Encouraging Multiple Forms of Scholarship in Faculty Reward Systems

Influence on Faculty Work Life

Has changing rewards systems for faculty, so that they encourage multiple forms of scholarship, been successful? A literature search, followed by a survey of CAOs, finds that valuing multiple forms of scholarship has had positive results among the faculty. Institutional planners might consider the Boyer reform as one strategy to align faculty interests with the interests of the institution.

by KerryAnn O’Meara

Introduction

In the 1980s, the public voiced great concern about American faculty and their priorities. Parents, trustees, and legislators contend that faculty did not pay enough attention to undergraduate education and had distanced themselves from the central missions of their institutions in the pursuit of esoteric research (Brand 2000; Checkoway 2001). Some higher education commentators claimed that faculty work was disconnected from the larger purposes of American society and made suggestions for how to reconnect the two (Rice 1986), while others simply engaged in "faculty bashing" (Sykes 1988). At the same time, research on faculty satisfaction, retention, and morale showed that many faculty were under stress (Gmelch, Wilke, and Lovrich 1986; Sorcinelli 1992). Rising research expectations plagued the reward system of many institutions striving to improve their Carnegie classification (Aldersley 1995; Dey, Milem, and Berger 1997; Finnegan and Gamson 1996). Female faculty and faculty of color complained that much of the work they valued (e.g., teaching and service) was not rewarded at their institutions despite institutional rhetoric that suggested otherwise (Park 1996; Sax et al. 1996; Tierney and Bensimon 1996).
Similarly, academic administrators, planners, and institutional researchers struggled to produce faculty workload reports for the public that reflected their faculty’s varied contributions (Middaugh and Hollowell 1992). Traditional means of assessing faculty productivity tended to separate faculty workload into the tripartite model of instructional hours, research, and service—but legislators reading those reports tended to emphasize the numbers of hours a faculty member was not in the classroom (Layzell 1996).

Ernest Boyer (1990) and R. Eugene Rice (1986; 1996) introduced a new way of thinking about faculty roles and rewards that changed the conversation from a half-empty view of the professorate to one focused on the critical contributions that faculty make. Boyer (1990), Rice (1986; 1996), and others (Diamond 1993; Glassick, Huber, and Maeroff 1997; Hutchings and Shulman 1998; Lynton 1995; Rice, Sorcinelli, and Austin 2000) suggested that faculty reward systems be amended to acknowledge the multiple ways faculty contribute to their students, discipline, and society. Faculty might emphasize the discovery, application, teaching, or integration of knowledge in their work, depending on the mission of their institution and their own talents and preferences. The scholarship of discovery includes creating new knowledge and working on the frontiers of a discipline to advance understanding of a subject. The scholarship of teaching refers not only to the transmission of knowledge but also to the study of pedagogy and learning outcomes. The scholarship of integration refers to the myriad new ways a faculty member brings existing and/or interdisciplinary knowledge together to understand an issue and communicate that understanding to audiences outside one’s discipline. The scholarship of application, now referred to as engagement, describes ways in which faculty use their professional expertise in partnership with communities to solve problems. Before Boyer and Rice introduced this framework, the definition of scholarship used by most institutional reward systems to evaluate faculty work was very narrow, referring mostly to basic or theoretical research published in peer-reviewed journals. Because of Boyer and Rice and the substantial efforts of the American Association for Higher Education’s (AAHE) Forum on Faculty Roles and Rewards, the Associated New American Colleges (McMillin and Berberet 2002), and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (Huber 2002; Hutchings and Shulman 1999), hundreds of institutions broadened the institutional definitions of scholarship used in their faculty reward systems. Likewise, academic planners and researchers gained a new way to talk to the public about what faculty do—a framework that represents the interrelatedness of seemingly disparate faculty roles.

Changing reward systems to support multiple forms of scholarship was thought to solve several problems at once. Faculty would be freer to engage in the type of work the public had criticized them for neglecting. Able to chart their own course, faculty would also be more effectively retained and satisfied. Finally, Boyer and others asserted that reforming reward systems would increase faculty involvement in the scholarships of teaching, integration, and application.

