FDChat: Inaugural FD Chat with New Faculty – Q&A On Research & Teaching

00:00 This is Dr. Christine Grant and I am the Associate Dean of Faculty Advancement in the College of Engineering at NC State and this is our inaugural kick-off pilot for what we are calling FD Chats and FD Chat is a part of our FD Media-we're calling it Faculty Development Media in which we're going to allow faculty to be able to get information and just-in-time information on guidance from me to point them in the right direction-a coaching of sorts to providing a compass of sorts to point them in the right direction on campus to get the help that they need. So, we decided to start this off with the new faculty and asked them to submit questions we are, how many weeks into the semester? Not far enough right or maybe too far. it's probably going very fast for everyone. Not quite halfway through the semester and I thought this would be a great time, since we have the new faculty orientation workshop actually about six weeks ago, right? So, this is September 21st and we have the new faculty workshop-well we've-what I found I remember as a young faculty member 25 years ago or a new faculty member that it was just overwhelming. It was like drinking from the firehose. And it would be nice to have someone just to kind of bounce some things off of and push me in the right direction. So okay we are going to get started, I am recording this and that is really just so that I can take notes on this later and get the information out to the rest of the folks and so let's get started.

01:45 So, basically what we did was we asked the group to just put their thoughts and their questions in three broad categories: research, teaching and other questions you would like to address. And essentially the New Faculty Orientation Workshop was set up along the lines of teaching, research and then at the end we actually talked about figuring out what your faculty advancement plan was and how to put that in place and how to identify resources so this is just a start. So, let's jump in.

02:16 So looking under research, there was a question that somebody submitted, it said "should I try to write the proposal when a have a ready great idea or should I just try to write one even though I am not prepared well, but just to meet the deadlines of grants?" This is a great question. I think that when you're talking about writing a proposal and when are you ready to write a proposal, that's-you know it's a catch-22. You can spend all of your time writing proposals. So for example, you could write lots of really-I won't say bad proposal-it's really a matter of quantity and quality. So, in the research grants arena quality is really better than quantity if you really want to get funding. So, you really just need to have one grant funded, one good grant funded. And you don't want to write or pursue a dozen that are not funded. So, submitting 12 bad proposals, just so that you could say you wrote 12 proposals is not the way to go either.

03:22 So, the challenge in the balance is the determination of what is the low-hanging fruit. So, there are some seed grants and some opportunities on campus or maybe nationally that are available that would be easy money. In other words, maybe

there's not a large peer review, so some of the proposals that you can write on campus go through college level and University level, it's not external peer review the turnaround time is pretty short. And so, if you do an on-campus proposal for seed funding that's what I would call though hanging fruit. So, you have some money in hand you can do some traveling, you can support some grad students, you can do some preliminary data evaluation or analysis, and the majority of the time, young faculty or new faculty have start-up packages and so that is funding that will help to augment the start-up package.

04:19 If you are a teaching faculty or non-tenure-track faculty, you may not have a large start-up package for research but you'd like to do some undergraduate research or something that is going to be helpful to help your scholarship in teaching or developing a lab or developing a-developing a-what you call-a senior design project. So sometimes seed funding on campus is nice because it's a quick turnaround as well. So that's what I would consider the low-hanging fruit. There are also some proposals that you can write that have a better-smaller, that you can write as part of the group. There might be a proposal you can write with someone, somebody is doing the large research center proposal or maybe they already have a research center and that research center may have some short turnaround grant funding available that you can write proposals to as well. In other words, the funding is already on campus, so it might be a multi-million-dollar center, the funding is already on campus, they have a window for a writing a proposal-maybe the proposal 2 to 3 pages long and then you are able to get that funding pretty quickly. So that would be another what I would call a low-hanging fruit.

