

THE CHRONICLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Manage Your Career

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Self-Sabotage in the Academic Career

15 ways in which faculty members harm their own futures, often without knowing it

By Robert J. Sternberg

Pogo recognized long ago that we often are our own worst enemies. Sure, he was a cartoon character, but he had a point—especially in higher education, where self-sabotage seems to be a standard characteristic of academic careers. In my 30 years as a professor, five years as a dean, and three years as a provost, I have observed many academics harm their own careers, often without realizing it. Here are 15 ways in which you can be most self-destructive.

1. You don't seek out multiple mentors. Too many faculty members sit back and wait for guidance and advice from their department heads or promotion committees. Successful academics, early in their careers, look for several mentors, including from departments other than their own. No one person or committee can be relied on to give you definitive career advice. In the end, you need to seek out multiple sources of advice, sort the good from the bad, and take responsibility for your own career development.

2. You don't seek out external evaluations. For some academics, the first time they get any sort of formal external feedback is during a tenure review. Guess what: That's too late. You need to pursue multiple external evaluations of your work early in your career—via reviews of your articles and grant proposals, colleagues in your field to whom you send your work for comments, and people who listen to you give talks. If you wait until tenure time, you are setting yourself up to fail.

3. You are either perfectionist or perfunctory in putting your work into print. Everyone wants to write the perfect article or book, but no one ever does. The longer you wait to publish, the

more likely someone else will beat you to press with the same idea, and the less likely you will be to find a publication outlet in time for gaining credit from a promotion committee. Moreover, many kinds of research go out of date quickly. Wait too long, and you court your own doom. But if you rush stuff into print, you will find yourself getting rejections and revise-and-resubmit notices, which also can hold up your bid to build your CV in time for its consideration by a promotion committee. Do your best on an article or book, but don't wait for Godot: Get it out promptly. And remember that, in any good institution, quantity matters, but quality, visibility, and impact matter more.

4. Did you hold on to revisions too long? Or rush them out? Very few articles are accepted on the first go-round with a publisher. Normally you can expect to do one or more revisions, whether for a book, article, or grant proposal. If you hold onto revisions too long, you will stifle your career. Editors and grant-review panels change, so you may find that the people evaluating your work later are looking for different things than were those who reviewed it earlier. Many of your revisions then may end up being in vain. So don't wait long in revising your work. But don't rush it out, either, lest it look like you failed to pay attention to the critiques. And if you disagree with the critiques, say why. Don't just blow them off, or your editor and reviewers are likely to do the same to you and your work.

5. You pay too much attention to personal relationships—or too little. Some early-career academics get so involved in their work that they ignore personal relationships with colleagues in their department. Or they act rudely toward others, believing that career success depends only on the quality of their work. Wrong on both counts. Whether departments admit it or not, they prefer to promote people who fit in—who contribute to the life of the department and of the institution. The person who is seen as a good fit will always have an edge over the misfit. But it also can be a mistake to devote so much time to personal relationships that your investment in those relationships is at the expense of your work.

6. You fail to understand the cultural norms of your institution. What counts for promotion differs from one institution to another, and what is written in the promotion guidelines sometimes fails to

capture what is most important for success. You need informal knowledge of the cultural norms of your institution, not just formal knowledge of the promotion requirements. It's important to be alert to the tacit, or unspoken, knowledge that only experience can teach you, lest you come up for promotion and meet the formal guidelines while falling short on the informal ones.

7. You aren't well known outside your institution. Important people in your field who are external to your own institution must know who you are, because they are the ones who will be asked to write about you at tenure or promotion time. Of course, a strong internal reputation is important, too. When tenure candidates, asked to recommend external letter writers, have no names to offer, that is a bad sign.

8. You lack resilience in the face of failure. In any academic career, the question is not whether you are going to have failures; the question is what you are going to do when you fail. You will have articles, book manuscripts, and grant proposals turned down; courses that are poorly received; talks for which audiences give you the cold shoulder. Academic careers are not for the faint of heart. In my experience, the people who are most successful in academe are reasonably smart and at least somewhat creative, but more important, they persist in the face of obstacles. Failed academics may be smart and creative but, when challenged, give up or become embittered.

