Advice to New Scholars

Division 15: Educational Psychology
Session for Early Career Educational Psychologists

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Scholarship

• It’s all about expectations at your institution... find out the norms/expectations.
• Get critical peer-reviews before you send manuscripts out for review.
• Programmatic – What is your identity?
• Make a 5-year plan (proximal and distal goals!), and follow it.
• R1 institution
  • Aim for at least 2 per year
  • Must have some in high-impact journals
  • Must be first/sole as much as possible
  • Establish your own program of research (don’t keep publishing with your advisor/mentors all the time)
  • Present at conferences and network (but pubs take priority)
First things first: your dissertation
Find your passion and a theoretical framework to help manage the complexity of what you study
Your research program in a lifespan context
Strive for a balanced research portfolio
Handling manuscript rejection
Don’t rush into grant writing unless it’s a mechanism for early career scientists of small scale (e.g., R03 in NIH, Spencer Small Grants)
You Can’t Publish What Isn’t Done Well

Begin with Strong Purpose and Input on Sound Design:

• Know the literature and what questions are begging to be answered
• Consult with others NOW; Research design is best done by a group of multiple, well-trained minds (mind bank) – and often with outside consultation

Thoughtful, Quality Design – (Quantitative, Qualitative, and Single Case):

• Understand and follow AERA, APA, CEC, IES, and other organizations’ guidelines for each methodology
• See special issues/articles/books on high quality research – we all keep learning
• See the APA Manual and follow the guidelines for research reporting; it’s not all about references and margins!

Final Thoughts:

* Volunteer to be an ad hoc reviewer and/or board member; you will learn a great deal.
  *If you do 2 good pieces of work a year, you will leave an important legacy.
Teaching

• Do mid-semester evaluations!!!
• Observe your colleagues.
• Balance between being a team-player, and keeping # of preparations as low as possible.
• Accept feedback positively.
• Show a trajectory of change/improvement over time.
• Online/hybrid courses
Teaching: Formal and Informal

• Know the value of teaching at your institution

• Teaching and research go hand-in-hand

• Give wise feedback

• Be reflective
  • We all have courses that don’t work: admit it and say how you will make it better

• Mentoring is also part of teaching
  • Seek out the strongest (avoid the weakest) students in your area of expertise
  • Develop your own apprenticeship model
Teaching: It’s Developmental

• Teaching adults is not the same as teaching K-12.
• Teaching does count for P&T.
• We all face challenges in college teaching; you cannot please all of the people all of the time.
• Your admin should understand factors we know are involved in course evaluations, such as whether a course is required or elected.
• Expect to continue to refine your courses over years to come, and to teach courses you are more and less prepared for.
• Be an excellent teacher, but set reasonable limits on course preparation time: “I found that when I set a limit to my course prep time, I got as much done as when I let myself go on and on for hours.”
• You are not in this on your own. Use the sources of support available to you.
Service

• Talk to colleagues to get a sense of expectations.
• Balance between being a team-player, and keeping your workload reasonable.
• Some at your college/university, some national.
• Stay away from local community service while an assistant professor, unless it’s highly valued at your institution.
Service

- Research and service can go hand in hand
- Service to department, university, and community are important
- Least important factor in getting tenure so learn to (strategically) *just say no*
- Challenges for women and for scholars of color
Service: Keep it In Balance & Perspective

• Assistant Professors should be assigned to and seek service that aligns with their growth in research and teaching.
• Assistant Profs should be doing primarily department level service at first.
• Talk to your department Chair/admin about your load if service is getting out of balance.
• You CAN say no – judiciously.
• Final thoughts:
  • Put the big rocks in first; have fun every day.
  • You CAN do it all, just not all at the same time. Your career will be long!
  • 8th grader: “Socrates was a famous Greek teacher who went around giving people advice......
  • .............they killed him.”
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