

BEST PRACTICES FOR EVALUATING FACULTY RESEARCH/CREATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

Goals

One of the three basic missions of the University is research, which is the foundation and key to all learning which occurs at the University. Research is simply learning at the most advanced, creative, and systematic edges of knowledge where discovery and imagination constantly recast the relation between the known and the unknown. "Research" has many meanings at a major university. In some disciplines, such as the arts, creative achievement is the means by which a faculty member's scholarly contribution is judged indispensable to the University's full research responsibility. The categories of research and creative activity will vary across departments and colleges. Research and creative achievement should not be measured only in terms of quantity but also in terms of quality. In each discipline, certain outlets for research and creative achievements are considered to be more prestigious and to demonstrate higher standards of scientific and creative merit than others among members of the discipline. Publication, presentation, exhibition, or performance through these outlets should be recognized as demonstrating a high standard of scientific and creative merit. Because these standards of merit vary greatly among disciplines, primary assessment of quality measures should be made within a discipline rather than across disciplines.

While the appropriate mix of research and creative outputs and input activities may be specific to a given discipline, some general dimensions of research and creative achievement performance might be considered.

Input Activities

Input activities are those in which a faculty member must engage in order to achieve a research and creative achievement output on which the faculty member will be judged. These input activities could include:

- Selecting realistic yet challenging research/creative achievement topics;
- Using appropriate methods and techniques in meeting objectives;
- Optimizing research/creative achievement outputs relative to inputs, such as time, personnel, materials, facilities and equipment;
- Internalizing responsibility for research/creative achievement program effectiveness;
- Expending personal effort in the research/creative achievement effort;
- Investing in professional growth and development;
- Providing leadership in research/creative achievement efforts;
- Adhering to high standards of professional conduct in research/creative achievement;
- Integrating short-term and long-term goals into a comprehensive research/creative achievement strategy;
- Conducting on-going projects to a timely conclusion;
- Committing appropriate efforts to seeking external funds;
- Securing appropriate external funds;
- Providing effective oversight to externally funded activities;
- Committing appropriate efforts to joint research/creative achievement activities.

Output Activities

A faculty member is evaluated in research and creative achievement by his/her output based on certain input activities such as those described above. Some issues which could be considered when evaluating a faculty member's research/creative achievements outputs are given below.

- Is the research/creative achievement innovative;
- Does the research/creative achievement demonstrate scientific and/or creative merit;
- Is the research/creative achievement output commensurate with research responsibilities and available sources;
- Does the research/creative achievement contribute to the mission of the department, college and University;
- Are the research/creative achievement outputs communicated to appropriate audiences;
- Are the research/creative achievement results communicated through appropriate vehicles (journals, presentations, performances, etc.);
- Are the research/creative achievement outputs communicated in an articulate and/or effective manner;
- Are the research/creative achievement outputs disseminated in a timely manner;
- Are research/creative achievement outputs provided to collaborators and other users in a timely manner?