9. You've been involved in one too many intradepartmental squabbles. Stay out of them if at all possible. Wait until you are tenured or, better yet, skip them altogether. You have better things to do with your time. If senior professors try to involve you, demur if you can.

10. You are too selfish or too selfless. Department members quickly pick up on selfishness in a new hire. It will not shock you to learn that, regardless of academic prowess, people generally do not want selfish colleagues around. They are the ones who never have time for others and, when they do, hog credit or, worse, steal ideas. It is equally risky to be too selfless. You want a reputation as helpful, but you can't afford to let your own work go undone while

you spend time helping others. Especially at risk are academics with technical skills. It is very hard to get promoted on the basis of the technical skills you used to help your colleagues.

11. You got stuck on your dissertation paradigm. Academic careers falter if they resemble one-act plays. By the time you come up for tenure, you need to be, at the very least, starting your second act—a second book, a new research paradigm, a new topic for your research, new course preparations. If you are seen as a one-idea kind of academic, you will be viewed as a bad tenure risk. And indeed, you are.

12. You collaborate too much with colleagues from graduate school or your postdoctoral years. You are expected, as a new faculty member, to show increasing independence. Don't make the mistake of getting sucked into extended, intense collaborations with your graduate or postdoctoral mentors or collaborators. The message you will send in doing so is that you never achieved the independence that will identify you as having embarked on your own career. Some collaboration with them is fine, but limit it.

13. You fail to have a coherent research program. You need a certain quantity of published research, but you also need a rational and organized research program. If there is no consistent theme, or perhaps pair of themes, professors will wonder if you have a meaningful future as an investigator, or if you are merely someone who flits from project to project, aimlessly pursuing investigations.

14. You are guilty of any form of academic dishonesty. If you are caught in any form of academic cheating, there is a single word to describe your career: over. It is very difficult to recover from verified academic dishonesty. Don't go down that road.

15. You haven't figured out who you are. As an academic, if you try to please everyone, you will please no one. So figure out what you do best and capitalize on it. Correct or compensate for the things you don't do well. No one is good at everything. Make sure you are good enough at everything on which you will be evaluated, and really good on some of those things.

Robert J. Sternberg is provost and senior vice president at Oklahoma State University, and a professor of psychology and education there. He will take office this year as president of the University of Wyoming.

132 comments



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jane5984 ▾

**trivellato** · 9 months ago

Sensible, thought provoking. I wish I had this list at the beginning of my career during the seventies.

57 ^ | ▾ · Reply · Share ›

**igsdoffice** · 9 months ago

There's a lot of good advice here -- but I find it a bit sad that the words "teaching" and "students" never appear.

306 ^ | ▾ · Reply · Share ›

**tuxthepenguin** → **igsdoffice** · 9 months ago

Why would that be? It would be a sad state of affairs if something like that were appropriate for an article like this.

"You fail to show up to teach your classes and fail to help your students learn." Anyone already in a tenure track position needing that advice is so far gone that no amount of advice is going to help.

58 ^ | ▾ · Reply · Share ›

**blackbart2** → **tuxthepenguin** · 9 months ago

"Anyone already in a tenure track position needing that advice is so far gone that no amount of advice is going to help."

One could say the same about nearly every bit of advice in this article. That doesn't make this omission less noteworthy.

(On the other hand, it's been my experience that pedagogical excellence rarely has anything to do with a tenure file's success, so maybe it's exactly right to omit its mention here. Still sad, though.)

110 ^ | ▾ · Reply · Share ›

**tuxthepenguin** → **blackbart2** · 9 months ago

I disagree. For instance, the first one, "You don't seek out multiple mentors." That is not the kind of thing a new assistant professor is likely to know. The elaboration on each point is definitely not obvious.

On the other hand, you're talking (apparently) about how to teach well. That's been covered a million times in a million places, and is very much specific to the field and the school.

I don't think it's a coincidence that you haven't made a specific suggestion as to what should be added to the list. 'Pedagogical excellence' is hard to define and harder to measure.

