



Monthly Mentoring Memos

January 2019

Developing a Coherent Research Agenda

One of the more allusive aspects of being a new faculty member at a research-intensive university is creating the coherent research agenda.

(Sternberg, 2013)

Think Coherent

- It's very easy in your first few years to get distracted - a colleague may ask you to collaborate on a study, you might get asked to contribute to a book chapter, or you might consider applying for some appealing extra funds - all great things to do but you need to ask yourself: How will this fit into my research agenda?

Think Flexible

- At the same time, there should be some room in your research agenda to be flexible
- Consider if you can frame your topic or scope a bit more broadly to be able to include off-shoots of interests or some room to grow

Think Concise

- While you may be able to wax eternal about the wonderful plans you have for your research in the next 1, 5, 10, and 20 years, your peer committee and colleagues most likely want to hear a brief overview
- Remember to keep your description worded in clear and jargon-free terms. As your materials work their way up the academic ladder, there will be fewer and fewer content experts reading your materials

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