

Integration of the Scholarship of Teaching Into Faculty Roles
and Rewards: Implementing A Task Force Recommendation

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In September 1993, at The University of Memphis, I assembled a faculty task force to review our entire system of faculty roles and rewards and to make recommendations for change. The Provost's Task Force on Faculty Roles and Rewards made its report last January and we are in the process of implementing its recommendations. The report included a recommendation on recognizing and rewarding the scholarship of teaching.

The University of Memphis is a comprehensive state university which enrolls approximately 15,000 undergraduates and 4400 graduate students. It is centrally located in the Memphis metropolitan area, which has a population of approximately 1,000,000, of which approximately 41% is minority. Most students commute to campus daily, living within a radius of about twenty miles from the university. The university draws strength from its urban location as reflected in its mission statement,

"The University of Memphis is a comprehensive urban university committed to scholarly accomplishments of our students and faculty and to the enhancement of our community, state, and nation through principles of academic integrity, sound management, and equal opportunity.

"As an urban university, The University of Memphis provides a stimulating academic environment for its students, including an innovative undergraduate education and excellence in selected research areas and graduate programs. The academic environment extends beyond the campus boundaries to encompass the entire community. Being located in a culturally diverse area presents a challenging responsibility. The University of Memphis has responded by developing a unique blend of teaching, research, and service that contributes to the growth of the Mid-South region.

"Teaching brings the benefits of scholarship and research to students and through them to the people of the area. The University of Memphis asserts that excellence in teaching traditional and non-traditional students is its central responsibility. . . .

"As a research university, The University of Memphis develops, integrates, disseminates, and applies knowledge. Faculty maintain on-going programs of basic and applied research or creative activities appropriate to their discipline. The University's urban environment provides a rich opportunity for research and creative scholarship, and

for the use of that scholarship in the intellectual and cultural development of the region. The University's commitment to fostering a research and creative environment harmonizes with the other aspects of its mission. . . ."

I appointed 26 members to the task force in September of 1993. At the initial meeting in October, I gave it my charge and furnished materials such as Ernest L. Boyer's book, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*, that dealt with faculty roles and rewards.

The co-chairs discussed the work of the task force at the Administrative Retreat in November, 1993, and obtained initial feedback there.

During the Summer Term 1994, the co-chairs of the task force met with the department chairs in each of the colleges of the University to outline the activities of the task force and to arrange for two members of the task force to meet with the faculty in each department at the beginning of the Fall Semester 1994.

At the beginning of the following Fall Semester, members of the task force met with the faculty in each department in the university to give a progress report and to obtain feedback on the working ideas of the task force. During this same period, the co-chairs presented shared ideas from the task force with the new faculty, gave progress reports to the Faculty Senate and to the Executive Council of the President, and solicited feedback. Also, the co-chairs of the task force met with departmental chairs to discuss the working ideas. The entire task force used the input from the departmental visits, information obtained at other meetings, and the rough draft document produced by the drafting subcommittee to produce the draft report. Three documents (*Faculty Handbook*, *Scholarship Reconsidered*, *Proposed Evaluation System for MSU*) were reviewed by members of the task force to identify commonalities and differences with the draft report.

During that semester, the draft report was made available to all faculty through their departments, to members of the Faculty Senate, to chairs of each department, to the deans of each college, to the Provost, to the Executive Council of the President, and other key administrators for their feedback. In November and December, it was discussed at the Administrative Retreat, in a meeting of chairs, in a meeting of Student Government Association leaders, and with the Research Board of Visitors, as well as with many individual faculty members and administrators. Over 30 written responses were provided by individuals and groups of faculty members.

On the basis of this considerable feedback, the drafting subcommittee and entire task force met in December, 1994, and decided upon changes to make in the document. The co-chairs then met in late December to review these changes and other recommended additions and revised the document in early January, 1995. The revised document was distributed to the drafting subcommittee the second week in January for further editorial suggestions. The co-chairs revised the document and

distributed it to all members of the task force during the third week of January.

Four members of the task force who had attended the 1995 national meeting of the American Association for Higher Education focusing on faculty roles and rewards reviewed the document and identified areas for further discussion at the January 23 meeting of the task force. At a final working meeting of the task force, the document was reviewed again, and final changes were made. The final document was distributed to task force members and each member had an opportunity to submit additional remarks for inclusion with the final document. On January 31 the final document of task force recommendations, the working documents, the signature sheet, and additional remarks by individual task force members were submitted to me. The co-chairs and I discussed the final document on February 2.

