Accelerating a Scholarly Research Program

Frost Center Colloquia
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Check-in: Hoping to discuss

• Please use your phone (QR code) or computer to answer the poll
Check-in: Your barriers to research

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10 habits of productive researchers

• There are lots of ways to build a successful research program

• And “success” can mean a lot of different things

• Let’s examine some habits that might help you develop consistency and make sustained progress
1. Schedule research time and protect it

• Research and writing take time, and they are both important parts of this job

• You schedule your teaching and would never schedule another appointment during that time; do you schedule your writing and protect that as well?

• The power of Writing Time
  • Start small but consistent
  • Always do something to move your research forward during this time
  • Protect this time

• Check out Paul Silvia’s book “How to Write A Lot”
2. Think about “filling your pipeline”

1. HSRB (IRB)
2. Data collection (running a study)
3. Data analysis
4. Manuscript writing / circulating
5. Manuscript under review
6. Manuscript in press
3. Be an exemplary collaborator

- Be the collaborator you always dreamed others would be

- Prioritize **turning around papers/projects quickly** (norms differ, but my research collaborators and I aim for 48 hours)

- **Offer something special** (e.g., unique participant sample, data analytic techniques, methodological expertise)

- **Network, network, network** (especially at conferences)…then be ready to carry the lion’s share of the load in the beginning as you demonstrate value of collaboration to others
4. Establish an effective writing process

• Be clear on authorship early on

• Clarify what everyone’s roles on the project are; first author does the heavy lifting

• Circulate paper among coauthors and instruct them to:
  • Make changes directly to paper (NOT COMMENTS, except for analyses)
  • Move the paper along quickly (48-72 hours) or they’ll be skipped and circled back
  • CC the entire team as papers move forward so the rest of the team can see the progress

• First author submits, shepherds through editorial process, and usually takes care of RR requests
5. Involve students

• Think about how to involve students at every stage of the research process

• Good research mentorship = good teaching

• It’s more rewarding to collaborate with energetic students, and they often teach us, too

• A graduate-style lab setting
6. Develop a habit of seeking funding

• Utilize internal grant mechanisms at Hope
  • Nyenhuis grants in the summer (many kinds; annual; summer support)
  • Frost Center Fellowships (annual; year-long fellowship)
  • Towsley Research Scholar Fellowship (third-year; four-year fellowship)
  • Departmental support

• Use those pilot funds to write external grants
  • OSRP is terrific
  • Next month (November) we’ll host a grant-writing discussion / workshop
  • Start small and then build up
7. Nothing for a single purpose

• A grant proposal can be a literature review introduction

• A student’s poster can be translated into a coauthored manuscript

• Readings for class can enhance your inquiry in a new area of scholarship

• How can you integrate your research and teaching more seamlessly?
8. Embrace rejection

• Get used to rejection (we don’t have “batting averages”)

• **You never get the pellet if you don’t press the bar** (successful folks don’t avoid rejection; they persist despite it)

• Your work will be rejected a lot. My work has been rejected a lot (e.g., my graduate school drought)

• Journal rejection rates in social psychology are 90-95%. Grant rejection rates can be 90-95%

• Don’t let rejection stop you; allow it to motivate you
9. Set goals

• Start (and regularly refer to) a document with your
  • short-term goals (e.g., this year, next year)
  • mid-range goals (e.g., pre-tenure, next 5 years)
  • long-term goals (e.g., 10-15 years)
  • lifetime goals (e.g., before you call it quits)

• Make them **SMART**: Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic, and based on a Timeline

• Break them into smaller sub-goals (e.g., collecting Sample A this semester; writing the paper by next semester)

• Share these with a few trusted confidants (commitment principle); be accountable

• Regularly take stock of your progress, adjust if needed, and celebrate successes
10. Have courage (and hope!)

- Fear, perfectionism, and procrastination are three of the biggest three to productivity
  - **Fear** that you will be rejected (newsflash: you will) or be thought stupid (reviewers are **USUALLY** constructive) or aren’t good enough (you have something important to say)
  - **Perfectionism** keeps us from sending things out (submitted is better than unpublished)
  - **Procrastination** stall us out indefinitely and can be dealt with by scheduling and holding your self accountable

- Do it, even when you don’t want to (in the moment)

- Swing for the fences...you can always work your way down the publication or grants ladder

- We learn from rejection, and we usually get better
What has worked for you?

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Let’s discuss!

• How can we support one another?

• What are tangible steps that you can start implementing now?

• How can the Frost Center support you?

• Don’t forget that November’s colloquium is on grant-writing!