Climbing the Ladder: Mentoring and Promotion in Academic Settings

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Learning Objectives:

• Building good mentoring relationships as a key to academic success

• Developing strategies for building community collaborations and developing your research agenda

• Addressing and overcoming challenges that people of color and junior faculty may face in academia
Pursuing Successful Mentoring in your Career

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Strategies to Acculturate into a new academic setting

1. Request a boarding process (training) that would allow you to learn about the department polices and procedures, resources, roles and expectations, and culture.

2. Make sure you understand the promotion and tenure requirements and policies (obtain a copy of promotion guidelines & the application form).

3. Meet with senior faculty and share your research interests. Explore possible collaborations in grants and publications.

4. Meet with junior faculty and find out about their experiences related to promotion and departmental support.

5. Become familiar with the IRB process to conduct community-based research.
Finding good mentoring

• Good mentoring is key to your academic success
• It can offer you guidance and advise
• Support
• Opportunities to collaborate
• Referrals
• Critical assessments when needed
• Inquire about mentoring practices at your institution
Finding good mentoring (continued)

• Typically department heads assign senior faculty members as mentors to junior faculty

• Do not limit yourself to one person. BE PROACTIVE and SEEK MORE MENTORS to fulfill different needs

• If needed, seek mentors outside your department/college
Recruiting Mentors

• Have clear goals & identify your needs:
  a. Teaching skills
  b. Research skills
  c. Building synergies (teaching, research & service)
  d. Life-related issues (balancing act)
• Be specific about your request when you approach a potential mentor
• Be PROACTIVE: do not wait for things to go bad before you seek help
Benefits of mentoring:

• Junior faculty can receive honest constructive & informal feedback
• Receive advice on how to balance teaching, research and other responsibilities and set professional priorities
• Acquire knowledge of informal rules for advancement (as well as political and substantive pitfalls to be avoided)
• Develop skills for showcasing your work; an understanding of how to build a circle of friends and connections both within and outside the institution
• Develop a perspective on long-term career planning
Qualities of a good mentor

• **Advocacy** - the mentor should be willing to argue in support of the junior faculty member for space, funds, or students.

• **Accessibility** - the mentor must make time to be available to the mentee. The mentor might keep in contact by dropping by, calling, sending e-mail, or inviting the mentee to lunch. The mentor should make time to ask questions and to read proposals and papers, and for periodic reviews of progress. The mentor should be willing to constructively criticize errors and to recognize and praise excellence.

• **Networking** - the mentor should have enough experience and contacts to be able to help establish a professional network for the mentee.
Qualities of a good mentor (continued)

• **Independence** - the mentor must not be in competition with the mentee; the mentee's intellectual independence from the mentor must be carefully preserved.

• **Excellence** - the mentor should help the mentee set high standards for her/his work and assist where possible in allowing the mentee to achieve these goals; assist in helping the mentee conduct realistic self-evaluations.
Tips for Protégés:

• **Show initiative in career planning**: write a personal statement about your educational philosophy and research focus (to be amended as needed); exchange your CV with your mentor for discussion.

• **Take advantage of opportunities**: to learn how the university, and your field, operate. Write down questions as they occur to you, and then begin searching out the answers.
More Tips:

• Realize that your success is important not just to you, but also to your department and the university. Consider that "going it alone" doesn't work that well for anyone.

• Track/document ALL your activities (date, audience, topic, etc.)

• Make your scheduled meetings with your mentor a priority, and take advantage of email and the telephone to keep in touch informally.

• Be willing to ask for help.
More Tips:

• Let the department chair know if you have questions or concerns about the mentoring you are getting.

• Begin assembling your “supporters" and advisors from the university community and/or professional field that could help your career.

• Be a good colleague in your department/college.

• Make and maintain contacts with other junior faculty, within your department, as well as in other departments and colleges.
More Tips:

- Become familiar with the resources available to support and strengthen your teaching and research.

- Assemble a library of information about your institution, school, and department: a copy of the P&T policies and the actual forms; a copy of the latest strategic plan for your college and your department.

- Set regular (at least once per semester) meetings with your department chair to discuss departmental expectations for tenure and promotion.
Conclusions:

- Mentors can play a critical role in helping you attain your career goals

- You have to be proactive and seek out people who can become your mentors

- Stay focused on your goal and priorities

- Mentors need to know how to do a good job and if not, move on!
Sources:

• University of Illinois at Chicago tenure system and research non-tenure track promotion and tenure guidelines
• Emory University Passages Program
• University of Wisconsin Women Faculty Mentoring Program
Research Identity and Career Mobility

Bianca Guzman, PhD
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Community Based Participatory Research

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is a "collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings. CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community, has the aim of combining knowledge with action and achieving social change to improve health outcomes and eliminate health disparities."

--WK Kellogg Foundation Community Health Scholars Program
PATHWAY PROGRAMS 2016

Goal: Advance a college going culture in Los Angeles in the PK – 16 educational pipeline

Golden Eagles
Working in applied settings and making your work recognized and valued by your institutions and the tenure process--- The GO East LA Initiative
How do you establish your community based research so that it counts for your career?