22 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



blackbart → tuxthepenguin · 9 months ago

"You don't seek out multiple mentors." It isn't obvious to successful people who have worked their way through life to a terminal degree that it's useful to get multiple perspectives from reliable experts who have your interests at heart? Many of the warnings presented in the article constitute good common sense of which it's healthy to be reminded, so far as that goes.

And I can point you to any number of places on the Chronicle and its forums where the lack of pedagogical training in many disciplines is lamented.

But I'm not sure we're keeping our eyes on the ball. This advice is proffered as a set of warnings as to how not to harm one's own professional career prospects (which can be and has been fairly read as "how to not jeopardize prospects for tenure"). igsdoffice's original comment bemoaned the absence of any mention of "teaching" and

[see more](#)

43 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



tuxthepenguin → blackbart · 9 months ago

I'm not following your argument. I wrote above that it was not a coincidence that you had not given an example of something that should be added to the list, and that it's not easy to measure or even define pedagogical excellence.

You have replied with six paragraphs of commentary about your views on teaching. You did not provide an example of something that could be added to the article, and you use the terms 'teaching quality' and 'teaching well' without defining them or explaining how they can be measured.

4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



blackbart → tuxthepenguin · 9 months ago

My argument is that the exclusion of teaching from the list has nothing to do with the difficulty of articulating succinct, sound advice about teaching in a way analogous to the other warnings presented in the article. My argument is that the exclusion of any mention of teaching from that list is a "depressing tacet commentary on the state of the academic institution" because such omission implies that teaching quality (however you or I might like to quantitatively or qualitatively measure it) doesn't register in tenure and promotion decisions.

If you really wanted to add a sixteenth warning to the list regarding teaching, one could simply say, "You haven't provided evidence of quality pedagogy to the gatekeepers of your professional advancement that they find compelling." This is no less broad than many of the other warnings ("coherent research program," "resilience in the face of failure"), and the definitions of "teaching

[see more](#)

29 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



tuxthepenguin → blackbart · 9 months ago

"You haven't provided evidence of quality pedagogy to the gatekeepers of your professional advancement that they find compelling."

That is a reasonable argument. When you go up for tenure, you will have to demonstrate that you can teach at an acceptable level. How you do that will depend on the school, of course, but some new TT professors may not think about it.

That should probably be added to the list. Its absence does not imply that teaching does not matter, however.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



conscience → tuxthepenguin · 8 months ago

I wonder to what extent he thinks politics is the heart of the matter, since most of his advice is cautious.

10 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Ben Quick → tuxthepenguin · 8 months ago

"When you go up for tenure, you will have to demonstrate that you can teach at an acceptable level....That should probably be added to the list. Its absence does not imply that teaching does not matter, however."

What is an acceptable level? I ask because I've never seen a TT denied tenure because of his or her teaching. I have seen tenure denied over failure to produce the requisite number of publications--usually 5-6 and/or a book.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



mbkirova → tuxthepenguin · 9 months ago

Bull. I am an adjunct and still find I have more to offer at dept meetings than illustrious colleagues trying to hide their classroom failures by silence, bombast or simply not attending. Learning is sharing, for profs alike.

19 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



tuxthepenguin → mbkirova · 9 months ago

What are you talking about?

4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



frankgado → mbkirova · 8 months ago

Friend, you are in jeopardy!

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



greenhornist → tuxthepenguin · 9 months ago

You actually reinforce igsdoffice with your retort. If "showing up for class and helping students learn" is all a professor aspires to in teaching, that's a sad commentary. While making significant contributions to knowledge through research, scholarship, publication, etc. is the rock solid foundation of our approach to higher education, teaching has assumed a back seat that has contributed to the mediocrity of learning in this country. We have a whole country full of people with college degrees who know next to nothing, and show very little capacity to think clearly. College professors should set a much higher bar from themselves as teachers than merely "showing up" (high as that is in Woody Allen's pantheon or virtues.) And a vague sense of "helping students learn" is hardly a professional approach to teaching. Demand more of yourself, and demand more of your

students. Yes, I know you are terrified that the only thing that will help you get tenure is publication. I've been there myself, and I get it. But you know as well as I that most scholarly publications do very little to "advance knowledge." Do what you have to to save your career, and try to make it more than just another item in your list of refereed articles. Take more pride in the worth of your time and effort, and do what's right for the advancement of knowledge and learning by publishing things worth knowing and inspiring students through your teaching.

