

Over the last several years the UCR Academic Personnel Office has coordinated path-to-tenure and path-to-full workshops as a contribution to campus faculty mentoring efforts. For the past 3 years, these workshops have been run as panels with recently promoted faculty joining the VPAP for a discussion of advice that worked well for them, followed by a Q&A session that engaged the attendees. In addition, the path-to-tenure and path-to-full workshops were offered separately from each other, and also individually within each college/school. This document is a summary compilation of advice offered from these workshops.

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## GENERAL GUIDANCE – PATH TO TENURE

### RESEARCH

1. **The CALL.** Review the relevant portions of the CALL to understand all the options available to you during your review actions.
2. **Department Values.** Review the department research statements to understand the value of different writing efforts such as articles in books, book chapters, conference papers, books, textbooks, review papers, guest editor of a journal issue, etc. Departments/disciplines value these different types of pieces differently. Department letters for your file need to be clear about the weight on these pieces for outside reviewers.
3. **Visibility.** Visibility in the field matters. Present at big conferences or organize workshops.
4. **Balanced Focus.** New areas of focus carry risk because you are new, so it is best to not go too far from your main areas as an Assistant Professor working against the tenure clock.
5. **Publication Priorities.** Review papers are a good way to consolidate your knowledge and vision for the field, but they are weighed less compared to novel research publications. On the other hand, they jumpstart proposals and they are a good way to work collaboratively within the field.
6. **Independence Matters.** Demonstrating independent research is key in all files, particularly for Assistant Professors where the decision on tenure hinges on that greatly. It is wise to show independence from your major professor and/or post-doc adviser. It is wise not to be working with the same people all the time, especially if they are senior people.
7. **Selectivity.** Be selective about commitments you make for collaborations. Avoid a jack-of-all trades master of none reputation. You want to be seen as an expert in one or more areas to the external letter writers and if you are pulled in too many directions, you may lose the opportunity to find your niche area.
8. **Time Management.** Assess your tolerance for juggling and multi-tasking. You might better align with a higher degree of focus on fewer research projects.
9. **DEI.** Research that has a DEI element strengthens the impact of research. However, not all research will have DEI elements and it is not a required element.

10. **Public Scholarship.** Public scholarship, or scholarly activity intended to serve the public, is valued as a substantive contribution. This work can be cited for its impact and its outreach to various communities.
11. **Post-docs.** If funds are available, working with post-docs is a way to move research along faster. Less mentoring may be needed compared to graduate students.
12. **Conference Papers.** If a conference paper is not itself highly valued as a credible publication, make it your aim to turn it into a journal paper that is.
13. **Authorship and Contribution.** Authorship order and/or corresponding author status have different interpretations across disciplines. Review what the department research statement says about these conventions. Sometimes ask for first authorship if you feel you need it, understanding you will inherit more responsibility for the project. For co-authored papers, think carefully about how to use the contribution statement in eFilePlus.
14. **Department Seminars.** Organizing department seminars is a great way to meet peers, and a great way to get reciprocal invitations to speak, and possibly get acquainted with a future letter writer. Assistant and Associate professors should think about giving department seminars to showcase their work in front of the entire voting faculty.
15. **Reviewer Roles.** Being a thoughtful and punctual reviewer lines you up for potential roles as an AE or EIC that will signal respect and generate visibility among your peers.
16. **Social Media.** Think about options to use social media to increase your visibility and voice in the field.
17. **Appraisal Process.** The appraisal process is very useful for determining when it is time to go up for tenure.
18. **Sabbatical for Feedback.** Consider using some sabbatical time as an assistant professor to address feedback in the appraisal process.
19. **Department Signals.** Be attentive to signals from your department about specific things they look for (e.g., maybe sole-authored papers, grant dollars, mentoring graduate students before tenure, etc.).
20. **Multiple Opinions.** Do not rely exclusively on the chair's opinion about going up for tenure. Consult with other advisors in the department.
21. **Review Promotion Files.** If your department's bylaw55 allows it, seeing other promotion files can help you decide if you are ready to go up for promotion.
22. **Seek Updates.** Senior collaborators and journal editors can be sympathetic to the plight of an assistant professor working against a tenure clock. If a paper is under review, politely inquire and ask for status update.
23. **External Input.** Get advice on your self-statement from someone not voting on your file.

