

Just Say No
Agenda for Midcareer Mentoring Group
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Issues

- Service work of the academy falls disproportionately on women faculty and faculty of color.
- Is saying no harder for women than for men?

Lessons from Senior Faculty

- No is a learned action.
- Don't most people say yes?
- Your time is a non-renewable resource. Only you can protect it.
- Asking is not the same as expecting.
- Won't I be pressured to say yes if I say no?
- Do "no's" always need explaining?
- "We just can't find anyone else to do this."

Solutions

- Determine the merits of departmental vs institutional service – which is more valued for promotion? What kind of service is expected *and rewarded*? Put your energies there.
- Do some homework to find out exactly what is involved in work you're being asked to do.
- Move "women's issues" into mainstream of university life (e.g., child care).
- Rule of Five – Set a limit that makes sense for where you are in your academic career and field: 5 outside talks/year; 5 articles/year. Any requests beyond the Rule of Five means that you say no to them, or switch out one of your prior commitments.
- Find creative ways to set limits
 - 24 Hour Rule – Consider the request for 24 hours before saying yes or no.
 - "I don't have my calendar with me. Let me get back to you."
 - "Yes, but I'll have to leave at __ o'clock."
- Know your primary goals and say no to anything that doesn't get you there – after exercising 24 Hour Rule.

Round Robin

Just Say No to the last thing you said yes to that you wish you'd declined. Who was the requester? How/did that matter?