HOW TO DEVELOP
A DAILY WRITING PRACTICE

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Kerry Ann Rockquemore, PhD is Executive Director of the National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity. Her scholarship has focused on interracial families, biracial identity, and the politics of racial categorization. She is author of two books: Beyond Black and Raising Biracial Children, as well as over two dozen articles and book chapters on multiracial youth. After Dr. Rockquemore became a tenured professor (at the University of Illinois at Chicago), her focus shifted to improving conditions for pre-tenure faculty by creating supportive communities for professional development, research productivity, and work/life balance. Her award-winning work with under-represented faculty led to the publication of her most recent book: The Black Academic's Guide to Winning Tenure Without Losing Your Soul. Through the NCFDD, Dr. Rockquemore provides workshops for new faculty at colleges across the U.S., writes a weekly advice column for Inside Higher Education, and facilitates an online discussion forum for faculty, post-docs and graduate students at www.FacultyDiversity.org
TODAY’S WORKSHOP

PART I: Challenges to Writing Productivity
PART II: The Case for Daily Writing
PART III: How to Write Every Day
PART IV: Organizing for post-workshop success

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I. The Core Challenges to Writing Productivity

The Balance Challenge
How can you meet the research, teaching and service expectations at your institution AND maintain your integrity, your voice, your emotional and physical health, and your relationships?

The Time Challenge
The things that are the least important to your evaluation have the greatest built in accountability, while the most important factors in your tenure and promotion, your reputation as a scholar, and your mobility are the things that have the least built-in accountability.

The Socialization Challenge
Most of us have learned to write only when deadlines approach and to believe that we MUST HAVE large blocks of time and/or inspiration to write.
I. The Core Challenges to Writing Productivity

We all know that publications are the currency in the academic market. Both your market value and your institutional value will be determined by your ability to publish your research.

**HOWEVER…**

- We tend to prioritize based on accountability
- The most important activity in your promotion, professional reputation, and future mobility has no built-in accountability.
I. The Core Challenges to Writing Productivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 Biggest Myths about Writing</th>
<th>I will argue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I need a huge block of uninterrupted time</td>
<td>Both unrealistic AND untrue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I must be inspired to write</td>
<td>No you don’t. You just need to show up – the inspiration happens once you get started.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing is what I do when I’m done thinking.</td>
<td>Writing IS thinking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## II. The Case For Daily Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“TYPICAL” NEW FACULTY MEMBER</th>
<th>“QUICK STARTERS”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over-prepare for class</td>
<td>Don’t spend major amounts of time on course preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend far less time on scholarly writing than needed to meet promotion and tenure criteria</td>
<td>Spend three hours or more per week on scholarly writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have difficulty developing productive contacts with colleagues</td>
<td>Regularly seek advice and talk with colleagues about research and teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel a sense of loneliness and lack of collegial acceptance</td>
<td>Report high levels of job satisfaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. The Case For Daily Writing

Quick Starter’s vs. Typical New Faculty

It’s all about different BEHAVIOR -- not different ABILITY!

Quick Starters:

- Spent three hours or more per week on scholarly writing.
- Did NOT spend major amounts of time on course preparation (after their first semester, they averaged 1–1.5 hours of preparation per lecture hour)
- Lectured at a pace that allowed for active student participation.
- Regularly sought advice from colleagues, averaging four hours a week on discussions of research and teaching.
## II. The Case For Daily Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARTICIPANT GROUPS</th>
<th>PAGES WRITTEN PER YEAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrote Daily &amp; Recorded progress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrote daily, recorded progress, and were accountable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. The Case For Daily Writing

Tenure & Promotion Criteria

- Research: 20%
- Teaching: 20%
- Service: 60%

Is this how you spend your time each week?

- Research: 20%
- Teaching: 20%
- Service: 60%

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II. The Case For Daily Writing

Write Every Day

30-60 minutes

First thing in the morning (if possible)

New faculty imagine they must have long unbroken stretches of time to write, but the demands of an academic career seldom allow this luxury.

Daily writing leads to steady productivity and fewer feelings of anxiety over failure to meet expectations for productivity.

**Mental shift:** writing is the most important part of my success, therefore it’s my top priority.

**Behavior shift:** I write every day and create a way to be accountable that’s meaningful and works for me.
III. How to Develop A Daily Writing Practice

12-STEP PROGRAM

1. Hold a *Sunday Meeting*
2. Post your writing goals for the week
3. Start each day by reviewing your top priorities
4. Get your butt in your chair every day (30 – 60 minutes)
5. Set a timer
6. Manage your *resistance*
7. Stop when the timer goes off
8. Track your writing via the *daily check-in*
9. Give yourself a treat
10. Re-post your writing goals on Friday
11. Assess and adjust
12. Take the weekend off

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III. How to Write Daily
A 12-STEP PROGRAM

