

**Report of Ad-Hoc Committee on Faculty Rewards:  
The 2025 Initiative**

August 1, 2014

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## Executive Summary:

The charge of the ad-hoc committee on faculty reward and recognition was to identify areas of faculty activity that are currently not equally or consistently valued at the departmental, college and university level and should be the focus of a campus-wide conversation. In addition, Executive Vice President and Provost Joseph E. Steinmetz asked the committee to suggest preliminary steps that the university community might take in order to better understand, recognize, and reward these activities. The committee met throughout the spring and early summer of 2014 in order to discuss needed areas of focus. In addition to drawing on the range of experiences of its various members, the committee also drew on feedback gathered from a meeting of all department chairs held in May.

The committee considered many different areas of faculty activities with an emphasis on those that had the most potential for wide impact and change and would therefore most benefit from a university-wide discussion.. As it carried out its work, the committee asked what we as a university community need to be doing now to ensure that we are supporting the community of scholars that will define Ohio State's profile of excellence in 2025. We termed this *the 2025 Initiative*. The committee considered the extent to which particular domains of faculty work affect a large cross-section of the faculty and the divergence across the campus in how these areas are recognized and rewarded. The committee's underlying assumption is that we need to make some changes in how and what we evaluate in terms of faculty activities. There is a wide mosaic of faculty talents and work load can be diverse across the faculty.<sup>1</sup> The degree of change will necessarily vary across units and will require the support of the senior administration, the college deans and the department chairs, and of the faculty. In order to focus discussions about needed changes, the committee identified three key areas of faculty work and identified discussion questions and short-term action steps for each:

1. **Citizenship:** Ohio State's motto is "education for citizenship," and its land-grant mission has always connected its academic mission to this key word. The committee believes that thinking seriously about citizenship in the context of the faculty career is an important way to connect our work with our stated mission and land grant values; to build academic community; and to bring external recognition to the university. What is less clear is how to recognize and measure the impact of the faculty activities that are based on an "urge to help each other" within this academic community. *The committee believes that it is important to find ways to incentivize and reward activities that build connections across the university as well as with professional colleagues beyond it. Such mutual support works to elevate the stature and recognition of the faculty as a whole.*
2. **Team Research and Beyond:** Ohio State has evolved, along with other institutions of higher education, in recognizing the importance of team and transdisciplinary research in addressing current research problems in both basic and applied fields. Although there is clearly great value in work performed by the individual scholar, previously untapped areas of scholarship have been made possible by integrating the perspectives and capabilities within and between disciplines that have previously worked in isolation.

There is little question that team research is something that we need to support as an institution, and that we need to do well. Team research is an area of faculty activity that, while generally valued and endorsed, can be difficult to implement within our current reward structures. The ways in which we typically evaluate this work—by percentage of effort or by authorship order—are not always a reliable or consistent metric by which to identify the specific contributions that an individual has made to a group effort. *The committee believes that assessment and metrics will need to be developed to enhance our ability to assess the unique contributions faculty make in team based research.*

3. **Community-based Activities:** Community-based activities are faculty activities that involve community members—at the local, national, and global levels—as partners in teaching, research, and outreach activities. Some examples are activities in which an external community partner helps us teach a service learning component of a course, or contributes expertise to a research project, or provides the location for and contributes to the parameters of an extension, outreach, or service project. Many of these activities do not fit neatly into the usual “buckets” of teaching, research, or service, which creates additional challenges and opportunities in terms of evaluation of impact. *The committee recommends that the members of our academic community gain a greater understanding of the importance of these activities and of the tools that will help them understand what constitutes exemplary work in this area.*

The committee’s recommendation is that during the 2014-15 academic year faculty and administration engage in a series of conversations centered on these key areas. These conversations will include a series of town hall meetings with the faculty, a discussion with the council of deans, and a discussion with department chairs. The committee also recommends conversations with peer institutions about their strategies for faculty reward and recognition. The expectation is that these discussions would lead to a series of concrete actions to be pursued to ensure that faculty are recognized and rewarded for their contributions in these three areas. Some potential initial actions are outlined below, but the committee recognizes that the real strength of the initiative will happen at the local level, with each department, college, and campus joining the discussion.

