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Active participation of faculty is needed if institutions are to meet their priorities of teaching and community service. This will not occur without major changes in the faculty reward system. Because professional associations play an important role in setting norms for faculty activities, a number of them have participated in a project aimed at describing the work of faculty in these fields. While each discipline has used its own structure and terminology, the resulting documents have expanded significantly the range of activities that could be considered as being both significant and of high quality in the promotion and tenure process.

Redefining Scholarly and Professional Work:

The Role of Scholarly and Professional Organizations

Background

In the spring of 1989, at the direction of the Office for Undergraduate Studies and with funding from the Sears Roebuck Foundation, Syracuse University began a project intended to enhance the importance and quality of teaching at the University. The project began with a focus on academic deans and department chairs because of their pivotal role in defining the campus culture and reward structures related to research and undergraduate teaching. The initiative soon expanded to include faculty from departments across campus.

As the project moved from conceptualization to implementation, meetings were held with deans, chairs, and faculty to discuss what could be done to increase the importance of teaching in their respective units. In these discussions, three determinants emerged as being key:

(1) in order for change to occur, the central administration needs to play an active role in supporting improved teaching; (2) the goal of improved undergraduate teaching will not be reached without change in faculty recognition and reward structures; (3) the promotion and tenure system will not change without articulated changes in the priorities established by disciplinary and professional associations.

There was a strong feeling among faculty that the expectations and criteria established by their disciplines determined, in large part, the relative importance of their various roles. That is, they believed that if teaching, community service, or professional activities were to be recognized

and rewarded, it would be important for their professional or scholarly associations to affirm these activities as being appropriate and important for individuals in their field.

Thus, while actual data from a national study of research universities, undertaken by Peter J. Gray, Robert C. Froh, and this author (1992), indicate that most faculty strongly support a broadening of what is considered as "scholarly" work, disciplinary groups have historically played a major role in determining the priorities of faculty as they strive to meet the existing on-campus criteria for promotion and tenure.

For some fields such as business and management where the national disciplinary association *is* the accreditation agency for the field, the relationship between what the accreditation requirements are for evaluating faculty and the criteria that are established in the academic unit is a direct one. For others it is less direct but equally strong, as departments vie for national ranking and recognition, with the perceived quality of the faculty being a major determinant in the ranking. In most instances the perceptions of departmental quality have been directly related to the number of Ph.D. degrees, the number of publications in major refereed journals, and the number of dollars brought in for sponsored research -- factors that were relatively easy to recognize and tabulate. It was this system of aiming for national recognition that provided the base for most promotion and tenure systems.

As the work at Syracuse progressed it became apparent that the problems and issues being addressed were not unique to the institution. When reports of the project were made at national meetings, other institutions expressed interest in using survey instruments developed as part of the project to measure the existing perceptions as to the balance between research and teaching at the institution, and in following general procedures that had evolved. These requests were to lead to a number of national initiatives.

The National Initiatives

With the active support of the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, The Lilly Endowment, Inc., and the Pew Charitable Trusts, a number of projects are underway to focus the energies of faculty on teaching, on community service, and on the priorities identified in their institutional mission statements.

As these efforts have gained momentum, the same basic principles have surfaced. First, that the goal of broadening faculty involvement in campus and community-based activities will not be reached without changes in the promotion and tenure system; second, that these changes will not occur without the active involvement and support of the disciplinary associations and societies; and third, that the administration on each campus must establish a climate that supports these changes.

If institutions are to improve the quality of their teaching and academic programs, if interdisciplinary activities are to be encouraged, advising improved, and service commitments to the community met, it will require the active involvement of the best faculty, often over long periods of time. This will not occur without major changes in the faculty reward system.

It should also be noted that while many faculty, particularly in the natural and social sciences have prospered under the research and publication paradigm, many others have not. What has evolved over the last two decades is virtually a two class system in which many faculty in the humanities, the fine and creative arts, and the professional schools find themselves as second class citizens, often being forced to

conduct research and to publish on topics that they, personally, believe are often unimportant. As William D. Schaefer wrote in his book *Education Without Compromise*, "the extraordinary effort that faculty members in the humanities (and in many of the social sciences) are forced to expend on what more often than not are worthless publications detracts from the time that could and should —- one can only trust would —- be spent in preparing classes and working with students" (op. cit., p.107).