Very little empirical research has been conducted to see if, in fact, any of the claims made by Boyer and other advocates have been proven true, with a few notable exceptions. Braxton, Luckey, and Helland (2002) completed a national study of faculty professional performance to understand the degree to which faculty in four disciplines had institutionalized the four domains of scholarship in their everyday work. They found that all four domains of scholarship had attained basic or structural level institutionalization (wherein faculty engage in these activities with some support), that the scholarships of discovery and teaching had attained procedural level institutionalization (wherein the activity is a regular part of workload), but that only the scholarship of discovery had achieved incorporation level institutionalization (wherein faculty values and assumptions support the activity). O’Meara (2001) conducted case study research to understand the impact of redefining scholarship at four different institutions. She found that each of the four institutions that reformed their promotion and tenure policies experienced a slightly more balanced reward system and an increase in faculty involvement in and satisfaction with multiple forms of scholarship.

This research has important implications for academic planners who want to align faculty rewards with institutional mission and retain faculty long term. Previous research shows that the more time faculty spend on research, the higher their salary; the more time spent on teaching, the lower their salary (Fairweather 1993). Yet across the United States and in the European Union, increased competition among institutions, shrinking resources, and a greater need for entrepreneurial strategies and planning is evident (O’Meara 2005a). Within these contexts, it is important to reconsider reward systems and the incentives that influence faculty behavior. Institutions must be able to respond to opportunities to increase revenue, develop new programs,
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eliminate programs for which there is no market, and increase participation in programs where there is greater demand (Peterson 1997). Reforming reward systems as Boyer suggested is one strategy that might be used to create incentives for faculty participation in knowledge application and/or partnerships with industry, new online degree programs, or other initiatives seen as important to the institution’s growth. Likewise, the Boyer reform offers a strategy for retaining those faculty who academic leaders want at the forefront of such initiatives. Department chairs and deans might consider the framework as they engage in strategic hiring, to ensure they have faculty with varied interests and talents within each department.

Given that hundreds of institutions have attempted to integrate a broader definition of scholarship into their reward systems, additional research is needed to explore whether this reform has resulted in the changes its advocates suggest.

Conceptual Framework

Literature on faculty behavior and satisfaction was mined to understand the potential impact that policy reform encouraging multiple forms of scholarship might have on faculty and institutions. Blackburn and Lawrence’s (1995) research on faculty behavior and satisfaction suggests that the strongest predictors of faculty behavior include self-judged competence and preferred effort to give to a role (forms of self-knowledge), and perceived institutional expectation of effort given to a role (a form of social knowledge).

Faculty will become more involved in the scholarships of teaching, integration, and application if they believe their involvement is expected, valued, and rewarded by their institution. Thus, amending promotion and tenure language to include these activities, providing incentive grants for involvement, or creating flexible workload programs that allow faculty to emphasize one area of scholarship over another are likely to increase involvement in multiple forms of scholarship. These reforms may also improve faculty satisfaction with those activities.

If the policies governing promotion and tenure supported multiple forms of scholarship, would not faculty feel freer to engage in these activities?

Research on faculty satisfaction, retention, and well-being suggests that faculty are most satisfied when they feel their work is valued and respected by their institution (Walker 2002). Institutions send strong messages to their faculty about what and who they value through faculty evaluation policies and the distribution of resources like release time and incentive grants (Tierney and Bensimon 1996; Tierney and Rhoads 1993). In national faculty surveys, female faculty and faculty of color indicate a greater commitment than their peers to community and professional service and teaching (Antonio, Astin, and Cress 2000; Bellas and Toutkoushian 1999). Researchers have suggested that expanding the definition of scholarship used in missions and faculty evaluation processes might help to value and support the work of academics most committed to the scholarships of teaching and application, thus improving their retention (Creamer 1998; O’Meara 2001). Such reforms are considered one way to increase the likelihood that scholars who emphasize teaching or professional service will be supported and promoted. These reforms are not intended to displace the role of research in a faculty career or within the academy, but rather to make visible the multiple ways all faculty make scholarly contributions.

In one study conducted by the National Center for Postsecondary Improvement (NCPI), nearly every faculty member interviewed (94 percent) said promotion and tenure were major rewards or incentives influencing their behavior (National Center for Postsecondary Improvement 2000). If the policies governing promotion and tenure supported multiple forms of scholarship, would not faculty feel freer to engage in these activities?

Building on the NCPI study and other aforementioned research, the focus of the research presented in this article
was the influence of reformed promotion and tenure policy on faculty behavior. The guiding research question for this study was: "Did making formal policy changes to encourage multiple forms of scholarship increase faculty involvements in the scholarships of teaching, application, and integration and/or improve faculty satisfaction and retention?"

