



EARLY-CAREER FACULTY GUIDEBOOK

Resources, webinars, and advice
to help you through your first years
of faculty life.

[NCFDD.ORG](https://www.ncfdd.org)

CONTENTS

PART

1

**The Biggest Mistakes that
New Faculty Make**

PART

2

Early-Career Faculty Checklist

PART

3

Strategic Planning 101

PART

4

Managing Your Time

PART

5

Daily Writing

PART

6

Mentoring 101

PART

7

Work-Life Balance

PART

1

**THE BIGGEST
MISTAKES FACULTY
MAKE**

The Biggest Mistakes New Faculty Make

As we kick off the new academic year, we want to share the 15 mistakes that new faculty make. We're not naming them to be mean or judgmental! Instead, we want to make them explicit so you can identify any you may be making AND suggest some concrete skills and strategies for you to move forward. Click each mistake to read more.

1. [Your Semester Has No Plan](#)
2. [Your Time Isn't Aligned With Your Evaluation Criteria](#)
3. [You Believe Balance is a Myth](#)
4. [You're Investing in Long-Term Institutional Change at the Expense of Your Research Agenda](#)
5. [You're Reactive Instead of Proactive in Your Professional Relationships](#)
6. [You've Put All of Your Eggs in One Institutional Basket](#)
7. [You Don't Know How You Spend Your Time](#)
8. [You Haven't Set Up Any Feedback Loops](#)
9. [You're Over-functioning on Teaching While Under-functioning on Your Research](#)
10. [You're Ignoring Your Body](#)
11. [You Internalize Rejection and Negativity](#)
12. [You're Trying to Do Everything Yourself](#)
13. [You Avoid Conflict](#)
14. [You're Looking for A Guru-Mentor](#)
15. [You Don't Have Strategies to Relieve Stress](#)

PART
2

**CHECKLIST FOR NEW
AND EARLY-CAREER
FACULTY**

Early-Career Faculty Checklist

- ☐ *Activate your NCFDD Account*
- ☐ *Begin the Core Curriculum*
- ☐ *Check out the NCFDD Library*
- ☐ *Watch a Guest Expert Webinar*
- ☐ *Sign up for a Buddy Match*
- ☐ *Register for a 14-Day Writing Challenge*
- ☐ *Join the Early-Career Faculty Discussion Forum*
- ☐ *Follow NCFDD on social media!*
- ☐ *Spread the word! Let your colleagues know they can activate their NCFDD account!*

PART

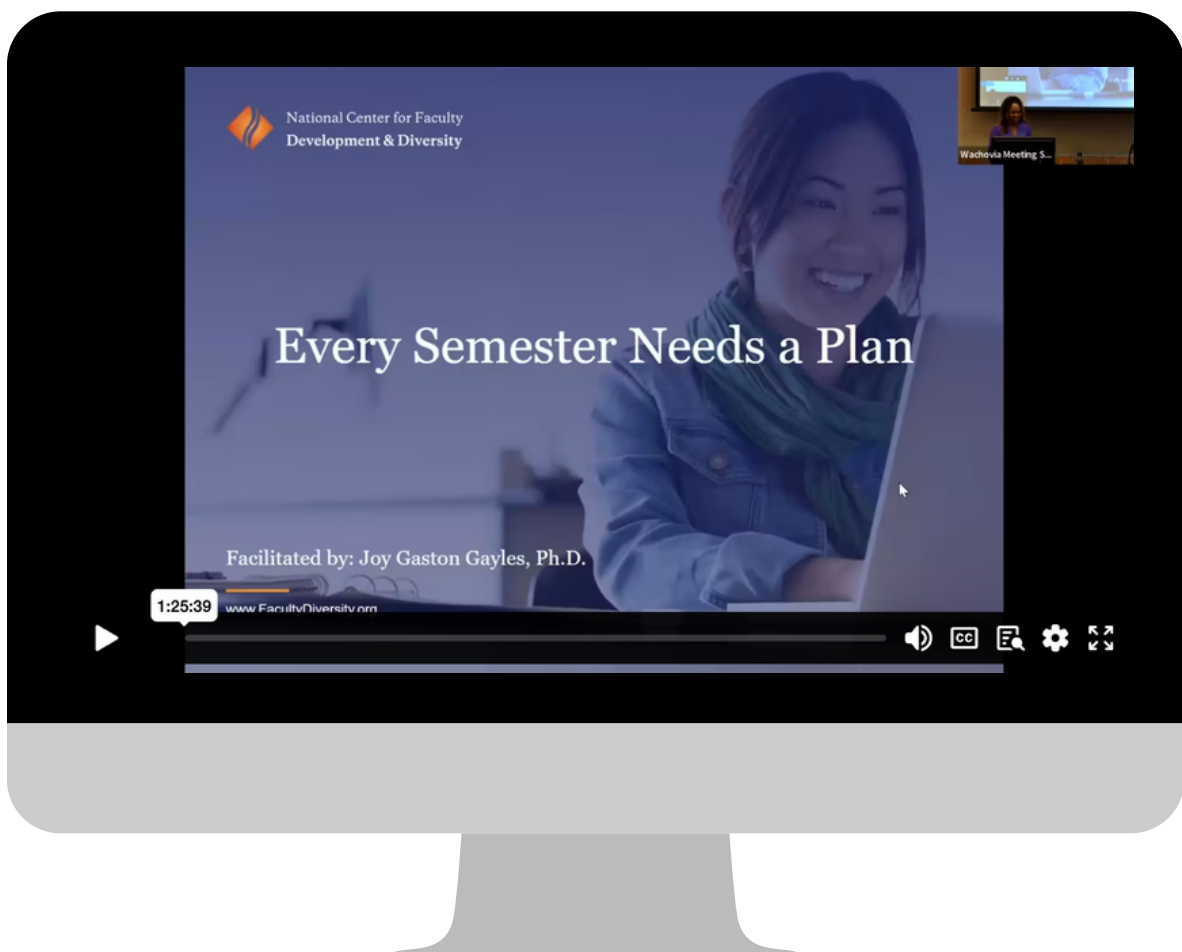
3

STRATEGIC PLANNING

EVERY SEMESTER NEEDS A PLAN

We offer this planning webinar at the beginning of each semester so that you can take time out of your schedule to identify your personal and professional goals, create a strategic plan to accomplish them, and identify the types of community, support, and accountability you need to make this your most productive and balanced semester ever!

