

# Succeeding in Academia – Managing the Tenure Process

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# Agenda

- University Positions and Tenure – Kynda Curtis, Professor and Extension Specialist
- Creating Your Story – Ruby Ward, Professor and Extension Specialist
- Five Tips for County Level Faculty Seeking Promotion and Tenure – Katie Wagner, Extension Professor and SL County Horticulture Specialist



# Outline

- Employment opportunities post-graduate
- Academic positions
- Post-doc positions
- What is tenure?
- University positions
  - Teaching
  - Research
  - Extension
- Suggestions for success



# Employment Opportunities (MS/PhD)

## Academic (institutions of higher learning)

- Universities, teaching universities/schools, liberal arts colleges, community colleges

## Non-academic

- Federal or state government agencies
- Private companies and commercial banks
- Non-profit or non-governmental organizations
- Consulting and research firms

# Academic Positions

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- Post-doctoral researcher
  - 1 to 3 years, temporary
- Lecturer
  - Teaching, normally not tenure-track
- Assistant Professor
  - Tenure-track or non tenure options
  - Job duties differ across universities, colleges, and position types
  - Once tenure is granted, promotion to Associate Professor is common
  - Faculty may apply for promotion to Full Professor when ready, usually a few years after promotion to Associate

# Post Doctoral Positions

- Short-term research position at a university, often linked to a research project
  - 1 to 3 years in length
  - Working with a faculty member or group of faculty
  - Full time research work
- Benefits include....
  - Reflect on career
  - Time to work on research before tenure clock starts
  - Start new research projects
  - May improve academic job prospects later
- Need to publish, expand networks and colleagues



# What is Tenure?

- A tenured appointment is an indefinite appointment that can be terminated only for cause or under extraordinary circumstances such as financial exigency and/or program discontinuation
  - Essentially life-time job security at a university
- Tenure-track
  - A period of six years in which an assistant professor passes through the tenure process
  - Tenure must be applied for at the start of academic year six
  - Tenure is obtained by meeting department, college, and university expectations in terms of research outputs (publications, grants, etc.), teaching performance, outreach/Extension performance, and service
    - Expectations differ across universities
    - Expectations differ across job types/appointments



# Research University Positions

- Positions are divided into percentages of research, teaching, service, and Extension
  - For example, in Applied Economics we have positions such as....
    - 50% teaching, 45% research, and 5% service
    - 60% Extension, 35% teaching, and 5% service
    - 60% research, 35% Extension, and 5% service
  - Each one has different expectations of research outputs, as well as teaching and Extension performance due to percentage differences....
- Large teaching appointments more common in arts and humanities colleges at R1 universities
- Colleges of agriculture positions normally have higher research appointments due to USDA experiment station funding
- Faculty salaries are normally higher at R1 universities





# Research University - Teaching

- Faculty “teaching load” is dependent on university/college type, and position appointment percentages
  - Load is the number of courses/sections taught annually
- Typical faculty appointments
  - 50% teaching/50% research – teach 4 courses annually
  - 35% teaching/65% research – teach 3 courses annually
  - 25% teaching/60% Extension/15% research – Teach 2 courses annually
  - 60% teaching/40% research – teach 5 courses annually
- Teaching also includes advising graduate students
  - 15% teaching appointment – teach 1 class annually and advise grad students
- Heavy teaching appointments
  - 80% teaching/20% research – teach 7-8 courses annually



# Research University - Research

- In academics, publications (refereed journal articles) are often the most important output for obtaining tenure
  - Quality and quantity expectations differ across universities
  - Understand the requirements for your position\*\*\*\*
- Grant writing - often both an input and an output indicator for tenure
  - Apply for grants to fund research, bring funding to the university
- Other publications such as research reports, Extension pubs, blogs, etc. may or may not be considered
- Large difference in expectations between economics and agricultural/applied economics departments



# Examples

- Example publication requirements
  - 30% research = 1.5 to 2 journal article publications/acceptances on average annually
  - 50% research = 3 to 4 journal articles on average annually
  - Quantity vs. quality is department specific
- Journal quality is based upon journal acceptance rates, field ranking, or impact factors
- Grant expectations vary wildly across departments
  - Just applying is enough in some departments, receiving a grant or two needed in others



# Extension Positions

- Typical appointments are 95% Extension and 5% Service
  - Extension (95%)
    - Provide leadership to Extension activities
    - Implement and direct programs that respond to clientele needs and issues
      - Employ innovative approaches
      - Develop partnerships
      - Pursue internal and external funding (grants)
      - Document impacts
    - Demonstrate scholarship in Extension
    - Manage budgets and personnel
    - Serve diverse audiences and support the civil rights mandate of University Extension
  - Service (5%)
    - Committee assignments, faculty organizations, reviewer, editor, etc.



