Getting Started as a Faculty Member in CNS

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New Faculty Orientation, CNS
Outline

1. Welcome
2. First things first
   - Settle in the department
   - Prepare for the first day of classes
3. Faculty Development
   - Teaching effectively
   - Service
4. Last, but not the least
   - Climate
   - Family friendly policies
   - Have some fun and take care of your health
Welcome to Austin

Figure: Courtesy of kvue
Welcome to the University of Texas at Austin

- Year founded: 1883
- Alumni: 482,000+
- Total students: 51,832
- Externally sponsored projects (2019-20): 7,198
- Amount awarded in sponsored projects (2019-20): $796,694,594
- Top 10 In More than 48 Areas: U.S. News & World Report Best Graduate Schools, 2020-21

Figure: Courtesy of: www.photosforclass.com
Welcome to the College of Natural Sciences (CNS)

The CNS is

- The largest college at The University of Texas at Austin
- One of the largest colleges of science in the U.S.

More precisely...
The CNS is home to 12,000+ undergraduate and graduate students, 1,200 staff members, and more than 700 faculty including:

- 23 members of the National Academies
- 1 Abel Prize winner (equivalent of Nobel for math)
- 3 Wolff Prize winners
- 50+ recipients of Regents’ Outstanding Teaching Awards
- faculty doing cutting edge science and math
- colleagues who knock on your office door to say “Hi”
- YOU
Congratulations for starting the best job in the world!

- **Research**: We have the freedom to pursue research that we choose/design/love.
  - On impact - CNS’ way: Jason McLellan and his team collaborated with researchers at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases’ Vaccine Research Center to design a stabilized version of the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein, which Moderna, as well as Pfizer and BioNTech; Johnson & Johnson, used as the basis for the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines.
  - On beauty: “I am among those who think that science has great beauty. A scientist in his laboratory is not only a technician: he is also a child placed before natural phenomena which impress him like a fairy tale.” (Marie Curie)

- **Teaching/Mentoring**: We share the passion for discovery with students.

- **Service**: We help colleagues at our department, CNS, UT, around the world
  - “Art is I; science is we.” (Claude Bernard)

- All that while being your own boss
First things first

1. Settle in the department
2. Prepare for the first day of classes
Settle in the department

1 Find out who’s who in the department
   - Ask the chair for a list of the department staff members and their roles.
   - Introduce yourself to each of the department staff members.

2 Talk with your mentor(s):
   - Your department may assign a single mentor or separate ones for teaching and research.
   - Meet with your mentor. Get to know them and let them help you get started.

3 Check that you’ve been added to Email lists
   - The department should add you to the email list for seminars and other department activities.
   - If you are new instructional faculty, remind the department administrators to add you to email lists for faculty meetings where teaching and curriculum are discussed.
1. Talk to colleagues who have taught the class in a previous semester

2. Plan your syllabus
   - Some information is required (see university guidelines, FIC website for Syllabus)
   - Avoid common mis-steps by talking with other faculty
   - You’ll be expected to post your syllabus and CV to the University website (you’ll get instructions about this)
   - Don’t include any information about your TA’s on the public version of your syllabus (FERPA violation)

3. Get to know Canvas
   - Canvas is a cloud-based course management system
   - Attend help sessions and office hours at the FIC
   - http://canvas.utexas.edu
Adapt to the modality of your course

- For Online or Hybrid courses, check out the Transitioning to Online Teaching and Learning Canvas site for resources
- Attend a FIC help session; see FIC website
  https://facultyinnovate.utexas.edu
- Consult with TIDES; see TIDES website
  https://cns.utexas.edu/tides
- Ask colleagues for help

Do a trial run before the first day

- Check all technology (Zoom, mic/camera, etc)
- If applicable, visit your classroom location before the first day of class
Researcher/teacher/fulfilled citizen of UT whose activities encompass

- Research (to be discussed on August 30th).
- Teaching
- Service

Use your time effectively: Learn to work smarter, not longer.
Tips for teaching effectively

- Teach an established course or one that allows a lot of flexibility
- Don’t recreate the wheel
- Reflect, take notes, revise
- Get feedback early and often
- Don’t be perfect, but do perfect (You do not need to teach the class perfectly the first time, but you do need to show improvement over time).
Use resources on campus

- Your teaching mentor.