[WATCH HERE](#)



EVERY SEMESTER NEEDS A PLAN WORKSHEET

Step #1: Identify Your Goals

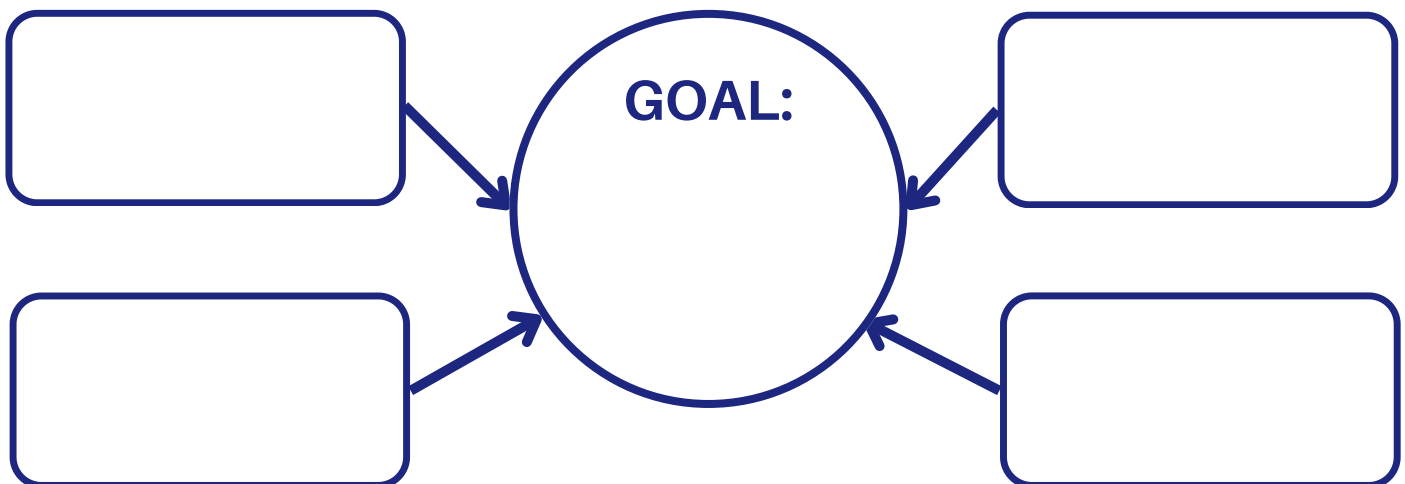
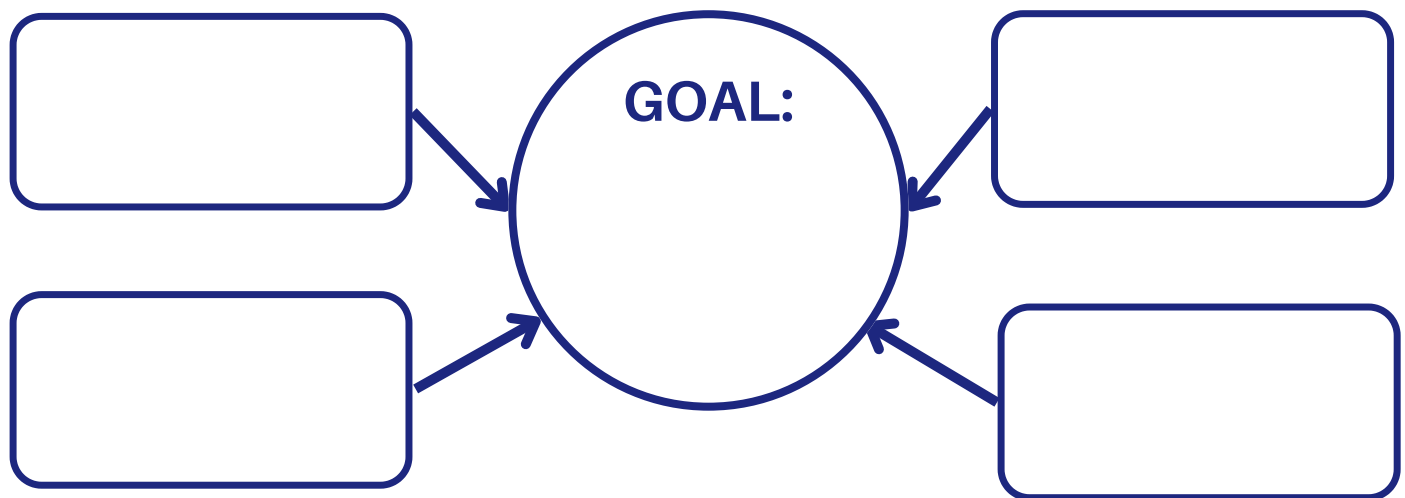
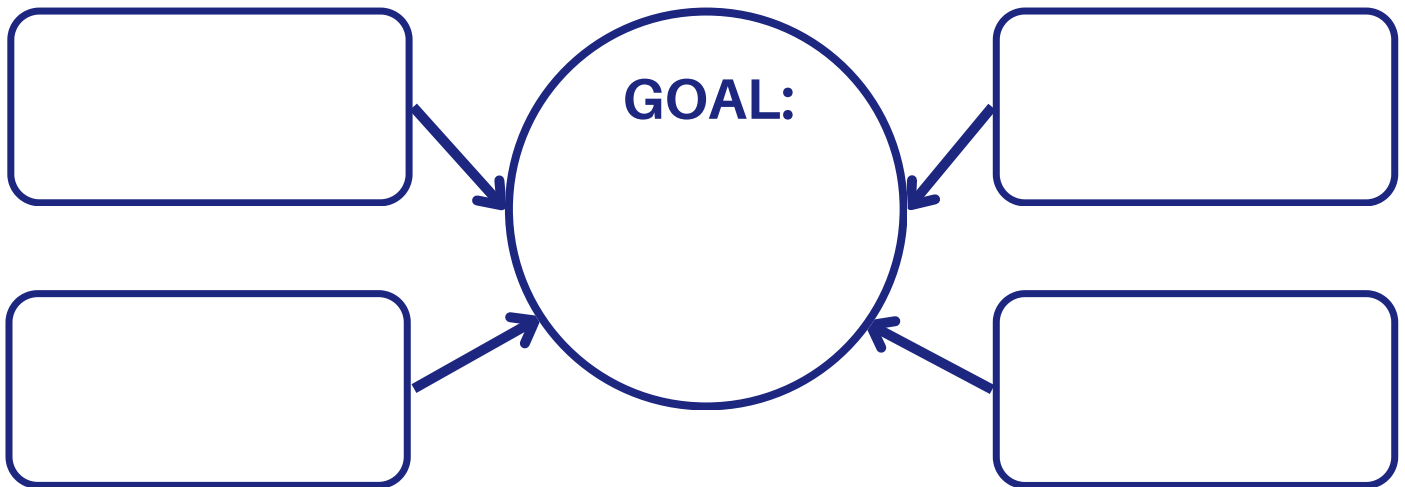
RESEARCH/WRITING GOALS