To help facilitate the change process, The Center for Instructional Development at Syracuse University began a project in 1991 to work with a representative group of professional and scholarly associations in the redefinition and assessment of faculty work. Of the fourteen Associations invited to participate in the project, twelve agreed to do so with several others joining as work progressed. It was apparent from the beginning that the leadership of these disciplinary associations felt that the present recognition and reward system for faculty needed modification and that they should play a key role in the change process.

The premise behind this project was that the redefinition of scholarship would expand the range of activities that qualify as being scholarly, professional, or creative. It was felt that an extension of the range of activities recognized as scholarly would change the priorities at colleges and universities, while at the same time facilitating (a) an improvement in the quality of teaching, (b) an improvement in the quality of curricula and courses, and (c) a higher degree of participation in professional service activities by faculty and their institutions.

The Project assisted professional associations in establishing task forces to develop and disseminate a defining statement of scholarship for that discipline. Each statement includes a list of activities that academic departments are encouraged to consider as meritorious when developing their own tenure, promotion, merit, or reward system guidelines.

Professional associations that have participated in project activities include: Association of American Geographers, American Philosophical Association, Conference on College Composition and Communication, American Political Science Association, American Chemical Society, American Sociological Association, National Council of Administrators of Home Economics, American Academy of Religion, Modern Language Association, American Historical Association, American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business, Association for Education in Journalism, National Architecture Accrediting Board, Geological Society of America, Joint Policy Board for Mathematics, and National Office for Arts Accreditation in Higher Education.

Included within the National Office of Arts Accreditation report are statements covering the following disciplines: Landscape Architecture, Architecture, Art and Design, Dance, Music, and Theater. It is anticipated that as the project continues additional associations will participate.

Over the past two years a number of the statements have, after extensive review, been published with final reports being disseminated widely by the associations. By fall 1994 it is anticipated that approximately eighteen such statements will have been completed. To meet the needs of individual campuses and to facilitate the use of these documents, a collection of the disciplinary statements is scheduled for publication by the American Association for Higher Education in late fall 1994 or early spring 1995.

Some Observations

While the process of developing these statements has not always been an easy one, the work of the task forces has been impressive. Most notable is the support the associations have received from their memberships for their efforts to recognize the wide range of professional work being done by faculty in the disciplines. As work has progressed, a number of factors have become apparent:

• *In every discipline there are scholarly and professional related activities that have not been traditionally recognized in the faculty reward system.*

The task force of the American Historical Society spoke for many disciplines when they wrote:

"This debate over priorities is not discipline-specific, but extends across the higher education community. Nevertheless, each discipline has specific concerns and problems. For history, the privilege given to the monograph in promotion and tenure has led to the undervaluing of other activities central to the life of the discipline — writing textbooks, developing courses and curricula, documentary editing, museum exhibitions, and film projects to name but a few."

• *The process of expanding the scope of what is considered scholarly/professional work is far more difficult for some disciplines than for others.*

For many of the disciplines this effort to reemphasize the importance of teaching applied research, and community related activities has created concern with how the field will be perceived by others. As one team member wrote: "Many worried that if we began to move away from a high-profile research emphasis we would lose more of our already small prestige in relation to the harder research areas." On the other hand, a recent survey of over 3,000 faculty in business and management schools, and open meetings at a number of national conferences showed strong support for the revised definition of professional work in the respective fields.