26 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



22293837 → greenhornist · 9 months ago

Showing up for class and getting good student evaluations is the goal for any non-tenured faculty. When it comes to staying employed, whether students learn anything or not is mostly irrelevant.

32 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



greenhornist → 22293837 · a month ago

Anyone who feels this way is definitely part of the problem and part of the reason higher education is failing so badly.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



sardian → greenhornist · 7 months ago

The major problem in evaluation of research is the actual quantification of the "value" of one's research. Is there a reliable "metric" for that? Citation count, paper count, h-index g-index, "prestige" of journals the author's work is published in etc are pathetic excuses for a reliable metric. More often than not, one's posture, manners, accent, ethnic/cultural/educational background are used subconsciously in making employment and/or tenure decisions. Those in positions of making such judgments are, of course, only "human" and it shows in the decisions they make. Too cynical? Just take a look at notorious cases of rejected papers, rejected publications etc, and multiply that number safely by a factor of 10-100 to get a realistic estimate. In fact the very "solution" that the author euphemistically suggests, i.e. to "pay attention to personal relationships," or to try to get included in ole boy networks, is one of the major problems academia faces.

[see more](#)

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



raymond_j_ritchie → igsdoffice · 9 months ago

I am a lab rat and NERD and so I am normally suspicious of anything talking about "emphasis on teaching" but in this case I agree with you. It is simply common sense that you should be expected to be able to teach well and look after your students. The omission is most curious, perhaps the actual purpose of an institute of higher learning has been forgotten. See the "Yes Minister" skit about the hospital with no patients.

33 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



listerprime → raymond_j_ritchie · 8 months ago

'I am a lab rat and NERD and so I am normally suspicious of anything talking about "emphasis on teaching" '

Why?

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



nontraditional001 → igsdoffice · 9 months ago

Good article. There is a tension between collegiality and competition in academe. Lamenting the lack of cooperation and a nurturing environment ignores that fact. Professors are not teachers either. We are not trained in pedagogy. We are subject matter experts and independent investigators whom impart our unique insight to students, thus stimulating their independent exploration of the topic. That is why "teaching" is only a minor factor in tenure decisions.

29 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



sheronsteele → nontraditional001 · 8 months ago

Pedagogy can be and should be and often IS a subject matter for study and discussion for educational professionals. The student is the reason for being of any educational establishment.

9 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



nontraditional001 → sheronsteele · 8 months ago

sure, if one is an education major or professor, Ed.D.

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



listerprime → nontraditional001 · 8 months ago

'Professors are not teachers either. We are not trained in pedagogy. We are subject matter experts and independent investigators whom impart our unique insight to students, '

And this is a serious problem.

15 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



nontraditional001 → listerprime · 8 months ago

Only if you expect a college education to be an extension of high school.

20 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Gene Preuss · 9 months ago

This is some of the best advice I've seen in the Chronicle

42 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



eyeshaveit · 9 months ago

I see in retrospect several places where I made my own journey harder than it needed to be....but made it to tenured professor anyway. Thank you for writing such a thoughtful article on an important topic.

28 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



22086364 · 9 months ago

Number 6 is perhaps the biggest gaffe, at least at the smaller schools I've taught for. I've seen really, really good people flushed out because they don't (or don't seem to) appreciate the culture in which they find themselves. Just as bad: once they're painted with this brush, it seems almost impossible to recover.

28 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



David Grant → 22086364 · 9 months ago

But there is a fine balance between adhering to cultural norms and advocating for their change. A little of both is needed, especially in today's academy.

28 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



mbkirova → 22086364 · 9 months ago

very true. triply so at American universities abroad.

