Faculty Workload breakout session notes

**What are the ways that we can help balance the stool a bit better?**

Are there things we WANT to change about the stool?

 Different aspects/types of service: To the University (faculty governance) and to the community – using research to branch out to the community.

Is it possible to integrate legs of the stool? (i.e. research and service) – may only be able to happen after tenure? In that same vein, how does that change the expectations for tenure? How do faculty know what to expect?

Maybe the idea is to have different sets of expectations for pre- and post tenure, however much of society does not find the research we do to be useful or applicable (despite the fact that that research might be the stuff that gets published). So maybe one solution is to recognize and credit efforts in other ways like services and program development.

(To the administrator) So what do we have in place right now that “gives credit” for integrations of the legs?

 Social sciences may be easier than other disciplines because the research is closely integrated/related to society and the “real world.” Does disciple matter?

Sculptor who uses recyclable materials and that’s how she integrates the legs.

So does that mean that research NEEDS to have and egalitarian bend/focus? It’s up to the faculty to take this approach if desired but there is also a place for basic research at an institution like this one. However, the pressure exists from the state and society for applied research. Also, this is something that is discipline specific (e.g. engineering is by nature more applied).

Does this change UNI’s role in the state of Iowa? IF we move toward more research and more applies research, this would necessitate a shift.

But not only is this discipline specific but also the “level” of institution (R1, etc..) Maybe researchers in Shakespeare are not really in short supply. Maybe there are other ways for those researchers/research to be productive.

Maybe “value” can be judged on a yearly basis in collaborative meetings/discussions with faculty. This works but there really has to be a set of guidelines (flexible ones) to govern/shape these discussions. This is where the P&T guidelines and documents come in.

Very broad P&T documents are problematic because it leaves a lot open for debate but at the same time, overly restrictive, are also not useful. How do we recognize integration? How do we recognize “different but same level of quality”? What about “average” level of quality across the 3 legs? “equality” of publications (journal impact factor)?

SO this brings us to 2 different questions: 1) What IS the workload and 2) How do we evaluate that workload?

Brings up the issue of % distribution vs. # of hours. Kansas St. is moving toward a model of open discussion on workload and coming to an agreement on that workload. This way people can build on strengths within the department, as a whole rather than as individual faculty members. Does this work for P&T where the primary focus is on accomplishments in research?

Regardless of what changes may come about, communication with faculty is KEY and everyone has to know what the rules ARE (they need to be consistent).

Maybe the balance comes out within the different levels of faculty (e.g. the full profs do more service and less research. Pre-tenure do more research, etc.) R1’s have a university wide committee of P&T, UNI used to but does not right now. This is only really applicable if there are university–wide standards…might be easier at an R1.

On another note, if teaching truly is valued, one should be able to be promoted to full thought excellence in teaching (not that research is non-existent but is not the primary focus). This goes back to the issue of recognizing an “average” across the three legs – where an “F” in any one leg, tanks the average but there can be an “uneven” distribution. This will allow passionate faculty to express and explore in a variety of ways.

So how does one measure things like teaching and research (since there are measureable things in scholarship)?

If we were to change the model at UNI, how would we need to do that? There currently is a committee at the university level to broaden the definition of scholarship (right now it’s still very department governed). More so, it’s about determining the goals of the institution. So how do you create change within in the institution? This requires a culture change institution wide.

Differential portfolios would be one way to do this.

If there were a path to tenure or promotion which was more teaching oriented, does it eliminate the need for research?

One example is to make sure that there are bits in each category but on in which the person excels. Alternately, a model involves different “levels” within each leg of the stool.

There is a relationship between pure and applied research. There is good evidence to support the fact that pure research supports applied and vice versa. Title “Pasteur’s Quadrant.”

How does one balance research expectations with teaching load simply in terms of time. “Teaching 9 contact hrs” doesn’t really cover it in terms of time commitment (class of 30 vs. 150, lab vs. lecture, assignments vs. simple lecture).

Departments would not function without departmental committees…are these valued at the university level? Ever since we became a “university” collegiate level committees got a bit more phased out. And how much do we need that? Is it essential? There is a place for counting this type of service within scholarship (e.g. curriculum development). We need to find ways to reward people for this since some have expertise in this area. The idea of being rewarded for one’s efforts is key (either in time or money).

Is there enough of a concern over workload to initiate some change in this arena? – Maybe start at the departmental level. Then work up.

Are our 3 legs related to those of the corporate world (people, profit and sustainability)?

What about work/life balance (especially for women)?

And individualized instruction (such as supervising research)? Compensate with a reduced teaching load? Undergraduate research is considered one of the high impact practices – because students get excited about the science and continue on. Some departments currently have a model to compensate for mentoring students.

So what about lengthening the tenure clock to longer than 5 years?