Among the assumptions under which the task force deliberated were:

- * To maintain an outstanding faculty which performs to the best of its ability, it is crucial that the reward system accurately recognize faculty contributions.

- * Departments will serve as the primary units for decisions regarding faculty roles and rewards. However, interdisciplinary activities should be encouraged and evaluated across the appropriate units.

Among the objectives of the task force were:

- * The recommendations will provide general principles and outline broad procedures for the planning and evaluation of faculty roles and the allocation of rewards that can be applied across the University. However, it is critical that these procedures allow for sufficient flexibility within departments in order to accommodate unique situations as well as foster academic freedom.

- * The recommendations are made realizing the importance of minimizing the time and effort of faculty in generating documentation for annual review and for tenure and promotion decisions, as well as for other University reports on faculty activities.

The basic precept underlying the task force's recommendation was outlined in the final report: "Each faculty member is expected to demonstrate a commitment to and competence in teaching, scholarship, and service activities. In a university community, teaching, scholarship, and service are communal responsibilities. However, variation will naturally occur among departments and among faculty members within departments as to the balance among these activities. It is important to emphasize that teaching, scholarship, and service are interrelated, and some activities may span more than one area. For example, journal editorship might be considered scholarship, service, or both, and dissertation supervision might be considered teaching, scholarship, or both. Teaching, scholarship, and service should be evaluated individually and collectively during annual review and at the time of

tenure and promotion decisions."

The report's recommendation on recognizing and rewarding the scholarship of teaching included the following:

A. TEACHING

Definition

Teaching encompasses classroom instruction, course development, mentoring students in academic projects including dissertations, testing, grading, and the professional development of the faculty member as a teacher.

Key Points

- (1) Teaching is central to the purposes and objectives of The University of Memphis, and it should be evaluated, rewarded, and encouraged in ways parallel to those for scholarship.
- (2) The evaluation of teaching should be adaptable to differences among disciplines.
- (3) The evaluation of teaching should be formative (to improve teaching skills) as well as summative (to judge teaching skills). Opportunities for faculty enrichment should be made available.
- (4) Since the evaluation of teaching is primarily a qualitative process, multiple sources of evidence should be employed. This should increase the validity of the evaluation.
- (5) One source of evidence will be student evaluations, to be obtained for all classes in all departments for all semesters, including summer sessions. The student evaluation instrument should include a standardized questionnaire with a substantial narrative portion to be used across the University. Departmental sections should be added to address the special nature of the disciplines and the mode of instruction in different classes.
- (6) Mentoring students at all levels is an important aspect of teaching activities and should be taken into account in faculty evaluations.
- (7) Creative and effective use of innovative teaching methods and curricular innovations should be encouraged and constructively evaluated.

B. SCHOLARSHIP

Definition

Scholarship is a discipline-based or multi-disciplinary activity that advances the fund of knowledge and learning through producing new ideas and understanding. In the course of advancing scholarship, faculty

members demonstrate their scholarly contributions, among other things, through products such as books, articles, chapters, films, paintings, musical performances, and choreographic design which are evaluated by peers. In the university setting, scholarship is demonstrated through products that are appropriate to the discipline and can be evaluated by peers. Scholarship includes the following five subcategories (in alphabetical order):

(I provide below only the portions of the report relating to teaching.)

Teaching: The scholarship of teaching focuses on transforming and extending knowledge about pedagogy. Examples would include writing an appropriate textbook or educational article in one's discipline. Innovative contributions to teaching, insofar as they are published or presented in a peer-reviewed forum, would also constitute scholarship of teaching.

Key Points

(2) The "scholarship of teaching" is not equivalent to teaching. Classroom teaching and staying current in one's field are not relevant criteria for evaluating faculty on the "scholarship of teaching."

The task force strongly recommended improving the process by which faculty undergo annual review, instituting a third-year review for tenure-track faculty, and more closely tying the sixth-year tenure review to the annual reviews. In part, the task force had the following to say regarding the annual review of scholarship: For each subcategory of scholarship considered by the department, normally only peer-reviewed items should qualify as scholarly contributions. For example, publications in journals, books, and other written media have traditionally constituted appropriate documentation of scholarship in most departments. Professional scholarly papers presented at international, national, and regional meetings might be appropriate to include.

IMPLEMENTATION

Ultimately, implementation of the task force recommendations will be successful only with the support and goodwill of the faculty. Since the report was circulated extensively during its preparation, I anticipate that it will be accepted with little resistance.