Strategic Decisions:
Elements of a Successful Career and a Satisfying Life

What are the characteristics of thriving early career faculty?

Quick starters (21 out of 415)
- Published more
- Received better teaching evaluations
- Were happier than their stressed-out peers

How did they do it?
These early career faculty members
- Avoided procrastination
- Developed regular work habits
- Balanced work activities rationally
- Sought help from colleagues early

How can you be a “Quick Starter”?
- Begin early, before being ready
- Stop, before returns diminish
- Let others do some of the work
- Moderate overreaction & overattachment
- Let go of negative thoughts
- Wait, patiently and actively

Boice’s Advice in Practical Terms
- **Mindfulness**: be aware of what you are doing and focus your attention and energy on it
- **Take advantage of short time periods**: use 15 minute periods before class or lunch to write or read
- **Manage distractions**: when you want to focus, shut your door and stay away from e-mail.
- **Take a break**: get up for a stretch or a cup of coffee with a colleague, to refresh your thoughts and get back on track
- **Talk to others**: seek advice when stuck, solicit ideas and help but don’t gripe about your lot in life
- **Nihil Nimis (Nothing in Excess)**: work, play and live at steady pace; set realistic goals; decline graciously when needed; be compassionate with yourself
**Work, Life, Tenure**

Work is an integral part of your life, but only part. Treat it as such. Tenure is part of a natural trajectory of success. Use plans to guide you in achieving your goals.

**Taking Charge of Your Career**

Identify some of your goals for teaching and research as you begin your faculty career: