Academic Careers for Minority Faculty: Myth and Reality

Gary S. May, Dean
College of Engineering
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Sloan MPHED Program
Outline

- Introduction
- Recruitment
- Research
- Teaching
- Service
- Preparing Your Curriculum Vita
- Conclusion
Demographics of Academia

• Full-Time S&E Ph.D. faculty (2010 statistics):
  – African American: 3.7% (10,000)
  – Hispanic American: 4.0% (10,900)
  – American Indian: 0.2% (600)

• Compare with the number of S&E doctorates graduating (2012):
  – African American 5.1% (1,140)
  – Hispanic American 5.9% (1,327)
  – American Indian 0.4% (100)
• A smaller pool of “traditional” talent will exist in the near future.
• Consequently, academia must cultivate new sources of professionals from which to draw.
• The more diverse the talent pool is, the more access universities will have to creativity, ingenuity, and innovative ideas.
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• **Myth:** Departmental diversity goals are driven by politics.

• **Reality:** A diverse faculty can carry out the mission of a university better than a homogeneous faculty.
• **Myth:** Placement Centers and advertisements are the best places to search for job openings.

• **Reality:** Probably more than 50% of your job offers will come from personal contacts (yours or your advisor’s).
Myth: Universities mean it when they claim to have a hiring freeze in effect.

Reality: There are usually special funds which can be tapped to hire minority faculty candidates.
Myth: All faculty candidates must be judged using the same criteria.

Reality: If you use criteria appropriate for white males, you will end up with a faculty of all white males.
Salary

• **Myth:** University faculty are not well paid.

• **Reality:** There is no “vow of poverty” associated with faculty careers. Starting salaries are very competitive.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics
Outline

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• **Myth:** Academic faculty perform “hands-on” research.

• **Reality:** Graduate students do most of the work. As a faculty member, you’ll be more of a research “manager.”
• **Myth:** Research must be performed by individual investigators.

• **Reality:** Small groups of collaborating investigators can be very successful. Writing proposals in groups can be an advantage.
• **Myth:** All publications are created equal.

• **Reality:** Refereed journal publications are considered more significant than conference proceedings.
Establishing a Reputation

• **Myth:** If you do good work, people will notice you.

• **Reality:** A little self-promotion never hurts.
Tenure

- **Myth:** The awarding of tenure is based solely on research contributions.

- **Reality:** Being a good researcher is a necessary, but not sufficient condition to receive tenure.
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Competence

- **Myth:** Those who can’t do, teach.

- **Reality:** The better teachers in academia would probably be among the most valued people in industry.

  *(Reality II: Those who can’t do go into politics).*
Rigor

• **Myth:** Teaching is a nice way to retire.

• **Reality:** Work hours in academia are at the very least comparable to those in industry. Sixty hour work weeks are not uncommon.
Industry Experience

- **Myth:** Only people with practical experience should teach.

- **Reality:** Classroom instruction has little to do with relating corporate “war stories.” Academicians are capable of maintaining contact with the “real world” through research, consulting, and professional activities.
• **Myth:** Students challenge minority professors in the classroom more than white male professors.

• **Reality:** Good students might challenge anyone, but you will not be intimidated by students’ questions if you know what you are talking about.
Graduate Students

- **Myth:** Minority professors have a more difficult time recruiting good graduate students.

- **Reality:** Professors with money and interesting research projects do not have trouble attracting students.
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“Public service is a high calling, worthy of the best and brightest of our students and citizens.”
Role Models

- **Myth:** Minority faculty are intrinsically good role models for minority students.

- **Reality:** It is very difficult for a poor teacher or researcher to be a satisfactory role model.
• **Myth:** Minority faculty should avoid excessive service activities.

• **Reality:** Although you should be selective, certain service activities can enhance your career.
Value of Service

• **Myth:** Service contributions go unnoticed during faculty evaluations.

• **Reality:** Although they are more difficult to quantify, service contributions can complement your case.
Outline

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Prepared Your Curriculum Vita

Conclusion
CV Format

Name

Curriculum Vitae

Home Contact Info

Business Contact Info

EDUCATION

University #1 (most recent)
Degree, Discipline, Date
Major
Minor(s)
Thesis Title

University #2 (next most recent)
Degree, Discipline, Date
Major
Minor(s)
Thesis Title
## EXPERIENCE

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## CONSULTING

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PUBLICATIONS

Books and Parts of Books

Journal Articles
[1] Cite refereed journal articles in reverse chronological order.

Conference Proceedings
[1] Cite conference papers in reverse chronological order.
PRESENTATIONS

Seminars and Conference Presentations without Proceedings

[1] Cite seminars, talks, and poster presentations. Indicate if talks were invited.

Keynote Addresses

[1] Cite any events at which you were the keynote speaker.
FUNDED RESEARCH GRANTS

As Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator
1. Title of Project
   Sponsor
   Amount Funded
   Duration

As a Contributor
1. Title of Project
   Sponsor
   Number of contributors
   Your contribution
   Amount Funded
   Duration
CV Format, cont.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Your employer when honor was received OR Sponsoring organization
Name of Award (Date received).

AFFILIATIONS

Employer or Organization
Name of Committee, your role(s) (Dates served).
Introduction

- Who are you?
- Employment history
- Professional philosophy
- Why are you interested in this university?
Research

• What are you interested in beyond your thesis?
• What facilities will you need?
• Who will fund your work?
• Where will you publish?
Personal Statement

Teaching

• Identify any prior teaching experience
• What courses are you interested in teaching?
• What new courses can you develop?
Overall Recommendations

- Keep documentation current.
- Be sure to list TA jobs under “Experience.”
- Frequently discuss your research with your faculty advisor and colleagues.
- Publish your thesis results.
- Cultivate good references.
- Use service activities to round out your efforts instead of dominating them.
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Summary

“Forewarned = Forearmed”

• The purpose of this talk was to provide a frank evaluation of academic careers in engineering for individuals from under-represented groups.

• In so doing, we have hopefully revealed some truths as well as dispelled some myths.