Apply – Accept – Survive: The Experience of First-Year Faculty in Sport Management

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Teaching/Learning - Professional Development (Other)
60-minute symposium, roundtable, or workshop
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2:10 PM
Room: Torrey's Peak

As doctoral students slowly creep towards successfully defending their dissertation, they encounter the simultaneous challenge of entering the job market in search for a faculty position. With the near simultaneous processes of defending a dissertation, applying and interviewing for jobs, negotiating for and accepting a position, and resettling across the country, taking the time to understand the minute details of career expectations can be difficult (Nel, 2015).

New faculty positions hold varying expectations for teaching, scholarship (research), and service (Austin, 2002). The expectations within these categories for achieving tenure can range from clearly detailed to closely guarded secrets, depending on the institution (Green, O'Connor, Good, Ledford, Peel, & Zhang, 2008). The doctoral program experience will have groomed graduates for certain expectations, while leaving them ill prepared for others. These new members of academia are also entering a new department with established sport management professionals, on an unfamiliar campus, and with varying levels of support for managing work expectations (Ponjuan, Conley, & Trower, 2011). Concerns have arisen about the fragmented preparation and expectations of the next (and current) generation of faculty for achieving tenure (Austin & Wulff, 2004). It has been recommended for doctoral students to be more accurately prepared for their upcoming expectations within academia, with that preparation coming primarily from their peers (Weidman, Twale, & Stein, 2001).

The purpose of this symposium is to provide an open forum for doctoral students to further explore the experience of new faculty members who have made the recent transition from doctoral candidate to first-year as a faculty member.

This discussion will be achieved through the lens of the mentoring theoretical framework (Kram, 1983). Mentoring theory suggests an assortment of relationships – including a doctoral advisor, peers, family, subordinates, experts within the field, and friends – can help provide the necessary support for professional development (Kram, 1985). Mentoring theory stresses the importance of diverse perspectives as a means to increasing career benefits and elevated vocational preparation (Sweitzer, 2008; Van Emmerick, 2004). While this symposium will not establish these relationships in their entirety, it will provide doctoral students with further professional development from faculty members currently working at various institutions, as well as peers from other doctoral programs in their field.

The symposium will initially provide the attendees background information on each of the panel members, followed by transitioning to their experiences based on following main points: (1) tenure expectations, (2) transitioning from student to faculty, and (3) lessons learned during their first year. Sub-topics within these main points include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Getting used to a new campus
- Awareness of university resources
- Assimilating to new faculty/department
- Juggling teaching/service/scholarship
- Understanding tenure process
- Building personal and working relationships with faculty peers
- Creating work plans
- Working with departmental chair and/or dean
- "Something I wish I was more prepared for in my doctoral program"
The first 30-35 minutes will be dedicated towards this open forum of discussion from the panel members. Following the open forum, the panel members will break up into two groups: one for doctoral students interested in hybrid and teaching institutions, another for students interested in research institutions. This will allow smaller sub-set of attendees to ask questions related to the subtopics mentioned above or related to their career aspirations.