- Texas Institute for Discovery Education in Science (TIDES) - CNS home for programs in innovative undergraduate science.

- Faculty Innovation Center provides a wealth of info on
  - workshops/seminars
  - materials for improving teaching
  - course development
  - use of technology.
Use observations and evaluations to improve your teaching

**Observations**
- **What**: You observe other colleagues teach.
- **When**: Teaching Discovery Day is a great opportunity to do this.
- **How**: Use the Reflective Observation form available at the Faculty Affairs webpage to make comments about the observation.

**Evaluations**
- **What**: Colleagues (peers and an expert evaluator) visit your class and evaluate your teaching.
- **When**: Check the Faculty Affairs webpage for details.
- **How**: Evaluators are using forms available at the Faculty Affairs webpage.
- Talk to the observer/evaluator both before and after the class.
Have fun while teaching

- Be enthusiastic and enjoy the students.

- Students will forgive almost anything except a faculty member making it clear they would rather be anywhere except in the classroom.
Tips for participating in service effectively

1. Think about 1-2 areas you’re interested in (grad education? undergrad education? mentorship? faculty development? discipline-based?)
   - Look for opportunities that benefit the department and you

2. Early in your career, choose service that has a finite commitment such as:
   - graduate student recruiting
   - commencement
   - outreach day (Explore UT, e.g.)

3. Choose service that is highly relevant to your discipline, such as:
   - serving on grant review panels (occasionally)
   - reviewing manuscripts (occasionally)
Climate matters to all of us! Do not allow anyone in your group or classes to create a climate that is not inclusive and respectful of all people.

Sexual Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Sexual Misconduct, Interpersonal Violence, and Stalking are prohibited.
  - You must report any incidents of above type.
  - Report forms are at the Faculty Affairs webpage.

Compliance and ethics are taken seriously.
  - Report any potential conflicts of interest/commitment.
Family friendly policies - MID

**Modified instructional duties (MID)**

Full-time faculty members may request MID for one semester when certain personal circumstances prevent them from being able to perform their classroom teaching duties.
Family friendly policies - some personal circumstances

- Regents’ Rules and Regulations provide for the **extension of the tenure track probationary period** for faculty under certain circumstances.
  - Personal circumstances that may justify the extension include, but are not restricted to:
    - disability or illness of the faculty member;
    - status of the faculty member as the principal caregiver of a preschool child; or,
    - status of the faculty member as a principal caregiver of a disabled, elderly, or ill member of the family of the faculty member.

- A **Personal Circumstances Flag** offers professional-/non-tenure-track and tenured faculty the opportunity to designate a year within the scope of a multi-year review as having been impacted by personal circumstances as is available for tenure-track faculty.
Welcome
First things first
Faculty Development
Last, but not the least

Supports for Your Family & Career

Your Many Benefits Include:

**Back-Up Child, Adult, and Elder Care:** Don’t stress about school breaks, bad weather, or caregiver cancellations. Reserve high-quality child care in a center, or in-home care for your child, adult, or elder relatives.

**Care for the Whole Family:** Easily find sitters, elder care, and pet care (your membership fee to the database is waived); jump ahead on the waitlist or enjoy discounts at participating child care centers.

Start Today!
Visit [http://clients.brighthorizons.com/utaustinfaculty](http://clients.brighthorizons.com/utaustinfaculty)
**Back-Up Username:** utaustin  **Password:** care4you
**Download the Back-Up Care app:** Search "back-up care" in the App Store or Google Play
**Questions? Call:** 877 242 2737

Additional benefits - subsidized back-up child and elder care
References

- UT Austin Faculty Affairs web site:
  https://provost.utexas.edu/the-office/faculty-affairs

- UT Austin CNS Faculty Affairs web site:
  https://cns.utexas.edu/faculty-affairs
Have some fun and take care of your health

Take some time for yourself to avoid burnout.

- Hike and bike trails
- Meet with colleagues for a (virtual) lunch or coffee. You will probably end up talking research or teaching, but it will allow you to bounce your ideas off someone and also let you relax a bit.
The best job in the world!