05:40 And then there are the high-risk, high-reward payoff proposals and then the third category I would say are the random kind of proposals-really-you may not get it-you just have to throw something up there and see what sticks, right? That sounds very unscientific, but the key is to figure out the balance between the low-hanging fruit and the ones where they're just really high-risk, high-reward proposals. So, getting back to the question they said the person I asked, "should I try to write the proposal when I have a really great idea or should I just try to write one even though I do not prepare well, just to meet the deadlines and grants." So, it is important to be writing all the time. So even if somebody has a large proposal, if you look at some mid-career or senior faculty, if they're doing it right, they are always writing or in the process of getting ready to write a proposal. Because a graduate student, let's say for 5 years for their PhD-let's say 5 or 6 years for PhD, typical grants let's say an NSF Grant, which is what I am most familiar, will be for 3 years total. And so, because they're for three years you are going to need some more funding for that student at some point. So, you can't afford to just say, "okay I'm going to wait til' the end of three years when this grant is up and then I'm going to write another proposal", no, that students going to need that funding before that 3 years is up.

07:06 So the other key is to always be writing and trying to identify opportunities and maybe you can't do all of them in the one year but you can pace yourself by saying "this year, this fall I'm going to write these three proposals and in the spring I'm

going to write this one or this fall I'm going to write one I have identified three other ones I am not quite ready I need some preliminary data and so therefore I'm going to go for that one next year". So, it's almost like you have a proposal-I'll call it a proposal roadmap or proposal plan where you are identifying things that you want to go after. Maybe you can go after them all right now and I believe that faculty know that and senior faculty and department heads know that and so they're not going to expect you to apply for everything that's out there. However, if you're not applying for anything because you're just waiting to next year because you're going to be more ready next year that's also not a good process or a good approach to take either. Because then you are-you might be considered a perfectionist because you got to have everything exactly right before you write that proposal.

08:13 So, the best thing to do-I mean when you were hired as a new faculty member, they hired you because they knew you had potential either to partner with other people to write proposals or to write that big proposal on your own. So, strategically you-when you did your job talk for those of you who did a job talk you had in there what proposals you were going to apply for or what grants you are going to go after and so you should go back and look at what you said. Some of you did that talk two years ago and you've been off doing a postdoc and now you're back and if you look back at what you said in your job talk two years ago before you went on to the postdoc for those of you to did that, you may be thinking oh my goodness what was I thinking, that's not what I really need to be writing proposals on.

09:04 So, the best thing in this case is to get wise counsel from your senior colleagues, in terms of what you should be looking at writing proposals for or what you're writing proposal portfolio should look like. Also of course to talk to program officers. So, there may be a program where it seems like it's a perfect fit, but if you talk to the program officer, the program officer might say, "well this is a great program, you have a great idea however, most people who get funded in this they have preliminary data. You have no preliminary data so that's not gonna go well for you", and that's not gonna necessarily be written in the solicitation, you're going to have to get that from your program officer.

09:43 The second thing is, the program officer might tell you, or you might find out through the grapevine that, this particular program you actually usually don't get it your first time, you usually have to apply 2 or 3 times, that's the average before you get it and so as you are applying, you apply for the grant and then you get feedback during that process-that review process and who knows, you might get it the first time. But you can get feedback during that process and then you can use that feedback to incorporate into the next cycle of the proposal as well.

10:16 So, these are questions you can ask your program officer and they can tell you the nuance of that particular program or if it's an on-campus program they can tell you the nuances of that. What I said I was going to do, was that I was going to talk for about 30 minutes and then let you ask questions at the end, but if you have a burning question based on something I am saying feel free to just jump in and stop

me and I can answer a quick question then we can save the majority of the questions for the end.

10:43   The next question we had on the research room was, "how many projects should you take on? I have some colleagues who seem to be on a million projects and constantly writing grants, one senior faculty member said three grants per semester. At this point I feel like I may get one or two done. Partly that is the class and partly that is the issue of keeping up with other prior projects." I'm guessing that this person brought to campus. "I am worried however how that I may be spreading myself too thin and either pushing into too many diverse areas too soon. On the other hand, I am concerned that if I don't do more, I'm going to have-there'll be some repercussions for that or I won't be ready for the annual review or whatever it is that-the evaluation-the evaluative component of this position."

