

Two Mentoring Workshops and a Reception

Friday, November 18, 2011, 1-5pm, GL 220, MMC

I. Workshop 1: Preparing for the Third Year Review, 1:00-2:15pm

A. Nicol Rae, Senior Associate Dean and Professor of Political and International Relations

The Administrative View and Formal Guidelines

- FIU's third year review program began in 1997/1998; progressively, it has become more formal.
- Candidates are required to submit a file with specific documents in it (report from a committee and a separate letter from the chair of the unit). See: http://academic.fiu.edu/faculty_resources.html
- Major difference with tenure files is there are no requirements for external evaluations (third year review is kept inside FIU) and the third year review file is much, much smaller.
- Third year review is due at the end of March in the Dean's office.
- The few candidates who had very problematic reviews decided not to come up for tenure.
- At college level, most reviews are positive though glowing reviews are rare.
- Most candidates put together a good file with appropriate documentation and reports.

B. Rosemary Hickey, Chair for Earth and Environment

The Department Chair's Perspective

- All faculty self-elect a mentor (usually a senior faculty member in a similar area of research interest); that person is on call for consultation. This mentor meets with other mentors for Third Year review
- Chair may attend but not required to attend.
- Committee writes a letter to the chair about third year review candidate, chair writes a separate letter to the Dean.
- 1-3 page statement on research completed and to-be completed for the remaining 2 years of tenure-earning status, show you have a plan towards tenure or beyond (most important part); CV in FIU format (see T&P manual); a list of courses taught (include thesis and dissertation committees with a brief statement outlining role in student mentoring); copies of annual evaluations; third year review appraisals from the Department Committee, Chair and Dean
- The chair can help in progress towards tenure (alter the assignment to help, teach a large course toward non-majors, a course needed for graduate students to stay on track with research)
- Take advantage to tap expertise of your mentor and committee members

C. Jamie Sutton, Chairperson in English department

The Department Chair's Perspective

- 2 years ago, the Third Year Review was more extensive; now, the file is much smaller
- you can meet the guidelines within two weekends – doesn't require a lot of time (unlike the tenure file)
- consider it an opportunity to honestly assess your first 3 years
- work plan is the most important part of the file (what you've done for the first 3 years and what you plan on doing the next 2 years - self-reflection)
- candidates will put file together with help of mentor, given to personnel committee and chair in January, personnel committee and chair will sit with the candidate and have a conversation to make them feel good about what they've done and what they can accomplish
- chance to see where you are and get assistance moving forward but not to be hit/reprimanded.
- be happy with "very good"
- don't overcomplicate, it's simple – make it simple

- stop worrying about it after the file is out of your hands; turn to fulfilling your work plan
- don't be afraid to ask the chair person for help
- if books are your primary form of scholarly expression, your book should be done and out to a press by the fourth year

D. Kenneth Murray, Assistant professor in Biology who has recently gone through Third Year Review
Faculty Perspectives

- was required to turn in: annual assignments, chair evaluation, 2 page statement (expectations)
- Third Year review should be seen as an opportunity (identify your progress and what you're going to do about it, clarify expectations)
- use Third Year review to identify any issues you have had along the way (raise an issue in a formal setting)
- what you state in your letter represents your point of view

E. Maria Aysa-Lastra, Assistant professor in Global and Sociocultural Studies who has recently gone through Third Year Review

Faculty Perspectives

- file required: teaching activities, CV in the FIU's guideline, chair evaluations
- don't spend more than 3 weekends on the file – spend more time focusing on publication
- opportunity to make sure you're on track
- the research plan is the most important part

Questions/comments

- 95% of people get a good review during Third Year review; usually "very good", rarely "excellent"
- 75-80% of people get good reviews for tenure
- if a bad review, think of other job opportunities you could pursue
- don't just look at your rating, read the letter
- Third Year review is currently on paper but could become electronic in the next few years (tenure is electronic)
- set up benchmarks for yourself and accomplish them
- external evaluations are very important for tenure (accomplished in the 6th year but should be thought about during the 3rd year) – shouldn't be written by co-authors or people that are too close to you (review will be devalued) but should be written by professors in comparable universities; avoid collaborators

