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Surviving the Journey for Doctoral Students and Jr. Faculty: Panel Presentation and Discussion

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ABSTRACT

Abbreviated presentations will be made by the four panelists that will focus on a range of topics of special interest to doctoral students and untenured junior faculty. The panelists' presentations will serve as discussion starters for the session with the primary focus on the interaction among the conference attendees and the panelists.

Keywords

Tenure, dissertation, doctoral student

1 INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

Making the decision to earn a Ph.D. and to accept the journey toward a full-time tenured faculty position should not be made lightly. The journey requires passion, dedication, persistence, money, family support, and time. And this is only the start. Many enter this process without fully understanding the hurdles that must be jumped before an individual gains a sense of security and confidence that he or she has a home within an academic family and larger institution. One study suggested that only 50% of students successfully complete their Ph.D.s. Of those who graduate, less than 60 percent find a tenured track position within ten years of graduation (Kajitani and Bryant 2005).

Though it has been suggested that the student's lack of persistence is at fault, the invisible problem of doctoral student drop-out can also be attributed to emotional distress, an absence of community, and a poor adviser-advisee relationship (Lovitts 2001). At the doctoral level, managing the process and the committee is under-estimated. While the student may perceive that the committee is committed to his or her success, the individual members often have little motivation or incentive to dedicate the needed time to the student (Peters 1997).

Though many perceive the doctoral process to be overwhelming, the path beginning with accepting a position on a tenure-track to the day when the board of trustees awards tenure, is long and difficult. Cultural fit within a faculty family is essential for success. Also, the productivity required of the new professor is under-estimated. Teaching, service, and scholarship are all equally required and demand time and talent from the new professor.

2 TOPICS

- **Selecting the committee:** Who you choose as your doctoral chairperson is among the most important decisions you will make. How do you recruit committee members who will actively serve as both subject matter experts *and* mentors?
- **Managing up:** Managing the personalities of committee members while gaining the breadth and depth of their experiences and knowledge is an essential ingredient to success.
- **Time Management:** It is essential to understand that the self-imposed deadline is the hardest to meet. As professionals we are accustomed to meeting the expectations and deadlines of our environment; but, the doctoral process leaves the management of time in our hands. This shift of responsibility can cause a breakdown in the process.
- **When is your Dissertation Complete?**
A common roadblock for doctoral students is not knowing when to start "finishing up." There is always another article to read, there is always another datum element to capture, there is always a way to make the dissertation stronger. So, when are you done? Having clarity is priceless!
- **Job Search.** When is the right time to start the job search? How close to completion should you be prior to starting the job search? How do you search for a position? How do you prepare for the interview?
- **Entering into a tenure track position.** The first year on the job requires the newly minted Ph.D. to navigate many organizational and cultural barriers. Many are invisible and require the new instructor or assistant to be politically aware while staying on track.
- **Service to your institution and field.** Yes, you must serve on committees, but this is not enough. Building relationships within the institution is essential. External relationships and projects demonstrate your ability to make a difference in your field.

- **Teaching.** We graduate with a Ph.D., which demonstrates our expertise in a field; but that does not mean we can teach what we know. Learning how to control the classroom and inspire your students is essential. Building learning outcomes that can be measured is not as easy as it seems.
- **Publishing.** Don't wait. Use your dissertation wisely as you plan to publish. It is essential to optimizing relationships at work and to find co-authors; yet you must still publish as a sole-author. Using the conference culture to launch your publication path can add much diversity to your promotion and tenure application.
- **Preparing for promotion and tenure.** This journey starts on the first day of work and does not end until the letter from the board of trustees is in your hand.

3 PANELISTS

Maureen L. Mackenzie, MBA, PHR. Ph.D. Professor of Business. Maureen brings over twenty years of management experience in the areas of operations, marketing, training, insurance residual markets and leadership to her academic role. Maureen earned her Ph.D. at Long Island University. Her publications cover areas such as Management, Human Resource Management, Trust in the Workplace, Business Graduate Education, Entrepreneurship and more. This past semester the MBA graduating class selected Maureen for the Class of 2013 Faculty Recognition Award. Maureen is a past President of the NBEA, and currently sits on its board of directors.

Lauren Spatig, MBA, Ph.D. Lauren has held a series of leadership and education positions for over 20 years within a large US corporation. Her work is aimed at supporting independent small business owners within a larger distribution system. She has operated as a scholar-practitioner within this organization, allowing her practice to inform scholarship, while the research informs practice. Her doctoral research focuses on the organizational design and management of small business. She is a published scholar and recently earned her Ph.D. from Fielding Graduate University.

Nicole Christian, MPA. Nicole has successfully combined her executive-based skills and knowledge to run a successful consulting firm that focuses on grant writing, business development and executive development. She is also an experienced professor, teaching at both the graduate undergraduate level since 2007. Her research focuses on public administration and management, transformational leadership and employee satisfaction. She is a well published scholar and is in the final stages of earning her Ph.D. in Applied Management and Decision Sciences at Walden University.

Peter J. Lane, MBA, Ph.D. An entrepreneur turned academic, Peter Lane uses rigorous scholarship to address real-world problems in corporate strategy, leadership, change management

and technological innovation. Peter's model of learning and innovation within strategic alliances is one of the most highly cited strategic management studies of the past decade. His work on CEO involvement in public policy was praised as a "new paradigm" for corporate leadership by the Peter Drucker Foundation's *Leader to Leader* magazine. Peter has worked with MBAs, managers and executives in the U.S., Europe and Asia. He has helped a wide range of organizations improve their effectiveness including local non-profits, national business associations, private entrepreneurial companies and major international corporations.

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