LAUNCH COMMITTEES

List of typical questions/issues addressed by LAUNCH Committees

All questions are written here as if asked by the junior faculty member, but all members of the committee are encouraged to raise relevant issues and pose questions. In some cases, it may be best for the Convener to or other senior faculty members to ask the questions on behalf of the junior faculty member.

Teaching
What is the process for making teaching assignments, and what factors are used to decide what I am teaching?
What am I teaching? When will I know?
Where is this classroom?
Can I move the date of the final?
How many office hours should I have? What if the students seem to want much more than that?
What can/can't I expect a GSI (or IA) to do?
How can I get access to course materials from previous years?
What is a CRLT mid-term evaluation?
How should I interpret these course evaluations? Which numbers are most important?
Why do the students in the class seem so resistant to learning about this topic?
Am I assuming too much? Should I be teaching more background material?
Am I assigning too much?
Who can review my proposed syllabus?
I am sending a ton of time preparing for each class. How can I become more efficient?
I am having trouble maintaining control in class. How do I regain control?
How do I use feedback from mid-term and end of term evaluations? How do I document that I'm using feedback and improving?
Can the department chair introduce me at the beginning of my first class, to show departmental support and provide credibility?

Lab/equipment/student space
What lab am I assigned? What should I do if this isn't going to be sufficient/suitable?
Why isn't the lab ready yet? What is the process for getting labs renovated?
Who is the facilities person and can they help?
Is there anything that can be done to speed things up?
Where are animal care facilities and how do I get access/approval?
Where is this joint equipment I am supposed to have access to?
What shared equipment might be available in individual labs rather than in common spaces?
What are the various UC Davis core facilities available?
Where can my students sit? I expect to get more students over the years, and this space won't be sufficient – should I worry about this now?
Are there lab stools? Desk chairs?
Should I wait to order equipment until after the lab space is ready?
How can I access my startup funds to start ordering equipment/supplies?
LS&A has a computer allocation; how does that work?
What is CAEN? Do they have computers I can use?

How do I get computer/IT help?
How do I approach a more senior faculty member who has equipment I would like access to or a more senior faculty member who has approached me to ask for access to my equipment?

Students and other lab personnel
What is the process for getting graduate students into my lab? Are there rotations? If the department pays for the student initially, when do I start being responsible?
How should I let students know that I have an opening in my lab?
I didn't manage to attract any students to my lab – is that a problem?
Are there students in interdisciplinary programs that I could take on?
How should I encourage/discourage particular students to stay in my lab following this initial rotation?
What course load do the students have, and how many hours in the lab is reasonable to expect?
What should I consider when choosing my student's thesis committee members?
Should I take on this student that is moving from another group? Since this involves a complete change in project, what is a reasonable expectation regarding graduation time?
How many undergrads should I take into the lab? What are UROP, SROP and SURE?
How do I identify undergrads? Should I do UROP?
How can I manage all these people?
How should I counsel a student that just failed the qualifying exam?
What qualities should I look for in a postdoc?
Who might I contact to get good postdoc applications? Should I advertise and, if so, how and where?
When hiring a postdoc, are there departmental norms in terms of salary, office space, length of term, etc.?
Can I get funding to take a student to a meeting?
Is there help for students that are non-native speakers of English?
What should I do if I am worried about a student's mental state?
How do I advertise for a technician?
What should I ask in a technician interview? What are the most important things to look for in a "first" technician?
Should I recruit existing masters students in the hopes that they continue towards PhD?
How many research students should I aim to work with my first year? What are the expectations regarding mentoring research students when I'm up for tenure?
Can I give a seminar in this department to showcase my interests to current graduate students?
What is an independent study course and are students paid to do research for this course? Can I use this as a trial test for students?

Service
Should I say yes to this request by another faculty member?
How do I say no?
What service should I be doing my first year? (What is my assignment?)
Should I serve on the graduate admissions committee right away?
How is service viewed at tenure time?
What are the types of service assignments in this department?
What are the benefits to doing this particular service assignment?
Should I consider service outside the UC Davis – for my professional societies? How is that viewed at tenure time?

Funding

This list was modified from the University of Michigan ADVANCE Program LAUNCH Committees Typical Questions list, 2013-2014.

How do I transfer my R99/K00 award to UC Davis? How should I use those funds?

What is the advantage of paying for students from NIH/federal funds?

Which type of NIH grant should I apply for? When should I apply?

What other types of funding sources should I be targeting?

Who at UC Davis has recently succeeded in earning this "x grant" for junior faculty and can I contact them for tips?

What foundation grants should I apply for? Who is the UC Davis foundation grant liaison?

Are there internal funding sources I can apply for?

What training programs might my students apply to for support, and how?

Who in the department can help me with budgets and submission?

How long before the grant deadline do I have to have it ready to go?

Are there examples of funded proposals to look at?

Is there a way to have my proposal proofread for English?

How should I interpret this review of my proposal?

How many proposals should a junior faculty member in this department submit every year?

Should I join a team who is writing a large proposal? If so, how do I reach agreement on my responsibilities for contributing to the writing?

I would like to lead a team who is writing a joint proposal. How do I organize our team so we stay on task and that members meet writing deadlines?

Can my LAUNCH committee review my first proposal(s) – perhaps when I am just formulating the aims - and provide feedback?

Can I have my proposal reviewed by an external expert (say someone who has previously served on the study section or panel that I'm targeting)?

Research

Should I continue to collaborate with my doctoral or postdoc advisor?

Should I collaborate with this person who is a giant in the field?

Should I collaborate? If I collaborate, how will my work be viewed when I come up for tenure?

Is there someone at UC Davis doing X that I might be introduced to?

How could I find a collaborator? Is a single meeting with a collaborator usually enough to get the collaboration going?

Is it reasonable to be spending this entire term gathering preliminary data before I write any proposal?

Other

What departmental or program retreats are scheduled that I should plan to attend?

Is there a process by which I can suggest a seminar speaker?

Should I use my summer salary (part of startup) this summer or next?

Why haven't I received a paycheck yet?

I've been asked to participate on a review panel for NSF. What should I expect?

I was on a review panel for NSF and it appears that hardly any proposals will be funded. Is this normal?

When should I serve on an NIH review panel? What is the NIH Early Career Reviewer Program?

We are about to start interviews for a new chair or faculty member. What kinds of things should I be asking the candidates?

What are the various new faculty orientations and teaching orientations I should go to?

What if questions come up between LAUNCH Committee meetings?

What if I say "yes" to something and now realize it is way too much for me to do?

Who will be my mentor beyond year 1?

What is Step Plus?

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