

# CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

## FINAL REPORT OF THE FACULTY SCHOLAR BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE

### Introduction

California State University's primary mission is to educate undergraduate and graduate students. Because the essential reason for scholarly activity is to further student learning, the instructional arena should be the primary context for evaluating scholarship. This will require that scholarship be reconceptualized to include elements of what Boyer (1990) has referred to as the scholarships of teaching, application, integration, and discovery. The result will be an integrated scholarship which reflects critical elements of all domains serving the cause of student learning.

The primary criterion for evaluating scholarship should be the effectiveness with which the scholarly work in one's discipline is communicated to one's students. As important as grant activity and publishing may be in advancing individual, school, and university objectives, the primary criteria for evaluating scholarship should be neither the *amount* of grant money one attracts nor the number of publications one has authored.

### Procedures

In the preparation of this document, the Blue Ribbon Committee used a number of publications, most notably several written by the internationally recognized educator, Dr. Ernest Boyer. Four subgroups were created, each of which examined one of the following concepts of scholarship: discovery, integration, application, and teaching. The committee not only included teaching as one aspect of the scholar model, but also emphasized teaching as it related to the scholarship of discovery, integration, and application.

**Teaching.** After considerable discussion, the committee resolved that "Teaching is a scholarly act that involves not only communicating knowledge but transforming and extending it as well. It is a dynamic activity in which both professor and student learn from and instruct one another. At its best, teaching is an intellectual journey engaging the faculty as mentors to their students. Good teaching is scholarship because its foundation is the careful study and research into the body of knowledge that comprises the discipline" (Williams, 1995, Pg. 4).

**Application.** The scholarship of application includes the symbiotic relationship of the theoretical and the practical. Application scholarship is characterized by the process of using knowledge to address demanding, substantive, human problems including community issues. The scholarship of application is reflected in intellectual and professional growth, and in demonstrated social responsibility.

**Integration.** The scholarship of integration occurs at the interfaces of disciplines, especially where one field of learning connects with another body of knowledge. The resulting interaction provides the setting for new insights and understanding as traditional facts and theories are considered in another part of the universe of learning. As broader perspectives are gained, new bridges and relationships between and among disciplines are established.

**Discovery.** The scholarship of discovery is expressed in creative activities documented as significant contributions to the knowledge, works, techniques, and/or principles of the discipline. These activities occur in media which are available to critical evaluation within the discipline(s) both in and outside of the university; these activities may be interdisciplinary.

## Documentation and Evaluation of Scholarly Activity

The documentation of the scholarly activity of teaching, discovery, integration, and application should be rich and varied. It should consist of evidence gathered over time from a variety of sources, namely, self-evaluation, peer evaluation, student evaluation, and other evaluation. Assessment of scholarly activities should be creatively constructed to be relevant and to fit the activity. The responsibility for documenting that one has successfully integrated scholarly efforts into the instructional arena resides primarily with the faculty member.

The Blue Ribbon Committee calls for a flexible faculty assessment and reward system that “recognizes the missions of institutions, the priorities of departments, the strengths of individuals, and the uniqueness of the disciplines” (Diamond, 1994, p. B3).

Fundamentally, the **Blue Ribbon Committee proposes** that:

1. The University’s conceptualization of scholarship must be expanded.
2. The University must provide the support needed to facilitate faculty achievement of goals generated from the Faculty Scholar Model.
3. The emergent definition of the faculty scholar must be aligned with University hiring, retention, tenure, promotion and with post-tenure review. Any model not tied to the University’s recognition and reward systems will be ignored.
4. Criteria by which faculty scholarship will be judged must be more clearly articulated than is presently the case.
5. University departmental and discipline-specific constructions of what constitutes a faculty scholar must form the basis for setting expectations and standards.
6. Student involvement in the faculty scholar process must be considered a vital component in determining the nature of an effective faculty scholar.

## EXAMPLES OF FACULTY WORK

This list illustrates examples of scholarship in each aspect of faculty work.

### Scholarship of Teaching

Demonstrate thorough understanding and current knowledge through

- clearly defined student learning objectives
- appropriate learning exercises
- prepared exercise packets
- samples of student exams and essays
- designed course materials
- creation of course software
- published research in teaching and learning
- teaching portfolio analysis

### Scholarship of Application

Using knowledge to address demanding, substantive human problems by

- conducting applied research and evaluation
- providing technical assistance
- developing new products, practices, clinical procedures, new artistic works
- consultation with community organizations
- performing clinical service
- promoting experiential learning and professional development

### Scholarship of Integration

Make connections across/within disciplines by

- designing new courses
- writing textbooks
- developing videocassettes and television programs
- writing for nonspecialists
- sponsoring colloquia and forums
- preparing cross-disciplinary seminars
- shaping a core curriculum
- preparing quality computer software
- integration of professional experiences in courses

### Scholarship of Discovery

Critically evaluated and professionally recognized

- journal articles
- monographs
- proceedings
- poems
- stories
- artistic creations
- awarded grants and evidence of subsequent work
- public performances
- published books
- public presentations

### REFERENCES

- Boyer, E. L. (1990). *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. New Jersey: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
- Diamond, R. M. (1994, May 11). The tough task of reforming the faculty-reward system. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, B1-B3.
- Williams, A. S. (1995, April). Teaching and scholarship at master's only institutions. *Communicator*, 28(4), 2-5.

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