Time Allocation: Balancing Research, Teaching, and Service

Lori Pollock
University of Delaware
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What should I do when someone asks me to participate in a new "opportunity"?

What can I do when I know I'm not spending enough time on research?

What kind of service should I do or avoid?

How do I limit my teaching time commitment and maintain a high quality learning experience for students?

Have you asked any of these?
Some Concrete Steps
Towards
R-T-S Balance
Step 1: Identify what is expected of YOU

How are you evaluated at your institution?

- Expected % effort 70 20 10? 60 30 10? 40 60 10? ...
- How are activities labeled among R, T, and S?
- Relative importance of activities within same category?
- Measure of quality of your work?
Step 1: Identify what is expected of YOU

• What is expected in your professional community? (potential letter writers)
  – Research publication: quality and quantity
  – Student training/mentoring
  – Research funding for projects
  – Research-oriented service to professional community
  – A good reviewer, PC member
  – Writing good recommendation letters, awards,...
Step 2: Proactively Plan

• Strive for an intended balance
  – long-term (year/semester)
  – Weekly schedule planning
• Separate colored calendars for R, T, S, H
• Reserve research time as explicit appointment on calendar
### Step 3: Keep an Activity Journal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Asked</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time Commitment</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Accepted?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/15/11</td>
<td>NSF panel</td>
<td>1 month</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/20/11</td>
<td>Invited talk @ X Univ</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/15/11</td>
<td>Submitted XYZ paper</td>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 4: Reflect and Recalibrate Periodically

- Review your activity journal by category
- Examine your calendar rainbow
Back to the Original Questions
What kind of service should I do/avoid?

- Should Do?
- Probably Avoid (for now at least)?
What kind of service should I do/avoid?

• **Should Consider Doing:**
  – Helps research program
  – Small time commitment and high potential benefits

• **Probably Avoid (for now at least):**
  – Low profile, low importance AND high effort/time
  – Just saying yes because don’t know how to say NO
What should I do when someone asks me to participate in a new "opportunity"?

- DELAY and ANALYZE COSTS/BENEFITS

**Exercise 1:** With your neighbors, develop a list of questions to ask yourself when you need to decide whether to say YES or NO.

**Exercise 2:** Describe ways you could DELAY your response.
What should I do when someone asks me to participate in a new "opportunity"?

- DELAY and ANALYZE COSTS/BENEFITS

**Questions to ask:**

**Costs?** Time commitment, short/long term? When? Effort?

**Benefits?** R, T, S,? Importance?

- networking opportunity? Right people?
- broaden knowledge/skills?
- high profile?
- passionate about and short term?
- how likely opportunity to come along again?
What should I do when someone asks me to participate in a new "opportunity"?

• DELAY and ANALYZE COSTS/BENEFITS

How to Delay:
This sounds interesting to me.  
I need to look at what I already have committed to, because if I say YES,
    I want to make sure I have enough time to do my best.

When do you need an answer?  
I’ll be sure to get back to you by then.

How to say NO politely:
How do I limit my teaching time commitment and maintain a high quality learning experience for students?

- Choose courses wisely
- Leverage others’ experiences/resources
- Plan ahead for efficiency
- Leverage student learning objectives
  - Demos/code reviews
  - Peer reviews
  - Student reflection -> reviews, exams
  - Oral comm: presentations
  - Writing: lit reviews/proposals
  - Other experts -> guest speakers
What can I do when I know I'm not spending enough time on research?

• Reflect and reassess research-related activities
• Rethink weekly calendar
• Set short term goals
• Work with collaborators -> shared deadlines
Your Charge This Summer

- **Try at least one:**
  - Meet with your chair/mentor: clarify expectations for YOU
  - Reflect on this past year:
    - Label journal activities: R, T, S and H, M, L
    - Examine R,T,S balance in randomly selected weeks
  - Proactively plan a balance of activities for this coming year
  - Choose a proactive challenge for this year:
    - Invite speakers to your school.
    - Initiate a potential collaboration.
    - Set up a regular reading group.
    - Ask to serve on a funding agency panel.
    - Reserve a set time for your own research planning each week.