II. Workshop 2: Tips for Publishing in Peer-Reviewed Journals 2:30-3:45pm

A. Wendy Silverman, Professor, Psychology

- publishing deals with persistence
- put aside a few hours or days to have time to write (turn off electronics)
- avoid writing on a blank screen
- the way you write should be the way you talk
- less is more (say things succinctly, get to the point)
- many agree that having 2 or 3 really good, top-rated journals is better than having 10 articles in fourth-rate journals (shoot for the top journals)
- perfectionism (shooting for good quality leads to publication)

B. Cem Karayalcin, Professor and Chair, Economics

- about 1000 ranked economics journals; rankings are extremely important for getting tenure in economics; top journals in econ have 5-10% acceptance rate
- before submitting, diversify research portfolio (don't be narrowly specialized – concentrate on 1 or 2 fields and specialize in these)
- useful to publish a few chapters from dissertation
- If, for instance, the acceptance rate is 15%, simultaneously submit a few (about 7) papers to realistically expect one to be published
- don't put more than 1 good idea in a paper (divide the thoughts in to different papers)
- approach different types of journals (don't publish in low quality journals without publishing in high quality journals – both quantity and quality are important)
- submit all papers to publish in 2 or 3 different journals
- present papers at conferences to get good feedback and meet people for networking
- get to know about 50-100 people in your fields (through conferences and networking) and maintain contact with these people (email, phone, etc.) – might be referees
- cultivate co-authors who are experienced in publishing – makes your life a lot easier
- work with an advisor for a few years
- be patient with co-authors especially if they're established
- don't submit 2 papers to the same journal within a few months, especially if they're related
- ok to submit 2 different papers with 2 different editors (editors don't communicate)
- look at the journal for related articles that have been printed and cite them
- need to know the preferences of different journals (tend to prefer authors from their own institutions)
- find a co-author who is a part of that clan

Joel Trexler, Professor, Biological Sciences

- weak research can get published, even in good journals, if it's written well; very good research can be rejected because it's not written well (pay attention to basics of good writing and don't forget the lessons from English Composition 101 like the importance of good topic sentences, communicating a clear thesis statement, using an outline to yield a tight structure to the manuscript, and so on.)
- publishing field and expectation of papers are changing (be aware of changes!)
- different fields have different guidelines for publishing (write for the journal you want to be published in)
- no one style can be taught because journals vary and change through time (learn the expectations of each journal)
- short, clear and concise paper is best (a focused paper is more likely to get published) but don't forget the use of electronic appendices for details

D. Kenneth Lipartito, Professor and Chair, History

- was chair of a journal for 4 years
- set yourself a goal that you dread achieving, and put off achieving it by doing other things like publishing
- journal moves in the direction of the editor (pay attention, to some extent, to the editors)
- you're not completely powerless when your article is accepted in a journal
- referees want articles to be written their way and may reject articles on that basis (editor acts as a buffer between referee and author)

- #1 mistake: answer to every mistake written by the editor; know your main argument and not try to win every argument.
- don't try to do too much – will be rejected.
- people who publish books mainly should consider publishing articles more often (sharpens all types of professional writing – levels of scrutiny, and the fact that many eyes are looking at your work makes it a difficult process)
- it not uncommon for people in Senior fields to submit sloppy work (they think the editor will fix it up); try to strive for the best but you can get sloppy on the senior level.

Questions/Comments

- pre-submission make it hard to judge an article based on an abstract
- editors sometimes have to edit articles of people they know (not enough editors for the required workload)
- do good work and people will get to know you (going to conferences aren't necessary)
- it is ok to email (don't call) the editor after revision – usually generates positive interactions
- a review may sound negative but it's actually not
- revise and re-submit = author thinks that if revised, the paper will get published but sometimes it gets rejected
- reject and re-submit = means you're still in play; not negative!
- answer reviews in the cover letter, even if you don't agree with the review (never make the editor work more than they have to)
- electronic database assigns reviewers to different authors
- it may be common to suggest reviewers for a certain paper
- editors have a lot of power (may send your paper to tough reviewers or easy reviewers – may do anything in their power to get the paper published or vice versa)
- editor has a balance of educator role and not telling the author how to write the paper
- editor READS the paper (doesn't just listen to what the reviewers said about the paper)