

DASNR Faculty Council Minutes
Special Meeting
June 19, 2001
8:00-10:00

Members present: John Caddel, Mike Kizer, Darrel Kletke, Ulrich Melcher, Tom Phillips, Jerry Fitch, Sue Williams, and Mike Woods (Robert Terry, Jr. substitute for Kathleen Kelsey)

Members Absent: Terry Bidwell, John Damicone, Kathleen Kelsey, Dean McCraw, John Ritter Glenn Selk, and Don Turton

Ex-officio Members: Bill Weeks, OSU Faculty Council Rep.

Non-Members Present: David Buchanan

1. **Call to order:** By Chair, Tom Phillips.

Purpose of the special meeting: To study the contents of the “Examples of Criteria that May Be Employed in Evaluation of Faculty” statement and recommend any additions, deletions, or other revisions prior to its further review by the Dean’s office. This includes the possible recommendation of eliminating the examples. Following the review and revision process, the document will be disseminated as an addendum to the “Academic Rank Descriptions and Guidelines” statement, if it is not eliminated.

2. **Background:** “Academic Rank Descriptions and Guidelines to Assist in determining Faculty Performance and Professional Development” was first adopted in 1984 by The Division of Agriculture Personnel Criteria Committee. It was revised in 2001 by a committee of appointed by Dean Curl. It included a list of “examples” as an attachment, but there were concern about the list from several areas.

Discussion:

David Buchanan, Chair of Task Force Report on Scholarship at Oklahoma State University (see Appendix A), was involved in much of the discussion.

Parts of the discussion are summarized in the following bulleted statements:

- Teaching, research, and extension are not, but should, be treated equally.
- Scholarly activities are not reserved for research.
- Engagement could be added as a new row to the matrix at the end of the task force report.
- Parts of discovery could be engagement.
- It was proposed that the division take a broader look at scholarship while attempting to develop or modify examples of criteria employed in faculty evaluation.

- Definitions tend to limit scholarly activities.
- Examples should be helpful to young faculty but not so rigid so as to restrict their activities.
- Points of effectiveness and excellence are difficult to separate and perhaps should be grouped.
- Is there a need to group activities in categories such as signs of excellence, effectiveness, requirements, etc.?
- Important and scholarly activities are also difficult to list separately.
- Some generally accepted activities that faculty should undertake as part of their teaching and extension assignments are rarely “peer reviewed”, eg., electronic materials. This is because there is no widely accept basis of peer review equivalent to publishing research in highly regarded scientific journals.

Conclusions:

- Generally, there was agreement that the examples should be modified to provide general guidance at the Division level. (No vote taken.) Departments should provide more specific examples to assist in professional appraisal and development.
 - A preamble to the “Examples” is critical to show the intended use of the document and should be developed by a small committee.
 - A committee to work on text to more clearly state our recommendation will consist of – David Buchanan, Chair, with Mike Woods and Tom Phillips as members. August 1, 2001, is a target date for a preliminary report.
 - If Dean Curl wants a final report before our next regular meeting, we will have another special meeting.
3. **Other Business:** There is a need to change the AFC by-laws to define the University Faculty Council representative. Previously there was only one representative of the Division of Agriculture; now there are more. One should be defined as the Ex-officio Member of the Ag. Faculty Council.

Next meeting of the Agricultural Faculty Council is scheduled for September 11, 2001.

4. **Adjourn** at 11:15 AM

Respectfully submitted,

John Caddel, AFC Secretary

Appendix A
Task Force Report on
Scholarship at Oklahoma State University

Scholarship is defined, in the American Heritage Dictionary, as the knowledge of a scholar whose mastery of a particular area of learning is reflected in the scope, thoroughness and quality of his or her work. A Task Force was charged, during the Spring of 1999, to examine scholarship at OSU. The task force was asked to identify evidences of scholarship that are appropriate for diverse responsibilities such as research, undergraduate teaching, graduate mentoring, advising, extension and artistic expression. Along with identification of diverse evidences, the task force was asked to find the common thread among such evidences that would retain our common identity as a community of scholars. The Task Force members, who participated in the meetings and forums, were Drs. Chris Cashel, Renee Daugherty, Gerald Frank, Debra Jordan, Dale Maronek, Ron Moomaw, Marcia Tilley, Alan Tree, Jack Vitek, Margaret White, Nancy Wilkinson and Joe Williams. Dr. David Buchanan served as the Chair of the Task Force. These members represented diverse elements of the university and serve in all three functional areas of OSU.

