

## Using Failure Productively: A Panel

The panel consisted of five professors at different stages in their careers and from different disciplines who shared their experiences with failure, as well as advice for coping with it, and responded to questions from the audience. What emerged was a picture of failure as ubiquitous and maybe even necessary for academic work.

### Tips

Persist

Learn from criticism

Expect to put in effort

Collaborate, don't compete

Be inspired by others' success

Expect to make mistakes

Ask for help

## Succeeding Through Failure: Learning to Fail Productively in Grad School

The event was an interactive presentation by Steve Lee, the Graduate Diversity Officer for the STEM disciplines. Dr. Lee described research by Carol Dweck and others suggesting that one's response to failure is a critical factor in forming productive habits and mindsets. He also invited the audience to reflect on their own habitual responses and formulate changes they might make in order to cultivate resilience and creativity in the face of failure.

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# Using Failure to Succeed

All academics fail. Unfortunately, we are much more likely to discuss our successes while we hide or ignore our failures. This can lead to a situation, particularly for graduate students, in which our failures seem unique and our efforts misguided, and in which we don't learn from our mistakes. Hearing about others' failures—particularly those we see as successful—and learning how they have overcome them is a positive way to learn how to cope with and use the inevitable disappointments we will face. In the spirit of attempting to find productivity in failure, I organized two events.

# Professors for the Future, 2015-2016

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**Program: English**

**Major Professor: Fran Dolan**



**Project Title: "Using Failure to Succeed."**

## **Project Summary:**

All academics fail. Unfortunately, we are much more likely to discuss our successes while we hide or ignore our failures. This can lead to a situation, particularly for graduate students, in which our failures seem unique and our efforts misguided, and in which we don't learn from our mistakes. Hearing about others' failures—particularly those we see as successful—and learning how they have overcome them is a positive way to learn how to cope with and use the inevitable disappointments we will face.

In the spirit of attempting to find productivity in failure, I organized two events. The first, "Using Failure Productively: A Panel," consisted of five professors at different stages in their careers and from different disciplines who shared their experiences with failure, as well as advice for coping with it, and responded to questions from the audience. What emerged was a picture of failure as ubiquitous and maybe even necessary for academic work. The second event, "Succeeding Through Failure: Learning to Fail Productively in Grad School," was an interactive presentation by Steve Lee, the Graduate Diversity Officer for the STEM disciplines. Dr. Lee described research by Carol Dweck and others suggesting that one's response to failure is a critical factor in forming productive habits and mindsets. He also invited the audience to reflect on their own habitual responses and formulate changes they might make in order to cultivate resilience and creativity in the face of failure.