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

PERSONAL GOALS

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Step #2: Map out the steps



Step #3: Introduce your projects to your calendar

MONTH	WEEK	WRITING/RESEARCH	PERSONAL
	Week 1		
	Week 2		
	Week 3		
	Week 4		
	Week 5		
	Week 6		
	Week 7		
	Week 8		
	Week 9		
	Week 10		
	Week 11		
	Week 12		
	Week 13		
	Week 14		
	Week 15		

ADVANCING YOUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Each semester, academics complete their NCFDD strategic plans to identify their professional and personal priorities and determine when they will get completed. In this video, we highlight 3 ways you can take your strategic plans to the next level.

[WATCH HERE](#)



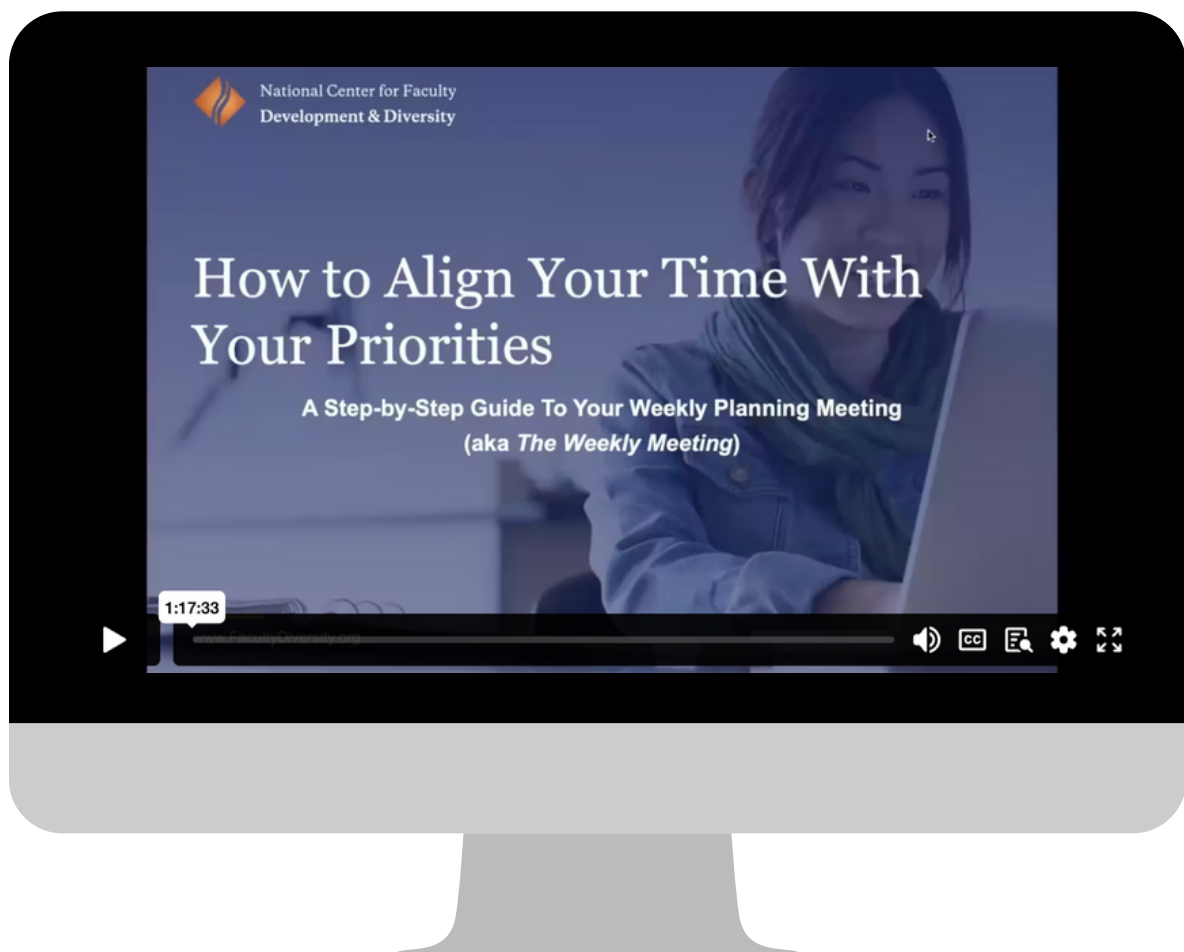
PART
4

MANAGING YOUR TIME

HOW TO ALIGN YOUR TIME WITH YOUR PRIORITIES

Grab your strategic plan and learn the secret to making it work day-to-day and week-to-week! How to Align Your Time with Your Priorities is a step-by-step guide to holding a weekly planning meeting (aka The Weekly Meeting).

[WATCH HERE](#)



THE 5 D'S: WHEN YOUR THING DOESN'T FIT

While working on your weekly plan, you realize all the tasks you aim to get done simply won't fit in your calendar. Now what? In this video, we identify 5 practical actions you can take.

[WATCH HERE](#)



PART
5
DAILY WRITING

HOW TO DEVELOP A DAILY WRITING PRACTICE

Are you sick of working all the time without making progress on your writing projects? Are you tired of your deadline-driven, binge-and-bust writing routine? Do you wish you could develop a healthy, consistent, daily writing routine that would allow you to meet your department's expectations for tenure and promotion?

[WATCH HERE](#)