#### **Context:**

The “three-legged stool” of faculty activities—research, teaching, and service—has been a cornerstone of the American higher education system for almost a century. These areas remain core to our faculty activities but have evolved over time, with additional areas and sub-areas—such as entrepreneurship, outreach and engagement, and professional practice—becoming more visible. At the same time, at Ohio State, the addition of clinical and research faculty has highlighted the importance of rewarding faculty appropriately for the distinctive activities they are recruited to do, with a growing acknowledgment that a faculty career can involve different emphases at different times. In addition, Ohio State’s faculty are evaluated not only by their internal peers but also by an increasingly diverse array of external referees, ranging from peer reviewers for grants, publications and promotion review to industry and community partners.

Given this evolving landscape of faculty trajectories and external review, it is particularly important that the university as a whole examine and articulate its own assumptions and values about faculty activities and how best to recognize and reward them.

The appointment of a new provost in July 2013 and new president in July 2014 provides a unique opportunity for the faculty to advise this new leadership team about strategic areas of recognition for faculty endeavors. Even before this transitional time, however, the issue of faculty reward and recognition has been an ongoing priority of the university. Recent initiatives in this area include the following:

- Beginning in 2009, President E. Gordon Gee and Executive Vice President and Provost Joseph A. Alutto, working with senate faculty leaders and the deans, articulated the need for greater attention to supporting faculty for promotion to full professor. In particular, they supported the notion—now codified in many unit governance documents—that associate professors who had made significant impact in the areas of teaching and service would be properly acknowledged for that work in the promotion process.
- In that same period, the University Senate and Board of Trustees have approved the establishment of clinical faculty in the Colleges of Education and Human Ecology and Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, meaning that every college except the College of Social Work and University Libraries may appoint clinical faculty into the departments approved to do so. The growth of clinical faculty in various units of the university raises important questions about how to recognize the impact of the practice-based activities that these faculty members pursue.
- In 2013, the Senate established provisions for local governance rights for lecturers and other associated faculty, inviting the opportunity to think about appropriate ways for integrating these faculty members into the units in which they teach.
- The Second-year Transformational Experience Program has engaged faculty across the campus, allowing for greater opportunities for students and faculty to interact outside the classroom. This type of activity raises questions about how it should be recognized in a faculty member's workload.
- The establishment of the Life Sciences and Environmental Sciences Networks and the Discovery Themes initiative have highlighted and provided a structure for collaboration and cluster hiring in specific areas of focus, structures that will increasingly call for agreements about how to "count" and value work that cuts across multiple departments and centers.
- At the college and departmental level, many units have added provisions for new areas of faculty focus, including such disparate areas as digital humanities; distance learning; engaged scholarship; and commercialized research in the form of licenses and start-up companies, among others.

The upshot of these various initiatives is that the parameters of faculty work—what faculty spend their time doing and how it is reported to and evaluated by peers and others—are in

flux. This does not mean that the traditional pillars of faculty work—basic and applied research disseminated through peer-reviewed publications and other venues; grants and contracts; classroom teaching and advising; service to the department, college, university, community, and profession—are no longer important or valued. But it does mean that the university needs to ensure that an increasing spectrum of additional activities is also recognized and legible to peers and others.

As it carried out its work, the committee settled on a working title of **the 2025 Initiative**, with the idea in mind that we need to prepare now to support and recognize the faculty who will define our institutional scholarly strengths in the year 2025. Many of those faculty members are already at the university and will continue their professional advancement; others we will hope to recruit as part of the continuous process of renewing the faculty through college-level planning and the Discovery themes. The committee, along with the department chairs, had the opportunity to reflect on the ideal qualities that the faculty should have in 2025, and then used that visioning exercise to identify its main areas of focus.

