Negotiating the Academy: One Point of View

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Being Successful in Academia is an Art, not a Science.

- There are a lot of different views on this subject.
- We will discuss one viewpoint today.
Topics to be Covered

- Mentoring
- Grad Student Issues – Classes, Length of Time in Program
- Job Search
- Finding a Post-Doc
- Research Areas
- Data Collection
- First Papers
- Collaboration on Papers
- Journal Selection

- Getting Started
- Ethical Issues
- First Year as an Assistant Professor
- Successful New Professors
- Tenure Process
Persistence and Rejection

• There is a lot of rejection in this field:

• Papers rejected, Grants not Funded, Not getting tenure, Poor Class Evaluations

• This happens to everyone.
Persistence and Rejection

• Also a lot of gratifying experiences – students getting jobs, publishing papers…
Proactive

• Be Proactive – In many fields, there are more PhD's than academic jobs.
• -- so it is critical to network and use business skills
Mentoring

Talk to a lot of people.
Mentoring

Don’t rely totally on one person.
Mentoring
Listen more to successful people.
Mentoring

Talk and Learn about everything: accreditation, teaching load, satellite campuses, how courses are taught, research, etc.
Characteristics of Good Mentors

- Show genuine concern for protégé’s personal welfare
- Competent and willing to share knowledge
- Honest and straightforward
- Willing to let protégé grow
Characteristics of Good Mentors

- Provide Insight into navigating the Department/School/University
- Give positive and negative feedback
- Culturally sensitive and willing to learn
- Appreciate individual differences
Characteristics of Good Mentors

- Meet regularly
- Review progress and set goals
- Help with networking (formal and informal)
- Encourage multiple mentors
- Provide accurate information
- Foster collaboration when appropriate
Classes

• Take as many Statistics and Methods Classes As Possible

• Can’t learn statistics by yourself
Classes

• Use Statistics/ Qualitative Data in papers in other classes

• Will be writing papers like this the rest of your career.
Classes

- The sooner you start the better.
- Don’t want to start with your Dissertation.
Research Methods

• If you do qualitative or quantitative research make sure that you have mastered your methods.
Length of time in program

• Is shorter better than longer?

• 4 years vs. 6 years
Length of time in program

• Longer is always better

• If you are productive and

• If you have resources
Length of time in program

• Why is longer better?

• Maturity about Academia
• Have started the publication process
• May have started the grant process
Presenting Papers/ Job Talks

• Watch others present.
• Watch for style more than content.
• Critique with others what you like or dislike
Presenting Papers

- Start Presenting Papers after Preliminary exams
- Too early may show some serious intellectual deficits
- Too late may hurt in terms of experience/relaxation when on job market
Preparing Job Talk/ Visit

• Be prepared
• Go to other Job Talks
• Give your talk several times to different friendly audiences
• This type of experience is critical
Job Talk

• What’s more important

• Presentation
  • or

• Question and Answer
Job Search

- Talk to lots of people about job issues:
  - Climate of the School
  - Pay Scale
  - Reasonable expectations
  - Course Load
  - Extension Programs
  - Research Incentives for Assistant Professors
University Interview

• Read the Bulletin of the school
• Know what classes that you would prefer to teach
• Know the expertise of the faculty of the school
Job Search

• Be proactive
• Figure out places or regions that you may want to locate
• Visit those schools that you are extremely interested
Job Search

• Attend Major Conferences years before you need to go on market

• Definitely attend during search year
Post-Doc

• On average people who take post-docs are much more successful.
In School, Post-Doc

• If you have research funding, it is possible to plan a pseudo post-doc while a pre-doc.
Post-Doc--Grant

- Individual Pre-Doc
- Individual Post-Doc
- K-Award
Individual Post-Doc Grant

• Up to 3 years of funding
• Fellows receive $5,500 for research expenses and 12 month stipend
• Institutions receive $4,400 institutional allowance
Tips - Conclusion

• Start Early

• Start one year before on the market for institution based post-docs.

• Start on individual post-doc grant after receiving candidacy but before starting on your dissertation.
Research Areas

Is it better to have one, two or three areas of research?
Research Areas

The fewer areas, the better.
Why?

It takes less time and effort to keep up with one area. Thus, it is easier be more productive if you have fewer areas.
Why?

It is easier to be known as an expert in one area. For instance, 14 articles in one area versus 7 articles each in 2 areas.
Why?

This is especially true for tenure, where reviewers are looking for the impact of your work.
Why?

It is OK to have more than one area if you are extremely productive.
You are a professional craftsperson, not a student. Also remember that all faculty are busy, but many are not productive. You want to be productive.
Data Collection

• All things being equal, it is better to spend less time doing data collection than *more* time.

