Succeeding in Academia – Managing the Tenure Process
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

- 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

Ruby Ward, Professor and Extension Specialist, Applied Economics Department
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

Katie Wagner
Extension Professor of Horticulture
Salt Lake County
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?