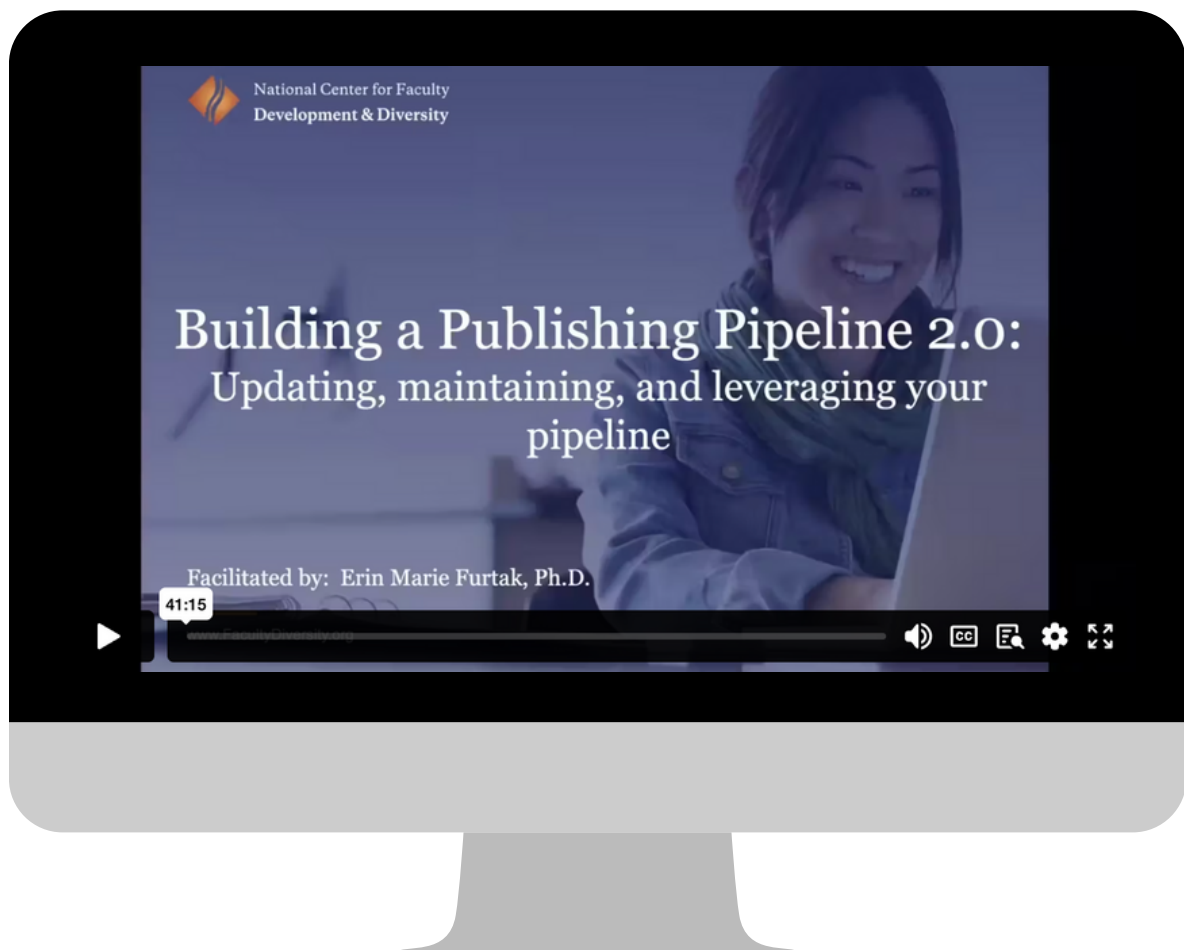


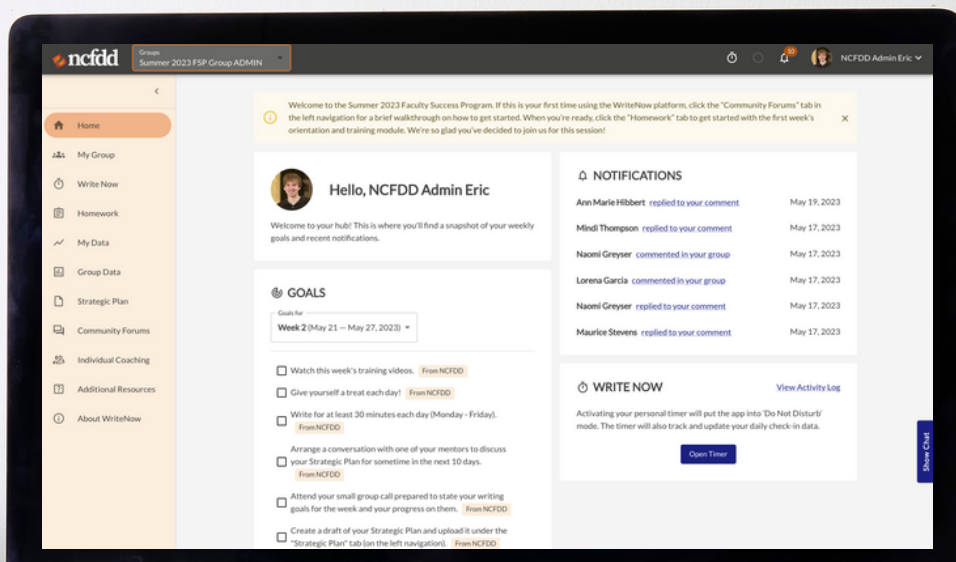
Multi-Week Course

BUILDING A PUBLISHING PIPELINE

How can we use a representation of all our research and writing projects to help us track our growth as scholars and to inform deliberate choices about where our scholarship might go? This multi-week course picks up on Erin Marie Furtak's "Productivity Pipeline" column and workshop and extends them into advanced planning and approaches for balancing multiple writing goals and scholarly trajectories.

[WATCH HERE](#)





14-DAY WRITING CHALLENGE

The 14-Day Writing Challenge is a great opportunity for all members at any stage in their career to experiment with daily writing. Using our proprietary program software, WriteNow, participants are able to engage with a supportive community and track their writing and research progress. At the end of the challenge, participants will have a qualitative summary of their progress and can see how implementing daily writing can increase overall writing productivity.

[LEARN MORE](#)

FACULTY SUCCESS PROGRAM

The Faculty Success Program (FSP) is a 12-week virtual program that arms faculty with the skills and support they need to accomplish their academic and personal goals. During the program, participants will meet weekly with their hand-selected small groups to review the weekly modules and any resistance or wins that come up. Our coaches are experienced and tenured faculty trained to support our FSP participants throughout the program.

[LEARN MORE](#)