Faculty involvements and activities are highly influenced by institutional type, career stage, and discipline (Blackburn and Lawrence 1995; Braxton, Luckey, and Helland 2002; Creamer 1998). However, the goal of this study was to gain a national sense of how reform did or did not influence faculty activity and satisfaction across discipline and across career stage at four-year institutions. Thus, the best participants were those with an overall view of faculty across their institutions; chief academic officers (CAOs) have this perspective. Each year CAOs recruit new faculty, review annual reports from faculty, make decisions to award or deny tenure, and in many institutions approve or reject post-tenure reviews. Because of their pivotal role in setting standards for and assessing faculty work, and because of their ability to describe what has happened and is happening in faculty roles and rewards across their institutions, CAOs were the ideal participants for this study (Austenson 1997; Diamond 1993).

**Methodology**

The purpose of this research was to understand the impact of formal policy changes to reward systems on faculty involvements and activities and on faculty satisfaction and retention. Survey research was the chosen method of data collection because very little research has previously explored this area. Also, a survey provided the opportunity to conduct initial exploratory research that could then be generalized from a sample to the larger population of CAOs at four-year institutions. The survey instrument was designed by the author and reviewed by six experts for content and by three experts in survey design to establish validity and reliability. In addition, it was piloted with six CAOs and each question was discussed to ensure understanding. Following pilot testing, the survey was revised and confirmed.

The survey questions explored CAO perceptions of the effect of efforts to encourage, assess, and reward multiple forms of scholarship on faculty activity, satisfaction, and retention. There were two paths in the survey, constructed to understand the influence of making or not making formal policy changes on the areas studied. The most popular policy reforms suggested in a review of the literature included: (1) changing institutional mission and planning documents to acknowledge a broader definition of scholarship, (2) amending promotion and tenure or contract language and criteria, (3) providing opportunities for flexible workload programs, and (4) providing incentive grants. Research shows that hundreds of institutions have made at least one of these formal reforms to their reward systems over the last decade (Diamond 1999; Driscoll and Lynton 1999; Glassick, Huber, and Maeroff 1997; O’Meara 2001; Rice and Sorcinelli 2002; Rice, Sorcinelli, and Austin 2000). CAOs at institutions that had made one or more of these formal changes to their reward systems over the last decade are referred to as “reform CAOs” and CAOs at institutions that did not make formal changes are referred to as “traditional CAOs” for the sake of brevity.

Approximately two-thirds of CAOs completed the survey online, responding to an e-mail invitation to complete a Web-based survey, while the remaining one-third completed a paper copy mailed to them. The results reported in this article are based on the responses of 729 or 50 percent of the CAOs (or their designees) of the 1,452 not-for-profit four-year colleges and universities identified by the 2000 Carnegie classification system. These survey responses are representative of the national profile of institutions. The majority of CAOs, 498 (68 percent), reported that their institutions had made formal changes to their reward system over the last 10 years to encourage multiple forms of scholarship; 231 (32 percent) reported that their institutions had not. The most popular formal policy changes made by participating institutions were expanding the definition of scholarship used in faculty evaluation policies (76 percent) and providing incentive grants to support multiple forms of scholarship (75 percent). About 45 percent of participants noted that their institution had expanded the definition of scholarship written into institutional mission and/or planning documents, and 41 percent of participants reported that their institution had used the expanded definition of scholarship to develop flexible workload programs (similar to Boyer’s [1990] “creativity contracts”). The survey data were analyzed using descriptive and univariate statistics with an alpha level of .05 for all of the analyses conducted.

The survey research reported here was conducted by the author while acting as a research associate for the former AAHE Forum on Faculty Roles and Rewards.
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directed by R. Eugene Rice. While this article discusses the influence of reform on faculty activities, satisfaction, and retention, a discussion of the influence of reform on promotion and tenure outcomes appears in two recent publications by the author (O’Meara 2005b; 2005c); discussion of the influence of reform on academic cultures appears in a third publication (O’Meara, forthcoming).

