

Goals

The Women of Color in the Academy Conference is designed to have a positive impact on the careers of faculty women of color by creating a space to gather, create community, and develop relationships with faculty who look like them.

As outlined in the welcome letter by our conference co-chairs, the conference was designed to offer a venue for self-reflection and focus on self while tapping in to the collective strength of the amazing women assembled in the room. Keeping this in mind, it is our hope you will take a few moments to think about two sets of goals. Please take some time during the conference to outline and consider talking about three “self-care” goals and three “caring for the collective” goals. As you network, discuss the possibility of becoming “accountability buddies” for these goals.

SELF-CARE GOALS

We've all watched flight attendants discuss the importance of putting on your own oxygen mask before assisting others. The same could be said of the academy – there are times where it is appropriate and important to put ourselves first. We hope you use this space to identify three self-care goals for the year.

1.

2.

3.

CARING FOR THE COLLECTIVE GOALS

Caring for yourself is primary. However, we recognize you do not operate in a vacuum. Building a strong community of support is important as well. In this space, we would like you to identify three ways in which you could envision yourself supporting and uplifting the community we have brought together today.

1.

2.

3.

ENACTING GOALS:

Sunday Meeting



Set up a Sunday Meeting with the most important person: You

One of the most difficult things to accomplish, in any facet of life, is seeing goals through to completion – with so many demands on our time, it's easy to get off-track. This is particularly true for those of us seeking promotion or tenure in academia. While it can be easy to come up with goals, both personal and professional, it's much more complicated to ensure that progress is being made on those goals, and before you know it, the semester is over and you're pretty much where you started.

One strategy, suggested by Kerry Ann Rockquemore, is the “Sunday Meeting.” It involves imposing a weekly structure onto your semester plan to ensure that you're making progress toward your goals and achieving long-term success.

It forces you to think about how you're going to accomplish your goals, and more importantly, when that work will get done.

In essence, it is a meeting of a committee of one – you – in which you map out what you will (or hope to) accomplish by the end of the week. **For more information visit:** <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2010/09/20/sunday-meeting>

The Sunday Meeting strategy has five steps (six, if you include creating a semester plan, in which you note all of your goals for the semester, which typically involve the criteria for tenure or promotion at your institution). The Sunday Meeting should only take about 30 minutes to create (and of course, you don't need to create it on Sunday, although that's when most people plan out their coming week).

In Step 1, you create a skeleton calendar, blocking out times for all of your standing commitments, both work-related and personal. This includes research and writing time, classes, office hours, meetings, etc.

In Step 2, you make a separate list of all of your to-do items based on your short-term and long-term goals, paying close attention to those tasks that are part of your evaluation for promotion and tenure.

In Step 3, you merge the to-do list with the weekly calendar you created in Step 1. This is the messy part. Each to-do item is assigned to a specific block of time during your week, based on an estimate of how long each task will take and the priority level it merits. You will undoubtedly have that nightmare moment when you realize that there's not enough time to get all of your to-do list done. Don't panic!

In Step 4, you decide what to do with what doesn't fit. Identify the high-priority tasks (taking a look back at your semester plan and your long-term goals will help with this). As for the remaining items, Rockquemore provides a few options: delegate; compromise; renegotiate deadlines; lower your standards (for non-critical tasks); just say “no”; and let some things go.

Finally, in Step 5, you commit to executing the plan. A clear plan and a firm commitment to it will help you move forward, say “no” when you need to; and make you more productive overall than if you tried to operate in crisis mode on a daily basis. Of course, unexpected circumstances and daily chaos can throw your plan for a loop, but crises will be easier to manage if you have a set plan in place.

Here's to short-term planning and your long-term success!

“Nothing is guaranteed. And all that came before doesn't predict what you might do next.”

— Maya Lin

“You don't have to be anything but yourself to be worthy.”

— Tarana Burke



The Strategic “No”

As members of the academy, and in particular as women of color, we are often overwhelmed with requests from students, colleagues, mentees, and mentors. There are many “service” tasks that bring immediate rewards, others that bring delayed rewards, and yet others that many not bring any reward.