The Work of the Scholarship Task Force. The Scholarship Task Force was charged with the responsibility of assessing the state of scholarship at Oklahoma State University and, if appropriate, for helping establish new directions for scholarship. The faculty was offered the opportunity to make written input via a survey. Relatively few responses were obtained. Several words were prominent in the responses including: knowledge, peer review, discovery, integration, application, dissemination and excellence. Several concerns about the process were expressed. Such concerns covered a spectrum of thought that ranged from a desire to maintain a perceived status quo that equates scholarship with peer reviewed research publications to a wish to broaden a definition of scholarship that more clearly identifies ways to include teaching and extension activities under an umbrella of scholarship.

After discussion of the survey and establishment of a sense of the concerns of the individual members of the group, plans were made for a series of forums at which a discussion of scholarship could be continued. Invitations were sent to each member of the faculty and invitation lists were specifically constructed to encourage diversity of ideas at each forum. Fifteen forums were held and approximately 100 members of the faculty attended. At each forum, attendees were asked to define scholarship and to engage in discussion of scholarship as it pertains to research, teaching, outreach and service. As might be expected, each forum was a unique experience, depending upon the specific mix of participants. At most of the forums, passion was fairly deep and many attendees expressed surprise that the 90 minute time limit expired long before faculty members were ready to cease discussion.

Many participants acknowledged existence of a belief at OSU that scholarship and publication of research are synonymous. Despite this perception, many expressed a desire that scholarly activity should include a broader range of activities including teaching, extension and, perhaps, service. In the same breath, a desire was expressed that scholarship should not be "watered down" to include any activity pursued by a faculty member. Many of the words that appeared in the written surveys

were repeated such as: knowledge, peer review, application, integration, communication and discovery.

A common question posed by attendees was "Why are we doing this?" Comments accompanying this question frequently revealed a concern that the administration has a hidden agenda for this activity and/or that this whole effort was "just about promotion and tenure". Reminders that this was initiated by the Faculty Council did not necessarily mollify the first concern. The second concern may reflect reality, to a certain extent. Although promotion and tenure was not part of the original charge to the task force, a discussion of scholarship must include investigation of assessment of scholarship which may naturally lead the issue of promotion and tenure.

Following completion of the forums, task force members evaluated the responses given at the forums to determine if there were common themes or concerns. A common theme from many of the forums was the passion felt for the well-being of OSU and the importance of scholarship. The necessity of maintaining excellence was also a clear motive for faculty in their pursuit of scholarly activities. It was particularly gratifying to see the interplay between faculty of long tenure and new members of the OSU faculty. Similarly, the interaction among faculty with highly diverse disciplines was a very positive aspect of this exercise.

Define or describe scholarship. After listening to faculty discuss scholarship, it appears that a simple definition of scholarship may not be easy to obtain. Indeed, some attendees asked expressly that we not attempt to define scholarship. Perhaps, instead, descriptions and examples of scholarship are preferable. A concern was expressed that "to define something is to restrict it." Vitality in scholarly endeavors cannot flourish with such restrictions. Given this reluctance, it may be better to describe some characteristics of scholarship rather than to define it precisely.

Several common themes emerged. The importance of open availability, through publication or presentation in an appropriate venue, of the results of scholarship was clear. Similarly, general agreement exists that some mode of peer review was a critical component in assessing scholarship. Initial engagement with the appropriate audience for scholarship was deemed to be crucial. The fact that there was a strong interest in scholarship in the teaching, extension and service functions was clear evidence that scholarship is not synonymous with research publications.

A frequent view was that we must broaden the list of expressions of scholarship. Scholarly activities in pursuit of teaching, extension and service must be permitted and encouraged. The desirability of maintaining excellence in the face of expanding definitions of scholarship was also a concern. Broadening the list of expressions of scholarship and increasing the standard for excellence need not be competing viewpoints.

While it may be desirable to include more activities under an umbrella of scholarship, it is not necessary to try to include all faculty activities as being scholarly. Faculty members perform many tasks, which are critical to the well-being of the university, that are not scholarly. As an example, much of the day to day work of advising, though not all, may be outside the arena of scholarly activity.

The work of Boyer and many others has established several categories of scholarship. These categories seem generally consistent with what the Task Force heard from the faculty during the forums and in the survey. As a result, we used some of the categories of scholarship as a starting point. In order to examine these categories in the context of a Land-Grant university, we have developed a matrix of scholarly activities with the Scholarship categories of Discovery, Integration and Synthesis and Teaching, Learning and Application cross-classified with research, teaching, extension and service. Each of these categories have places in each of the functional areas.

