



Nuts and Bolts of Tenure
Minority Faculty Development Workshop
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Opening Thoughts

- This is **not** about obtaining tenure. This is about becoming a dynamic faculty member and making a significant contribution in research, teaching and service.
- Focus on what it takes to make these contributions and all of the issues related to tenure will work themselves out.
- While universities are converging the requirements for success have some differences

- **Scholarship**

- Find out what the requirements are and make sure you are within them.
- While there is **no substitute** for high quality scholarship, all of your publications will not be at the same level.
- Balance between *highly respected and newer journals*. Stay away from journals that lack the respect of your colleagues. You want to hit “both” societal and nonsocietal journals with faster turn around times

- **Scholarship**

- Submit a list of suggested reviewers with every paper. (Reviewers that you know and know you)
- Use conferences and conference publications as a testing ground for new ideas.
 - Use the advance program to determine what papers you will attend. Use the remaining time to network.
 - Use the conference to generate new ideas for “your” own work.
- Learn to write and write well.
 - You may need to “sit-in” a writing course

- **Know the cognizant program managers in all agencies related to your success**
 - NSF hit rates are **below 10%** so if your research program **only** consist of NSF submittals you are swimming up hill.
 - Attend the pertinent conferences that these program managers attend and let them know what you are doing
 - Be willing to ‘reinvent’ yourself.
 - Take what you “know” and apply it to other areas
 - Stay ahead of the curve. Investigate new areas. Push don’t follow.
 - Talk to people outside of your research area

Building a research program

Minority Faculty Development Workshop

- **Future research will be “platform” specific**
 - Energy and energy related research
 - Environmental Issues, Resilience, Sustainability
 - Novel research applied to old sources (I.e. coal, Nuclear)
 - High Performance Computing
 - Quantifiable Verification and Validation
 - Evaluation and Prognosis
 - Computational Biocomplexity
 - Interdisciplinary Materials Research
 - Biomaterials, Self Assembled materials, Materials exhibiting self-repair (autogenous), self-diagnosis, self-replication and self-consumption (autophagous)
 - Interdisciplinary Systems
 - Biologically inspired systems, Smart and Intelligent Systems
 - Become Bio-literate
 - Industrial Research - A good mix

- **Building a strong reputation**

- People **must** know you. No reputation is worse than a controversial one
 - The easiest way to become known is to work for it.
“Your gift makes room for you”
 - Join a societal technical committee related to your research area and “volunteer” for something
 - Ask successful people if they need help and help them!
- Spend **at least “one”** summer somewhere else. National labs, other universities
- Use your **local** network to give invited talks. Note when you give an invited talk you are not the only one on the hot-seat.

- **Students are extremely important to your success**
 - Interview potential students.
 - Go beyond their school and GRE
 - Make sure their research interest truly fit your own.
 - Don't just ask do you like experimental research?
Ask questions like what specific have you done that highlights your interest.
 - Develop students from the undergrad level.
 - Trade with faculty from other universities
 - Look for the “Eye of the tiger”

- Teaching is important but it is **binary**
 - Teaching is the “one” thing that all faculty have in common
 - If you are exceptional in teaching it helps. If you are a poor teacher it hurts. Most are okay.
 - Good teaching creates good students at all levels
 - Try to double count teaching and research.
 - You learn best by teaching!
 - Develop or teach courses in your research area
 - Bring research examples into the class
 - Hire undergrads to build demonstrations or simulations for classes at all levels

Final Thoughts

- Develop 5 ways to “respectfully” say NO.
 - Quid-pro-quo is a great deterrent.
- If you are doing what you are supposed to do and you are successful and you are having problems at your universities, LEAVE.
- Find good mentors and use them
 - Your best mentors are in the room **but** you should have multiple mentors from all walks of life.
- Utilize the wealth of the people you have around you
- Shared responsibility for one another
- Build your own community.