School of Communication:
Reporting and Evaluating Faculty Service Contributions
November 2020

Faculty in full-time positions in research universities generally have a great deal of latitude in deciding how to allocate their effort, but except in unusual circumstances are expected to make contributions to teaching, research (including scholarship, creative activities, and the many other forms that innovation takes), and service. The purpose of this document is to outline how we describe, document, assign, compensate, and evaluate faculty service in SoC.

What is service?

Under the broad rubric of "service" fall three categories of contributions: governance, leadership, and external "pro bono" work.

Governance. Our university expects a principle of shared faculty governance to guide most of its activities. Shared governance is overwhelmingly carried by faculty who serve as members of advisory or deliberative committees, councils, task forces, or other work groups that oversee university units and their operations. The hallmark of excellence in governance is sincere, diligent, and responsible participation in these activities.

The need for governance in the university pervades the enterprise and is exercised at many different levels, including programs (e.g., doctoral programs, undergraduate majors), departments, schools, interdepartmental and interdisciplinary projects and centers, and the university. In addition, every faculty member is a member of one or more scholarly/intellectual/artistic communities, and those collectives often have similar needs for governance in the institutions that support them. Those institutions—including scholarly associations, producing organizations, peer-reviewed journals, research agencies and foundations, and so on—have a similar need to engage faculty in their governance and decision-making via a similar set of committees, task forces, boards, and working groups.

We therefore greatly value faculty participation in governance both within the university and throughout the intellectual and scholarly communities in which faculty participate, and we expect and credit such participation as the most fundamental and broadly relevant type of service. However, we recognize that there is a practical difference between standing committees/governing units and *ad hoc* committees and task forces. Standing committees and units generally play a more formal and significant role in governance, and those activities therefore tend to require more extensive participation and effort. Fairness dictates that we weight them more heavily in evaluating service contributions.

Leadership. A university's needs for direction and management are seldom met through basic structures of governance alone; instead, some members of the faculty are asked to take on roles as leaders of units within the institution (or outside, within their disciplines and external communities) and bear special responsibilities for communicating, guiding, evaluating, reporting, and the like. Within Northwestern and SoC, these leadership roles include designated roles as program coordinators/directors, center directors, department chairs, school deans, and parallel

appointments within other schools or the provost's office. In external communities, they include appointment or election to significant chair positions, faculty senates, association presidencies, and the like.

We consider all these leadership roles to be contributions of service. However, every appointment to such a leadership role within SoC is accompanied by additional compensation and/or emoluments such as released time from teaching commitments for paid research leave. Leadership activities generally involve contributions well beyond ordinary participation in governance, but within SoC such contributions are well-compensated.

External "pro bono" work. Many of our faculty are involved in work with partners outside Northwestern University, making contributions that are directly connected to their areas of scholarly and artistic expertise. In most cases, this work is compensated by the external partner. Examples of compensated external work include consulting, paid work on theatre or film projects, and industry residencies. We do not treat compensated external work as service.

However, when such external work is done on a "pro bono" basis, i.e., voluntary and strictly uncompensated, then it may count as "community service" if it is directly connected to the faculty member's scholarly or artistic expertise. So, for example, if a theatre faculty member serves on the board of a nonprofit theatre company without compensation, that would be an appropriate contribution to list as service; however, in our school, serving as the volunteer coach of a children's sports team would not be appropriately listed as service.

As with governance and leadership, we evaluate such pro-bono contributions based on their importance to the intellectual enterprises in which we are engaged, their extent, and their impact.

Distinguishing service from out-of-class instruction and collaborative research activities. Most universities also rely on committee structures to deliver out-of-class instruction to students: as part of the process of delivering instruction, faculty can serve as members or chairs of doctoral committees, direct independent studies, and advise and/or mentor students. Likewise, similar processes guide the research enterprise, especially in the sciences, where faculty can serve as heads of research groups. We do not consider faculty roles in leadership and supervisory roles within teaching or research to be contributions to governance or to unit leadership/management.

Expectations for faculty service

We expect every full-time faculty member to participate actively in governance and leadership as described above; we appreciate, but do not expect, faculty to contribute significant "pro bono" work to external groups and organizations. Specific expectations for effort to be contributed are outlined in the School of Communication workload document. As a general rule, both tenured faculty members and full-time NTE faculty should be contributing a significant percentage of total effort to service; pre-tenure faculty have a reduced expectation for service. Regardless of category, expectations for service can be adjusted based on unit needs and faculty skills and interests.

As noted above, parallel governance and leadership activities can be found at a very local level such as a module or doctoral program or at the level of a much broader enterprise, e.g., the university as a whole or one's disciplinary association. As faculty members progress through a career, we expect to see a basic pattern in which individuals begin by making less (and less demanding) service contributions and grow in the number, significance, and impact of contributions:

- As a pre-tenure or NTE faculty member, individuals are expected to participate actively in their departments, schools, and other units by regularly attending meetings and other unit events. Individuals are expected to serve on a reasonable number of ad hoc committees and task forces as requested.
- Around the fourth year of service we expect pre-tenure or NTE faculty members to begin taking on local leadership roles as chairs of ad hoc committees, module coordinators, assistant department chairs, and the like. We hope to see them also develop significant involvement in governance outside the university.
- Post-tenure or after appointment to senior lecturer, we expect faculty to continue expanding their participation in governance within and outside the university and to take on more significant leadership roles inside the school. For example, it is at this point that we begin asking a faculty member to direct a graduate program. Faculty who make solid contributions to governance and provide exemplary leadership in more local roles are offered the opportunity to serve as associate department chairs and/or assistant deans.
- Faculty who achieve the rank of full professor and who have developed a record of exemplary service are offered the opportunity to serve as department chairs and/or associate deans. We also hope they will be offered opportunities to play significant leadership roles outside SoC, either in Central administration, faculty governance, or professional/scholarly organizations.

Assigning service roles

A few service roles inside SoC and at Northwestern are elected, such as membership on the SoC Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee and service in the faculty senate. However, most roles are filled via appointments by the department chair, the dean of the school, or an administrative officer outside SoC.

Departments have their own practices regarding committee formation or assigning local leadership roles (e.g., module coordinator) that may deviate from school standards. Departments organize faculty search committees in consultation with the dean's office and with the approval of the provost. The dean's office consults with department chairs to identify potential directors of graduate programs and makes those appointments. The dean invites advice from the faculty when appointing department chairs and associate or assistant deans, and in some cases may conduct a formal search to recruit a faculty member to fill an administrative role. Decanal appointments are approved by the provost.

Evaluating faculty service

In each review of a faculty member's performance--whether annual merit reviews or reviews for reappointment, promotion, and tenure--we consider teaching, research, and service. We examine activities and accomplishments in each area. For each area, we collect peer evaluations in the form of assignment to one of four ordered categories:

- Below average: Either the individual does not participate in governance or any level of leadership or does, but the contributions made are considered inappropriate.
- Average: The individual meets expectations for participation in governance but contributes little or no leadership.
- Excellent: The individual contributes appropriately to governance and contributes solid leadership as is appropriate to their career stage.
- Exceptional: The individual has significant positive impact on the university and/or their external communities through leadership activities.

These assessments are combined with similar assessments of teaching and research to provide overall judgments of the individual's contributions, which in turn guide annual salary increases as well as other faculty development processes.