

# The Balance of Teaching, Scholarly Activity and Service at OSU ATI

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## Abstract

The Ohio State University Agricultural Technical Institute (OSU ATI) has responded to recent state demands for increased productivity and accountability in higher education. The result has been a change in the balance between teaching, research/scholarly activities and service for regular tenured faculty. New faculty workload and performance policies have been developed.

## Introduction

The Ohio State University Agricultural Technical Institute (OSU ATI) located in Wooster, Ohio is a two-year branch campus in The Ohio State University system devoted primarily to programs in agriculture. Approximately 750 students attend OSU ATI. Upon successful completion of one of the 18 programs, an Associate of Applied Science degree is awarded. There are 38 tenured faculty at OSU ATI with responsibilities ranging from classroom teaching to the coordination of a program. Several faculty have no-salary courtesy appointments in other departments which help to facilitate research and other scholarly activities.

Historically, OSU ATI faculty have viewed their role as being primarily in a teaching role with research/scholarly activities and service as being minor responsibilities. This mindset has been changing rapidly over the past seven years with pressure from various sources outside and inside of the institution, resulting in the adoption of a new faculty workload policy. More of a balance in productivity between teaching, scholarly activities and service is now required for satisfactory annual faculty performance. Other institutions of higher learning with primarily a teaching mission have been experiencing similar trends in faculty expectations (Nieto and Henderson, 1994). A recent study of Oklahoma State University faculty productivity found that both the research and instructional activities of regular faculty have increased (Oklahoma Regents, 1993). In an effort to enhance quality and improve productivity, the Illinois Board of Higher Education has instituted a new program known as Priorities, Quality,

and Productivity (PQP) (Illinois State Board, 1993). Reports concerning changes in faculty roles, responsibilities and productivity at two-year technical colleges are sparse. The purpose of this paper is to document that faculty roles and expectations are changing at the two-year technical college level and to relate the opportunities available for faculty development in this new atmosphere.

## Tenure and Promotion Process

Prior to 1987, allowances were made for OSU ATI faculty not having the quantity and quality of scholarly activity expected of university faculty going through the promotion and tenure process. The Provost would meet with the University Promotion and Tenure Committee to explain the unique mission of OSU ATI prior to review of dossiers of OSU ATI faculty. The majority of decisions resulting from this committee review of OSU ATI dossiers prior to 1987 were favorable for promotion and tenure even though the documentation of quantity and quality of scholarly activities was less extensive than most other OSU departments. This situation began to change in 1987 with the denial of promotion for an OSU ATI candidate on the grounds of inadequate documentation of scholarly activity. Several candidates up for promotion and tenure were denied the promotion component between 1987 and 1992 because of this deficiency.

## College P & T Review Committee

OSU ATI is a school within the College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Science. On a pragmatic basis, OSU ATI is often treated as a department within the College. In 1988, the College formed a College Promotion and Tenure (P and T) Review Committee. This committee was composed of a cross section of faculty from all departments in the College. Prior to the formation of this new committee, all dossiers went directly to the Dean's office after approval from OSU ATI in Wooster and then were forwarded to the University P and T Committee. The main goals of the College P and T Review Committee were to create more uniformity in documentation within the College, and to enhance the credibility of the College within the University. The creation of the College P and T Committee prompted OSU ATI to form an ad hoc faculty committee in 1989 to review the existing OSU ATI P and T policy and make changes that would reflect a new bal-

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ance between teaching, research/scholarly activity and service.

### **Mandate for Increasing Productivity**

In 1991, the Ohio Governor formed the "Managing for the Future Task Force". The charge given to this blue-ribbon committee was to examine how to provide the highest quality higher education services within a constrained state resource environment. The task force report was submitted to the Ohio Board of Regents which is the State governing body for higher education in Ohio. Recommendations in this report called for the development of a plan by each publicly-supported University or college to measure quality and productivity (Managing for the Future Task Force, 1992). More specifically, each institution was called to measure:

- Quality of classroom teaching and courses.
- Quality of service in areas such as registration, admissions, etc.
- Student achievement.
- Faculty workload including number of students(FTEs) taught per course per term (semester, quarter); average dollars per faculty from grants, contracts and awards; and hours per week spent on consulting or private endeavors.
- Evaluation of faculty performance.
- Impact that granting of sabbaticals has had on teaching and/or scholarship/research.

