

# TCU

## Service: An Interpretative Commentary

The expectations of faculty at TCU are teaching, research or creative activity, service, student engagement, continued professional development and adherence to the Statement on Professional Ethics. Although teaching and research activities should consume the majority of a faculty member's time and effort, none of the other expectations may be totally ignored. The expectation of "service" prompts numerous questions from faculty. What constitutes service? How much service is enough? How is service evaluated? Does service "count" towards promotion, tenure and compensation increases?

Perhaps definitions of service are in order. A faculty member may render service at the University, school/college or department level. Additionally, a faculty member may render service to organizations appropriate to his/her field. Finally, faculty members may contribute service to their community. If the tradition of shared governance is to continue, some faculty must render service to the University and/or the school or college. Likewise an effective department requires good departmental citizenship and this mandates faculty service in the department. Although not required, faculty are encouraged to render service to appropriate organizations and associations; most professional associations function only through volunteerism. Finally, we as members of a local community render service independent of our professional expertise to improve the quality of life. Such community service contributes to a better quality of life, but is not part of the evaluation of a faculty member.

As a guiding principle, senior faculty are expected to be more involved in service than junior faculty. But, junior faculty are not exempt from the service expectation. In the way of advice to junior faculty, recognize that teaching and research or creativity activity are of paramount importance and accept service assignments consistent with the following guidelines. First, being a good department citizen is critical for success. Therefore, accept and successfully discharge departmental assignments. Second, before deciding between service to the school or college or University versus service to a professional association, consider the impact of each. Service to an association that is likely to increase the visibility and reputation of the University is very important; the impact is significant. On the other hand, if such service is not likely to enhance the University then service to an internal constituent should take precedent. When trying to assess the impact of service within the University consider that faculty and students are at the heart of a university. Therefore, as a guiding principle, render service that most directly impacts students and colleagues. For example, junior faculty should be very active in recruiting new colleagues. Likewise, the recruitment and retention of students to TCU and into the school or college or department has a high, positive impact. Who but faculty should be responsible for curriculum revision and assessment? Whether at the department, school or college or University level faculty participation in curriculum revision and assessment is of paramount importance at all levels. Finally, standing University committees are important and more likely to be staffed by senior faculty, but ad hoc committees and task forces are equally important and provide an opportunity for junior faculty to serve.

The conclusions that should be drawn from the above commentary are:

- Effective faculty governance requires active service by the TCU faculty at the department, college and university level.
- Service is expected of all faculty.
- Senior faculty are expected to render more service than junior faculty.
- Service to the department is necessary for success.
- Service opportunities should be evaluated for degree of impact.
- Service opportunities involving recruitment and retention of students and colleagues and curriculum issues are critically important.