

IT'S A MARATHON, NOT A SPRINT

Balancing Work and Life in Grad School and Beyond



Kristin Stephens-Martinez



James Mickens



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Kristin Stephens-Martinez

Who Am I?

- Assistant Professor of the Practice
 - (focus on teaching with some research)
- Duke University
- CS Bachelor's, Univ. of MD, College Park
- CS Master's, UC Berkeley in Computer Networking
- CS Ph.D., UC Berkeley in CS Education

Computer Science Education

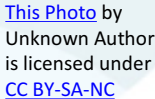
- The study of how we use CS in education
- The study of how we learn CS
- Focus: How do we scale learning?



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Happy to chat
about any of this
or otherwise!



EECS Peers



Who is James Mickens?



- Poet, scientist, philosopher, football expert
- BS in Computer Science: Georgia Tech
- PhD in Computer Science: MIT
- @MSR: 2008—2015
- @MIT: Fall 2014
- @Harvard: 2015—now
- @Harvard: April 2019

TENURED

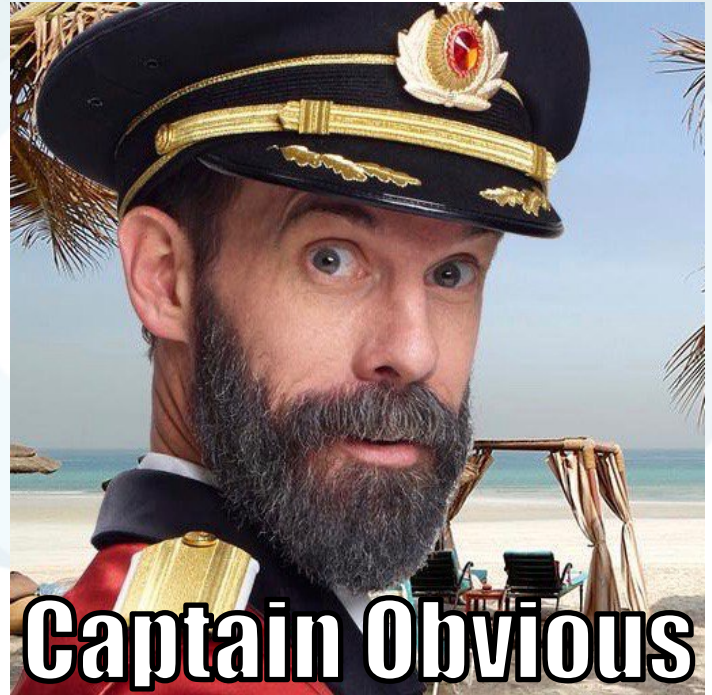


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Three Pieces of Advice

- Find time to have fun
- Learn to say “no”
- Build a supportive community



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Find Time To Have Fun



Grad student

Academia



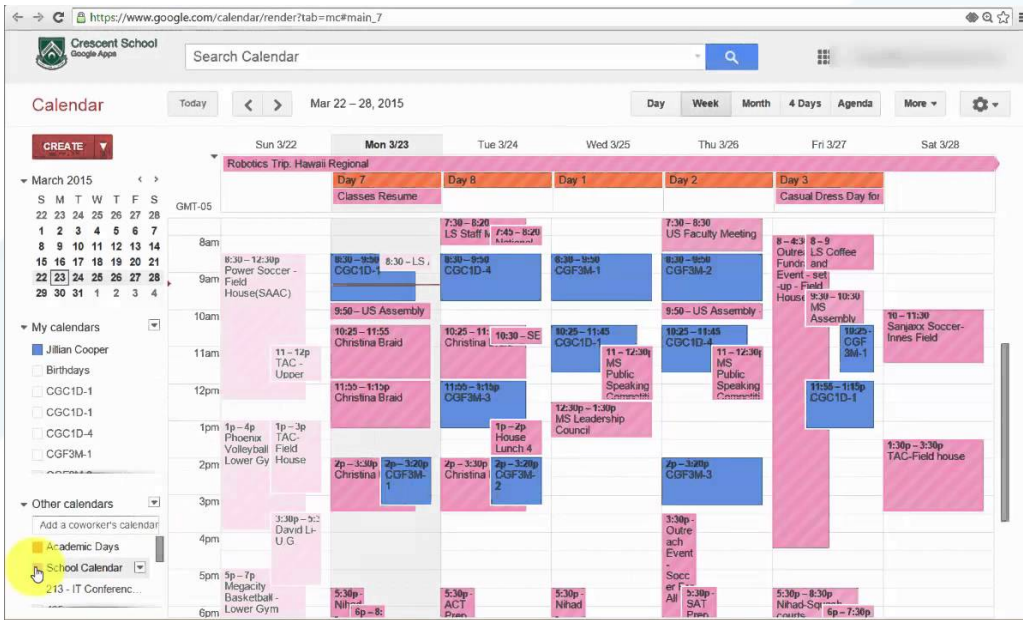
Industry



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Find Time To Have Fun




- **There will always be more things to do!**
- **If you struggle to make time to have fun, add calendar items to block out time for fun**
- **Your “fun time” should be as inviolate as your “work time”**



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Find Time To Have Fun



Won't I hurt my career if I don't work all the time?