• *There are significant differences among the disciplines in terms of faculty activities and the description and valuing of those activities.*

While some disciplines such as history were comfortable with the four-part model of scholarly work proposed by Eugene Rice and then reported by Ernest Boyer, other disciplines were not. The Chemistry and Geography task forces suggested four categories: Research, Application, Teaching, and Outreach. The Religion report maintains the traditional categories of Research, Teaching, and Service, while the Arts felt more comfortable with Teaching, Creative Work and Research, and Service. There is simply no single definition of scholarship that the disciplines subscribe to. It therefore becomes most important that as campus criteria for promotion and tenure are developed, each academic unit be encouraged to define the work of faculty and its recognition and consonant with disciplinary values. It is important to note that while departments will be developing a statement that may be significantly different from one another, the overall process that is used to relate the faculty reward system to the priorities of the institution is consistent and one that involves the central administration, deans, chairs, and faculty. This process is described in Chapter 2 of the book by the author and Bronwyn Adam, *Recognizing Faculty Work.*

• *These differences have direct and immediate implications for faculty serving on promotion and tenure committees.*

It is essential that committee members reviewing materials from faculty in other fields recognize that the criteria used to evaluate professional and scholarly work in their own departments may not be appropriate for the work of faculty in other fields. They may have to rely on the quality of the process used at the departmental review level, where the disciplinary expertise exists, and less on assessing the quality of the work itself. To assist faculty on personnel committees and those preparing for review, *A Faculty Guide to Serving on Promotion and Tenure Committees* by the author is being published. These differences must also be recognized by the candidate themselves.

In preparing their documentation for review, faculty should realize that sooner or later, these materials will be reviewed by faculty from other fields. This sensitivity will affect the content and presentation of the materials that are forwarded for review. The question must be asked, "How can I effectively communicate what I do and its quality to people in other disciplines?"

• *The proposed changes will be much easier for some faculty than others.*

Faculty inclined toward work that has traditionally been marginalized by the reward system or who see themselves as members of disciplines whose work has been undervalued tend to more strongly support the recommendations coming out of the various task forces. Some faculty, however, perceive the recommendations as threatening a reward system with which they are quite comfortable. What is important is that each group recognize the vital contribution of faculty with different strengths and interests to the vitality of their department, their institution, and their discipline.

• *There is agreement, however, on the characteristics of an activity that can be considered scholarly and professional.*

While there has been much disagreement about specific activities and terminology, there has been agreement among the disciplines as to the characteristics or features of professional scholarly work. If the activity

(1) requires a high level of discipline-related expertise,
(2) breaks new ground or is innovative,
(3) can be replicated or elaborated,
(4) can be documented,
(5) can be peer-reviewed, and
(6) has significance or impact,

it will be recognized as scholarly/professional work in most disciplines. The relative value of this activity in comparison to other appropriate faculty work may vary considerably from discipline to discipline and from institution to institution. Representing non-publication activities for peer review requires a new type of presentation and documentation that addresses each of these six characteristics. Faculty work such as designing a new course, assisting a task force in addressing a major community problem, developing instructional software, initiating an interdisciplinary project, directing a play, or writing a textbook can often meet these criteria, while some published "research" cannot. The keys are quality and significance, and demon-

strating those attributes.

It is important to note that in the development of their statements each task force stressed that their report should be used not as a prescription, but as a guide — - as a starting point for individual departments as they begin to address the question of how specific activities are to be valued in their own campus contexts. There was overwhelming agreement among task force members that such decisions must be made at the departmental, school, and college level, mindful of the priorities of the department and the assignment of the individual faculty member.

What these reports call for is a faculty reward system that recognizes the mission of the institution, the priorities of the department, the strengths of individuals, and the uniqueness of the discipline. These considerations require a reward system with flexibility and respect for difference. Without such a system, the individual, the institution, and the discipline compromise important values and fail to enjoy an environment that can nurture faculty scholarship in all its manifestations.

Note: Portions of this chapter are from an article that appeared in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*

Suggested Reading

Robert M. Diamond, *A Faculty Guide to Serving on Promotion and Tenure Committees*. Bolton, MA, Anker Publishing, forthcoming.

Robert M. Diamond and Bronwyn Adam, *Recognizing Faculty Work: Reward System for the Year 2000*. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 1993.

Peter J. Gray, Robert C. Froh, and Robert M. Diamond, *A National Study of Research Universities on the Balance between Research and Undergraduate Teaching*. Syracuse University, 1992.