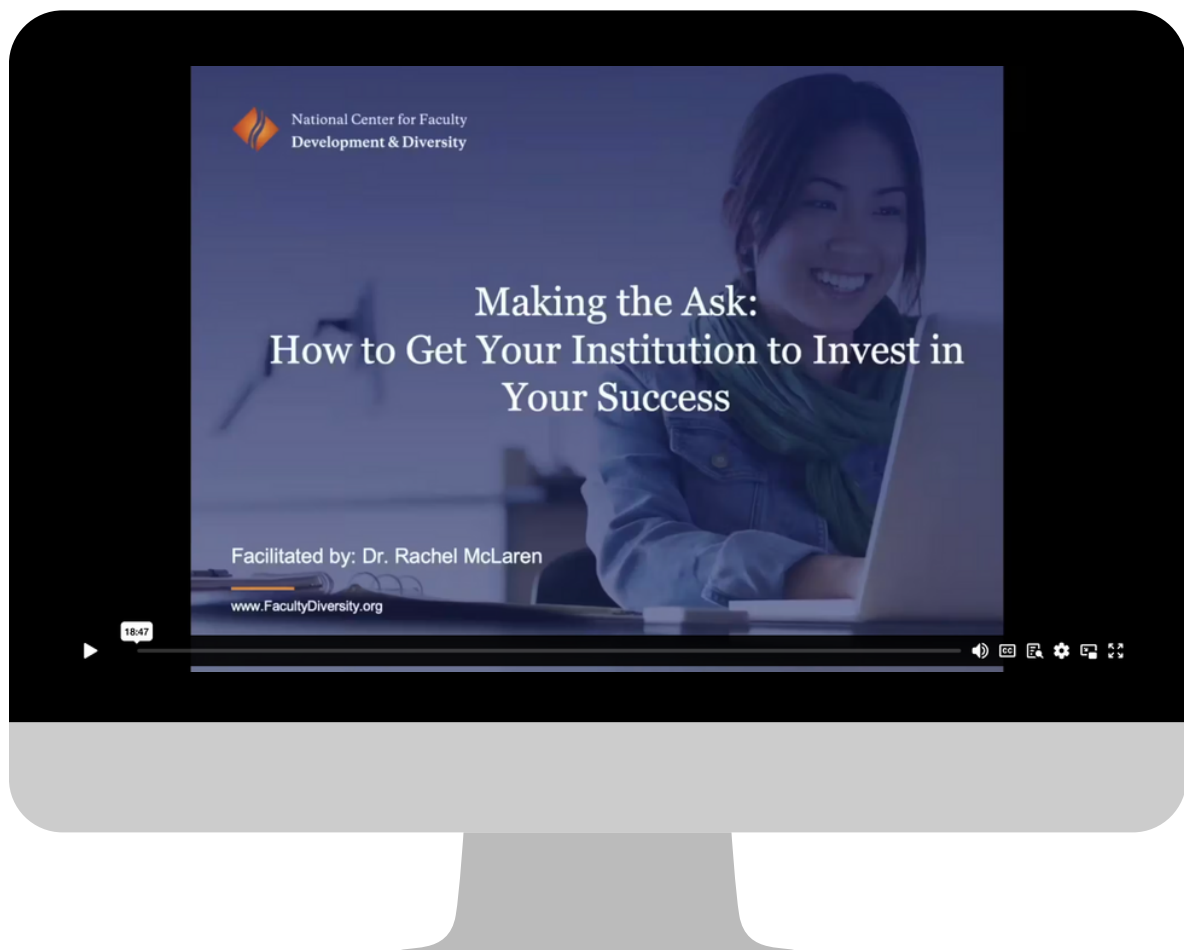


Webinar

MAKING THE ASK FOR FSP

We hear often from faculty who want to participate in our Faculty Success Program but don't have funding. In the tips and best practices below, we share how to create an irresistible offer, how to position your participation as a win-win situation for your college, and how to secure a commitment from your university to provide you with the tools you need to thrive.

[WATCH HERE](#)



PART
6
MENTORING 101

There Is No Guru

We've all heard repeatedly how important "mentoring" is to our professional success, but if you scratch the surface and ask people what exactly they mean by "mentoring," you will find a wide range of responses. Too many new faculty members we know imagine that they will have a single guru-like "mentor" who will sense their needs, generously dispense wisdom, care deeply about their success, and gently guide them along the path to tenure and promotion. Since that rarely happens, we want to focus this week on Common New Faculty Mistake #14: Looking For A Single Guru-Mentor.

The problem with the idea that you will find one guru-mentor is that new faculty members have a wide variety of needs, and it is not only impossible but also problematic for all of those needs to be met by one (and only one) person. For example, if you are a typical new faculty member, you have some combination of the following needs:

Professional Development

You are looking for help in learning how to manage time, resolve conflicts, administer projects, organize your office space, teach efficiently and well, supervise graduate students, and make strategic decisions about service commitments.

Emotional Support

As a new faculty member, you are in the midst of a significant identity and role transition: from a graduate student (or postdoc) to a professor. As a result, you may need support in dealing with the common stress and pressures of transitioning to life on the tenure track.

A Sense Of Community

Given that most new tenure-track faculty have uprooted their lives to move to a new area, you may find yourself seeking both an intellectual and/or social community where you feel a true sense of belonging.

Accountability

The structure of your job likely provides the least accountability for the activity that is most valued (research, writing, and publication). In order to avoid getting caught up in the daily chaos, the vast majority of new faculty members need some form of an accountability system for writing.

Institutional Sponsorship

You also need to cultivate relationships with people who are invested in your success at your institution. By that, we mean senior faculty who are willing to use their power to advocate for your best interests behind closed doors.

Access To Networks

Because knowledge isn't produced in isolation, it's critical for you to connect with others to discuss potential research collaborations, navigate external funding, and access opportunity structures that might not be immediately apparent to you as a new faculty member.

Project-Specific Feedback

You will also need to regularly communicate with people who can provide substantive comments on your proposals, manuscript drafts, and new ideas.

We're listing these common needs to illustrate the point that no one person could (or should) fulfill all of them in your life! Expecting a single mentor to transition you from graduate student to faculty member will inevitably lead to disappointment, over-dependence on the advice of one person, and feelings of loneliness. For example, we once spoke with a tenure-track faculty member who had relied exclusively on her departmentally-assigned guru-mentor to guide her through the transition from graduate student to professor. The guru advised her when she arrived to "hold off working on her book for a few years to mature intellectually." In response to this very bad advice, she spent her first few years "intellectually maturing" instead of writing and then was shocked to receive a negative third-year review that focused almost entirely on her lack of published work and minimal progress on her book. Our point is that gurus are human; they make mistakes. Therefore, relying exclusively on one person can put you at unnecessary risk and leave you with many unmet needs.

This week, we want to encourage you to fundamentally rethink the idea of "mentoring" by asking yourself: What do I need, and what is the most strategic and efficient way to get it? Then, instead of looking for one all-knowing guru-mentor, you will start to realize that there are many different ways to get information, support, feedback, and advice. We can meet our professional development, emotional support, community, and accountability needs by connecting with professionals, peers, friends, books, and online communities. For example, it's probably more effective to hire a professional editor than to expect your departmental mentor to copyedit your work. It's probably more satisfying to meet with friends for emotional support than to expect it from your department chair. And, it's far more meaningful to join a writing group for accountability than asking your mentor to call you every week and make sure you're making progress on your writing.

Let us be perfectly clear. There are some needs (e.g., sponsorship, access to opportunities, project-specific feedback) that only senior people in your field and/or department can meet. The trick is to know the difference so that you focus the limited time you have with senior mentors on the things only they can provide for you while finding alternative ways to meet your other needs.

If There's No Guru, Then What's A New Faculty Member To Do?

Instead of focusing on any one particular person, we're suggesting that you imagine an extensive web of support that you create by identifying your needs and proactively getting them met. If we could construct an ideal mentoring network to support new faculty members, it would include all of the following:

- A broad array of mentors and sponsors that are located within and beyond your current institution.
- An excellent coach (or therapist) to help you transition through your first year.
- A local and extended network of friends who you can rely on for social support and stress relief.
- A group of scholars in your field with whom you can share drafts and ideas.
- A supportive community that meets your unique accountability needs and celebrates your successes.
- On- and off-campus professional development activities.
- A professional development fund that you can access to get whatever needs you have met in the most effective and efficient way.

