WEP Promotion Workshop

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Participants

- Mary Jane Irwin, Distinguished Prof. of CSE
- Kristen Fichthorn, Prof. of ChemE
- Laura Pauley, Prof. of ME
- Mirna Urquidi-Macdonald, Prof. of ESM

Climbing the Academic Ladder

Now that you're a tenured Associate Professor and the honeymoon is over, what's next?

Promotion Guidelines

- PSU guidelines (HR-23)
  (http://guru.psu.edu/policies/QHR/hr23.html)
  "Promotion and tenure decisions shall be based on recognized performance and achievement in each of the several areas, as appropriate to the particular responsibilities assigned to the faculty member."

- CoE guidelines
  (http://www.engr.psu.edu/hr/WebHandbook/Criteria.html)
  "For promotion to Professor, a faculty member should be recognized by professional peers as an authority or leader in a major area of professional activity."
**Question: Promotion Process?**

- The review process
  - No more semi-yearly formal reviews by various department/college committees
  - Only yearly oral reviews by Dept. Head (usually to decide on raises)

So, what is the promotion process and how do you work it to your benefit?

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**Timeline**

- Timeline for promotion to Assistant
  - A six year "clock"

- Is there an informal timeline for promotion to Full Professor?
  - Usually a six year "clock"
  - Four years would be fast (early)
  - Eight+ years would be slow

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**What's (Still) Important**

- Teaching
- Research and Scholarship
- Service

Is it just more of everything?!?

Yes, but with more risk and responsibility.

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**Teaching**

- Continued strong SRTEs & advising record
- Demonstrated skills in variety of small/large, ug/grad, major/service courses
- Create or update key courses in the major &/or grad curriculum
- Bring in grants/awards that support the teaching effort (e.g., lab equipment)

Write a best selling text book!
**Research**
- Continued strong publication & external funding record
- Branch out into new areas of research with a focus on impact
- Build systems
  » riskier but larger potential impact (and more attractive to industry)
  » takes time before output (i.e., publications)
  » needs a bigger team of researchers
  » needs resources ($$, space, etc.)

**Research, con’t**
- Grow your research team (ug & grad students, postdocs, other faculty)
  » build team spirit
  » weekly team meetings - keeping track of deadlines and make sure each team member is working on a project leading to a paper submission
  » once a year off-site intensive retreat - invite industry collaborators to attend
  » ensure students have the necessary resources (e.g., space, equipment, etc.) to do their work

Packaging is *important* - create a sexy web page to highlight your team’s work and keep it up-to-date!

**Service**
- Its payback time !!!
  - Department service
    » Graduate Officer (may be good for a one course reduction in teaching load)
    » Undergraduate Officer
    » Personnel (work to hire the best)
  - College service
    » Engineering Council, WEP, . . .
  - University service
    » Senate and Grad Council (elected), CFW, . . .

**Service, con’t**
- Government service
  » NSF review panels
  » Agency advisory board memberships
- Professional service
  » Leadership roles in key conferences in your field (e.g., program committees)
  » Associate Editor of leading journal in your field

Just keep in mind that no one ever got promoted to Professor based on service!
Are You Ready?

- Talk to your Department Head
- Talk to senior trusted colleagues (either at PSU or elsewhere)
- The actual “process” is the one you know - prepare the dossier, get external letters, undergo formal review by various committee levels

If all else fails, use blackmail - get a Professor position offer from elsewhere!

Getting Support Letters

- Make a hit list of candidates
  » all from the senior ranks
  » international mix
  » from schools ranked equal or above PSU

- Network, network, network
- Market your research through the web, glossy brochures, ruthless self promotion, etc.

What if You Go for It

... And it Doesn’t Happen

- Find out why - talk to your Dept. Head and senior faculty in your department
- Then try, try again
  » but think about timing especially wrt asking for external letters