• Better instead to be an investigator on a big project than a Principal Investigator on a small project. Easier to publish off of a million-dollar study than a ten-thousand-dollar survey.
First Papers

• In grad school use data in class papers. It is good to begin data based papers as early in your career as possible.
First Papers

• Carve up your dissertation.

• Try to come up with 3 to 5 papers.
First Papers

- Papers should be brief and focused.
- Papers should not be lit reviews.
First Papers

• Dissertation writing is generally too wordy.

• They provide more detail than is needed.
First Papers

• Cut, Cut, Cut.
• It will be painful.
• Your treasure is other peoples redundancy and unnecessary details.
First Papers

• Only work on papers that have findings that are good, and make an important contribution.
First Papers

- Find an example of someone’s work that you admire and figure out how they put it together.
First Papers

• Try to write papers that are relevant to several journals.

• For each paper pick 4-6 potential journals.
Papers

• Read “Instructions to Authors” and understand what types of manuscripts are appropriate for the journal.

• Do not hesitate to email journal editors to ask for clarification, if needed.

• Potential reviewers.
Collaboration on Papers

Collaborate with people that you trust, that you know will do the work.
Collaboration on Papers

If they do not do their work, finish the paper and move on. Don’t let the paper sit.
Collaboration on Papers

Senior scholars may be trustworthy but may not have the same drive, because they are at different stages of their careers.
Collaboration on Papers

Make sure that you always have your own line of independent papers.
Collaboration on Papers

Need to have several single-authored papers to prove that you are an independent researcher.
In the Social Sciences, generally having more than 3 or 4 authors is not good. **This is especially the case if you do not have many papers.**
Journal Selection
Choose journals that offer the following elements:

Journals that are associated with a professional association and are received as part of the membership in the association.
Journal Selection

Select journals that are more highly ranked in the citation index.
Journal Selection

Tips to Consider

Stay with an editor that likes your work.
Journal Selection

Tips to Consider

Stay away from book chapters, unless it is a major book in your field or there is a personal obligation.
Journal Selection

Tips to Consider

• Select a journal that has articles available online.
Journal Selection

Tips to Consider

• Try to stay away from journals that have long turn around periods.
Journal Selection

Tips to Consider

Write papers that can be submitted to 5-8 different journals. Depending upon your timeline and willpower, start with the most prestigious first.
Journal Selection

Tips to Consider

Prestigious journals help more with tenure and with grants.
Journal Selection

Tips to Consider

Be **realistic**. Know the quality of your paper and the quality of the journal.

For instance, JAMA has a 91% rejection rate (6,000 articles).
Journal Selection

Tips to Consider

Ok to go to a high rejection rate journal that has a quick turnaround.

JAMA Median time to first decisions overall is 7 days and 34 days for manuscripts sent for external peer review.
Journal Selection
Tips to Consider

Don’t get too down about a rejection.

Every paper has a home.
Journal Selection
Tips to Consider

Don’t revise papers too much. “Too many cooks” can spoil a paper.
Journal Selection

Tips to Consider

Bad Papers and Papers in Bad Journals Live on Forever
Journal Selection
Tips to Consider

Really bad papers can be like rotten apples. They can spoil the bunch.
Citations

- Google Scholar
- ISI Web of Science
Factors Associated with Citations

• Publish in more Prestigious Journals
• (very difficult to get paper heavily cited in lower quality journals)
Factors Associated with Citations

• Do Original, Important Research
Factors Associated with Citations

• Review Articles in Journals are Cited More
Factors Associated with Citations

- Papers that are less consistent with the research in a particular journal are cited less.
Factors Associated with Citations

Publish in journals that are received as part of the membership in the association.

Publish in Journals that are online.

Put your papers in a Depository.
Factors Associated with Citations

Publish Several articles in a particular area
Factors Associated with Citations

• Cite yourself. In particular, cite your own papers that are in obscure journals. (people reading your papers are generally looking for other work in that area).
Factors Associated with Citations

• Remember it takes years for papers to be cited. This is especially true in the Social Sciences where there are longer review periods.
Factors Associated with Citations

• **Social Embeddedness and Psychological Well-Being Among African Americans and Whites**
  *American Journal of Community Psychology, Vol. 29, No. 4, 2001*
  • 37 Google cites (April 2012)

• **Reciprocity among older adult peers**
  *Social Service Review  June 1985*
  • 9 Google cites (April 2012)
Impact Factor

- Impact Factor: # of cites per article in the last 3 years of a journal.
- (This is misused a lot).
- Impact factor is used as a proxy for quality and the potential for citations.
Impact Factor/ Citations

• The impact factor indicates the potential for a particular article to be cited.

