- What are the department's tenure expectations & process?

# The First Month-What Department Chairs Need to Let You Know About Teaching

- Let you know what courses to be taught
- Provide sample syllabi and/or book lists
- Explain student population in core courses and in the major
- Inform new faculty on course requirements and other departmental offerings
- Provide contact to other resources such as faculty who have previously taught the course

# The First Month- How Department Chairs Can Help You Get Started in Research

- Provide information about research interests of faculty in the department
- Match you with existing faculty member with similar research interests
- Inform you about the availability of travel funds to support research, and/or attend conferences
- Explain the resources available for research both on (i.e., OSP) and off campus (i.e., funding agencies)
- Provide application materials for any research support available to faculty in the first year
- How are TAs/fellowships allocated?




# The First Month- What Department Chairs need to Tell You about Service

- Explain what counts as service
- They will make service assignments judiciously
- They will protect junior faculty from service overload, especially women and minorities

# The First Year-Department Chairs Helping New Faculty Pursue an Effective Research Agenda

- Know the research history of the new faculty member. Do they have an established research agenda? Are they involved in any projects? What kind of publication record do they have?
- Help them create a research agenda. Some require one-on-one help (chair or faculty mentor). Some need help with execution. Some just need assessment.
- Meet regularly (twice a year) to talk about research plan and agenda
- Look for problems indicated above. Suggest time management or writing techniques. Suggest drafts to be circulated for comment/review.
- Help with grant proposals by providing copies of successful grants.
- Support research interests, particularly when pursuing cutting-edge or sensitive research. Keep in mind reaction of P&T committees and advise accordingly.



# The First Year-Department Chairs Helping New Faculty Become Effective Teachers

- Perform classroom observations (chair or senior faculty)
- Team new faculty with experienced teachers
- Have them attend teaching seminars
- Have them work with on-campus resources.

# The First Year-Department Chairs Helping New Faculty make good choices on Service

- Help them decide on how to divide time among, teaching, research, advising, grant writing, committee work and other service
- Help them determine which committees they should join (department, college or university). Which will help them learn about the university? Give them visibility?
- Advise on outside service work? Paper and proposal reviewing. Journal associate editorships. Conference/session organization.
- Make service expectations clear for P&T process. Look for national level service that will help P&T.
- Help them to learn to say “no”.

# Beyond the First Year- Evaluation Procedures

- Chairs need to be responsible for explaining yearly, mid-probationary, and P&T processes.
- Have faculty begin P&T dossier in first year.
- At annual review, review progress, adjust workload, and discuss their P&T dossier.
- In particular, begin to discuss potential outside reviewers, and specific ways they have tried to improve their teaching.
- Arrange an annual meeting with the dean. Allows dean to be familiar with faculty member and their area.



# Beyond the First Year- Mid-probationary Review

- New faculty need to know if it is a formality or whether it can result in a decision to terminate.
- They should be aware that a positive mid-probationary report does not guarantee tenure.
- Should include a written report about what the new faculty member should do during the remainder of the time on tenure track
- Should be summative by reviewing what has been accomplished to date, and formative by indicating what needs to be done.



Any Questions?