

# PROMOTION TO FULL PROFESSOR

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# Paths to Full Professor

- There's not one path
- Institutional perspectives differ
- Follow your own path
  - but we all know the basics:
    - ✓ Distinction in Research
    - ✓ Distinction in Teaching & Students
    - ✓ Exemplary Univ. & Professional Service

This can be the best job in the world ...  
do what you love and love what you do!



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# RESEARCH & THE LETTERS!



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# Promotion to Associate vs. Promotion to Full Professor

- You just got tenure!
  - more freedom
  - but still risks
- External visibility & leadership critical
- Key question:
  - what are you going to change?
- My path:
  - started collaborating ...
  - to start something brand new



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# Research Maturity

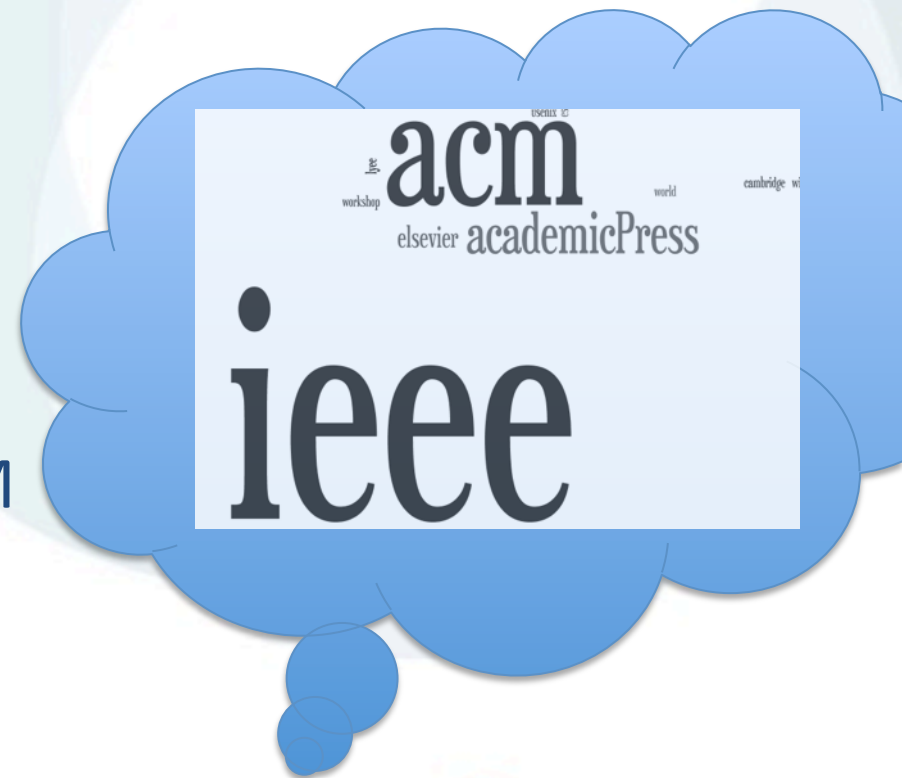
- Choose important, challenging problems
- A coherent research portfolio
  - high-impact, consider high-risk areas
  - consider interdisciplinary work
  - reinvent yourself!
- My path:
  - End-user software engineering
  - Started at tenure (with Gregg Rothermel & Curt Cook)
  - Ramped up
  - Eventually: EUSES Consortium was born



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# Research Maturity (cont.)

- Publish in venues that “count”
  - conference vs. journal
  - “brands”
- My path
  - Almost always IEEE or ACM
    - Other only if a good reason
  - 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> tier only



# Research Maturity (cont.)

- Keep funding your work
  - need continuous funding
  - explore options other than NSF
- My path
  - Went after “medium” & “big” NSFs
  - Also \$ from HP, IBM, Microsoft, misc.
  - How:
    - RPFs (eg, Google, Microsoft, etc.)
    - Shared students



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# Research Leadership → The Letters

- Carve out a research leadership role
- Lead a collaborative effort
- Make your research *visible!*
  - cultivate senior research leaders
  - give talks at key research venues
  - go to YOUR conference every year
  - try to place your students well
- My path
  - Big fish small pond +
  - Presence in 1-2 big ponds