• What’s more important over time is the actual citations of your work.
H-index

• H-index is the average number of cites per article for an individual.
Ethics

• Tenured and Untenured Professors can and do get fired.
Ethics

• Most people think of Sexual Harassment but that is not the only, nor the most frequent ethical violation.
Travel

- Do not exaggerate travel expenses. (saving 40-100 dollars is not worth your career).
- Do not Double Dip ever. It is especially egregious if using Federal Money. (sometimes you may not know when it is Federal Money)
Travel

• Examples (crack house, state representative, med school professor, this workshop)
Israeli Is Prime Minister is Accused Of Double-Billing

- Prosecutors alleged that former Israeli Prime Minister Olmert, as mayor of Jerusalem in the 1990s and later as trade minister, profited from a double-billing scheme in which he charged charities and the government for trips and expenses already paid by other organizations.

- Washington Post August 31, 2009
Using University Resources for Personal Issues

- Do not use copy machines for your church or social club.
Using University Resources for Personal Issues

• Do not send Christmas gifts by Federal Express using a University account.

• Do not illegally take grant money (petty cash, respondent reimbursement)
Plagiarism

• Do not Plagiarize

• 2 Examples (proposal, reviewing paper)

• Easy to plagiarize in early stages of career when having difficulties in writing.
Fudging Data

- Do not Make-Up Data

- Several NIH Grant Recipients have been caught making up data.
Ramifications of Ethical Violations

• Fired
• Released From Position
• Charged with a Felony (Felony over $500)
Ramifications of Ethical Violations

- Prohibited from getting NIH funds or serving on NIH committees for 5 years.

- Retracting articles that have been published.
Ramifications of Ethical Violations

• Embarrassment/Profession Credibility
• (even if the person is not ever aware that others know of the violation)
First Years as an Assistant Professor

• Do not give too many presentations.
  - Immediate psychological reward for presentations.
  - No immediate psychological reward for papers.
First Years as an Assistant Professor

• Try to be a good or maybe average citizen, not a great citizen.
First Years as an Assistant Professor

• Try to position yourself for tenure anywhere.
Successful New Professors

• Limit classroom prep to 2 hrs./class
• Spend 30-60 min./day on writing
• Spend 2 hrs./week discussing teaching & research with colleagues
• Keep daily time logs
• Integrate research into teaching
Successful New Professors

• Have Multiple Mentors
• Have published an article from their Dissertation
• Perform a reasonable or minimal amount of service
• Seek Advice
• Spend more time writing research than conducting research (Productive not Busy)
Successful New Professors

• Meets with students a reasonable amount of time

• Set appropriate boundaries with students (Stays out of Student/Post-Doc Drama).
Finding the Appropriate Fit

- Top 20 Universities are not the best fit for all. There are 100’s of Universities and Colleges in the U.S.
- 4 Examples
- Retool (Chi-town)
- Keep trying (Mo-Re Dad)
- Find best fit (Paul’s Mom, UM Tenure)
Finding the Appropriate Fit

• Two major scholars are at Bowling Green State.
• Ken Pargament – The Leading Scholar on Religion and Coping
• Wendy Manning – Runs a major NIH funded Family Research Center
Research Productivity for Tenure

- Combination of:
  - 1) # of peer review journal articles
  - 2) Quality of Journal
  - 3) # of authors per paper
  - 4) # of 1st authored papers
  - 5) # of sole authored papers
  - 6) # in Social Work Journals
Research Productivity for Tenure

• Grants alone will not get you tenure

• Articles alone will get you tenure

• However, need grants if you have the profile of a person who should get grants.
Tips for Choosing Tenure Reviewers

Select Peer Institutions
Examples: Big Ten, Ivy League (not MAC, Eastern Michigan, Bowling Green, Toledo).
Tips for Choosing Tenure Reviewers

Choose only one person per institution.
Tips for Choosing Tenure Reviewers

It’s good to travel some, so that potential reviewers may know about your work. However, do not travel too much.
Tips for Choosing Tenure Reviewers

Select endowed chairs over full professors, and full professors over associate professors.
Tips for Choosing Tenure Reviewers

- Assistant professors and new associate professors are not eligible.
- Dissertation chairs, committee members and people that you’ve worked with are also not eligible.
Tenure Statement

Concentrate on the findings, importance and contribution of your work. Make it easy for reviewers to write their letters.
Tenure Statement

You want others to review it, but do not want “too many cooks”.
Tenure Process

• Submit package to Tenure and Promotion Committee: articles, tenure statement, names and addresses of 10 potential reviewers.

• T and P Committee sends materials out.

• T and P Committee reads the package and external review letters.

• T & P and Executive Committee votes.

• Provost’s Office votes.
CONGRATULATIONS

You have received tenure!
NOW...

It’s time to begin working towards becoming a full professor.