Valerie’s Personal Journey

- Youngest of 3 children
  - Mom: school teacher
  - Dad: engineer, started his own company
- As an undergraduate
  - Active in student organizations
- Journeyed into the PhD
- Journeyed into the academic position at Northwestern (11 years)
- Journeyed into the department head position at TAMU (9 years)
- Journeyed back to the faculty (2 years)
- Journeying into senior associate dean position (current)
Identifying Promising Research Ideas

- Leverage from your dissertation
- Seek collaborations where appropriate
- Take time to speculate, explore and have conversations
Start-up

- Identify what is needed to be successful
  - Equipment
  - Students
  - Travel
  - Summer salary
- Time frame: first two years
- Understand limitations
- When you receive a grant
  - Seek an extension on the start-up
Graduate Students

- Identify what works well for you
  - Meeting often, very little
  - Expectations

- Utilize your classes to identify students for your research group

- Talk with colleagues at other institutions to recruit students

- Post-docs focus solely on research
  - Match with department chair/head
Mentoring

- Within the department & outside the university
- Aids in dealing with hurdles
- Personal story:
  - Northwestern supported former MS advisor as formal mentor