ABSOLUTELY NONE OF YOUR COLLEAGUES WORK 80 HOUR WORK WEEKS ON A CONSISTENT OR A SEMI-CONSISTENT BASIS

- **Work culture may encourage “hour boasting”**
- **To a certain extent, you may need to play along . . .**
- **. . . but the real goal is to do good work!**



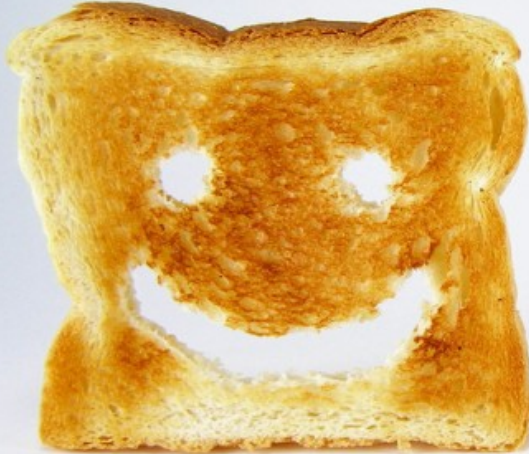
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Find Time To Have Fun



Don't be like this toast



Be like this toast

Getting burnt out can have lasting effects on your mental health and your career

- Deadline sprints and project pushes are normal (and can be enjoyable!)
- But ultimately, your goal is to do work that makes you happy and/or is meaningful: work for the sake of work isn't healthy!



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Learn To Say No

“You’d be a perfect fit for...”



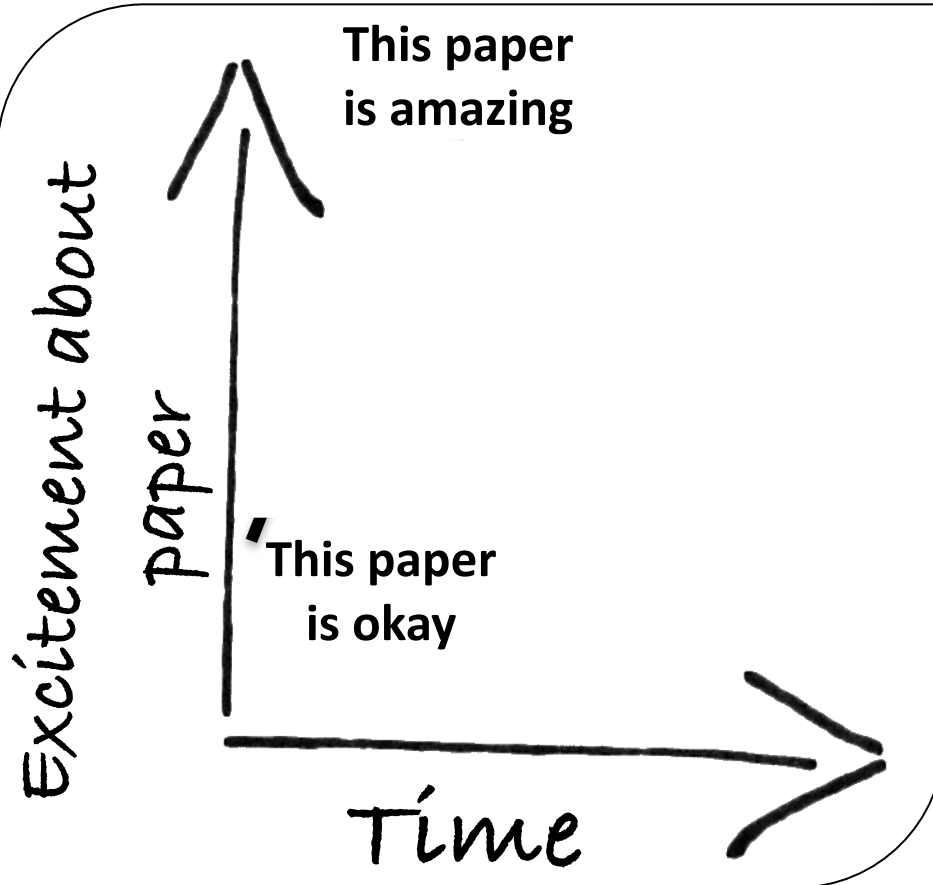
- There are an infinite number of things that you could do
- Women and people of color often get asked to perform additional service
- Be strategic about how you spend your time
 - In many cases, the person asking you for time will not take rejection personally
 - Think about how doing task X will further goals that you have for yourself



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Build A Supportive Community



- You are not the only one who:
 - Has papers get rejected
 - Occasionally says something incorrect during a meeting
 - Isn't sure which career path is the best one
- A strong support group is important
 - Talk to grad students (even in other departments!)
 - Network at conferences like GHC!
 - Don't be afraid to talk to mental health professionals



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