4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

**lindarugg** · 9 months ago

During the hiring process at my first institution after grad school, I was taken aside by multiple prospective colleagues and either warned about certain other colleagues or encouraged to take one side or another in departmental squabbles. During the interview process, mind you! This was a harbinger of what was to come: some very difficult psychological battles among colleagues, with the non-tenured faculty seen as pawns. I could see already in the interview process that there would be problems of this nature, but being a relatively young and vulnerable person, I found it difficult if not impossible not to take sides or get involved. The people who were my most respected mentors found jobs elsewhere, and I was lucky enough to be able to find a good job ultimately at another institution and get out. But so much time was wasted and so much anguish was generated by these petty internecine wars. I made plenty of mistakes myself (the list in this article is spot-on), but the departmental culture was designed to nurture failure, despite the efforts of some supportive colleagues. I think that as senior faculty members (I am one of those myself now) we need to look to this list to ask what we should be doing (and not doing) to support our younger colleagues. That's what I intend to do as chair right now. Thanks for this.

86 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

**jamie23** → lindarugg · 9 months ago

On a note only tangentially related to the article but in response to lindarugg, if you find yourself in a situation such as this, people approaching you during the interview process to get you to take sides, to tell you about difficult people, etc, run! I didn't, I assumed that because I'm a pretty easy-going, people person that I could ultimately get along with the people identified as difficult. In my case, this identification of difficult people was by the dean who really wanted me for the position and told me she would 'have my back'; only much too late did it become clear that 'having my back' was so she could push me under the bus when things really did escalate.

When you're untenured, there is no safe place, there's no way to escape craziness in the department, there really is no one who will protect you. As much as having a tenure-track position is attractive, all of the other ramifications of situations such as this, both professional and personal, are not worth it.

46 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

**penast** · 9 months ago

Nothing in excess. Good advice in life.

7 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

**cynical1** · 9 months ago

Excellent advice. I know I am somewhat guilty of #13. It's not that I jump from one topic to the next, it's just that I work on one area for a while, start to get bored of it, then branch into something related. My current work might seem quite at odds with what I was doing 10 years ago, but I can show a logical path of how I got here!

Perhaps I would be better off if I stuck to one or two areas, but then again, maybe not. I have a highly cited paper in an area that I know find horrendously boring, and I hate it when I get papers to review in that area! I enjoy challenging myself by branching into new areas - that is what drew me to academics. If I had tried to stick to those one or two areas, I might have lost my motivation.

17 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

**frankgado** → cynical1 · 8 months ago

You are describing my own career in scholarship. I entered the profession because I wanted to continue learning. Although I haven't found any area in which I have studied intensively boring, when I had

said what I wanted to say, I didn't want to repeat myself. I remember, in graduate school, encountering an American lit professor who had devoted his entire career to writing about Theodore Dreiser. Very successful, but what intellectually curious, creative person would seek a life in such a cave? In my ideal college or university, such faculty would be flushed out as soon as the signs of this malady appeared.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



rahodeb · 9 months ago

All excellent advice, except a qualification is necessary for #3: there is nothing wrong with a revise-and-resubmit verdict from a journal. The only bad kind of revise-and-resubmit article is one that wasn't revised and resubmitted.

25 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



babsbythebeach · 9 months ago

I wish this list existed when I had first started, but then I still might have been too young/arrogant/ naive/caring to heed the warnings. I would say #16 should be, a word of caution that my grad school friend in his first year said to me, "Do not teach well. Do not spend too time with your students. Just publish and keep your head down." When he initially said this to me, I was incredibly angry, but then belatedly I discovered he was right.

I cared too much about my students and teaching. I spent hours working with them on editing their papers, working on their analytic skills and mentoring. Big mistake. When I was nominated by my students in my first year for Excellence in Teaching, my nomination was revoked because they said it might have been a fluke. When my students nominated in years 2 & 3, again the administration revoked my nominations because they said I might use the award to "jump ship" to another university, so they changed the criteria to, "you must have taught 3 full years to be eligible...." When students started to sign up for my classes and opt to be on the waiting list rather than sign up for another instructor, a colleague of mine said I was, "doomed." She was right, I left that institution after my 3rd year.

Another great piece of advice from a seasoned colleague, "Do not say anything in your first year. You never know who is married, who is divorced, who are allies and who are enemies. Get a lay of the land before you open your mouth at any meeting or any dinner." Again, another piece of advice I was unable to put into action because I was dragged into ever department battle, something I wish I had never gotten involved in.