24. **Assessing Graduate Student Potential.** It will be difficult to predict which graduate students will be awesome as members of your lab or research group. Gather an impression about potential mentees as much as possible in classroom setting and at department events to gauge attitude, curiosity, and ability. Some graduate students will need more mentoring, and do not confuse that with the lack of skill or competency. Seek department guidance about students and have clear and written expectations for students you work with. Talk to your chair and the graduate division if the working relationship begins to be uncomfortable.
25. **Graduate Admissions Committee.** Service on graduate admission committee is a good way to see the profile and caliber of incoming students for your lab or research group.

## GRANTS

1. **Sustainability.** Every tenure decision asks about research sustainability, and for some fields grants are essential to keep the research program going. Submitting proposals and eventual success will be critical to a positive promotion decision.
2. **Publication Quality.** What kind of prior publications you have matters when to reviewers of your proposals.
3. **Engagement with Program Directors.** Consider speaking with program directors at the agencies to fully understand the Call for Proposals will help shape your proposal.
4. **Reviewer Experience.** Serving on grant panels as a reviewer is a great way to improve the scope of your knowledge about your field, and also seeing what types of projects get funded can help you aim your own project in a productive direction.
5. **Early Career Opportunities.** Do not overlook the possibility of UCR seed grants and aim to submit an early career proposal to agencies like NSF, NIH, and USDA.
6. **Manage Teaching Obligations.** Use available teaching relief around grant deadlines.
7. **Collaborative Opportunities.** Reaching out to collaborators can open up opportunities for grant success.
8. **Identify Agency Priorities.** Find potential problems by reading reports, listening to people about what matters, and finding out what agencies care about.
9. **Involve Students.** Look for ways that students can help you write proposals, perhaps by doing some of the necessary preliminary work that is also related to their projects.
10. **Maintain High Quality Proposals.** Make sure every proposal you send out is high quality, regardless if it gets funded or not, as your reputation builds upon that.
11. **Revisions.** Revise and resubmit rejected proposals at least two or three times to collect useful review comments from the process.
12. **Publish Research Outputs.** Publications from the research on funded grants are essential. Lots of grants but insufficient publications will be viewed negatively.

13. **PI Status and Funding Share.** PI status and sole-PI status get recognized. Showing your share of the funding can help explain your role.
14. **Use of Start-up Funds.** Use your start-up funds on projects that have a long enough runway to obtain large grants later.
15. **Undergraduate Research.** Undergraduate research is important for some grants and important for providing graduate students an opportunity to learn skills on how to mentor undergraduates.
16. **Training Grants.** Roles with training grants help the service and mentoring dimensions of your file, particularly when you have a leadership role.

## TEACHING AND MENTORING

1. **Balancing Teaching and Research.** Be a competent and caring teacher while maintaining strong focus on research productivity.
2. **Efficient Teaching.** Try to teach similar classes early on to be efficient with the time spent on teaching so that you have as much time as possible for your research.
3. **Leverage Experience.** When teaching a course for the first time consider asking faculty who have taught the class before if, they are willing to share their notes with you.
4. **Alignment.** Try to get teaching assignments that are related to your research area.
5. **Preparation Matters.** Good preparation is key to being confident and effective in the classroom.
6. **Strategic Course Relief.** Be strategic about course releases that are available to you. Use them when you start writing. Do not use them too early when you are still acclimating.
7. **Clear Syllabus.** Students expect a clear and detailed syllabus, including exam dates and grading rubric. Explain if/how missed exams and late homework will be handled.
8. **Office Hours.** Being available for scheduled office hours is a must.
9. **Continuous Improvement.** If teaching is not going well, the question that will be asked is whether there is noticeable improvement and does the candidate respond conscientiously to the feedback and avail themselves to resources that could help them.
10. **Balancing Ambition.** Do not be too ambitious about developing new classes at this stage of your career.
11. **Diverse Teaching.** Teaching well in both undergraduate and graduate courses matters. Likewise, teaching well in both small and large classes matters. Work with the chair to ensure you are getting a good balance of assignments.

12. **Adjust Expectations.** Understand that almost all Assistant Professors will overestimate the level of preparedness for the students in their classes. Adjustment is going to be key and knowing that in advance will make it easier to smooth things out.
13. **TA Coordination.** Do not underestimate the significant responsibility involved with coordinating several TAs for a large class.
14. **Teaching Evaluations.** Quality of teaching comes down to how student respond to the question about overall effectiveness of the instructor, the question about overall learning experience, and what patterns are seen in the written comments,
15. **Accept Feedback.** If there are poor student evaluations in your merit file, you should discuss in your self-statement what the problems were and how you tried to address them. Hopefully, you can point out how your adjustments have led to improvements, perhaps referring to consultations with the ADT and/or XCITE. Accept that while most criticism will be meant to be constructive, some will just be mean-spirited.
16. **Classroom Recordings.** If you teach in-person, but record your lectures for posting, you can anticipate that in-person attendance will drop precipitously.
17. **Classroom Visitations.** Consider inviting your senior colleagues to visit your classroom so that you can seek their advice about your style.
18. **Mentorship.** Make good use of mentorship statement to detail your role in mentoring and the success of your mentees. Pairing undergraduate students and graduate students in your lab can help you manage your time and give the graduate students an opportunity to learn how to mentor.

