

The high-level story of DanCo's CAREER grant in two minutes

- Transitioning from postdoc to asst-prof at Cornell
- Encouraged to take a shot at it in year 0
- A history of work around thinking about social science when doing computer science
 - Specific old directions: systems for encouraging behavior, modeling behavior (in Wikipedia)
 - Specific new idea: leverage behavior traces not for computational modeling, but personal reflection
- The CAREER was basically those two things with a cover story.
- Goal today: give you a couple of actionable points, and how I dealt with them.

Get (and give) examples.

- "I can do this" (as I did with dissertations)
 - Not just ones "topically close"
- Ideas for structures, organizations, and levels of detail
- Ideas for the ed/research integration
- Get both successful and unsuccessful examples
- Me: asking people at current school and graduates from PhD school (not very comfy reaching out to "strangers", and not well-connected at the time)
- In the spirit of sharing: <http://www.cs.cornell.edu/~danco/research/career>

The career versus the CAREER

- \$500,000 is (weirdly) not that much money over 5 years: how to balance vision and practice?
- Articulate the long-term goal that this work supports/instantiates/sets up (the "career")
 - What's your story/why is this important/what do you want to be when you grow up?
- Choose some specific bits that are reasonably coherent (the CAREER).
 - Too many ideas can lead to "scattershot" or "unclear" or "disconnected" -- all bad
 - A T-shaped proposal (or job talk) can help manage these tensions.
- My dilemma: two quite different pieces.
 - Breadth where I was a known quantity; depth (weirdly, maybe) in the 'new' piece
 - <https://blogs.cornell.edu/danco/2013/08/13/the-incredible-evolving-research-statement/>

Integrating education (and broader impacts more generally)

- As with research bits, quality, not quantity.
- Detailed plans, not vague generalities ("I'll develop a class", "women like topic X"/Nike Ad)
 - Ideally, with some thought to evaluation (partnering with your education-focused units?)
- Real contributions to your institution/context/community
 - "I'll teach my research" is boring, but "random creative activity X" is confusing.
 - "Why does your department need DanCo Seminar Class?" "Why is it good to do this with local 6th graders?"
 - Release educational, code, data materials.
- How can you _integrate_ the research and education?
 - The 4307 I wish I had invented

- Field or service or analysis or design experiences that feed the research as class activities -- though, danger, my Masters SE prof
- My own: maybe a skosh long, but this let me discuss details and rationales (not everything happened, but many did), in a way that reviewers saw much value in.
- Think and plan early (especially if you need partners): can't bolt it on.

Get (and give) help

- Start early enough to get feedback (my guesstimate: 1 month at two-thirds time, plus life)
- Multiple levels, multiple passes: first at structure and summary (more useful?), then at details
 - Summary-first writing idea from Gilly
- Again, experienced folks at your, or nearby, or your PhD, institutions
- This is pretty much what I did: two early readers at outline level, one at a draft, one closer to completion
- It's okay to help each other, too
 - In fact, aware but not embedded outsiders are great readers.
- Get detailed feedback when you can: reading a proposal is like playing Rock Band

Some insights from my experiences on panels (if time)

- One way program officers choose panelists...
- Not enough "why important"
 - Though, don't oversell
 - And balance: too much setup == not enough proposal
- Not enough justification/evidence for main idea(s)
 - Presentation of questions/ideas unclear
 - No clear evaluation/outcomes
- Bogus educational integration
 - No real plans around BI claims
- Parts not connected (reviewers noted this despite my best obfuscation efforts)
- As rational as you can expect
- Serve on panels and get your own view! (taking names)

Closing

- Proposals are persuasive, communicative documents (so are papers really)
- Write for other people (outside your space): make importance clear, jargon-minimal, clear writing, legible (10 point Arial is legal, but dumb)
- Write like a person (I'm notably informal, and this comes through in the proposal)
- Don't strategize too much: like having babies, there's no "right" time in the academic cycle, so write it while you're ready.