• Always begin with your passion

• Who do you choose to work with—faculty/staff/student/others

• What community do you choose to form partnerships with both inside and outside of the university

• It is critical that you educate your colleagues, department chair, college about why your research is meaningful and necessary

• Funding—grant writing, implementation, dissemination
Get your research recognized by the university community

Cal State LA, Verizon boost STEM education among East Los Angeles middle school boys

By Cal State LA News Service

California State University, Los Angeles has joined a program under Verizon Innovative Learning to provide science, technology, engineering, and math experiences to middle school boys in East Los Angeles.

Students will participate in summer intensive courses on the university campus to learn skills such as coding, 3-D printing, robotics and entrepreneurship that will help to make them competitive for future careers in a digital economy. Throughout the 2017-18 school year, students will return to Cal State LA each month, for mentoring and continued training in STEM subjects. Through the partnership, Cal State LA was awarded a $400,000 grant.
Collaborative Work: Research and Publications

• Developing a team of colleagues that participates in a research topic
  • Inside your campus
  • External partners
• How do you divide work-equity
• Issues of race, ethnicity and partnerships
• Grant writing and funding alliances
• Writing teams and publications
  • Single author publications vs. multiple authored
  • The value of technical and trade publications
Strategizing with Publications

• Whenever possible publish in an international journal
  • Publishing in another language

• The value of book chapters
  • Creating external writing allies

• Refereed co-authored work
  • How should I pick a journal to submit to—research the journal and the editorial board
  • Make contact with the editor prior to submitting
  • Do not be afraid to use your voice about your research— you are the expert
Your Work and Voice are Necessary

• Remember that the research expertise that you bring to your institution, the community you work with and the academic discipline are important and deeply necessary
  • Oftentimes our voices are the only voices describing a community or social issue with a strength based approach
  • As community psychologists we often offer system level outcomes for community problems/social issues
• It is never a necessary step to discontinue research that you care about to be successful in an academic career
  • Building alliances and making your work public makes it valuable in an academic setting
Choosing a Career Path

Sinead Younge, Ph.D., Morehouse College
Training Opportunities

• Postdoctoral Fellowships
  • F mechanisms-Awards [NSF/NIH]
  • K (Career) Development Awards

• General Fellowships
  • CDC Fellowships
  • American Psychological Association Congressional Fellowship
  • American Public Health Fellowship

• Gap Year for Professionals
  • Volunteering (informal or formal)
  • Traveling
  • Pursuing a passion project
  • Germany Academic Exchange Program: DAAD Programs

• Visiting Professorships
• Adjunct Teaching
What type of skills do I need?

• Technical Skills
  • Methodological
  • *Data analysis
  • Program Evaluation
  • Clinical Work

• Community Engagement
  • Community Based Participatory (Action) Research/Engagement
  • Facilitation
  • Advocacy
  • Community organizing

• Academic
  • Teaching
  • Research
  • Administrative
Job Opportunities March 2018

- Project Director, Become: Center for Community Engagement and Social Change
- Project Coordinator for Culturally Responsive Education, The University of the State of New York- Regents Research Fund
- CDC Evaluation Fellowship Program
- Impact Assessment & Learning Officer, The James Irvine Foundation
- Consultancy Evaluation Specialist, The United Nations
- Impact and Evaluation Manager, Obama Foundation
- Empowerment Evaluation Contractor, The Colorado Trust
Find Balance, or Balance Will Find You

- Professional Advancement
  - Mentoring
  - Writing
  - Teaching

- Self Care
  - Family/personal Obligations
  - Well-Being
Balancing Act

Research

Teaching

Service
Reclaiming “Protecting” Your Time

• Negotiate for “protected time”
  • Reduced *service* expectations for new faculty positions

• Be intentional about service commitments
  • Consider strengths, weaknesses, needs, and skills acquisition

• Confer with other faculty about service demands
  • What are the *actual* committee expectations?

• Understand the political landscape
  • What are the power dynamics?

• Considering administrative roles

• Leaves of Absence and Sabbaticals
“Cultural Taxation” of Faculty of Color

• the obligation to show good citizenship towards the institution by serving its needs for ethnic representation on committees, or to demonstrate knowledge and commitment to a cultural group, which, though it may bring accolades to the institution, is not usually rewarded by the institution on whose behalf the service was performed1

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Know Your Benefits

• What services can you access via your benefits plan?
  • Family Medical Leave (FMLA)
  • Short/Long Term Disability
  • Fertility Assistance
  • Flex Spending
  • Behavioral Health Services
  • Fitness Club Memberships
  • Telemedicine
  • Retirement plans
  • Yoga/Fitness Classes
  • Massage/Acupuncture
Conclusions

• Be proactive and learn about the rules of the game early on
• Mentoring can help promote your professional career
• Develop close reciprocal relationships with communities
• Identify goals and priorities
• Publish and disseminate your work
• Balance your life and protect your time
Thank you

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