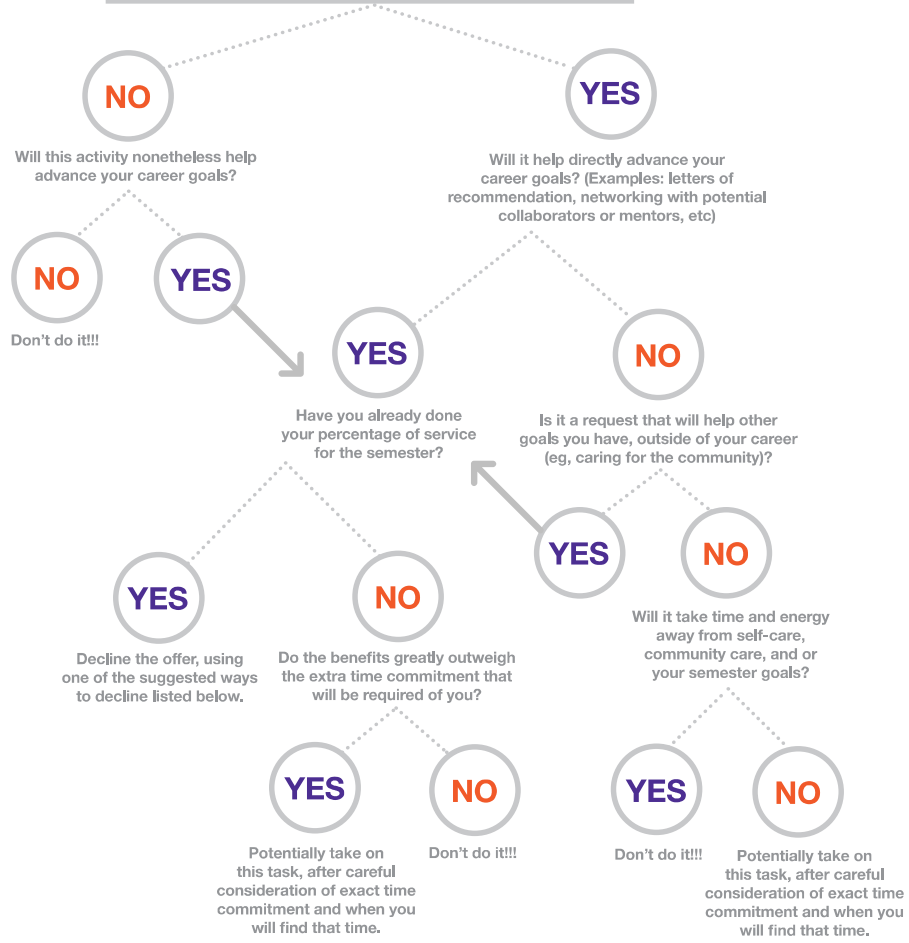
As such, an important aspect of self-care as an academic is learning the art of saying “no”.

Here we highlight some advice and also provide a tool, the No Decision Tree, to help you respectfully decline requests for your time.

- **Avoid Saying “Yes” On The Spot.** Instead of immediately replying “yes”, take some time to carefully consider the request and go through your “no” decision tree.
- **Does This Task Advance Your Goals?** Consider whether this opportunity advances your vision for your career and life goals. If the request is for work that you are not passionate about, will the opportunity help you connect with people or other projects that can help advance a goal that you are passionate about?
- **Serve Strategically.** Determine what percentage of your tenure and promotion evaluation will be based on service, and use that as a guideline to determine how much time you will dedicate to service each week.
- **How Much Time Will It Take?** Estimate how much time it will take to complete the requested task. You might reach out to others who have done similar service tasks before for input on the time commitment required. Also, consult your calendar. What specific day and time will you allocate to completing this task?
- **Set Policies.** Create your own guidelines for saying no. These policies can be publicly state (ie, “I require at least two weeks notice for letters of recommendation.”)
- **Artfully Decline.** You don’t necessarily need to explain your decision to say no. In fact, explaining may put you in a bind (for instance, if you decline saying that a specific day/time does not work for you, and they suggest a different day/time). You might offer an explanation only if it is an unassailable reason. You might consider volunteering someone else who might welcome this opportunity, being mindful of that person’s time and availability.



SOMEONE ASKED FOR YOUR TIME AND LABOR... SHOULD YOU DO IT?
Was it someone who could help promote your career in some way (ie, tenure, promotion, letters of recommendation, etc)?



“I have come to believe that caring for myself is not self-indulgent. Caring for myself is an act of survival.”

— Audre Lorde

“All of it’s a big responsibility: being a woman, being African-American, but also just being a person.”

— April Ryan