In a perfect world, your department would be organized in such a way as to welcome and support you during your transition from graduate student to professor. In reality, it will most likely be your responsibility to identify your needs and find ways to meet them. Along with that responsibility comes the realization that you have tremendous power (even if it doesn't always feel like it). In other words, you don't have to be dependent on a single guru-mentor because YOU have the power to create a network of support that is populated by people who are invested in your success. This collective approach will enable you to feel supported before, during, and after problems arise in your department. It will provide you with opportunities.

connections, and reference groups that extend far beyond your college or university. And most importantly, it will serve as a buffer to decrease any alienation, loneliness, and stress that you may feel at your current institution.

The Weekly Challenge

This week we challenge each of you to do the following:

- Review the list of new faculty needs, and ask yourself two important questions: 1) What do I need right now? and 2) What is the most efficient and effective way to get it?
- If you feel resistant to reaching out, seeking professional assistance, or asking for help, gently ask yourself: Why?
- For every need that you identify, brainstorm at least three different ways to get it met. We keep a list of resources and referrals on the NCFDD website that may provide a good starting point.
- If you have not yet met the faculty development professionals on your campus, ask who they are, where they are located, and what services they offer.
- Write for at least 30 minutes every day (because people love to mentor, sponsor, and support productive new faculty members).
- If you want an intensive mentoring experience, consider joining our Faculty Success Program.

We hope this week brings you the energy to re-think your assumptions about mentoring, the clarity to identify what YOU need right now, and the energy to seek new and creative ways to get all of your needs met!

*Want to dive deeper? Watch our Core Curriculum Webinar:
Cultivating Your Network of Mentors, Sponsors & Collaborators*



NCFD DD Mentoring Map

Department Colleagues
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Professional Editor
1. _____
2. _____

Readers
(see Intellectual Community)

Senior Faculty in Your Department
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

On Campus Mentors
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Off Campus Mentors
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Peer Mentors
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

On Campus
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Off Campus
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Friends
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Family
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Other
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Readers
0-25%
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

25-50%
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

50-75%
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

75-100%
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

 **Professional Development**

 **Emotional Support**

 **Role Models**

 **Intellectual Community**

 **Substantive Feedback**

 **Sponsorship**

 **Access to Opportunities**

 **Accountability**
for what REALLY matters

 **Safe Space**

1. _____ 3. _____
2. _____ 4. _____

PART
7

**WORK-LIFE
BALANCE**

Hidden Handbook

RE-THINKING SELF CARE

Self-care plays a vital role in sustaining the success and well-being of academics. However, self-care does not have to be expensive, selfish, or time-consuming. In this video, we invite academics to rethink self-care, and we offer a collection of supportive strategies and practices.

[WATCH HERE](#)



It's Crunch Time



The end of the term must be near because most of the new faculty members we've heard from are holding their breath, trying to keep their heads above water, and praying for the end of the term! The feelings of exhaustion and frustration we hear repeatedly are both intense and predictable. As a result, let's focus on some concrete ways to deal with **Common New Faculty Mistake #15: Failing to Recognize and Adjust to the Rhythms of the Term.**

Tip #1: Clearly Communicate To Others That It Is Crunch Time

Let those who live with you and/or are impacted by your behavior know that the next week (or two) will be difficult, assure them that it's a finite period of time, and let them know you appreciate their support and understanding. We find that people are willing to assist us when we communicate our needs ahead of time.

Tip #2: Lower Your Standards In Non-Essential Areas Of Life

We are what's known as neat freaks. During crunch time, we give ourselves permission to be slob. It's OK because it's only one week. For instance, Kerry Ann loves to eat out, but during crunch time, she's OK with peanut butter and pickle sandwiches because she doesn't have time for anything else. And that's OK because it's only one week. The point is to ask yourself: what can I let slide a bit for the next week (or two) without negative consequences?



Tip #3: Assess What Grading ACTUALLY Needs To Get Done

Many students do not read comments that are given on final papers and projects. Upon the suggestion of one of Kerry Ann's mentors, she developed the habit of asking her students ahead of time to indicate if they want her to write comments on their final papers. Fewer than 10 percent requested the comments, and she saved hours of grading that would never have been read while concentrating her comment-writing on the students who genuinely wanted feedback.

Tip #4: Say NO To Service Requests Until The End Of The Semester

If you are struggling to find time to complete all of the things on your to-do list, it makes no sense to add more items. In other words, when your time is scarce, one of the worst things you can do is to take on any additional responsibilities. Say "no" often, clearly, and without guilt.

Tip #5: Every Day Needs A Plan

Take 30 minutes on one day of the week to get your to-do list out of your head and onto a piece of paper. Then force yourself to place each of your tasks onto a specific time in your calendar. If you don't have enough time for the tasks, then delegate them, re-negotiate the deadline, or let them go. This Weekly Meeting will clarify your week and force you to make the tough decisions in advance. Then each morning, you only need to spend two minutes reviewing the items you must complete for that day. This will keep you focused and confident that the truly important things will get done.

Tip #6: Write For At Least 30 Minutes Each Day

When new faculty feel crunched for time, one of the first things they are ready to sacrifice is their daily writing! This term, put yourself, your future, and your daily writing time into the non-negotiable category (along with classes and meetings). There are MANY other ways to be efficient besides eliminating the one activity that is central to your promotion, tenure, and long-term professional success.

