



**NATIONAL
CANCER
INSTITUTE**

Negotiating Your First Faculty Position

NCI Career Development Workshop: Advancement to Research Independence

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Establishing a Sustainable Career in Research and Medicine

Guiding Ideals

- This above all: to thine own self be true
Shakespeare
- Know Thyself
Ancient Greek Maxim
- Negotiating first faculty position is one of the few times in life with tremendous leverage.
- Negotiating is expected- outcomes will impact research productivity, career trajectory, work-life balance.
- **Best outcomes correlate with a well proposed and documented research plan. Take the time to map out research goals.**
- **Mindset/Philosophy: goal to secure the resources needed to succeed as a scientist. Base negotiations on goal for research success.**

Platform for Negotiation/Fundamental Items

Base negotiations on goal for research success

- Compensation
 - Base salary
 - Signing bonus
 - Moving/Relocation support
 - Travel and meeting support
- Personnel Support
 - Administrative Support
 - Meetings, travel, finances
 - Pre and post-award grants management
- Personal Factors
 - Spouse/Partner dual career hiring support
 - Childcare support

Platform for Negotiation/Fundamental Items

- Start-Up Package/Research Support
 - Laboratory Space/Square feet/space cost/rent
 - Shared core facilities and access
 - Proximity to collaborators
 - Laboratory equipment
 - Major instruments (microscope)
 - Lab space redesign
 - Post doctoral support
 - Consumables
 - Animal Costs
 - Computing resources
 - Support for research staff (manager, technician/benefits)
 - Graduate student funding matrix

KEY POINT: Recruitment package should be justified by the research plan.

Know Before You Go: Obtain Critical Information Before Initiating the Negotiation Process

- Talk with mentors about strategy- optimal plans for lab establishment-career planning, weekly schedule
- Inquire about recent hires in department/recruitment packages
- Compare with faculty at peer institutions around the nation
- Professional societies are often source of valuable information
- What is the expected teaching/service load
- Opportunities for sabbatical, how long and how often
- Policy on inventions and patents
- Resources for commercialization
- **Expectations for tenure**

Strategies for Negotiation: A Win-Win Proposition

- Collaboration with integrity: mutually meaningful end goals in mind
 - Your sustainable success translates into success for department and university
 - Mutual aspirations for high impact work that will result in grants, publications, and recognition
- Implement your departmental leaders to help advocate on your behalf
 - Rational justification for needs will help facilitate success
- Determine the issues with primacy
 - Start up funding
 - Salary
 - Teaching schedule
 - Lab space
 - Personnel Support

Strategies for Negotiation: A Win-Win Proposition

- Before signing, confirm all critical items **in writing**
 - Start up amount, critical funding endpoints such as space rent/support
 - Spending timeline expectations- 3-5 years, forever?
 - Renovation needs/commitments
 - Support for lab staff and students
 - Teaching load requirements overtime
 - Sabbatical opportunities
 - Tenure clock and possibilities for tenure advancement/extension
- Verbal commitments are not enforceable
- **Attorney review**
- **Please avoid:** requests without rational justification, considering only salary, overlooking costs: benefits, service contracts, space rent, transparency about tenure, **avoiding negotiation altogether**

Research Program/Clinical Practice: Finding a Balance

- Patient care is a constant presence
- Patients always come first
- Issues, problems, complications unpredictable
- Each person must decide how much variability and risk to bring into career and life
- Suggest tight control if planning on lab or large clinical research effort
- Need nights to work/sleep
- Shift toward incentive compensation makes research commitment more challenging
- Pursue an environment that will value individual effort

Getting Started

- Physician Scientist
 - Tenure track or no
- Must get going, but take time to make thoughtful decisions
- Grants Some advise no grants only data and papers, this is tough and
- Papers speaks to need for preliminary data from research experience
- People
- Protection
- Expect the unexpected- partners take leave, baby/family health issues?

Research Program

- Evolves overtime, strategize re projects
- Put the lab infrastructure in place
- Decide how to run your organization, find people who are likeminded
- Be overt about commitment and availability
- Establish clear research objectives
- Taking students is very rewarding but can be a risk
- PI is the bottom line in all things
 - Data
 - Money
 - Problems of all kinds!
 - Tremendous intellectual satisfaction

Also Can Say No

- Do not overschedule – need time to think
- Committees or courses that will be a significant time sink early in you career
- Research diversions
- Students that are unfocused
- Make every effort not to sacrifice your protected time
- **Events that will conflict with family commitments**

Additional Opportunities

- Teaching
 - Lab, clinic, OR
- Specialized courses
 - Put time into course success (ethics)
 - If volunteering, cut your losses if not going well
- Academic and national society participation
 - NIH/NCI, SSO, ACS, ASCO, BSI,
 - Policy- institutional, local, and national
 - Testified at AMA meeting re fertility preservation

Throughout Career

- Take time to establish relationships with colleagues in several fields
- Take time to establish relationships with your peers
- These will be the people who lend support and can help you advance
 - Societies/Awards
 - Committees
 - PROMOTION
- Need people to call on good or bad days who get it and are trustworthy



Go Forward with Optimism

BE TENACIOUS

- Take great pride in your research program/clinical practice
- Go for funding opportunities
- Submit papers for publication
- Take strong students when available
- Get out and give talks
- **PRIORITIZE YOUR PERSONAL LIFE**

Life in Balance

- Life as a Physician Scientist
- Good and bad days in clinic
- Good and bad days in lab/research
- **Inspiration can be taken from both to keep striving**

- Good and bad days in life!
- Make time to enjoy
- **Complexity of a dynamic life can be sustaining**

Career Evolution- A Diverse Portfolio

- Running a research program, managing patient care in the clinic/operating room, teaching ethics, and serving as a mentor helped me to develop skills that have resulted in diverse and unique opportunities
- Since 2004, course focused on surgical ethics and professionalism
- 2015 Breast Center and Fellowship Director, NIH/NCI T32 Co-Director
- 2020, Associate Dean, Regulatory Affairs
- 2022, Associate Vice President, Research Integrity and Compliance
- Ongoing medical student surgical ethics clerkship
- Through these opportunities, continue to learn and evolve, while also serving the larger research community

Enduring Friendships

- At the outset of my academic career, I learned positive role models and support from outstanding mentors and friends are essential to develop a foundation for sustainable success.
- The impact of positive influences during critical times of self-discovery cannot be overstated.



MDACC 2006
with Dr. Sharon Chan



Hong Kong 2018



BSI Malaysia 2024



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