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# TEACHING & STUDENTS



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# Teaching

most of us are in academic jobs because we like working with students; we want to train them well

depending on your interests and personal style, this can be a time to do new things: introduce new teaching methods, revamp the curriculum, create a new course, write a text book

you may also be expected to take responsibility for larger lower-level courses; understand departmental norms



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# Teaching

if teaching is your passion, or if you are at a teaching institution, find a way to lead, e.g., develop an interdisciplinary program, a new approach to engage non-majors, new assessment methods

share your questions, initiatives, experiences, and successes with others in your department

find a peer group of innovative teachers, e.g., by attending and presenting at SIGCSE or regional conferences or workshops



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# Teaching

at promotion time, teaching effectiveness is typically assessed using your teaching statement, teaching materials, student evaluations (controversial), peer evaluations

if you're not sure, ask for information on the norms on teaching assessment in your department

use your teaching statement to document steps you've taken to address any concerns (don't be defensive, address them head-on)



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# Teaching

consult carefully before embarking on initiatives that fall outside the core mission of the department, e.g., K-12 curriculum

be aware that the weight placed on teaching performance is different at different institutions



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# Student Advising

students will likely continue to be key to your research success

at promotion (and grant renewal) time, document your advising approach and how it has evolved

also of importance is student co-authorship on research, positions after graduation



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# SERVICE & OUTREACH



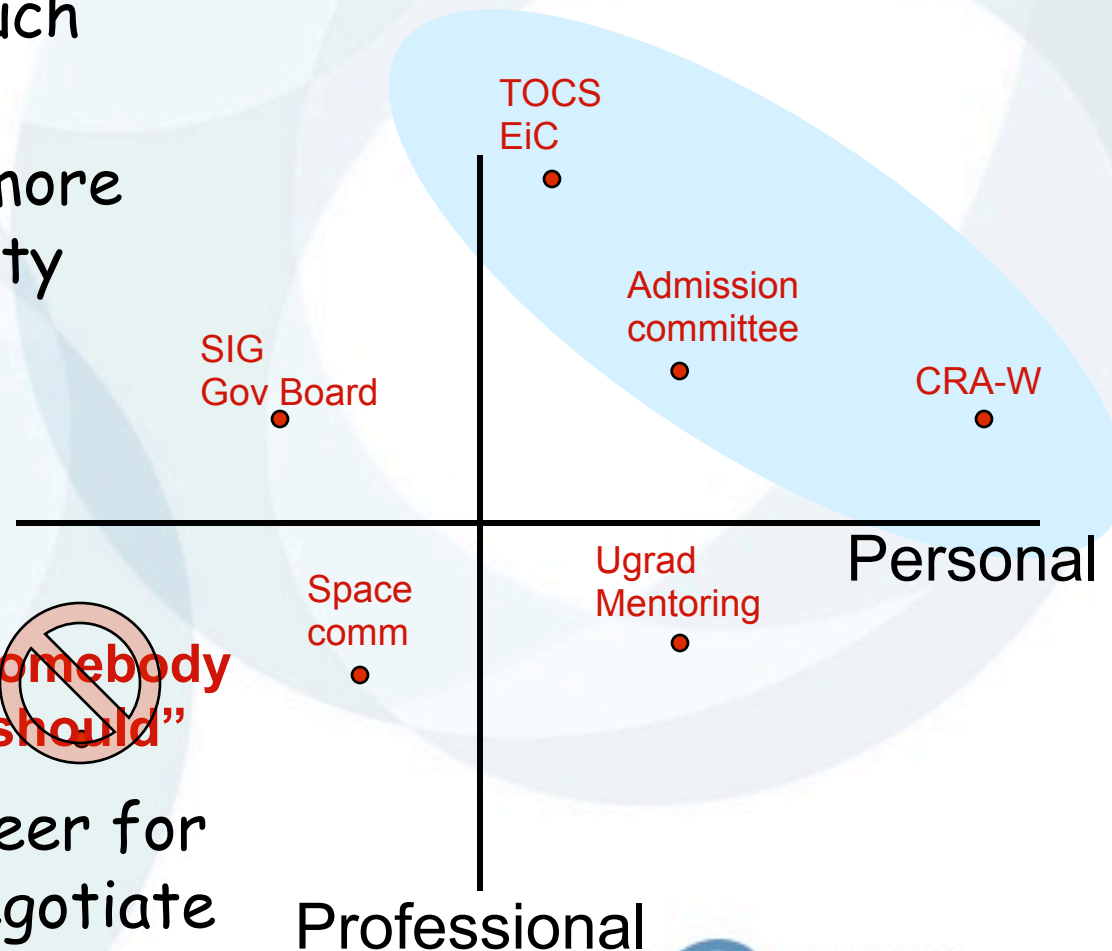
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# Choose Service that Matters!