Tip #7: Only Check E-Mail One Time Per Day (Max)

E-mail begets more e-mail. When you have little time, the least effective way to spend it is by writing e-mails. We're only able to restrict our e-mails to once a day during crunch times, but for one week, it's unlikely to cause a crisis and typically works out just fine.

Tip #8: Eliminate Unnecessary Electronic Distractions

If you subscribe to any listservs, sign off until the term is over. Many people sign off during the summer, so why not just do so now? Listservs create lots of e-mail in your inbox, very little of which is critical information that you can't do without between now and graduation. While you're at it, why not take a respite from all electronic time-wasters: Facebook, Twitter, television, etc.

Tip #9: Take Care Of Your Body

Exercise reduces stress. When we don't have time to go to the gym, we opt for using the stairs instead of elevators in buildings, take quick walks at lunchtime, or just put on some music for five minutes and dance like a toddler who just found a cup of coffee. Be creative! Whatever you need to do to get your heart rate up and your body moving will benefit you during crunch time.

Tip #10: End Every Day With Gratitude And A Treat!

As each day comes to a close, take a moment to thank the universe for all the things that went well and affirm that everything in your life is working for your highest good. We insist on a treat every day during crunch time because we deserve it. So do you!

We hope that you find the strength to try some new end-of-term strategies, the creativity to adapt them to your unique situation, and the comfort of knowing that you are not alone in your struggle.

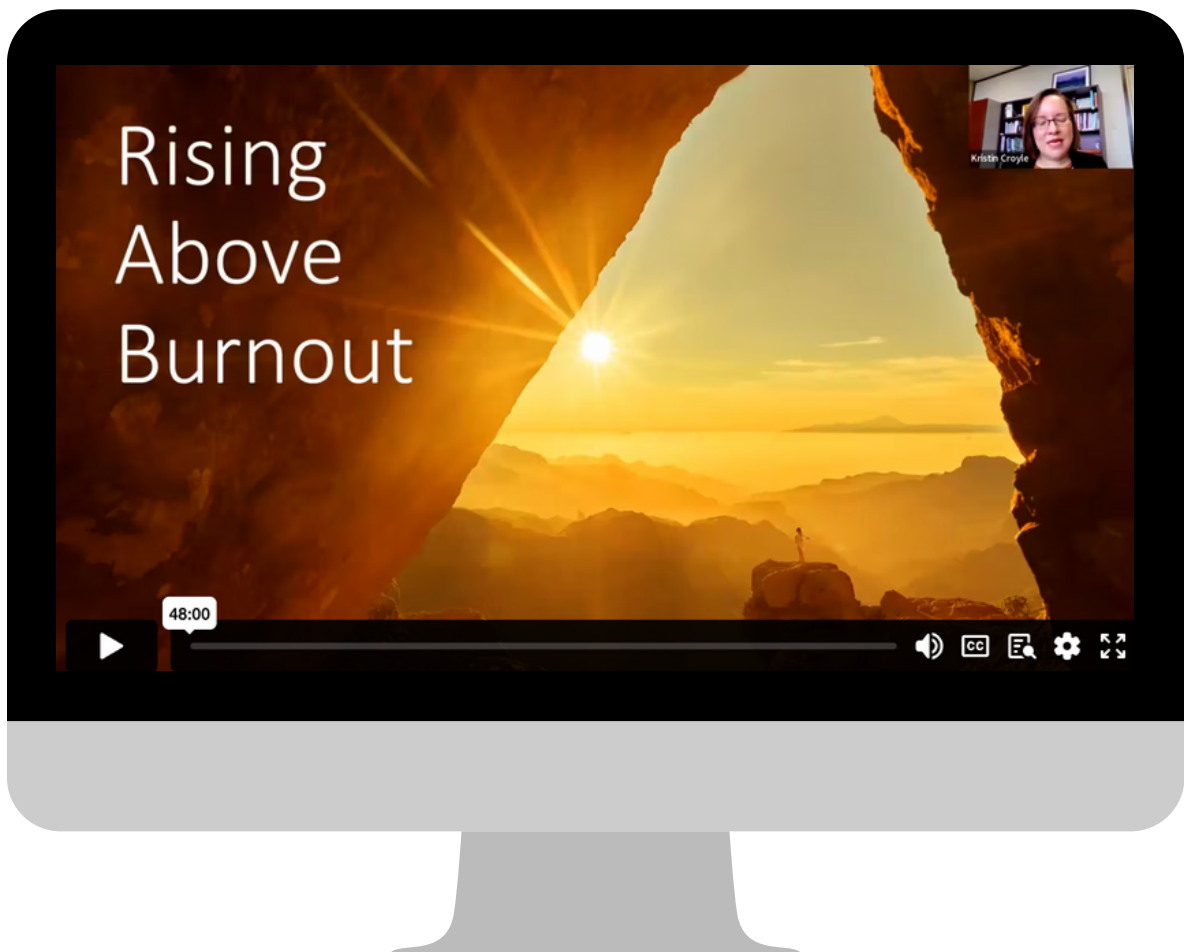


Guest Expert Webinar

RISING ABOVE BURNOUT

Faculty have been sharing experiences of burnout over the last two years, but this experience is not only confined to the COVID period. Many characteristics of the faculty role can contribute to feelings of burnout. This webinar will focus on some of the contributors to burnout in a faculty role and concrete steps that faculty can take to continue to find energy, satisfaction, and joy in their work.

[WATCH HERE](#)





ncfdd

CONTACT US

**For questions about membership, reach out to
Membership@NCFDD.org**

**For questions about the Faculty Success
Program, reach out to FSP@NCFDD.org**

[NCFDD.ORG](https://ncfdd.org)