11:28   So this is interesting because I have been doing this for 25 years and you can ask any faculty member and they could-all of us could say the exact same thing this person said, "I am worried I may be spreading myself too thin and pushing in too many diverse areas too soon" - or it's that - faculty feel that way all the time and the people who don't say that they don't feel that way, they are managing it pretty well, but that's kind of the reality of this job. Unlike being a graduate student or a postdoc where you have a specific project that you're working on, you finish it you do your thesis, you defend, you write your papers, you're done with the project. Being a faculty member is kind of a continuum, you're always kind of all working on lots of things at the same time and hopefully when there's something that will come to the fore, and you'll say, "oh yeah, this is the one I really want to focus on."

12:23   The comment that, "I have some colleagues who seem to be on the million projects and constantly writing grants," that is probably true. Funding is challenging right now and you will find that you have faculty who are mid-career associate professors, senior faculty who were saying, "oh my goodness the funding is drying up. I'm having to work harder and write instead of 5 proposals for every one that gets funded, I'm having to write 10". Now I'm making up those numbers, so don't get scared, I just made those numbers up. The point is that the pendulum is shifted and there is more challenging to get funding.

12:53   For new faculty however, it's really interesting because there are a lot of programs that are available for junior faculty where you are not competing with senior faculty. So some of the Young Faculty Investigator-Junior Faculty Investigator Awards that they have from NSF and some of the other federal agencies and New Faculty Startup Awards, things like that. Those are-you're not competing with senior faculty. However, because of the internet and because people know this, people are a lot more savvy about getting funding. So, some of them have been working on these proposals for a long time, they've been developing them with their mentors, helping to advise them, review their proposals. So, it's still competitive, even though you are competing against early career faculty. I use the words young and new and early career, I think the best terminology is actually early career,

because not all early faculty are young faculty so I'll use the term early career from here on out.

13:55 You have to determine what the hit-rate is for funding in your particular field. So if you are a computational person and the biggest thing you need is computers and student-time and machine-time at a national lab, then that type of budget and being able to get started on that type of a project is going to be a lot different than somebody who is setting up biomedical laboratory, where they have to get a lab setup, they have to get the infrastructure done, they have to get the hood checked, they have to get the safety plan in, they have to order equipment and supplies, they have to train students on how to do cell culture work. The startup time associated with that type of a research project versus a computational project is going to be different. I am not saying one is better or shorter or whatever than the other, it's just going to be different. So it's important that you understand what the start of time is associated with projects and what kind of resources that you need and when you need to be spending those resources to get started and then how quickly you're going to be able to get additional funding or need additional funding to do what you've gotta do.

15:05 So, yes faculty are usually working on a lot of different projects. Some people will tell you more than others, so some people want you to think that they're working on a million projects and if you're not doing the same thing as they are then you just must not be working hard. So, you have to be careful about that too because sometimes people would just-you know try to-I don't want to say intimidate but-you know they'll try to make you feel like you're not really doing what you're supposed to be do because it makes them feel great about what they're doing, okay so I recorded that so-I'm just-I'm going to be totally honest with you, I've been doing this for 25 years and I've seen a lot of different things so you have to figure out whether-what the intention of the person telling you that they're working on a million projects in there, they've got 3 grants per semester that they're pursuing and you have to figure out what the motive is behind the information you're being given.

15:58 And then you have to look, realistically about what it takes to do the research you want to do, what the turnaround time is on the grants, so like I said some of the low-hanging fruit, maybe two to three months but a lot of NSF, which is what I know, might be 6, 8, 12 months. I had a proposal that I submitted with a group last year in Washington, University of Washington and we literally just got the notification a couple weeks ago that it was funded. And so by the time the funding hits, it would probably been be a year since we wrote the proposal, right? Now not all programs have that large return-around, but if you're talking about a year out, then you need to get some things in the pipeline. So, you can't just sit around and say, "oh, I think I'm going to wait till next year because I'm not ready on everything, because then if you say I'm going to wait till next year and it takes a year then you're not going to get funding in hand until 2 years out. So, you need to think about that as well. So any questions on that? This is a huge topic and a huge issue

for new faculty and trying to figure this out is kind of the key to your success of I think in the funding realm.

