

IETC Tips for New Faculty

Time Management/Organizational

- Manage your time and don't volunteer for too many extras the first few years.
- Stay on top of your time! Especially my first quarter I was constantly playing catch-up. Items like Early Alerts came by surprise (evaluation by week 3!), and I would have felt better with a sense of the speed with which a quarter ensues once it begins.
- Do minimal service, it's not valued. Save that until you are too old for research.
- Keep a good calendar and document all activities on and professional, community off campus.
- Just because you know a subject really well doesn't mean you don't have to take the time to prepare a lecture in it.
- Organize your course material - spend time structuring the content
- Keep organized records of your accomplishments for the tenure binders.
- Exercise! Take advantage of the wonderful and FREE gym to work out every day. I let myself go during my first several years here on the grounds that I didn't have time to exercise, but now I get up an extra hour early to work out. By doing that and cutting out processed and fast food, I lost 20 pounds, which I've kept off for almost three years.

Working out also gives me a great excuse to NOT grade papers! :)

- Now: Be prepared for the time compression of the quarter system. The pace is relentless. You will constantly be ordering textbooks, preparing syllabi, creating and grading examinations, and submitting final letter grades. Your time for scholarship will be constrained.
2013: The switch to semesters has been imperfect. Expect to do some extra curriculum efforts to work out the "bugs" in the system.
- Take your time! Be prepared for class first, but be sure to keep your research going. Your first year, given new preps, adapting to quarters (still) and an endless stream of meetings, will not be research productive. Just keep it ticking over.
- Get courses under control quickly, so you can free time for research. If you plan to make major changes to a course do it the very first time you teach it, so that after that you can leave it alone the subsequent times you teach it. Take very organized notes the first time, so you can reuse those subsequent times.
Publish JOURNAL papers early and often.
- Brace yourself for the quarter system and be picky about classroom assignments.
- Carefully define your plan of work with your department head with an appropriate mix of teaching, service, and scholarship which will allow you to meet tenure requirements. Pay careful attention to the scholarship component and make sure the teaching and service load are consistent with scholarship expectations. Expect it to take 3-4 years to establish a funding stream for your research.
- Don't try to focus on too many different goals in the beginning. Just focus on teaching and maybe one research project.

- The hours required to do a good job of teaching a class are far greater than you realize (lecture prep, lab prep, homework prep, quiz prep, test prep, office hours, lab grading, homework grading, quiz grading, test grading). Learn to say No.
- Start organizing your office from day 1 (file final exams in a folder, keep hand outs in a labeled binder...) and keep up the organization as best you can - things can pile up quickly.
- Not for faculty, but for organizers: a one page list of frequently needed contact info and an organizational chart which includes the departments and/or functional areas within each college.
- Concentrate on students first and committee work last.
- Start teaching right away (if you had negotiated 1,2 no-teaching quarters in order to start up your lab). You will use your non-teaching quarters much more effectively.
- Plan ahead of time for how to divide your time into research, teaching and servicing.
- The quarter system is not so easy. Plan carefully everything ahead of time and talk to your colleagues about any teaching issue.

Get Involved/Make Connections

- Get involved! In any college, get involved in an established course (freshmen sequence, or something similar). Teach a lab, act as a tutor, whatever your position will allow. You get to work with established faculty, and learn the ropes for ordering supplies, working with the support staff, etc.
- The boundaries between departments and colleges are not real -- they are fiction. Reach out to others. Once you form a connection, you can achieve a lot.
- Take advantage of all the talks, seminars, etc - I never feel I have the time but whenever I go, I'm glad I did.
- Get involved in faculty social activities
- Get involved on an Institute committee early on so you meet people outside your department and college.
- Meet faculty in different colleges and talk with them about what they are doing. Meet faculty in your own college and discuss what they are doing.
- Get involved with the Service side of RIT, I know it doesn't count for much in your annual review, but it will help you get connected to the people that really make RIT run.
- Get to know as many other faculty as you can. Start with within your department. If you are tenure track find other tenure track faculty. They can be a great pick me up when things get to seem overwhelming. Oh and work with your department head to keep on track.
- Don't hide in your office; come tenure time, no one will know you and it won't matter what you've accomplished. In particular, connect with your students outside of class - it's nice to have them as supporters.
- Take advantage of as many campus professional development opportunities as possible.

- When I started, I was completely alone in figuring out the rules of the game, including tenure and promotion. Mostly, I spoke to other faculty in my same situation and we tried to understand how to be academics. I wish I had known that I could have hooked up with a senior faculty member as a mentor. At the time, this was not often done. Senior faculty kept to themselves and only shared passing advice to junior faculty. A new faculty member in 2010 definitely should be working with senior faculty both for scholarship and pedagogy. Senior faculty need the freshness of the young academics and their spark. New faculty need the wisdom and advice of veterans.
- Check out the campus, inside and out, above ground and below. There's a lot of cool stuff in the tunnels, on display in the hallways of buildings other than your own, and outdoors. Also, a big part of your job satisfaction is what you make of it. Don't get sucked in by people who just complain.
- Work with your department's untenured faculty accelerated scholarship team, or start one if one does not exist to quickly develop and advance your scholarship focus. Collegial cooperation is an excellent tool to develop your teaching, scholarship skills and department, college, institute knowledge.
- Get involved right away
- Get to know the campus, people and various programs, including Student Affairs. Students need your expertise for your class content, but they also benefit from other information you can give them about RIT or the referral to other resources.
- Reach out, and do as much socially as you can.
We all are hoping you will.
- Try to get involved with faculty both within your department and other departments. Participate in RIT activities.
- Network as broadly as possible
- get to know students and faculty
- Try to make connections with faculty in other colleges and departments. It is very easy to get trapped in the insularity of your own department and college but you will find tremendous faculty members across the Institute, men and women who will offer supportive ideas and advice.
- Get to know other faculty in other departments and colleges to form collaborations.
- Meet faculty outside your college: set up collaborations with them, or serve on institute-wide committees.
- Don't be a lone ranger. Make sure to establish networks early on and to ask senior faculty for advice on anything.
- Volunteer- get to know folks from both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. Attend student events!
- Use your first year to get to know all the faculty members within your department. It is a great way to get to know them better and find out potential collaboration opportunities!

Seek Help/Use Resources

- Don't be afraid to ask for assistance. There are MANY people willing to help in all areas of the teaching/learning process, classroom management, working with different populations of students: deaf and hard of hearing; English as a Second (third) language; first generation college students.

When hired to teach because of your specific expertise, it doesn't mean you have been instructed in how to teach. There is NO ONE way to teach.

You aren't expected to KNOW EVERYTHING... it is okay to learn from your students, too.

- Ask questions -- if you don't, it's not likely anyone will tell you otherwise.
- Make time to meet with your Library Liaison to discuss your area of research. They can steer you toward the best resources for you and your students. And knowing your area of research, they will drop you interesting finds, as things come across their paths.
- Ask your colleagues for lots of help!
- 1. Ask about resources available to faculty within the department, i.e. Xerox machines, laptops, cameras, video cameras, tools, paper and space.
2. Talk with a NTID College Rep about classroom protocol when working with deaf students.
- Take advantage of the Teaching and Learning Center's programs. Get involved in cross-disciplinary committees; you will learn how the Institute functions as a whole.
- Ask your boss who is my mentor? Who can I go to with questions? If you don't have one, a good one, or in my case - a bad one, it is a very long uphill battle, as I'm finding out.
- Develop your own style - don't try to adopt someone else's. There are many ways to get your message across and the faculty here are very helpful and willing to share what has worked best for them - but you have to ask.
- don't be afraid to ask for help
- Just do your homework. When I started at RIT over 20 years ago, before internet and email, I found out whatever I wanted to know via phone calls and letters. It is much easier today.
- Seek out a mentor
- Find a tenured faculty member who is willing to show you the ropes.

Use Technology/ Learn Technology

- BE as update as possible on computer technology!
- Work closely with ETC people...best people on campus. Learn all you can about MyCourses but also all the resources available on line, like the on line reserves for courses.
Learn about the special rooms like the TLT studio in library.
Attend ETC seminars to learn more tools.

- Technology is not always the solution to every problem, but it can be very helpful.
- Make sure you know about Faculty/Staff Information Access Center. I didn't know what it was until late in the first quarter and I really could have used it more to learn about my students.
- Make your class as interactive as possible and USE MY COURSES!
- Get familiar with Mycourses, all the key functions it can do. Also, be aware of the early alert system, and use it when appropriate.
- watch out for the need to have A/V resources captioned -- this means it is more difficult to spontaneously show video clips in class, so you have to plan ahead more.

Publish/Scholarship

- Start writing and keep writing.
- publish, publish, publish
- Publish
- Get more heavily into research and publication.
- The new goals of RIT are to produce scholarship, don't get caught-up in committees or departmental projects that prevent you from doing your research

Interaction with Students:

- Be aware that CoLA the majority of courses are not tiered (have prerequisites), as a result you have to teach the introductory material multiple times. It is a bit tedious for the professor if you truly value the subject as it leaves you with one fewer week in the quarter. Also, tedious for students from earlier classes with you who take your other offerings and have to sit through a repeat of Week 1.
- Try to understand the students' motivation and perspective.
- Relax, you know your stuff. The students will benefit from your experience and they want to get to know you. Be yourself.
- That clear explanation is an important component of good teaching, but guided practice is also an important component. So slow down the rate of new material by doing an example for the class, then asking the class to do one on their own. It takes a little time, but students learn more.
- Have lunch with students from time to time....they are a wealth of knowledge and have a very different (often enlightening) perspective about the RIT world.

Misc:

- Pay attention to the orientation and learn how to use "My courses" and other employee resources online.
- Don't let perfection get in the way of progress.

- Find some way to make yourself indispensable.
- Enjoy the place you work, take a class or two and keep growing.
- You need your Ph.D.
- Be familiar with the names/numbers of the buildings.
- Follow the academic senate, staff council, provost, and institute council minutes/e-mails.
- Don't buy a permit to park close; the walk to campus from far away lots is really enjoyable.
- That non-tenure track faculty have some benefits. Especially that adjuncts can contribute to their retirement funds.
- Expect things to change.
- Get thermal layers for the winter.
- Use the underground tunnels!!!
- take the trouble to learn some basic sign language--it goes a long way here
- RIT Survivor Toolkit

Concerns:

- Do what is important to you as an academic. RIT is only interested in how much money you can bring into the school, and into the pockets of administrators some of whom are paid at least 30 or 40 times what our staff are, if not more.

This provost has already shown that faculty recommendations are worthless. A new administrator has been appointed who never even made the short list from the search committee.

Sorry to be so negative but RIT has gotten much worse in the over thirty years I have been here.

- If you are in COS, start looking for a new job. The unrealistic expectations for research combined with the lack of infrastructure and institutional support from RIT will make your grant applications uncompetitive with those from research universities. The Provost has made it very clear that there will no tenure for newly hired COS faculty unless they bring in grants.
- No +/- grades. Faculty self governance is an important responsibility
- Get everything in writing.
- Be prepared to lower your standards in the classroom. The administration cares more about student retention and self-esteem than it does for scholastic achievement.
- I would most likely say that the faculty environment is way too fluid to stand on. The administration has not been able to appropriately align their expectations given the facts

with regard to tenure and promotion. That is, we are a really good A university for C-level students. If you want to get any scholarship done, plan on doing it yourself - sometime. Then, keep your eye on the bouncing ball. We were an excellent career focused college at one point. When we tried to become an R1 university, well, keep your hands in your pockets. Did you have a second job choice?

- Do your own thing, be self-reliant, do not rely on administration for resources or to keep promises.
- Chart your own course toward tenure. Deans & Dept Heads come & go and have their own agendas. You need to determine for your family, yourself, and your career what is important to you and plan accordingly. Then implement your plan. Over my career, everyone who danced to the tune admin whistled, got screwed! Whistle your own tune....
- Ask for start-up funds (don't let them tell you RIT does not provide them) and summer undergraduate research funds (make the administration put their moneies where their mouths are).
- lay low