The committee invites others in the university community to continue to contribute to this conversation by having their own discussion about the 2025 initiative. Over the course of the 2014-15 academic year, the task force's recommendation is that conversations be held across the university to identify key actions that individual units, colleges, and the university can take to ensure we are creating an environment where faculty will thrive and succeed.

To motivate and stimulate these crucial discussions, the committee has identified three major issues that need to be addressed; the basis for their selection; and some possible initial steps to take in order to recognize them more fully and consistently. These steps are not intended to apply only to the promotion process, although the committee recognizes that promotion is a particularly visible and significant milestone in the arc of a faculty career. Instead, these areas of discussion and focus are meant to be broadly relevant to faculty in all areas of endeavor and appointment types and at all points of their careers.

### **Focus Area 1: Citizenship**

Since the 1930s, Ohio State's motto has been "education for citizenship," and its land-grant mission has always connected its academic mission to this key word. When President Lincoln signed the Morrill Act (also known as the Land Grant College Act) in 1862 he did so because he believed, as former provost and former interim president Joseph A. Alutto has put it, that "the best chance for continued peace and prosperity in the U.S. was to establish a system of higher education that supported the ideals of human equality and armed citizens with the skills they would need to act in pursuit of the common good."<sup>2</sup> In his commencement address in the spring of 2013, President Obama focused on the importance of this term in civic life, defining it as "a united urge to help each other... a recognition we are not a collection of strangers; we are bound to one another by a set of ideals and laws and commitments."<sup>3</sup> And across the university, various units have embraced the term "citizenship" in a number of areas, making it a

focus not only of research, teaching, clinical duties, and outreach and engagement activities but also of unit governance documents and activity reports.<sup>4</sup>

The committee believes that thinking seriously about citizenship in the context of the faculty career is an important way to connect our work with our fundamental historical charge and land grant values; to build academic community; and to bring external recognition to the university. What is less clear is how to recognize and measure the impact of the faculty activities that are based on an “urge to help each other” within this academic community. Academia, particularly a Research 1 university such as Ohio State, appoints faculty from around the world who are known for their individual expertise. Further, it defines that expertise not only in relation to the university but in relation to professional standing across the nation and world. The pressure to focus on individual accomplishment is understandably great. And yet the committee is aware that it is important to find ways to incentivize and reward activities that build connections across the university as well as with professional colleagues beyond it.

When the committee talked about citizenship, we did not mean only “service,” although we are aware that service activities are a component of this umbrella term. Nor did we mean stopping whatever one is doing in order to do what someone else wants. When we talk about citizenship, we mean in general those activities that help advance connection, collaboration and community within and across academic divisions, departments and centers. We also mean making connections with our broader publics outside of the university, an issue that we explore more fully in the section below on community impacting activities. The challenge of documenting such work, especially within the university, is that its impacts and metrics are not always as visible or easily reported as individual contributions. But we believe that talking about and valuing citizenship is not only core to our land grant mission but also core to our longer-term commitment to retaining faculty and educating our students.

In order to frame this part of the conversation, the committee encourages the faculty and the university leadership to undertake a wide-spread discussion of the following questions:

- How is citizenship connected to academic freedom? As defined in the *Rules of the University Faculty*, academic freedom includes the right for faculty to “exercise their constitutional rights as citizens without institutional censorship or discipline” while also assuming the responsibility to “differentiate carefully between official activities as faculty and personal activities as citizens, and to act accordingly.”<sup>5</sup> How do the central tenets of academic freedom differentiate and distinguish citizenship from collegiality and how do we fairly recognize the first without creating inequitable and overly subjective expectations regarding the second?
- What defines a “good citizen” in any given unit and how does such a citizen raise the profile and facilitate the work of the unit? Why is citizenship valuable within a unit and what impact does it have on the unit’s ability to advance its work? What faculty duties might already be included under this umbrella and which ones aren’t but should be? What metrics might be added to unit governance documents that would make this work more visible within a department and across the university?

