Career Planning in Academia

- Review of Faculty Tracks
- Review of Promotion Process
- Where do Faculty go wrong in Career Planning?
- Where do Departments go wrong in developing the Careers of Faculty?
- Where does the Promotion Process run into Difficulty?
- How to balance institutional service with your personal agenda?
- Mentorship
- What to look for in a Faculty Position?
- Balancing your Career with your Personal Life
Faculty Tracks

- **Usual Professorial Tracks**
  - Scientist
  - Clinician scientist
  - Clinician scholar

- **Prefix Tracks**
  - Clinical
  - Research
  - Adjunct
Faculty Tracks

- Track designation does not appear in the academic titles of Faculty and disappear at the level of Professor
- Tracks serve to align criteria used in the promotion process with institutional and personal goals
- No tenure at BU School of Medicine
- No “Up or Out” provision at BUSM
Materials used in Promotion Process

- Curriculum vita
  - Training, appointments, institutional roles
  - Grant support
  - Publications in chronological order

- Portfolio: description of research, clinical, teaching, (including teaching evaluations) and administrative responsibilities and accomplishments

- List of external and internal references
  - Arm’s length referees
Steps in Promotion Process

- Faculty member discusses appointment/promotion with Section Chief
- Faculty member submits credentials for appointment or promotion year round, but typically in summer-fall
- Departmental Appointments and Promotions Committee reviews credentials-right track? Right time? Appropriate referees?
- Departmental Committee reviews all materials including letters of reference and makes a recommendation to BUSM
- BUSM Committee votes on appointment/promotion
- Board of Trustees approves appointment/promotion
What Criteria are used in Promotion Process?

- Publications
  - Quality of Journals (Impact Score)
  - Interrelationship of publications
  - Impact in field as judged by peers
  - Quantity and Trend of Publications
  - Independence
  - First or Last Author
Criteria Used in Promotion Process (Con’t)

- Grant funding, particularly peer-reviewed grant support
- Teaching Evaluations
- Evaluations of Clinical care
- Departmental support
- Programmatic needs of School and Department
Major Areas of Emphasis in Promotion Process

- Clinician Scientist Track
  - Scholarship
  - Peer review
  - Funding
  - Clinical/Education work

- Clinician Scholar Track
  - Clinical/Education work
  - Peer review
  - Scholarship

- Prefix Tracks
  - Clinical
  - Research
  - Adjunct

- Scientist
  - Scholarship
  - Peer review
  - Funding
Where does the Promotion Process run into Difficulty?

- Different standards and expectations among Departments
- Quality of Peer Review (e.g., “arms lengths”, discipline leaders vs. subject matter experts, collaborators, “hidden agendas”)
- Quality or quantity of Teaching and Clinical Evaluations
- Wrong Track
- Tenure (e.g., slots, “up or out”)
Where do Faculty go wrong in Career Planning?

- Honest assessment of
  - Training
  - Interests
  - Talent
- Lack of focus
- Emphasize quantity over quality
- Start “tenure clock” prematurely
- Timing of Independence
- Use of mentor(s)
- “Writer’s Block”
- Planning beyond first three year term
- Visibility outside of the institution
Where do Departments go wrong in Career Planning for Faculty?

- Misalignment of what is needed by the institution with what is rewarded
- Inattentive mentorship
- Assume funding=quality=promotion
- Conflict of service and “protected time” leading to unrealistic distribution of responsibilities
Where Do Departments go wrong in the Promotion Process? (con’t)

- Insufficient investment in faculty
- Inadequate attention to research infrastructure
- Insufficient time on “Tenure Clock”, particularly in Clinical Investigation
- Assembly of supporting documentation
- Overuse of women and under-represented minorities for institutional service
How to Balance Institutional Service with Career Goals

- What is your understanding of what you were hired to accomplish?
- Most junior research faculty should expect to be protected from institutional service.
- Institutional “citizenship” is important, but ok to say “no” - turn the question around.
- Increasing tenure on the faculty carries a greater burden of service.
- Departments and sections are dependent on faculty to perform under-compensated activities.
Keys to Having a Productive Relationship with your Mentor

- Examine track record of Mentor
- Trust your “gut”
- Seek more than one mentor (advisor)-very few faculty have too many mentors or too much mentorship
- Most senior faculty want to view themselves as effective mentors (your success is their success!)
- Allow yourself to be effectively mentored (i.e., be honest, pose questions, seek “sounding boards”, listen carefully, give feedback)
What to look for in a Faculty Position?

- Scientific and/or clinical environment-opportunities for growth
- Financial support, particularly beyond the honeymoon period
- Track record of supporting Junior Faculty
- Personal goals and needs
What to look for in a Faculty Position? (con’t)

- Does the Departmental leadership understand and support research and/or clinical work in meaningful and practical ways?
- How will success be measured? What time frame?
- Space/Salary/Perquisites
- Set priorities in your negotiations
Balancing your Career with your Personal Life

- Inherently personal set of priorities-do not ignore the need for balance!
- Leaders increasingly aware of the need for balance (e.g., resident work hour restrictions, need to avoid “burn out”, prevalence of dual career relationships)
- Higher burden of organization-plan carefully
- Recognize that many academic careers evolve, change, and adapt