17:12 Those were the two research questions and again, in all the things that I'm telling you-you know this is my perspective from what I've experienced and from what I've seen. There may be some nuances associated with your fields, your department, the culture of your department that may be different from what I'm telling you. So, the key is to ask these same questions that you've asked me. You asked that of everybody that you can ask, that's going to give you honest and a reasonable response, right. So, you got to figure out who those people are either in your department or outside of in your field and you just ask them the same questions that these colleagues have asked me and get the perspectives and you kind of separate out the good information from the information that doesn't make sense and the information that is relevant to you and then you apply it to your own career.

18:05 Okay so here's the teaching one. In the teaching realm somebody says, "I still spend way too much time on teaching, even though I have lecture notes and materials from other colleagues, how can I sufficiently cut the time in preparing the class", and then some other question the same person asked was, "some students get the ideas, points very fast but still a very confused in class, how do I balance in-how do I balance in teaching so that all students would agree with the pace in lecturing." Oh, that's a good question, let me deal with the first one first, spending way too much time on teaching.

18:39 So in teaching there is a lot of quantity in the course material because we're talking about quantity and quality and there's a quantity in the number of times a week that you need to be on. So, teaching is one of those things where you have to be on three times a week, or two times a week or in office hours. It is an immediate thing, so it seems very urgent because it is right there in front of you, whereas writing a paper or writing a proposal, well writing the proposal is urgent because you have deadlines but writing a paper may not be, because it's not kind of in your face. So, the challenge is to figure out in the teaching realm and preparing how much time you actually want to spend. So again, there's a lot of quantity in a lot of course material so why you should not sacrifice quality in preparation, you will need to decide what is enough in terms of perfection on slides and content.

19:37 I remember I used to spend all night, making the slides just right. And now with the internet, you can find more information to add-to embellish your presentation, examples, videos, you know, content. Things that they can have-extra material they can have to help them with their homework and there is a rule in terms of the number of prep hours that you have per delivery hours. I cannot remember what that rule is, I'm going to have to check and look that up for you. Richard and Rebecca may have that in some of their materials, but there is a rule of thumb, so to speak. I remember for undergrads you should spend three hours studying, what is it? Three hours studying for every hour you spend in class. There is a rule of thumb for teaching prep as well, I would need to check what that is. But you'll need

to develop your own process and your own boundaries in this realm. And sometimes when you're first teaching the class, you're going to do just an okay job in your view and maybe in the student's view and maybe you'll do an excellent job or maybe you'll do kind of a medium job but what you should do, is you should commit to taking time over the break or the next time you teach the class to upgrade your content and your delivery.

20:52 And it's also important to find out the minimum expectation, in terms of material, in that particular course that your department needs to have covered. So, for example I used to teach fluid dynamics and heat transfer and so we would have a book that we would use, that was a certain number of a chapters and content and materials that we would need to cover in that course. And let's say that you're coming from University "X" and now you're NC State and so you're teaching what you think is the parallel course but at University "X" they covered-oh way-you know, they did Shell Balances and Momentum Balances and they did all this you know theoretical calculations in their fluid dynamics class. Well you need to look carefully at what the expectation is at NC State for that particular class. It might be that the amount of content that you had in the class from University "X" is different than the amount of content that you have here. It might be more, it might be less, but you need to understand what the expectation is and not try to expand beyond that too far.

21:55 So it's good to include examples from your field of research, it's good to include examples from the internet, videos, things like that. However, if you start to add content that is not core to the class then-and go beyond your colleagues now. So, let's say you got notes from your colleague to teach fluid dynamics in my case right and I decided "oh well, I think that there's this really cool module that could be used to teach this part of fluid dynamics that's not in the original course, but I'm going to add this and enhance it. Well two things might happen, number one the student know what's supposed to be in a class and if you add and enhance things that are not in the class and they know kind of what's been taught in the past, they're not going to be happy with you because you are adding additional stuff. And you're going to be doing extra work and you're not-it's not going to get you anything. Unless, the department and you and the team that has taught that class has decided that there is new content that needs to be put in the class that you need to develop and hence that's why you're doing it.