64 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



PsychGirl → **babsbythebeach** · 9 months ago

"Do not teach well. Do not spend too much time with your students. Just publish and keep your head down... Do not say anything in your first year. You never know who is married, who is divorced, who are allies and who are enemies. Get a lay of the land before you open your mouth at any meeting or any dinner."

This just makes me sad. Why do we accept this as the culture of academia?

117 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



texas2step → **PsychGirl** · 9 months ago

Your reply is so spot on. This article is depressing. We are now just like industry.

50 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



bbaylis → **texas2step** · 9 months ago

Does anyone else find it ironic that no matter how much higher education attempts to separate itself from business and industry, we end up behaving like a

business?

31 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



aclarke02 → bbaylis · 7 months ago

So very true! At some institutions, students are referred to customers and the institutions live by the cliché that the "customers" are always right. . And while I understand that students are really our "customers, I find that term to be very misplaced in the world of academe.

2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



tech_prof → texas2step · 9 months ago

Just like industry? I've been in industry for 30 years and my experience is if any of the crap cited here happened in industry, people are fired. No tenure to protect you. What experience do you have in industry to compare against? What others tell you? I've seen both, and frankly, there is a lot less 'ego buffing' and childish departmental squabbling in industry than in academia.

And as for bbaylis' following comment, why would you think higher education is any different from business and industry? Because you tell yourself it's different? Because in the past it was different? Because in the past you could protect your 'academic freedom' with tenure and now tenure is dying? At the end of the day, a college is no different than a business. You can all wail and moan about how 'thats not true, its... its... academia!!!' It's a business dangling the hope of a better life in front of people in the form of a diploma and it's funded mostly

[see more](#)

45 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Bonapartist01 → tech_prof · 8 months ago

Amazing? I'm not sure about that, but I would say it is amazing to watch the private/industrial sector insist that we are a classless society when we've been destroying the middle for thirty years; that it's amazing to watch said sector insist on selling us "supply side economics" and "trickle down"; that it's amazing to watch said sector insist that it wants college graduates, and then disparage and attack everything that goes to make a real education; that it's amazing to watch said sector push a system of education-and-work-place that would discard most of the Founders as useless humanities types. By the way, "it increases it's cost" should be "it increases its cost." And insisting that the pronoun snafu is irrelevant is the same thinking that insists that exporting jobs and inflating executive bonuses is an "irrelevant" question for public policy discussion.

26 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



listerprime → tech_prof · 8 months ago

Thanks for posting this. It's stuffed with truth. With or without a dropped apostrophe.

6 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Gloria Monti → tech_prof · 7 months ago

tech "prof:" capitalism, a love story. pathetic.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



listerprime → texas2step · 8 months ago

No. I'm in industry. They are very honest about what they expect from me as a researcher. To make them money. Frankly not being lied to constantly (which was my experience in academia) is very refreshing.

21 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Gloria Monti → listerprime · 7 months ago

Texas. I rest my case.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



frankgado → PsychGirl · 8 months ago

Good for you, girl! Your sadness is a symptom of the morbidity of the profession.

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



aclarke02 → PsychGirl · 7 months ago

Self preservation!

I completely understand...hunker down and try to fly under the radar while getting your work done, especially if your institution's culture breeds cliques, taking sides, etc.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



mf_me → PsychGirl · 2 months ago

I've been in academia for one year and I have hated it. I wish I had read this article a year ago. Quite frankly, I feel I stuffed up my career (at least at my institution) if I consider some of the points mentioned in the article. I am writing purely from my perspective in my institution. I don't know what it's like elsewhere. To complicate matters, my institution is situated in South Africa so socio-political and socio-cultural factors further burden academics as they try to work within a managerial environment. At my institution, a managerial discourse is rife and many academics feel (or so I am told) that it is all about control and funding. There is no emphasis on teaching and learning. So much of what people are saying here is true regarding industry and academia. They are the same. Academia is business. I don't agree with it but it is what it is. I wanted to become an academic because I have a passion for teaching and learning. Now I'm considering a career change. What is happening in practice at my institution is a Neoliberal governmentality discourse, and from reading some of the comments below, it is happening at other institutions too. It has made me bitter and I want to cry. That is all.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›

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