

More than Tenure:

How Getting Along with Colleagues and Balancing your Time is Just as Important as Research
12:50-1:40 p.m. in Westlake 214

Top Ten

10. Be your own advocate

- Make a point of gradually talking to everyone in the department. Let people know what you're working on, things you're doing in your classes, stuff going on with your family—as much as you are comfortable sharing—and listen to what they may offer about all these matters.
- Asking questions is not a sign of weakness or inexperience. Most people welcome questions. Faculty like sharing strategies that worked for them.
- If you are struggling, don't suffer in silence. It's better to ask for help early, when a problem is still on a manageable level.

*getting along with colleagues
*taking care of yourself

9. Use your colleagues as a resource.

- Get advice from many different people with varied perspectives, compare the advice to your own values, and then prioritize. Keep in mind that each department has its own Tenure and Promotion guidelines, so what worked for someone in one college may not work for another. Also, don't compare yourself to colleagues in your department who were tenured and think you are good to go as long as your accomplishments are similar. Expectations change and everyone's situation (and portfolio) are different.
- No one will be able to give you a straightforward checklist of everything you should complete to earn tenure. People take a variety of paths; this is good news for you, as it will allow you to play to your own strengths.
- After getting some advice, make your own plan for research, service, and teaching. Run it by people in your department.

*unraveling the mystery behind tenure

8. Don't say yes to everything.

- Saying yes to everything may be why you were qualified enough to get your current position. However, in this setting, it can work against you if you volunteer for everything. Choose wisely, then follow through on the commitments you've made.
- At first, you may feel anxious to participate. Volunteering for some things will get you involved. After being around for a while, you will better understand your role in the department. Hence, you will be better placed to choose activities that relate to your role.

*managing your time
*taking care of yourself

7. Learn the culture before you try to change it.

- Your colleagues do want you to bring fresh new ideas to the table. However, they will be resistant to them if you are suggesting change before exploring the rationales for existing methods.
- Before expressing your own opinions, take time (during faculty meetings, for example) to observe your colleagues and learn to see the complex relationships among them.
- Express interest in and appreciation for everything your colleagues have already done.

*getting along with colleagues

6. Take a long view, with your department and with students.

- You are not responsible for addressing every injustice you see, or fixing every problem you notice in the department.
- Keep student feedback in perspective. Many students will realize later in life how much you taught them.

*getting along with colleagues
*taking care of yourself

5. Try different methods of working, and choose what is most efficient for you.
 - Some people only answer school emails during office hours. Other will email anytime, day or night. Figure out what helps you focus and accomplish things on your own terms.
 - What is the best location for you to accomplish various tasks? Is it better to keep work and research tasks assigned to separate locations? Does grading in a coffee shop help to keep you from getting distracted by other things?

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4. Try to get two or three birds with every stone.
 - A couple of my community murals involved faculty/student collaboration, service to the community, and related to my personal research (creative production).
 - How can you combine research with teaching and service?
 - Special Emphasis Grants are available for faculty/student collaboration.

*unraveling the mystery behind tenure
*managing your time

3. Familiarize yourself with the Faculty Handbook.
 - Though not a perfect document, the handbook familiarizes you with the university and what it offers you. Some information is major (paid/unpaid leave for family and medical reasons), but the minor things help, too (availability of notary public on campus).
 - The handbook gives you an introduction to the University structure, as well as general information about tenure and teaching.

*managing your time
*taking care of yourself

2. Be yourself.
 - You can take a unique approach to teaching, while still imparting the information necessary.
 - Every department will have a wide variety of personalities. Your style of lecture, grading, feedback, interacting with students, etc., may be different than others in your department. Don't we want our students to learn that there are a variety of ways to solve problems?
 - Being yourself shows confidence in your own abilities, which will inspire others to have confidence in you.

*taking care of yourself
*unraveling the mystery behind tenure

1. Take care of yourself.
 - What good is tenure if you are miserable? During the years working toward tenure, you may learn to prioritize more than any other time in your life. Do not deprive yourself of the things that are important to you.
 - family
 - friends
 - exercise
 - hobbies
 - culture
 - Trivia Night at Blue
 - Rhodell's on Friday night
 - monthly coffee with other new faculty?