22:56 And one of the things that you can do is to look at ABET accreditation report, I just thought about this actually last night, when this question came in. The ABET accreditation reports, if you're teaching an ABET- a course that goes in the ABET list. What happens, for those who are new, every six years ABET comes around and accredits the curriculum. And so there's a group of people that have to actually look at the curriculum and look at the courses, look at what you've said your outcomes are, your deliverables, how you're going to evaluate those different things. There's a whole lot of terms that I'm not using properly here, but there's a whole lot of terms in terms of looking at what the outcomes are and the goals of

the class and how do you measure whether they met the goals of the class, did they learn their learning objectives, things like that.

23:47 So, one thing you can do, is to go back and look at the ABET reports for those classes that you're teaching and the real cool thing is that you can look at the report, find out you know what percentage of the reports should be this, what percentage should be that, what percentage should be that. And also in the ABET reports, at least the ones that we do in chemical engineering because I'm-I'm in charge of the transport phenomena sequence. What we do is we have-our colleagues actually write in there what's working and what's not working. So, in other words they might say something like, "you know I had students work in groups on their homework and it worked really well, but then when they got to the test, they didn't do as well," or "I try to incorporate this technique in the class, we started using flip classes and that seemed to work really well and the students then demonstrated and did well in the homework".

24:40 That information is going to be in the ABET reports and so you can actually look at the ABET reports for the course that you're teaching and get information that you may not get from just looking at somebody's syllabus. So that's a great source of information if you're teaching ABET course. If you were teaching a course that is a specialty topics course, or something that really hasn't been done in that department and they brought you in because you're the specialist, they want you to do that, see if you can find a course somewhere else in the country that's being taught using that particular-that particular topic and see if you can benchmark what you're trying to do. Get in touch with a faculty member who taught it at University wide across the country and see if you can get a copy of their syllabus, their learning objectives and maybe just give them a call and tell him you know I would like to talk to you for 5 or 10 minutes and ask them about what their learning objectives were and how it worked.

25:34 Okay the other question-I'm going to skip for a minute because there's another one that's the related someone asked, "how do I bound my class prep times" -the same topic- "I took the list of goals that I brought out of orientation with me and I've been trying to implement them step by step," -that came from the workshop- "on the class side it seems to be going well, the prior course instructor put active learning into his plans, so I have been able to build on that. But even with the core structure to work from, I feel like I am still keeping my head above water and I am regularly getting my slides done a few hours before the class. In part, this is because I have no slides to work from, but I still worry that I am pulling too many working-round-4 a.m. rounds to get ready. How do you bound it? Is there a good strategy for controlling how much time you spend prepping for courses?" And that goes back to what I was saying earlier, that you need to figure out how perfect you need to have your slides right. Because if you start with a high bar of perfection for your slides, then you're going to try to meet that bar throughout the semester and all of a sudden, oh my goodness you have a committee meeting or all of a sudden you're on somebody's PhD committee or have to go to a faculty meeting or you have to-

and so you're not able to necessary spend that amount of time. And then it may look to you, and maybe to the students, that the quality of slides or what you're doing is slipping.

26:52   So, you can't know that when you're first teaching for the first time, but learn from it and so that when you teach that course or another class again, you can say, "you know what, I really don't need to have color slides, all numbered, they don't need to be perfect every time I do this". It's important to get the material across to the students and so maybe the visualization of the slides is not really as important and so that I think we spend a lot of time on as well. Also trying to cram too much material into a lecture is also a challenge. You get the basic material and then say, "Oh I can show them this video and then I can show them-" and then you run out of time. You also have to figure out what delivery tool you want to take. Do you want to just write on the board? Do you want to have workbooks or notebooks, where the students fill in the blanks as you're teaching? I used to do that, I had some people that loved it, because then they could pay attention to my lecture and just write down-fill in the blanks on the paper, and some people absolutely hated it because they wanted to write their notes. You know, that process of writing their notes was something that was important to them.