In December 1992, in response to the Task Force Report, the Ohio Board of Regents identified specific expectations for two-year colleges (Ohio Board of Regents, 1992). Specifically, these expectations included a commitment to developmental education services; partnerships with industry, business, government and labor for workforce education; non-credit continuing educational opportunities; college transfer programs or the first two-years of a baccalaureate degree for students planning to transfer to four year institutions; linkages with high schools to insure graduates are prepared for post-secondary instruction; and a high level of community involvement in decision making in areas of course delivery.

### **Faculty Workload Policy**

As a result of these expectations, and in response to the Provost's request, the OSU ATI Academic Council composed of academic division chairpersons, formulated faculty workload and faculty performance policies. The faculty workload policy gives guidelines for the amount of classroom instruction and the minimum amount of scholarly activity and service expected of regular tenured faculty at OSU ATI.

The Faculty Workload Policy was approved in May of 1993 (OSU ATI Academic Council, 1993). Guidelines for classroom teaching loads are presented as a range of credit hours. Notice that the policy is specific with respect to classroom workloads but very flexible regarding scholarly activities and service.

### **Instructional Load**

- The annual credit hour load limit for nine month faculty will be at least 20 but not more than 40 credit hours, and for twelve month faculty, 20 to 48 credit hours.
- The teaching load in any quarter will not exceed 15 credit hours or 20 contact hours per week.
- Any quarterly workload assignment which exceeds the limits shall be made only with the consent of the faculty member and with expectations of workload reductions in the subsequent quarter or supplemental payment for the overload.

### **Research, Creative, and Other Scholarly Activities**

The minimal scholarly activity expectation for each regular tenured faculty member must result in one published article and/or one oral presentation annually. Faculty are expected to devote a reasonable amount of time to the creation of new knowledge and to its dissemination. Examples of how this information could be conveyed include: publication in refereed journals, presentations at professional and/or industry meetings; publication of educational media materials and computer software; authorship of books and monographs; editorship of newsletters and journals.

### **Professional Service**

The faculty member should devote a reasonable amount of time to University committees, advising student organizations, and active participation in professional and/or industry and community organizations.

### **Faculty Performance Policy**

The OSU ATI Faculty Performance Policy is designed to augment minimum standards as presented in the Workload Policy (OSU ATI, 1993). Faculty members must understand both policies in order to perform at a minimally acceptable level.

### **Teaching Performance**

Faculty who meet expectations will demonstrate the following:

- Student evaluations administered in all courses taught. Peer review by a colleague other than the Division Chair of one course annually.
- Peers may be any colleague at OSU ATI, in the College of Food Agricultural and Environmental Resources, in other colleges of OSU, or at other institutions. Peer review should include course materials (syllabi, handouts, laboratory manuals, student assignments, quizzes and tests etc.) in addition to classroom observation.
- Evidence of improvement in areas of concern identified by either student evaluations or peer reviews.
- Evaluation of service rendered to student advisees.

## Research, Creative, and Other Scholarly Activities Performance

The scope of scholarly activities for faculty at the two-year college level can be broadened considerably from the basic research format. Although basic research may be a part of scholarly endeavors, applied research dealing with teaching methodology and applications to practical problem solving in agricultural disciplines is much more realistic for OSU ATI faculty to accomplish and is more in line with the institutional mission statement. Below is a list of activities which serve as a minimal requirement for scholarly activity performance.

One of the following items should be accomplished on an every-other year basis:

- Publication in a refereed journal.
- Presentation at a regional, state or national meeting of a professional organization.
- Paper read at a learned society.

One or more of the following annually:

- Publication in a nonrefereed professional and/or trade journal.
- Presentation at industry or trade association.

## Professional Service Performance

Quantity of professional service is easier to measure than quality of the same service. The major quality standard for service is demonstration of active participation on University committees or cooperation with industry.

Service activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Active participation on one or more Institute, College or University committees.
- Active participation in a professional or industry organization.
- Active participation in student activities (Club advisor etc.)

## Implications for Teaching

The two policies serve to narrow the distinction between faculty responsibilities in a university and a two-year technical college. