My First Year on the Tenure Track

…and you thought you were busy, stressed out, and tired in grad school!

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Outline

- Setting Up a Lab
- Budgets
- Teaching
- Service Work
- Committee Work
- Graduate Students
- Other Advice and Lessons Learned
Setting Up A Lab

- this will be, **BY FAR**, the most challenging and time consuming activity in your first year!
• it took ~5½ months to get my lab fully up and running*
Number of Items Ordered for Lab

• I ordered 134 different products (total of ~10,500 items!)

• this takes an incredible amount of time, effort, and patience

• start early and ask lots of questions

• tour labs to get ideas (I am still making adjustments as I visit others’ labs)
Budgets

• figuring out how budgets and money distribution work initially seems like an impossible task
• there are often lots of nuances that take asking numerous people even more numerous questions to figure out
• once you figure out how, it is really fun to spend the money!
Teaching

• teaching can take up **LOTS** of time

• block out times to prepare for class and stick to them (i.e., shut your door)

• my goal is 4 hours of prep per lecture

• no class will be perfect the first time you teach it
Proposal Reviews

these take a lot of time (1+ day/proposal), particularly at first

try to focus on the part of the proposal that you are most familiar with

make sure to justify all of your criticisms

you are anonymous to PIs, but not to NSF panel members!
Manuscript Reviews

Quaternary faulting in Queen Valley, California-Nevada: Kinematics of Fault Slip Transfer in the Eastern California Shear Zone-Walker Lane Belt

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ABSTRACT

New geologic mapping, tectonic geomorphologic, and terrestrial cosmogenic nuclide (TCN) geochronologic data document the geometry, style, kinematics, and slip rates on late Quaternary faults within the Queen Valley, California-Nevada area. These data provide important insight into the kinematics of fault slip transfer from the dextral White Mountains fault zone northward into the Mina deflection. Queen Valley is a ~16 km long, NE-trending basin bounded to the south by the White Mountains and underlain by four major Pleistocene to Holocene alluvial fan surfaces: isolated remnants of Q1, relatively smooth Q2 surfaces, Q3 surfaces with bar and swale morphology, and Q4 defining present-day drainages. Beryllium-10 TCN dating methods on in situ boulders demonstrate that the ages of the Q2 surfaces range from 77.1 ± 0.8 ka to 53.6 ± 1.2 ka and the youngest Q3 surface is 16.9 ± 0.2 ka. Four different fault types and orientations cut...

• these also take lots of time (1+ day/paper)
• provide compliments as well as constructive criticism
• make sure to justify all of your comments and give specific examples as to how the paper can be improved
Committees

• committee work can be time-consuming

• my current committee work includes:
  • GT Undergraduate Studies Committee
  • five GA Tech Ph.D. exam committees
  • two non-GA Tech thesis committees

• I spend the least amount of time and effort on committee work
Recruiting Graduate Students

• establish a web-presence ASAP
• entertain every inquiry from potential students
• be picky (having no grad students is better than having bad grad students)
• I had eight applicants; I accepted four; two are coming to GA Tech
Best Decision I Made

• hiring a laboratory manager

• my lab manager is worth her weight in gold!
Worst Decision(s) I Made

- choosing not to teach my first semester instead of my second
- agreeing to co-teach my first course
- not hiring a lab manager immediately
Can You Do Everything Well?

• **NO!!!**

  • there are not enough hours in the day to complete every task with the highest quality

  • choose what is most important to you; focus your efforts on these things
A Few Words of Advice

• make a point to exercise (or partake in some other stress-reducing activity)

• learn to say “NO”

• enlist the help of others (faculty, staff, lab techs, mentors, etc.)

• don’t try to do everything all at once
Concluding Remarks

• You will be busy!

• You will be stressed out!

• You will be tired!

• But, for the most part, you will have fun and get to do lots of cool things!
QUESTIONS!?