# Extension Positions

- No specific “research” percentage, but Extension includes scholarship (research) as well
- Scholarship in Extension
  - Peer reviewed journal articles
  - Peer reviewed Extension publications (fact sheets, etc.)
  - Instructional materials (new materials or significant adaptation of existing materials)
  - Grantsmanship
  - Regional, national, & international conference presentations



# Suggestions for Success

- Focus your time/energy on the job elements most important to tenure and delegate the rest (as much as possible)
  - Extension programming, publishing, impact reporting, etc.
  - Cal Newport referred to this as “Deep Work”
- Document (from day 1) everything you do towards tenure
- Apply for grants to fund programs but importantly to hire help (program assistant, intern, evaluation specialist, etc.)
- Hire help and delegate as much as possible (shallow work elements)
- Use Extension editorial services and/or pay for technical editing



# Reminders from “Deep Work”

- Enhance Your Ability to do “Deep” Work
  - Set aside time and space to focus on the **most** important tasks
- Prioritize Downtime
  - Regular rest improves the outcomes of deep work
- Reduce Digital Distractions
  - Choose digital tools wisely
  - Limit time on social media
- Reduce “Shallow” Work Time
  - Limit time on email, scheduling, etc.



# Creating Your Story

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# Creating Your Story

- Who? Who are you as an Extension academic?
  - Comparative Advantage
- What? What are the expectations for success?
  - How are you evaluated?
- Why? Why are you doing or going to do what you do?
  - Needs Assessment
- How? How will you get there? What is your plan?
  - Build teams and create deadlines



# Creating Your Story

- When and Where? Document and keep track of what was done.
  - How is the when and where fitting into your overall plan.
  - Show something each year (publications, grants, education)
    - Not every area is going to be the same each year, if one area is lower another should be higher.
- Market your Extension story!!
  - Evaluations and impacts
  - P&T documents



# Five Tips for County Level Faculty Seeking Promotion and Tenure

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# Build a Support Network

- Do not be isolated!
- Build connections with Extension colleagues and resources (including specialists).
- Ask for other successful dossiers to see examples of relatively current and highly regarded submissions.
- Ask a lot of questions and learn the Extension lingo.
  - What is impact?
  - What is considered scholarship, peer-reviewed, peer referred?
  - What types of funding sources should you include?
- Show up prepared to ask questions!



# Understand Your Job Expectations

- Read and understand what is expected of you in your role statement (and committee and director letters).
- Do not be afraid to ask your director for clarity on questions like what counts and what does not count or what things mean.
- Your role statement is your roadmap to success!
  - Your committee will reference it, your director will reference it, and...
  - External reviewers will evaluate your Extension work performance based on your role statement!
- If you are spending exorbitant time doing activities/events that do not check boxes from your role statement, why are you spending your time doing those things?



# Keep Yourself Organized!

- Keep your events, participant numbers, outputs and outcomes, evaluation results and so forth organized so you can return to numbers later and make perfect sense of them.
- Keep in mind you might opt to reorganize or reconceptualize your programs and/or presentation of your programs later (tables and graphs). Meaning you might have to move numbers around.
- Think about how you want to present program information (evaluation data) via graphics, charts, picture graphs and so forth to add interest/clarity/visual appeal to your documents.
- Tuck away useful appendix item pieces (testimonials, articles, awards) as they up.



# Focus on the Big 3!

- Spend most of your time building up the big 3: scholarship (peer-reviewed), grantsmanship, and impacts (program evaluation).
- I'll throw awards in there as well – especially if they are of national significance or reflect your outreach to your local community.
- Take cues on what you should be prioritizing from your committee and director letters.
  - Important questions to ask:
    - What are my weakest areas?
    - What are my strengths?
    - In your opinion, what should I be prioritizing my time on for the next year?
    - Provide committee an update on efforts from last meeting.



# Your Extension Dossier Should Detail Your Professional Work Story.

- Developing your dossier takes incredible amounts of time investment, patience, creativity, attention to detail, and humility.
- Give yourself the time and patience to hone, refine, and polish overtime.
- Your presentation of your Extension work is more important than any grant, any single event, or any presentation you might give.
- Make your dossier a high priority and do not rush its crafting and make sure you deliver a clear, detailed, well-written, and aesthetic final product (on time).





# Questions?

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