28:02   And this goes back to this other question: "Some students get the ideas very fast and some are still confused in the class, how do you balance the teaching so that all students would agree with the pace of lecturing?" Well news flash, they will never all agree with your pace. Some people will think you're going too fast and other people will be bored silly. So, there's never going to be an agreement on how you deliver your lecture. And you should not be teaching to the student to have them in agreement. You want to make sure that they are getting an experience that is positive enough, so that they don't ding you on your teaching evaluations, of course, but you don't want to just try to please the students.

28:38   I think a good rule of thumb would be to talk to somebody who has taught before or who has been in the academy-Outstanding Academy of Teachers, North Carolina Teaching Awards and the College of Engineering. Try to find some of those people, we might have a call or something in the future when we pull those people on, to talk about some of that. But I think-your key is that don't want to lose them, you want to make sure you-okay let me back up. The most important thing is that you need to cover the material you need to cover in order to get the information out to the student, so that should be number one. If you find that the students are not getting the material or they're looking confused or they're not connecting with you in the classroom, then you need to look at the style of which you're delivering the material. I would then go back to some of the things Richard and Rebecca said and look at some of the materials there to see if there's some things that you can glean from that in addition.

29:35   So some students are going to be confused and it's a matter of how you handle your office hours. If you have office hours face to face or if you do open office hours

online, where students can log in and chat with you. I haven't taught in a few years, so that kind of chat space wasn't around when I was last teaching, the last thing that I remember it was email. And spending a lot of time on email and figuring out, do I blast my answer to a question to the whole class? So that they can all glean from what this student didn't know, that I was able to impart the wisdom of particular topic into them? Or do I just answer one on one questions? So, optimizing that delivery of information is something that technology can help you with that you should ask around about that.

30:22 And then I guess the last question that was asked is, "I am interested in discussing case studies that folk have, concerning in-class cheating during tests or quizzes for me in particular I'm curious about seniors. I'm interested in understanding some examples of what should be a warning versus a reported honor code violation." So, what I did with this, is that I actually pulled up some information about faculty tips on academic dishonesty in the classroom, some suggestions, some preventions if you suspect cheating has occurred; what to do; what is plagiarism. All of that is important to cover. So, what I'm going to do is I'm going to send that information out to you as a link that you can look at, it's called Faculty Tips on Academic Dishonesty in the Classroom. It's actually from the Center for Teaching out at Berkeley. So, that would be something that you could glean from.

31:22 There's also information on the NC State website, the honor code-Paul Cousins, who I believe is still over the Office of Academic Integrity and is also a really good resource and some case studies and I can send you some information about that as well. I will say that when I was teaching, I told students at the beginning of the semester that I prosecute, I take people to court. Okay sorry about that, so where was I, oh yeah, academic - so I used to tell students that I will take them to court. That's what I called "the court" and I had some cases where I had some students that were cheating and had to take them all the way through the system. I think that sometimes we tend to say well, "if you cheat on homework that's not a big deal, but if you cheat on test that's a big deal." I think we need to establish parameters for academic dishonesty in the classroom, whether it's homework or whether it's tests or whatever.

32:30 That's basically what I had. I want to leave some time for you all to ask some questions about the stuff I talked up about or some other things. So, what I want to do now is to open this up to questions, if you have questions on anything I talked about or anything else or some ideas or thoughts or feedback for me - any questions on what we just talked about. Okay so I'll ask you a question was this helpful? what I was saying to you. Well I'll tell you that I was-there was a couple things I had written down, but most of it was off the top of my head. So, you were getting-what you were getting was just me talking to you extemporaneously is that the word-yeah, just telling you-from the gut what I was thinking and really my goal was to push you to identify the resources you need to get even more information.

33:17 So I'm-my goal in these chats is to just to seed the thought process for you to go and search for more information and if I can provide some of that information, that's great but I want to empower you to actually go out and find what the answers are to these important questions and keep asking the questions, they are great questions.

33:35 Caller (On Phone): I think I'm going to get a very bad review from my students, because I am shocked to be quite Frank. I'm teaching seniors, I tell the students in class that this assignment needs to be done, otherwise you'll lose points. I tell them on Moodle that they needs to that. And no matter how many times that I tell them that, they are late or they don't do it. And I feel like I'm constantly policing them and I'm just wondering, is this typical?