- Find out what/how much service really counts
- Quality & Reliability more important than quantity
- Cost/benefit analysis
  - + better environment
  - + visibility/respect
  - + connections
  - stress
  - time
  - enemies
- Be Proactive - volunteer for positions you want, negotiate better deals, and learn when/how/why to say no

**Somebody**  
**"should"**



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# Service: Many Choices!

## Do Cost/Benefit Analysis

volunteer for choice jobs &  
negotiate a better deal

- Departmental

- Graduate Advisor
- Undergraduate Advisor
- ABET Coordinator

- College & University

- Faculty Senate (elected)
- Dean's advisory council
- College P&T Committee
- (important) Search Comm

- Government

- NSF review panels
- Agency advisory board memberships

- Professional & Research community

- Technical Leadership roles in key conferences in your field (e.g., program committees)
- Associate Editor of leading journal in your field
- Role with CRA, ACM, IEEE, AAAI
- Involvement in SIGSCE

Look outside dept.  
for greater impact  
of your service

# Nancy's Examples: always pros & cons

- External

- CRA-W (since 2000 – joined as tenured)
  - Met amazing people, ugrad research is a passion
- IEEE Robotics & Automation Society, Program Chair of major conferences (ICRA & RSS)

- Internal (Dept, College, University)

- Graduate Advisor (lasted 14 months...)
  - Negotiated extra semester of sabbatical, after full
- Council of Principle Investigators - Chair
  - Stepped up at Challenging time for University
- Interim Head (last year)
  - Started Dept honors program

# FINAL REMARKS

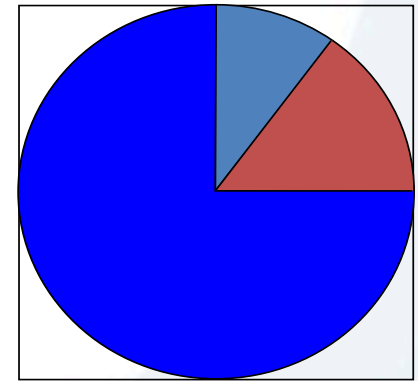


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# Local Expectations

- What's important at your institution?
  - stay balanced in whatever “counts”?
    1. research
    2. teaching
    3. service
  - study recent cases (successful and unsuccessful)
    - ⚠ caution: criteria change ⚠
  - serve on academic personnel committee
  - continue a local mentoring plan
  - ***find a champion!***



Service Teaching Research



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# When a promotion is not successful

- First – is more common on promotion to full than at tenure decision
- Determine where & why as best can
  - At the departmental level
    - Try to get constructive feedback
  - At a higher level
    - Did the department make a good case?
- How to handle the disappointment
  - anger, withdrawal, considering leaving, shrugging it off

# Help Each Other Succeed!

- We're a team!
- When one of us looks good, we all look better!
- How:
  - Nominate for an award.
  - Invite as keynoters.
  - Add to your program committees.



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# The best job in the world!

- Do what you love and love what you do!
- Maintain a positive attitude
  - learn from your mistakes (there will be many!)
  - don't lose heart (or face) if denied
  - all efforts you make at your own institution increases your marketability
- Maintain perspective
  - make sure you enjoy your job!



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