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New Faculty: Issues and Challenges to Success

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Guiding Questions

• How is the professoriate changing?

• What do new faculty need and want?

• What might we do to ensure a better future?
How is Professoriate/Faculty Life Changing?

• Expectations to keep up with expanding knowledge and changing technology
• Expectations to use evidence-based practices to support diverse learners
• Pressures for heightened productivity/entrepreneurialism
• Need to work collaboratively
• Escalating pace and expanding workload
• Sense of declining faculty power and autonomy
• Challenge of finding/maintaining academic community
• Challenge of defining boundaries between personal and professional lives
• Need for continuous professional development
Career Challenges for New Faculty

• Expectations and evaluation

• Faculty work—research and teaching

• Collegiality and community

• Work-life balance & integration
Top Ten Roadblocks for an Early Career Investigator

10) Getting a grant
9) Getting a grant
8) Getting a grant
7) Getting a grant
6) Getting a grant
5) Getting a grant
4) Getting a grant
3) Getting a grant
2) Getting a grant
1) Getting a grant
Expectations & Evaluation Landscape

• Ever rising demands for research productivity, grant funding (Siegel et al., 2003)

• Rise of interdisciplinary and inter-institutional university research centers/collaborations (Boardman & Bozeman, 2007)

• In sciences, tenure favors single discipline, basic research, federal research grants; little weight for applied research, patents, industry partnerships (Siegel et al, 2003).

• Pressure on university finances re: research support (Trower, 2012)
Evaluation: New Faculty are Asking For:

- Clarity of expectations—NF relatively clear about the tenure process (what they need to submit, when, to whom)

- Need much more clarity about tenure standards (the performance threshold—how good is good enough)

- Articulation of priorities/weights, provision of written information, mentoring and guidance

- Performance feedback—explicit, focused, affirming as well as corrective (e.g. annual & mid-point review)
R & Teaching: New Faculty are Asking For

Research
• Research leaves, course release, start-up packages, travel support, research assistants, pre-and-post award support

Teaching
• Skills in course design, learner-centered teaching, course-based assessment, blended and online learning, use of new learning spaces, and valuation of teaching

Faculty Professional Development
• Support for scholarly writing/grant writing, career advancement, faculty mentoring and leadership

Venues
• Shift from one-on-one to peer, “mutual mentoring” through research circles, faculty learning communities, intensive institutes