

## **Top 10 Tips for Junior Faculty on Jump-Starting Your Career** **Daniel S. Hamermesh, University of Texas at Austin**

- 1. Send your thesis and post-thesis articles off to journals quickly**  
It takes on average more than 18 months from submission to final acceptance of an article (and at least another year until publication). If a paper is rejected on initial submission, add at least 6 to 9 months to the total. With a tenure decision during your 6<sup>th</sup> year, submissions after your third year is unlikely to be accepted by tenure time.
- 2. Work on several papers at once**  
If you are working on only one paper, you will have too few publications at tenure time; and you will either be “over-writing” that paper and/or have be spending lots of time avoiding doing research. But avoid the other extreme—spreading yourself over so many papers that you never finish anything.
- 3. Become an expert on 1-1/2 topics**  
Scattershot publications suggest you are a dilettante. Becoming known as an expert in one area, and highly knowledgeable in a second, shows you are a serious scholar and embeds you worldwide as somebody to be talked with about a particular issue.
- 4. Unless you are at a liberal arts college that stresses teaching, don't over-prepare your classes**  
The marginal product of additional preparation time diminishes rapidly; and most schools do not take teaching into account unless you fall below some standard. The loss function here is asymmetric.
- 5. Attend seminars—and try to meet with the speakers**  
Aside from the direct intellectual benefit to you, your attendance signals your colleagues that you are interested in developing your skills.
- 6. Submit abstracts/papers to conferences and workshops**  
This way you get constructive comments and make yourself known. This latter is especially important, since the people you will meet are ideal candidates to write letters commenting on your work at tenure time.
- 7. Generally don't hide your light under a bushel**  
This summarizes how you should behave at seminars, conferences, workshops and other venues. There are many junior economists in this world, and it is important to become known (but not for silly comments).

8. **Avoid service on University-wide committees**  
Such service is not valued by the Department members who will decide your tenure, and it takes time away from activities that they do value.
  
9. **Do (some) service on Department committees**  
Such service is valued by Department members (if for no other reason than that it saves them time); and it is also a good way to get to know your colleagues and for them to get to know you. Organizing seminars or helping in recruiting are particularly attractive types of service, since they enable you to meet interesting economists.
  
10. **If you have a problem, talk to the Department chairperson or a senior colleague in your specialty**  
Most senior people see themselves as mentors and are happy to discuss issues of research, teaching and service with you. Most Department chairs wish to bend over backwards to give you a fair shot at attaining tenure.