Findings

Faculty activities and involvements. Faculty workloads vary greatly and often include a diverse array of activities that fall outside of discovery, integration, teaching, or application of knowledge (Braxton, Luckey, and Helland 2002). As institutions have become more dependent on external funding and more interested in garnering national prestige, faculty have spent more time seeking such funding, writing grants, and making national conference presentations (Finnegan and Gamson 1996; Huber 2002; Lee and Rhoads 2004; Slaughter and Leslie 1997). Increasingly, faculty have been called upon to engage in service-learning and to increase their student contact (O’Meara, Kaufman, and Kunz 2003). In order to ascertain the influence of reform, it was useful to compare increases in faculty involvement in multiple forms of scholarship to increases in other areas of faculty activity.

Z-tests were conducted to determine if there were any significant differences between reform and traditional institutions in terms of observed increases in faculty activities over the last decade. The differences were significant between traditional and reform institutions on three items. In comparison to traditional CAOs, reform CAOs were more likely to report an increase over the last decade in faculty involvement in the scholarships of application, teaching and learning, and integration (see figure 1).

Faculty satisfaction and retention. Advocates of rewarding multiple forms of scholarship have claimed the reforms studied here would enhance faculty recruitment by making reform institutions more attractive to potential candidates. Likewise, advocates have suggested that

Figure 1 Faculty Activities and Involvements

Results of z-tests comparing reform and traditional institution CAO responses to the question, “Please check any area of faculty or institutional activity that has increased at your institution during the last 10 years.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Reform Institution CAOs</th>
<th>Traditional Institution CAOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty involvement in the scholarship of application</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty involvement in the scholarship of teaching and learning</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty involvement in the scholarship of integration</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External funding</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty presentations at national conferences</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant applications</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty publications</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty involvement in service learning</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student contact</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *** p < 0.001
Figure 2 Faculty Satisfaction and Retention

Results of z-tests comparing reform and traditional institution CAO responses to the question, “Please check any area of faculty or institutional activity that has increased or improved at your institution during the last 10 years.”

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in faculty satisfaction with roles and rewards</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in retention and satisfaction of female faculty</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in retention and satisfaction of faculty of color</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in faculty recruitment efforts</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased evidence of senior faculty vitality</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p < 0.05

senior faculty who have reached a career plateau would be revitalized by a reward system that encourages their involvement in the scholarships of teaching and integration. Finally, by valuing teaching and service more, it was thought faculty who report greater involvement in and commitment to these activities (i.e., female faculty and faculty of color) would receive greater recognition for their contributions in these areas, and thus be more effectively retained and satisfied in academic life.

When z-tests were conducted, reform CAOs were significantly more likely than traditional CAOs to report an increase in overall faculty satisfaction with roles and rewards (see figure 2). Surprisingly, the differences were not significant between reform and traditional CAO responses in terms of the retention of female faculty and faculty of color, faculty recruitment efforts, and senior faculty vitality.

Seeing the influence of reform on increases and improvements. As noted earlier, two paths were created in the survey to examine whether increases in faculty activity and improvements in satisfaction and retention were different among institutions that made reforms and those that did not. However, the same question, whether reform influenced faculty behavior and satisfaction or not, was posed directly to the CAOs themselves. Reform CAOs were asked the degree to which their formal reforms, and traditional CAOs the degree to which their informal reforms (if they were made at all), influenced the increases in faculty activity and improvements in satisfaction and retention that they observed. T-tests were conducted to gauge whether these differences were significant. Results indicate reform institution CAOs were significantly more likely than traditional institution CAOs to report that observed increases or improvements in the following areas of activity were influenced by their efforts: faculty involvement in the scholarships of application, teaching and learning, and integration; external funding; faculty presentations at national conferences; faculty involvement in service-learning; and student contact (see figure 3).

Reform institution CAOs were also significantly more likely than traditional CAOs to report that observed increases and improvements in overall faculty satisfaction with roles and rewards were influenced by their efforts.

Bias must be considered when interpreting these findings. Some CAOs may have wanted to see positive outcomes from reforms in which they were personally invested. As a result of looking for attributable outcomes, they may have seen them (Weick 1995). Similarly, CAOs at institutions that maintained traditional definitions and policies may have been less likely to look for data that their
Figure 3 Seeing the Influence of Reform on Increases and Improvements

Results of t-tests comparing reform and traditional institution CAO responses to the question, “Please rate the extent to which your efforts to encourage multiple forms of scholarship have influenced this increase or improvement.”

