Demystifying the Promotion and Tenure Process

Academic Mentoring Workshop
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Russ Joseph - Northwestern University
About Me

From: St. Thomas, USVI

Research: Computer Architecture

Education:
  BS ECE/CS Carnegie Mellon (1999)
  Advisor: Margaret Martonosi

Northwestern EECS
  Assistant Professor 2004-2010
  Associate Professor 2010-present

Fun: running, golf, basketball
Tenure Portfolio @ Northwestern

Materials
Curriculum vitae
Statements: research, teaching, service
Representative Publications: 2-3
Outside Letters: 6-8 (some of your choosing)

Expected Balance
Official: Research 40%; Teaching 40%; Service 20%

Reality: Excellent research; avoid disaster in teaching; serve on PC for good conferences and be on department committee (sort of know what is going on)
Intermediate Feedback Mechanisms

Formal annual review process for all faculty
- Used for salary increases
- University compiles summary of measurable activity (funding, publications, teaching evals)
- Meet with department chair
- Sometimes useful, sometimes not so much

Mid-point evaluation for junior faculty (mini-tenure)
- Candidate writes statements (research, teaching, service)
- Request external letters

Hopefully, some informal/ad hoc feedback, too
Common Pitfalls

Don't be a hero!
● Avoid ambitious educational projects
  ○ Small tweaks to a course are fine
  ○ Be cautious about major overhauls
● Lobby for low effort teaching/service assignments

Don't be a perfectionist!
● Try to do good work...obviously
● If you wait for it to be perfect...it won't get out the door...or will be too late