## SERVICE

1. **Initial Campus Service Expectations.** It will be sufficient in the first year or two to be involved with department searches and perhaps one department committee. As time goes on, service involvement should increase.
2. **Department Meetings.** It is expected you will attend and be engaged at all department meetings.
3. **Strategic Service.** Choose professional service roles strategically, that might have some relevance to your research.
4. **Faculty of Color and Women Faculty.** Faculty of color and women faculty will experience many requests for committee work due to a goal to have diverse representation of faculty who are serving. In addition, they will be sought after for graduate student committees. You need to monitor the workload and protect some time for scholarly work.
5. **Community Service.** Community service often connects to contributions around DEI. Helping students prepare for college entrance exams, presenting in classrooms about career opportunities in your field, tutoring in underserved communities, judging in poster competitions are a few examples that look good in a file.

### SPECIFIC TIPS FOR BOURNS COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING (BCOE)

1. **Grants.** Significant emphasis on grants, including sole-PI grants and large money grants. Showing your portion of the money when a co-PI is important.
2. **Collaborations.** There is an increasing trend for collaborations with CNAS and SOM.
3. **Writing with Students.** Authorship with students is very common and often the PI is toward the back of the list, though may be the corresponding author.
4. **Conference Papers.** Computer science discipline gives as much, if not more, credit to refereed conference paper (in prestigious conferences). It is good to mention this in self-statements and have the department letter talk about it.

### SPECIFIC TIPS FOR COLLEGE OF NATURAL & AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES (CNAS)

1. **Grants.** In many CNAS departments, grants are critical for the sustainability of research programs.
2. **Team Science.** The distinction between team science and basic science is important. Both are valued. Your self-statement and the department letter should highlight where you are on this spectrum and talk about the role of your collaborative work to the field.
3. **Independence.** It is expected that your research should mostly be around data and efforts that come from your own UCR lab.

### SPECIFIC TIPS FOR SCHOOL OF EDUCATION (SOE) AND SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY (SPP)

1. **Student Mentoring.** Co-advising and/or working with student in other departments is good.
2. **Audience for Scholarly Work.** Public scholarship is highly valued.
3. **Book Publishers.** For books, academic press has more prestige, but trade press has more impact. After you reach full, trade press might be a good avenue to work on the impact of your work.

### SPECIFIC TIPS FOR SCHOOL OF MEDICINE (SOM)

1. **Grants.** Grants are critical for the sustainability of research programs.
2. **Teaching.** Most medical schools do not require a lot of teaching, but UCR SOM does.
3. **Low Value Research Products.** Do not spend time on review papers or book chapters.
4. **Collaborations.** Collaborations with MDs can be beneficial.

### **SPECIFIC TIPS FOR COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES, ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES (CHASS)**

1. **Fellowships.** Fellowships are very prestigious to the file. Review the policy that CHASS has for administering Fellowships.
2. **Invited Talks.** Particularly as an associate professor on the way to full professor, try to get invited by foreign universities for talks and/or fellowship appointments to build your international reputation.
3. **Book Disciplines.** In some departments, the so-called book disciplines, a first book is necessary for tenure and a second book is necessary for promotion to full. This is changing somewhat, and the department research statement should be reviewed to understand your department's culture. For book disciplines, things that get you merits are not necessarily the same as things that get you promotion. Think about how you want to be perceived by the outside: two books on the same topic, or two books on different topics. Academic press has more prestige, but trade press has more impact. After you reach full, trade press might be a good avenue to work on the impact of your work.
4. **Bunching Teaching.** Bunching is a common practice and can be used effectively for increased focus on your research but understand that it is not equivalent to a "leave," as faculty are expected to be in residence, with significant on-campus presence, unless they are on a sabbatical or approved leave of absence.
5. **Protecting Writing Time.** Faculty in writing disciplines have found protecting certain times of day, and not letting anything change that, leads to increased and consistent productivity. Joining writing clubs is a good idea.