LIFE BALANCE IN AN ACADEMIC RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

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OR

I GOT A JOB IN HIGHER ED!!!
Transition Tops

1. Teaching
2. Research/Professional Development
3. Service
4. Life
SPINNING TOP # 1 TEACHING
Teaching

• Lectures
• Homework/Quizzes/Exams
• Grading
• Questions
• Other and Unexpected
SPINNING TOP # 2 RESEARCH
Research

- Read to stay current
- Experiment/Develop
- Write it up
- Conferences
- Find Funding
- Other
SPINNING TOP # 3 SERVICE
Service

- Advising
- Committees
- Prospective Students
- Relationships with Employers of your Students
- Coach Students for Job Interviews
- Other Service
SPINNING TOP # 4 LIFE
Life!

- Partner
- Children
- Parents/Family
- Vacations
- Volunteerism
- Managing a Household
- SLEEP!
- Other things
HOW CAN I DO ALL THIS????
First Steps to a More Balanced Life….BREATHE

Clarify Expectations

• Contract – what does it say?
• Check in about Review criteria
  – Example: Teaching 60%?, Research 30%?, Service 20%? (oops that’s more than 100%!)
• Research Sponsorship
  – Sponsors = Reduced Teaching Load?
• Office Hours
  – How many are required?
  – How best to be in touch with students?
Establish Boundaries

Practice saying:

- “I have to say no to this unless I can give up…”
- “I would like to help but my schedule is full right now. Could I help out next month or next semester?”
- “Tom is better suited for this task. Let me see if he would do this if I took one of his tasks.”
- “If you can’t make my office hours, then check my calendar and schedule an appointment.”
Lists and Planners

Practice saying:

• Get all appointments and meetings on a schedule.
  – Electronic calendar that is shared with students
  – Students make appointments outside office hours!

• To-do Lists
  – Mark off when done.
    • Feeling of accomplishment
  – Break down projects/tasks into smaller tasks that CAN be accomplished.
  – Set start and due dates.
Prioritize Tasks

• Not all tasks are equal – High and Low Priority
• Work on High Priority when you are alert and can focus.
• Low Priority tasks can wait.
• Ask questions about tasks! Ask for a due date if none is specified. Or offer a due date if none is specified.

Remember!!!!
Most people will be more accepting of a delay if YOU TELL THEM ahead of time and give an estimated time to completion.
Research

- Establish a time every day/week that is focused on research.
- Close your door if in your office.
- Create a space if at home. When you are in this space...it’s work!
- Try to work at least 1 hour a day. This is the most effective way to accomplish work.
Personal Control – What do you do?

- Walk/Jog?
- Swim?
- Bike?
- Yoga?
- Piano?

Then build that in to your day too.
What Supports Can You / Have You Established?

- At work?
  - Other newbies?
  - Mentor?
  - Find a Champion
- Outside of work?
  - Partner?
  - Friends?
  - Mentor/Champion?
  - Family?
Keep a Perspective

- Laugh / Smile / Positive Thinking
- Are you trying your best?
- No one is perfect.
- We all mess up.
- Are you having a good time?
- You can’t save them all.