<table>
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<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty recruitment efforts</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence of senior faculty vitality</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>460</td>
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<td>Student contact</td>
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Note: * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Informal efforts (or lack thereof) resulted in specific outcomes. Regardless, in both tests of the influence of reform, comparing reform and traditional CAO responses and asking CAOs themselves whether they saw formal or informal reforms as having influenced measures of faculty behavior and satisfaction and retention, the four formal reforms studied here made a difference.

In summary, findings from this national study showed that institutions that initiated formal reforms to encourage multiple forms of scholarship were significantly more likely than their counterparts to have CAOs report:

- an increase over the last decade in overall faculty satisfaction with roles and rewards
- that their institution's efforts over the last decade directly and positively influenced faculty involvement in the scholarships of application, teaching, and integration; external funding; faculty presentations; service-learning; student contact; and overall faculty satisfaction.

Limitations

Using CAO perceptions to explore the impact of reform on faculty behavior and satisfaction has several limitations. First, this strategy does not measure the behavior itself,
nor does it consider faculty self-reports, but rather relies on the perceptions of a second party. Thus, this research should be interpreted with that in mind and read in conjunction with the research of Braxton, Luckey, and Helland (2002) and others (O’Meara 2001; Huber 2002) that explores faculty scholarly activity by going to the source (i.e., faculty themselves). It is important, however, to explore CAO perceptions of faculty behavior and satisfaction as they relate to policy reform because these academic leaders have primary responsibility for faculty development and evaluation. What they believe is and is not working will influence their actions; therefore, it is important to understand how they believe these reforms have or have not influenced the realities of faculty behavior and satisfaction on their campuses.

A second limitation is that the larger the institution, the more difficult it is for CAOs to generalize when reporting on changes in faculty behavior and satisfaction. Attempts were made to address these limitations in the overall project (of which this article is one part) by asking survey questions more than once in different ways and by conducting additional qualitative focus groups to validate survey findings.

Discussion and Implications

These findings contain several implications for our understanding of the effect of changing reward systems on faculty behavior and satisfaction and for academic planning.

Reforms sent cues to faculty that multiple forms of scholarship would be valued, which in turn influenced faculty behavior and satisfaction. It is no secret that faculty in all institutional types struggle to discern what really “counts” in their reward systems. Given that reward systems are not only made up of artifacts, such as promotion and tenure policies, but of values and beliefs (Schein 1992) as well, it is no wonder many faculty “structure the unknown” (Waterman 1990, p. 41) by paying attention to cues in their environment and assigning meaning to those cues (Weick 1986). These findings suggest that faculty seem to have used one or more of the four formal policy reforms as cues and interpreted them to mean greater institutional “valuing” of multiple forms of scholarship. These cues influenced significantly greater faculty satisfaction with roles and rewards. Likewise, incentive grants, flexible workload programs, revised promotion and tenure documents, and mission statements seem to have influenced faculty behavior and use of discretionary time, as institutions where these reforms were in place reported greater involvement in newer forms of scholarship. These findings are consistent with Blackburn and Lawrence’s (1995) research on faculty behavior, which suggests that faculty are influenced to participate in activities when they acquire social knowledge that the institution values these activities, and Austin and Gamson’s (1983) observation that promotion and tenure policies can act as important extrinsic motivation for faculty, influencing their decision making regarding the use of discretionary time. Consequently, institutions should consider the important symbolic impact of such reforms.

Valuing multiple forms of scholarship has increased overall faculty satisfaction, not necessarily targeting female faculty and faculty of color. It is important to observe the effects that redefining scholarship have and have not had on female faculty and faculty of color. Park (1996) argues that prevailing working assumptions about what constitutes good scholarship and the relative importance of teaching, research, and service in promotion and tenure decisions have created a system of institutionalized sexism in the academy. Many scholars have noted that men as a group devote a higher proportion of their time to discovery (research activities), whereas women as a group devote a much higher percentage of their time to teaching and service activities (Antonic, Astin, and Cress 2000; Bellas and Tourkoushian 1999; Park 1996). Park argues that “teaching and service are characterized as women’s work and explicitly devalued” (p. 47). Creamer (1998) also argues that traditional measures of publication productivity have skewed productivity ratings toward White men and away from female faculty and faculty of color. Many advocates of Boyer’s framework urged that institutions adopt it explicitly for the purpose of creating a more equal playing ground for women and minorities. Park (1996) argued, “Although Boyer does not argue for this expanded definition of scholarship on explicitly feminist grounds, both his thinking and his conclusions...suggest a set of criteria for tenure and promotion that would be more woman (and feminist) friendly than those currently in place” (p. 75).