- How does good citizenship intersect with but also differ from good service? The *Rules of the University Faculty* broadly define service as “providing administrative service to the university, professional service to the faculty member’s discipline, and disciplinary expertise to public or private entities beyond the university.”<sup>6</sup> What baseline expectations does this definition raise in given units?

In addition to local, college, and university-level discussion of these questions, the committee suggests the following concrete actions for the 2014-15 academic year:

- Make the annual James F. Patterson Land-Grant University Lecture<sup>7</sup> an opportunity for a nationally-renowned speaker to discuss the concept of citizenship in terms of faculty activities
- Ask the relevant senate committees to discuss whether “citizenship” should be included in any of the definitions of faculty activities in Chapters 6 and 7 of the Rules, which focus on tenure-track, clinical, and research faculty specifically
- Ask department chairs and school directors who have successfully integrated community-building activities into faculty annual reports to share their practices with other unit leaders
- Create a central website in the Office of Academic Affairs that creates an inventory of activities already underway that focus on citizenship in order to create a baseline of current practices
- Consider holding discussion groups for newly promoted associate and full professors about the role of citizenship in the university and how to manage the demands of this role as a member of the senior faculty

## **Focus Area 2: Team Research**

When the committee began its discussion, almost everyone agreed that the university as well as most of our individual units and colleges value and encourage team research and scholarship. Our research centers, collaborative grants, support of multi-authored publications, and work with external research partners all rely on and testify to the idea that many of our current research agendas require moving beyond a single-PI or single-author model. While this model is still prominent and productive in many disciplines and specializations, Ohio State has evolved, along with other institutions of higher education, in recognizing the importance of team research in addressing current research problems in both basic and applied fields. Such research is also crucial to the continued evolution of interdisciplinary, trans-disciplinary, and translational work.<sup>8</sup> There is little question that we need to support team research and scholarship as an institution, and we need to do so well.

As the committee carried out its charge, however, it recognized that team research is an area of faculty activity that, while generally valued and endorsed, can be difficult to implement within our current reward structures. When faculty in a unit evaluate a case for promotion, for example, they understand that being a co-PI on a grant, or a middle author on a paper, can in any given case represent a significant commitment of time and expertise. Yet most faculty

committees still frame their discussions in terms of the original contributions that a given faculty member has made to his or her field; the degree to which he or she is known for a particular focused area of study; and the degree to which various measures of impact (such as citation rates or references or invited presentations) can be attributed to the individual. More broadly, peer reviewers look for evidence that a faculty member is an “intellectual driver” in his or her research program, someone who has added a unique and valuable contribution even within a collaborative or team project.

The committee speculates that the most typical way that such activity is currently described—by percentage of effort or by authorship order—is not always a reliable or consistent metric by which to identify the specific contributions that an individual has made to a group effort. In many ways, the most compelling measures of impact come from the qualitative narrative statements that collaborators provide about their specific contributions and those of their colleagues. In promotion and tenure reviews, units frequently include helpful statements from collaborators that help contextualize the faculty member’s dossier. Yet the integrity of on-going assessment of faculty performance necessitates quantitative as well as qualitative measures of this impact. Developing such metrics is a national and international project and is actively being studied by the International Science of Team Science (SciTS) Association as well as by the developers of various bibliometric data bases such as Academic Analytics.

In any given department or unit at Ohio State, however, cultural assumptions about the need to demonstrate original, focused, and individual research play out daily in formal and informal mentoring contexts; in committee and faculty meetings; in promotion and salary reviews; and in decisions about what new faculty to hire. The most cutting-edge citation measures will not necessarily mitigate the advice of a senior faculty member who tells an assistant professor that it would not be “safe” to pursue a collaborative project, particularly one that involves work with another department or center. Such advice is sincere and well-intentioned but can create conflicting signals between what a faculty member might hear in his or her department and elsewhere on campus. It is important for units to talk about the values of team science apart from specific mentoring or evaluation activities so that the university can become increasingly adept at juxtaposing a team research model with the still salient and often productive single-PI and author model. While we may not be ready to state that multi-authored scholarship is more highly valued than single authorship, as some members of the committee proposed, we do believe that it is important that we be clear and consistent in valuing both.

