THE SUSTAINABLE PROFESSOR’S GUIDE TO GOAL-SETTING FOR 2018

Overview:
A. 2017 assessment
B. 2018 goals
C. 2018 obligations
D. 2018 quarter/semester goals
E. Dedicate time to your goals
F. Make it sustainable

A. 2017 Assessment

Get out your CV and calendar and review the following:
- Research—major discoveries, new information, new approaches or technologies in the lab, new projects started, projects wrapped up, projects abandoned
- Products—papers, reviews
- Finances—grants in, out, and in limbo
- Team—personnel changes, attitudes, mentee progress
- Advertising—seminars, meeting talks, posters, social media
- Teaching
- Service—to department, graduate program, university, society, international field, etc.
- “Wins” from this past year
- Regrets, places for improvement, disappointments
- Worries
- Overall assessment of 2017

B. 2018 Goals

Dream up a few big-picture, job-related goals. You might wish to start a new research direction, publish an impactful paper, establish a solid funding base, create a happy lab environment or be a great teacher. They do not have to be doable, nor even very specific, and they should involve a change.

C. 2018 Obligations

Enter into your calendar all the obligations that constrain your time. Include courses you teach, conferences you’ll attend, seminar dates, grant deadlines, paper deadlines, your partner’s travel, and so on.

D. 2018 Semester Foci

Pick your top goal or goals from part B and assign each to a semester (or quarter if that works better for you) in 2018, where they will be the primary focus of your best and most
productive energy. Try to take into account all of the other obligations you’ve already entered when you assign goals to particular parts of the year.

E. Block off Time to Work on Your Goal

Block off the time on your 2018 calendar that you’ll dedicate to working towards your goal. You can plan for an hour or so each day, or one or two big chunks each week, or whatever works for you. **This** is the time you’ll spend working towards your goal. Right now, you don’t need to commit to anything more than faithfully showing up on a regular basis to work on that particular goal during that particular semester. You can spend your first time block deciding on a plan of action, or just get to work on the first thing that occurs to you. The key is that during these time blocks you are working towards your goal and nothing else.

F. Make it Sustainable:

- What can you take OUT of your calendar to make time and mental space for these new goals?

- Where will you get the energy for your new initiative(s)?

- We are lucky to be able to work towards our own advancement. How can you use this privilege for the good of others?

I hope this is a fun and useful process for you! Let me know how it goes, ask any questions, or make suggestions for improvement on Twitter at @ehaswell.