STEP 1: HOLD A SUNDAY MEETING

Set up the Skeleton (5 minutes)
Block all of your time commitments out of your calendar for the week (classes, meetings, writing time, etc…)

Brain Dump (10 minutes)
Create your list of to-do tasks (use project maps to figure out what long term items need to get done)

Tasks Meet Time (15 minutes)
Assign each task a specific block of time and decide what to do with the tasks that don’t fit into your calendar
III. How to Write Daily
A 12-STEP PROGRAM

STEP 2: POST YOUR WEEKLY WRITING GOALS IN THE NCFDD DISCUSSION FORUM

Monday
- Revise Scientific Racism Section
- Measuring Race: From Taxonomy to Measurement
- IQ Tests
- Respond to suggestions by CM and RR and send query on HR to editor
- Insert citations for HR and IM piece and send back to editor

Tuesday
- Draft "How the Irish, Italians, and Jews became white" section
- One writing blog

Wednesday
- Draft Exclusionary Immigration Policies Section
- Chinese Exclusion Act
- Citizenship for Whites Only
- One immigration blog: build on neoliberalism

Thursday
- Take notes on White by Law
- Prepare Balance Talk

Friday
- Revise OUP Chapter Two Sections
III. How to Write Daily
A 12-STEP PROGRAM

STEP 3: START EACH DAY BY REVIEWING YOUR PRIORITIES

Why do this?

✓ Because the seemingly urgent, but unimportant tasks tend to rise up and take over the day. This simple practice will remind you what really matters

✓ It will slowly but surely help you to organize each day around the activities that contribute to your long term goals.

✓ It will make saying “no” easier throughout the day

✓ You will get more done and find it easier to let go of the small stuff

It’s very simple, you can look at your calendar because you’ve already assigned the important tasks to specific blocks of time.

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III. How to Write Daily

A 12-STEP PROGRAM

STEP 4: BUTT IN CHAIR
STEP 5: SET A TIMER

www.online-stopwatch.com

00:30:00

Start
Clear

Back
III. How to Write Daily
A 12-STEP PROGRAM

STEP 6: EXPECT RESISTANCE
III. How to Write Daily
A 12-STEP PROGRAM

STEP 7: STOP WHEN THE TIMER GOES OFF!
III. How to Write Daily

A 12-STEP PROGRAM

STEP 8: TRACK YOUR WRITING
WITH THE DAILY CHECK IN

Example:

“Hello all!!
Yesterday was CRAZY busy, but I did get in 90 minutes first thing!
Today was much more relaxed, and I got in 2 hours this morning!
I am making good progress on all fronts. I debated as to whether or not to come to my office today, but I am glad I did because I am just blasting through my to-do list over here!

Treat: All-ladies Salsa lessons with my fabulous friend who is an instructor (and a professor!)”
III. How to Write Daily
A 12-STEP PROGRAM

STEP 9: GIVE YOURSELF A TREAT

✅ Reinforce your new habit by giving yourself a treat!
✅ Treat = anything that brings you pleasure
✅ Remind yourself that you are receiving a treat because you took care of the most important work for your long term success

NOTE: there is absolutely no punishment allowed!
III. How to Write Daily

A 12-STEP PROGRAM

STEP 10: AT THE END OF THE WEEK,
HOLD YOURSELF ACCOUNTABLE BY RE-POSTING YOUR
GOALS AND YOUR PROGRESS

Monday
- Revise Scientific Racism Section
- Measuring Race: From Taxonomy to Measurement
- IQ Tests
- Respond to suggestions by CM and RR and send query on HR to editor
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III. How to Write Daily
A 12-STEP PROGRAM

STEP 11: TAKE FIVE MINUTES TO REFLECT
How do I feel about my progress? What good things happened?
What do I need to adjust next week?

“Summary: Finished most goals, but not all. Need to work on: OUP is taking longer that I had hoped... Need to re-assess. Personal goals: I had lunch at home twice with hubby. I went to dance class with my friend. I did not walk as much as usual, because it is SO cold, but I did walk some. I need to record that better. Good news: Editor is encouraging with regard to special issue submission. Special issue proposal was accepted! My second book is moving into production!! Balance talk was great! I finished my class reading before class! I did make 3,500 words on OUP. Goal was 4,000.”
III. How to Write Daily
A 12-STEP PROGRAM

STEP 12: TAKE THE WEEKEND OFF
Welcome!

The National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity is a professional development, training, and mentoring community. We work with colleges, universities, organizations, and individuals towards one goal: helping new faculty members make a successful transition from graduate student to professor. We offer online and on-site training workshops, leadership development programs, individual coaching, and institutional consulting.

Become a member of our community today! Then share, connect, exchange, and grow – that's why we're here and we hope you are too. You can engage this community's resources anytime, from anywhere there's a web connection.

Welcome. We're glad you're here.

www.FacultyDiversity.org
Questions and Comments