To that end, the committee recommends that the campus community undertake discussion of the following key questions:

- Since one of the primary tenets of academic freedom, and of the tenure system, is that institutions of higher learning provide a context for cutting-edge research that may fail before it succeeds, how do we properly reward faculty who try something innovative but risky, particularly in a collaborative environment? Is this something that should be undertaken primarily by the tenured faculty and, if so, how do we articulate the institutional value of this to the probationary and non-tenured faculty, to our students, and to our external stakeholders? Would hiring more faculty with tenure (lateral or



senior hires) through the Discovery Themes and other initiatives strengthen the institution in this regard?

- What is the role of the senior faculty (especially the full professors) in mentoring and advising assistant professors and others who are interested in pursuing team research? What is their best advice and how does it intersect with or diverge from an overall institutional commitment to team research? How can the senior faculty take the lead in providing mentoring and peer review for this research?

In addition to local, college, and university-level discussion of these questions, the committee suggests the following concrete actions for the 2014-15 academic year:

- Charge relevant senate committees and the Office of Academic Affairs with exploring structural ways to enhance peer review in cases where a candidate for promotion has done significant collaboration with another unit, including considering whether someone from the other unit should attend the meeting where the case is discussed. How can we avoid having faculty members in different units and disciplines being rewarded differently for the same research project?
- Consider the ease of describing and citing team research in the evaluation of what tool will replace Research in View
- Have the Office of Academic Affairs and/or Office of Research host a workshop for unit heads and promotion and tenure chairs about current best practices for evaluating team research, including reports from attendees from Ohio State of the National Academies Workshop on Institutional and Organizational Supports for Team Science and/or International Science of Team Science (SciTS) Conference.
- Host an outside speaker who can describe new ways of developing metrics for evaluating citations and other impacts of collaborative research, such as the developers of the “R Factor” for collaborative research<sup>9</sup>

### **Focus Area 3: Community-Based Faculty Activities**

In some ways, this focus area combines the other two areas that we have described above. Civic engagement is arguably one aspect of citizenship, and in the context of faculty research, it almost always involves teams. Yet we call it out here because we believe that it is another area our committee feels is generally valued but which faculty have little sense of how to evaluate or support in individual cases. For the purposes of this report, we define community-based activities as faculty activities that involve community members—at the local, national, and global levels—as partners in teaching, research, and outreach activities. We are not speaking here of ethnographic studies, clinical trials, or other contexts in which community members serve as research subjects, although we know that such studies are and will continue to be important. Rather, we mean activities such as where an external community partner helps us teach a service learning component of a course, or contributes expertise to a research project, or provides the location for and contributes to the parameters of an extension, outreach, or service project. Many of these activities do not fit neatly into the usual “buckets” of teaching,

research, or service, which creates additional challenges and opportunities in terms of evaluation of impact.

The definition above is in line with current national conversation on the nature of engaged scholarship. Ohio State has long been a leader in this area, and is classified as an “engaged university” by the Carnegie Foundation. In 2013, the university also was awarded the C. Peter Magrath University Community Engagement Award by the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities. Yet at the unit level, there is not a wide-spread understanding of the university’s place as an engaged university and of how to evaluate and reward the impact of faculty doing community-based work.

We want to make clear that this is an area in which we do not believe every faculty will or should participate. Although it is germane for every faculty member to consider what it means to be a citizen of the university, such citizenship does not always entail community-based activities. What we do recommend is that the members of our academic community gain a greater understanding of the importance of community-based activities and of the tools that will help them understand what constitutes exemplary work in this area.