Development of this matrix came about after failed attempts to equate one of Boyer's categories of scholarship with each of the functional areas. Initial examination of the scholarship categories of teaching, discovery and integration leads one to believe that maybe those three terms are synonymous with the functional areas of teaching, research and extension. This parallelism, obviously, breaks down since it is not possible to equate integration with extension. This initial examination lead the task force to consider the categories of scholarship and the functional areas as a cross-classification. This provides a much more satisfactory result. It is, on the surface, confusing to see teaching as a component of research. However, publication of research results or presentation at a professional meeting both fit nicely into the Scholarship of Teaching.

There was debate as to whether to include a separate examination of service. However, the task force ultimately decided that there are areas of service which may include scholarly activities. This service may include both service to the university community or to professional organizations that are outside of the university.

It is crucially important to see that scholarly activity is not confined to any one functional area. There is a traditional view that tends to equate scholarly activity with research. This view is rapidly becoming outdated. During the forums many faculty spoke eloquently about the importance considering scholarly activity in teaching, extension and service. This broader view is consistent with ideas that are being expressed in many other places around the nation. It is also important to point out that there are important activities in each of the functional areas which, while critical to the success of the university, are not necessarily scholarly activities.

Oklahoma State University is unique in Oklahoma because it is the Land-Grant university. As such it has clearly defined functional areas of teaching, research and extension. Our approach to categorizing scholarship is consistent with this tri-partite view of a university. While similar to other universities around the nation, OSU serves a specific set of clientele, state-wide, nationally and internationally. It has long tradition of excellence in serving people and the view of scholarship described in this document emphasizes the outward looking nature of Oklahoma State University.

Unfinished business: The discussion must continue beyond examination of scholarship to evaluate excellence in all activities that help to form an academic community. These discussions, as they have happened at other universities are frequently multi-year efforts. Appropriate evidences and the nature of appropriate peer review of scholarship in teaching, extension and service need to be developed. More diverse scholarship evidence in research may need development as well.

Recommendations:

1. The process of examination of scholarship at OSU should continue in an organized fashion with appointment of a new committee (perhaps with inclusion of some members of the initial task force).
2. A clear and unequivocal statement is needed from the administration that continued consideration of the nature of scholarship is critical to the future vitality of this institution.
3. Representative faculty with primary responsibilities, especially in teaching and extension, should be assembled to assess potential evidences of scholarship and appropriate avenues for peer review.
4. A unit should be organized at the university level with the purpose of providing educational seminars and written materials for assisting faculty (especially newer faculty members to assist in development of self-assessment and evaluation documents) in their professional development and in the organization of evidences of scholarly activities

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	Research	Teaching	Extension	Service
Scholarship of Discovery	Investigate needs and possibilities in society, uncover new knowledge or create fresh artistic expressions.	Interact with current and potential students, investigate their need for knowledge and establish new teaching and advising methodology and materials specific to the students and the discipline.	Interact with current and potential clientele, investigate the need for new knowledge, information or approaches, and develop new methods for extending knowledge and applications specific to the clientele and the discipline.	Evaluate the needs of the university, college, department, academic discipline or professional organization and develop new ideas, approaches or innovations in the managing the affairs of the academy.
Scholarship of Integration and Synthesis	Combine new knowledge with, and apply new expression to, an inherited corpus.	Integrate knowledge from various sources to develop teaching and advising materials and approaches.	Integrate knowledge from various sources to develop materials for extension.	Place new ideas approaches or innovations into the context of the established traditions of the academy.
Scholarship of Teaching, Learning and Application	Publish, exhibit or perform the results of the research in appropriate venues	Teach and advise in appropriate mode, deliver lectures and publish written or electronic materials for use in teaching	Deliver programs and publish written, recorded or electronic materials for use in extension. Engage in professional practice with external clientele.	Provide written, oral, aural or visual material to pertinent constituencies.
Materials for use in evaluation of the scholar (all should have peer review)	Articles in peer reviewed journals, artistic expression (music, art, literature etc), research articles in other venues, notable achievements of students	Lectures, written supplements, books, electronic materials for teaching, articles in peer reviewed journals about teaching, development of critical thinking and reflective expression in students.	Extension programs, fact sheets, books, electronic materials for teaching, articles in peer reviewed journals about extension.	Reports, public presentations, articles.