



Mentoring and Staff Development Program

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Disclaimer: Most of views or opinions given in this presentation are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of Penn State.

Definition of terms

Mentoring

a process through which a new, junior faculty member (JFM) receives guidance and support for successful career development.

Tenure

“a status granted after a trial period to a teacher protecting him from summary dismissal” (Webster’s definition).

Mentor

- a senior faculty member who advises a JFM.
- at the rank of tenured associate or full professor.
- assists the JFM in creating an agenda for working toward his/her professional development goals.
- provides ongoing guidance as long as the JFM is untenured.

Mentor

- Explains how the university system “works.”
- Guides the JFM to achieve an excellence in teaching.
- Helps in identifying sources of external funding.
- Explains the peer-review process and the hierarchy of publications.
- Helps in development of professional networks.

Penn State Mining Faculty Case Study

➤ Mining faculty member A

six years of industrial experience; 10 years in government; joined Penn State in 2000; dismissed in 2003.

➤ Mining faculty member B

15 years of industrial experience; joined Penn State in 2003; dismissed in 2007.

➤ Mining faculty member C

two years of industrial experience; 10 years in consulting company; five years in government; joined Penn State in 2002; dismissed in 2008.

➤ Mining faculty member D

five years of industrial experience; joined Penn State in 2001; granted Tenure in 2007.

\$\$\$ wise

Regular salary and benefits (assumptions):

- nine-month base salary (\$70,000)
- medical, dental and vision insurance (\$9,600 per year)
- retirement contribution (\$3,200 per year).

Total: \$82,800 per year

\$\$\$ wise

Each new JFM is provided with start-up package:

- summer salary support for the first two years (\$50,000).
- two graduate students for two years (\$144,000).
- research lab equipment, software (\$40,000).
- office equipment and furniture (\$6,000)
- travel funds (\$20,000).
- relocation cost and house hunting (\$10,000).
- visa expenses if not U.S. citizen or permanent resident (\$10,000).

Start-up package only: \$280,000



Mentoring Development Program

by

Mining Faculty Member D

Understanding the Tenure Process

Tenure

- A six year “clock.”

- Regular written evaluations:
 - 2nd year, Dept. P&T Committee, Dept. Head, Dean

 - 4th year, Dept. P&T Committee, Dept. Head, Dean

 - 6th (final) year, External reviewers (minimum eight evaluation letters), Dept. P&T Committee, Dept. Head, College P&T Committee, Dean, University P&T Committee, President.

Understanding the Tenure Process

- Gather relevant materials
 - department, college and university guidelines and criteria
 - recent tenure dossiers

- Communicate with
 - department head
 - senior department faculty members
 - recently tenured faculty members

Understanding the Academic Environment

- Department of Energy and Mineral Engineering – very competitive environment (mining eng.; petroleum and natural gas eng.; fuel science, environmental eng.; energy eng.; energy business and finance).
- College of Earth and Mineral Science – strong emphasize on “climate change” education and research.
- The Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) - strong research focus/emphasize.



Understanding Academic Requirements

- teaching
- research
- service

Three jobs and a home life!

Teaching

- Requirement: demonstrate an ability to convey the subject matter to students in an effective manner.
- Course evaluations
 - students (1-7 point scale where 1 – poor; 4 – average; 7 – excellent)
 - peer-review (tenured faculty members within the department)
 - Penn State mining alumni surveys (6th final year)
- Undergraduate and graduate students supervision.

Teaching – What is Important

- strive for excellence in teaching (students' evaluation: 5 and above).
- demonstrate “teaching improvement curve.”
- learn from students and peers surveys/comments.
- teach a blend of courses (small/large enrollment, undergraduate/graduate).

Teaching – What is Important

- don't let department head to overload you with courses (Penn State tenure criteria are not those of a community college; teach no more than two courses per semester).
- avoid summer teaching (big distraction and time sink).
- don't develop/establish new courses until you get a tenure.

Teaching

“No matter how good your research and service are, you will not get tenure unless you have excellent teaching record.”

(Lori Clarke, University of Massachusetts)

Teaching

“Excellent teaching alone will not get you tenure, but poor or average will prevent tenure.”

(Philip Stoddard, Florida Int. University)

Research

Requirements:

- an ability to carry out both independent and collaborative, high quality research.
- publish in recognized, refereed journals.
- secure external funding.
- have an area of specialization, wherein a major portion of the research effort is concentrated.