There were several places in this study (of which these data are one part) to look for potential benefits from a broadened definition of scholarship and a new system of rewards and evaluation for female faculty and faculty of color. The first was in the area of faculty satisfaction and retention. These findings did not reveal a significant difference
between reform and traditional institutions in satisfaction and retention among female faculty and faculty of color specifically, but rather a significant difference between reform and traditional institutions in faculty satisfaction overall. CAOs also did not experience the reforms as targeting female faculty and faculty of color specifically, but rather as focused on the satisfaction of the entire faculty. The second area to examine is who was tenured and promoted, as female faculty and faculty of color are reported to be more affected by the devaluing of teaching and service work in promotion and tenure. Other findings from this study (O’Meara 2005b; 2005c) suggest that the four policy reforms are likely to benefit female faculty and faculty of color by virtue of making it more likely that “teaching scholars” and “service scholars” make it to the decision point of promotion and/or tenure. Once their portfolio is submitted, these findings and previous research over the last decade suggest their chances are about the same as other faculty, a little better than three in four (Chait 2002). A third place to look would be the criteria used to assess scholarship in a reformed system; subsequent research (O’Meara 2005b; 2005c) also explores this question.

Institutions can gain a competitive advantage by establishing a reward system that honors multiple forms of scholarship.

Recruitment and retention of faculty are critical components of long-term academic planning. Faculty are the institutions’ greatest resource and investment (Bowen and Schuster 1986). Boyer’s framework can act as a useful tool for acknowledging and rewarding diverse scholarly talents and emphases. Data from this study suggest that institutions can gain a competitive advantage by establishing a reward system that honors multiple forms of scholarship. Faculty who feel satisfied and valued by their institutions are more likely to be retained over time (Hagedorn 2000). Faculty retention saves the institution money and makes it more effective in accomplishing institutional goals.

Areas for Future Research

The shifting of faculty effort away from teaching and service and towards research, known as academic ratcheting (Massy and Wilger 1992), has been widely observed across institutional types in the last two decades. The findings of this study are especially salient for academic planners who want to slow down or stop academic ratcheting on their campuses. Academic planners might use Boyer’s framework in institutional assessments of current faculty distribution of time and effort. If there is a mismatch between institutional mission and faculty workload emphases, the policy reforms discussed here, as well as a shifting of resources, might be enacted to bring institutional mission and faculty rewards into greater alignment.

However, academic planners should recognize that assessments of faculty workload, studies such as this one, and the policy reforms discussed herein focus on inputs (e.g., faculty time spent on the scholarship of teaching), rather than outputs (e.g., learning outcomes, student satisfaction). Institutional researchers and planners need to study whether and how well faculty are accomplishing the ultimate goals of their institutions (e.g., learning, public service, contributions to knowledge). For example, do increases in time spent on teaching necessarily mean more learning is occurring and, if so, for which students? How might increased time spent on research benefit students?

Over the last decade, faculty have been pressured to become more involved in living-learning programs, integrate technology and diversity discussions into the classroom, and participate in distance learning and K–16 partnerships (O’Meara, Kaufman, and Kurtz 2003). Efforts were made by reform institutions to acknowledge much of this work through a broadened definition of scholarship. At the same time, research shows there has been increasing pressure since September 11, 2001, for institutions to become more entrepreneurial and to engage in grant writing and somewhat more traditional forms of scholarship as they compete for scarce resources (Lee and Rhoads 2004). The research for this study was conducted in 2001–02 and the academy has become more entrepreneurial since then. Future research is needed to explore how current pressures on faculty and institutions to become more entrepreneurial are influencing efforts to reward multiple forms of scholarship.
Case studies are well-suited to this future research because they provide an opportunity to explore the ambiguities and complexities of reward systems and how they influence faculty behavior (Huber 2002).

Summary

Faculty are an institution's most important long-term investment not only because of who they are, but because of the work they do over the course of their careers. The costs to the institution of not retaining faculty are huge. Similarly, the costs to most institutions (even research universities) of having faculty concentrate purely on research are high both in terms of student satisfaction and in meeting expectations in other areas of institutional mission. Reward systems have been found to influence faculty behavior (Blackburn and Lawrence 1995). Thus, institutional planners might consider the Boyer reform as one strategy to influence faculty use of discretionary time and better align institutional mission and the work of personnel.

References


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