34:05 Dr. Grant: So, what kind of assignment-so what you said was-I am repeating it for the recording you said that students are-you have a bunch of seniors and they are always telling them that they need to get their assignments done. You're telling them on Moodle, you're telling them and if they don't get it in, they're going to lose points and they're late and they're not-they're not being responsive and your question is, "is this standard?" You-your question is, is this part of the course? is this normal?

34:32 Caller: Yes

34:33 Dr. Grant: So, my question to you is, what kind of assignments are you talking about?

34:36 Caller: One example, I get the students lab safety training. I tell them this is extremely important. That this is what they need to do, this is the training they must do. I go through in class with them and then I say, "you need to go up on Moodle and acknowledge you received this training" and that's all they have to do is go up and just click a box and I'm meant to record it. I send out an email-the TA sends out an email tells them the same thing, "if you don't fill this out by this day, you're going to start losing points." I come into class and I look, only half of them have done it. So, I take points away and I tell them, "if you don't get it done by Thursday I'm going to take more points away," this is serious-

35:16 Dr. Grant: When you say point-

35:18 Caller: -no lab, until we do this.

35:19 Dr. Grant: When you say points away, you mean points away from their lab assignments for their overall grade, I mean what-

35:24 Caller: -overall grade.

35:25 Dr. Grant: -their overall grade, so let's say I have a 95 average, if I don't get this done you're going to take away points from my overall average, so my 95 is going now become a 94.

35:35 Caller: Yes, 94 or maybe 93 depending on-or maybe five points, if you don't do it after a couple times I tell you.

35:42 Dr. Grant: So, is this the way-is this a new class that's being taught?

35:46 Caller: No.

35:48 Dr. Grant: Have they used this policy before?

35:52 Caller: They have not-they have not been that strict on lab safety and that's caused some issues. I'm kinda now being much more-it's not just this though, it's other things too. It's normal assignments that their doing, still responsible for.

36:07 Dr. Grant: So I probably shouldn't say this, but I am the mother of a 20 year old college student. He's a junior and what I have seen in students, because-since I've been teaching for 25 years-what I've seen in students over time, has been a less-things don't seem to be as urgent, right? in general-

36:28 Caller: Yup.

36:29 Dr. Grant: There is an urgency and they don't seem to be-it doesn't seem to be as big of a deal. The only time things are urgent and they're big deal is when they gotta get a text message answer or-you know it's like they want immediacy in some areas and then in other areas, it's just not a big deal cuz they'll-

36:48 Caller: Yup.

36:49 Dr. Grant: -the only way to get it done or it's just not urgent or who are you tell me. I have this statement that I use, that some-I think students kind of have gotten-not all students-but students have gotten to the point where it's kind of like, "teach me, I dare you," you know, kinda like "yeah really? I'm here, teach me, I dare you" you it's kinda like a-it's a different mindset, a different perspective than when I started in 1989 from my perspective. So, there has been a shift. I think that the challenge we face is because we are going to be evaluated, we don't want to mess things up, to mess up our evaluation, at the same time we have to put our foot down right? I mean the safety is-

37:29 Caller: Yup.

37:30 Dr. Grant: -safety. And if you don't do it, now what you might consider in this case for this example is to bring in somebody else, a safety tsar-like person from outside, the department head and associate department head, somebody who is you know,

to come to the class-at the beginning of class or the beginning of a lecture and give a five minute something, you know, show some crazy video or just talk about how important this is to the department. And if you're going to be citizens of the world as engineers, you need to have safety first and a lot of companies have safety first so this is not-

38:07 Caller: Yeah.

38:08 Dr. Grant: -just a lame assignment, but it might help to have somebody outside, not you-somebody outside come in and give a little tiny mini something to the class-

38:17 Caller: Yeah.

38:18 Dr. Grant: -about the topics so you can start to focus, not on the punitive aspects of "you are going to lose points", but focus on what you're really trying to get them to do which is to highlight the fact that safety is important.