Research – What is Important

- focus on original research and establish your own identity.
- make a substantial contribution to specific research area so as to cement your reputation.
- recruit excellent graduate students.

Research – What is Important

- “publish or perish” – if you do not publish you have no business in academia.
- only refereed journal publications count.
- publish in the major journals in mining.
- quality over quantity in publications.
- single number of high quality publications over six year provisional period may not get you a tenure at Penn State.
- depending upon research focus, publish in recognized refereed health and safety journals and/or environmental journals.

Research – What is Important

- write joint journal publications with your peers who have the same research interest.
- do not continue to publish with your PhD advisor, establish independence.
- maintain several papers under review constantly (time counts).

Research – What is Important

- do not write books during the tenure process (“Journal articles get you tenure, books get you a chair.” Earl Grinols, University of Illinois).
- present papers at conferences (important for exposure to peers and networking), do not publish in proceedings (copyright issue).
- develop a thick skin, paper game is not for the fainthearted (if you cannot swallow rejection, find a job out of academia).

Research – What is Important

- obtain federally and industry funded grants (administration likes to see that you are a good financial investment).
- identify a research area and agency that will fund your work.
- demonstrate that you have original research ideas.
- develop relationships with people in federal agencies and industry.
- try to get and learn from successful proposals submitted by your departmental colleagues.
- if rejected, learn from reviewers comments and never give up in trying to obtain funding.

Research – What is Important

- grants come in second but don't substitute for refereed journal publications.
- grants should facilitate publications but cannot replace them (faculty with significant funding and weak publication record have been denied tenure at Penn State).
- consider every research project in light of the published end product.
- if the significant grant is received, ask department head if reduced teaching load can be obtained.
- research work requires nights, weekends, and summers.



Research

“No matter how good your teaching and service, you will not get tenure unless you have a strong research record.”

(Lori Clarke, University of Massachusetts)

Service

- Requirement: show evidence of personal involvement in professional and learned societies and in department, college and university affairs.

Service – What is Important

- Pick service that will help your career development.
- Become active in professional societies and conference activities
 - start networking at conferences, it is essential for career development
 - get involved in some committees
 - get to know the leaders in your field and make sure they know you
- Do the amount of department/college service that seems appropriate for your development
 - do your share, but no more
 - learn when/how to say no – do not accept heavy administrative assignments.

External Reviewers

- external evaluations are crucial for a final decision on tenure.
- need to be knowledgeable in your research area(s) and have impressive CV.
- need to be familiar with your work; from schools ranked equal or above yours.
- make a “hit list” of people to serve as external evaluators; meet and talk to them at society and conference meetings.
- work with Department Head in selecting external reviewers (confidentiality is an issue).

External Reviewers

➤ They will:

- compare you to the current young faculty in the field,
- indicate what are the important contributions of your work,
- assess your future research potential,
- indicate if you would get tenure at their institution.

Additional Survival Skills

- avoid politics at any cost – it is the realm of the tenured faculty.
- establish your P&T data file right away (practice good data collection).
- take 2nd and 4th year written tenure evaluations seriously; department does! (list actions to take to address areas of weakness).
- there is no place on the tenure dossier to provide any excuse (no sufficient funding in mining; economic crises, teaching or service overload, etc.).

Additional Survival Skills

- avoid doing consulting job that does not lead to refereed papers, and does not count as a grant.
- do as little as possible that detours you from getting papers published and grants funded.
- understand that your institution is looking for evidence that you will remain active in research after you get tenure.
- your dossier needs to be a document that would impress any accomplished academic in your discipline with your productivity.

Case Study Results

Faculty Member	Teaching	Research	Service
A	Excellent	Poor	Excellent
B	Excellent	Poor	Excellent
C	Excellent	Average	Excellent
D	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

Final remarks

- be passionate about what you do.
- assume ultimate responsibility for your own career.
- be the best teacher to your students, establish strong bonding with them.
- Obtain research funding.
- **PUBLISH, PUBLISH, PUBLISH** in refereed journals!!!

Final remarks

- do only the service that will help in your professional development.
- establish good relationship with department head, faculty members within department and college, outside academics, industry people.
- Tenure enables freedom, indeed.

At the beginning of academic career (2001)



after the tenure (2007)





THANK YOU!