To that end, the committee recommends that the campus community undertake discussion of the following key questions:

- Engaged scholarship and teaching assumes at its core that there is a dynamic reciprocal relationship to the work of a community partner. What specific examples can faculty give in their own units of such work and what it has meant to them?
- The university’s current definition of outreach and engagement states that outreach and engagement is:
  - That aspect of **teaching** that enables learning beyond the campus walls
  - That aspect of **research** that makes what we discover useful beyond the academic community
  - That aspect of **service** that directly benefits the public<sup>10</sup>

Does this definition give an adequate baseline for articulating the significance of these activities to the mission and vision of our academic community?

In addition to local, college, and university-level discussion of these questions, the committee suggests the following concrete actions for the 2014-15 academic year:

- Create an Academy of Engaged Scholars through the Office of Outreach and Engagement that can provide leadership in this campus conversation
- Charge relevant senate committees and the Office of Academic Affairs with exploring structural ways to enhance peer review in cases where a candidate for promotion has done significant collaboration with a community partner. Who are the proper internal and external reviewers for evaluating the impact of community-based research and how should the reviewers be chosen? What materials should the reviewers receive and what should they be asked to evaluate and comment on? How can the voting faculty in individual units be informed about how to review such evidence?<sup>11</sup>

- Develop appropriate metrics for evaluating the quality of teaching in community based courses.
- Consider the ease of describing and citing community impacts in the evaluation of what tool will replace Research in View

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Boyer, E. 1990. The Faculty: A Mosaic of Talent. *Scholarship Reconsidered*.

(<http://www.umces.edu/sites/default/files/al/pdfs/BoyerScholarshipReconsidered.pdf>)

<sup>2</sup> <http://buckeyevoices.osu.edu/articles/2014/06/09/a-land-grant-university-for-the-world/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/05/remarks-president-ohio-state-university-commencement>

<sup>4</sup> There are too many examples to name here, and the committee suggests that it could be helpful to compile a central repository of work in this area. As initial and by no means exhaustive examples, we mention the Glenn School of Public Policy's course on civic engagement

([http://glennschool.osu.edu/undergraduate/pdf\\_handouts/Bachelor%20of%20Arts%20in%20Public%20Affairs\\_1sheet.pdf](http://glennschool.osu.edu/undergraduate/pdf_handouts/Bachelor%20of%20Arts%20in%20Public%20Affairs_1sheet.pdf)); the Fisher College of Business's undergraduate "Citizenship Program"; the School of Environment and Natural Resources' Appointments, Promotion and Tenure (APT) document

(<http://oaa.osu.edu/assets/files/documents/SENR-APT.pdf>); and the College of Medicine's criteria for the clinical excellence pathway for clinical faculty (<http://oaa.osu.edu/assets/files/documents/MED-APT.pdf>).

<sup>5</sup> <http://trustees.osu.edu/rules/university-rules/rules5/ru5-01.html>

<sup>6</sup> <http://trustees.osu.edu/rules/university-rules/rules6/ru6-02.html>

<sup>7</sup> <http://outreach.osu.edu/programs/patterson-lecture.html>

<sup>8</sup> "Transdisciplinary research" is for the purposes of this document defined as projects in which faculty members from different areas bring their expertise to a particular project and define their role as bringing that particular disciplinary/expert perspective, with each perspective having equal value. "Interdisciplinary research" is for the purposes of this document defined as projects in which a faculty member in a given field studies and adapts the methodologies and expertise of another field in order to investigate a research question. "Translational research" is research that works to apply basic research, particularly but not exclusively in the health sciences, to clinical or other practitioner settings.

<sup>9</sup> <https://thewinner.com/papers/the-r-factor-a-measure-of-scientific-veracity>

<sup>10</sup> <http://outreach.osu.edu/>

<sup>11</sup> Ohio State is a member of a state-wide coalition, the Ohio Campus Compact, which should be an important resource in this discussion. For more information, see <http://www.ohiocampuscompact.org/>. For an example of how another university studies this question, see the 2013 report on Academic Review and Engagement at Tulane University (<http://tulane.edu/provost/upload/Academic-Review-and-Engagement-February-2013.pdf>).