38:30 Caller: I went-I didn't-I didn't have time to get-I'm so lost, I didn't have time to get somebody come it. I went through what you just said with them. I showed them examples of things blowing up. I explained that in the industry you can get fired for this. I explain other situations of people losing their eye from things exploding and not wearing safety glasses. And I explained it, we've been audited and the University had a compliance requirement that all the labs needed to have-so I went through all that and gave it. And I didn't want to just want to focus on this just the example, it's really just still overall trend. I'm just surprised, I really am of how on average students do not do things on time and we're getting ready to graduate em.

39:10 Dr. Grant: I think if you, if you talk to your colleague and if you talk to some of your senior colleagues-

39:13 Caller: Yes.

39:14 Dr. Grant: -you would probably find somebody, whose even older than me, would tell you how students have changed over the years. And I think that, some of it is we need to kind of make them do the right thing-like what you're trying to do and some of it is, "you know what, okay, this is how they are, let's see how we can take what we have and make it into something that is still going to be positive". I mean you're-you're seeing them for the first time right? and they're seniors yeah. Well the other thing you can do is, you can do what you got to do for this class and then the other piece would be to bring it to your colleagues, either at a retreat or the faculty meeting and say, "you know we've got to incorporate the importance of safety," so there's two ways to do it, "we've got to incorporate importance of safety," if you want to talk about this topic, "into our students early on," which our faculty all know, "we should do it in the entry-level sophomore course, or we should do it in the introductory-level Freshman course and we should have modules, we should have something so that this permeate throughout the curriculum."

40:14 That might be a way to take your frustration with this and make it to something that something's actually is going to be positive, that will benefit the department overall. So that's one way to take that as a departmental citizen and make a difference, right. The other thing is to have candid conversations with some of your colleagues about-what is it that we're expecting our seniors to be able to do, what should their prospective be on some of these things. You know there was a group of people who taught senior design, that met a couple of years ago, do you remember this Barbara? We actually-

40:51 Caller: Yeah!

40:52 Dr. Grant: They actually met to talk about the senior design class and what they were doing and how they could collaborate. So, this is across departments-

41:02 Caller: We used-we've actually scheduled a meeting for us to talk about another subject, if can bring it up-

41:07 Dr. Grant: Yes!

41:08 Caller: I think we actually meeting-I think it maybe tomorrow.

41:10 Dr. Grant: That's perfect, so that group, the interesting thing I was in one of the first meetings they had-

41:15 Caller: Next week.

41:16 Dr. Grant: -the interesting thing is that, they had never met before and they found-you the first thing you have to do whenever you're meeting with people who are from different departments or different areas is find out what you do, find out what you have in common, find out what's different, and then figure out how you can work together and I think they have done that well-at least they did a while back. I think they were talking about writing proposals together-I don't know if that ever happened. But I think on this topic having that brought up and what can we do or other people can help-so bottom line is, it may not help you this semester but I think-so going back to teaching evaluations that are challenging right? Or anticipating teaching evaluations that are challenging. I think that the key is to make sure that your department-your senior faculty-your department head and understands the stance you've taken and why. And that it may impact your teaching evaluations. You can say something about that now, and when the evaluations come out, hopefully it won't be impacted, but if they are, you then have some narrative that goes with that, right, to explain it.

42:21 And we see that all the time when people come up for reappointment and promotion that they may have an off semester in their teaching. You know everything is fine or maybe they had a rocky start and then things just really started picking up. Sometimes there will be some narrative in there from the department

head or senior faculty, from the DVF, to kind of explain a way-what was happening during that time. Does that help?

42:44 Caller: Yeah, that's some good ideas.

42:46 Dr. Grant: Okay alright, so any other questions? About teaching or research or projects.

42:52 Caller: Thank you very much!

42:53 Dr. Grant: Okay great! So again, this was Faculty Development Chat. It's our first in edition-our first episode and hopefully we will have some more in the future and we will take the information from what we just did and capture it in some type of written format and get it out to the rest of the assistant professors. And if there is any other topic that you would like us to cover-I envision it not being me all the time, it could be somebody else that we get on the line to help us out with some of these things-maybe Paul Cousins to talk about some aspects of plagiarism or something like that, that would be helpful as well so-. Okay, thank you very much and we'll see you next time.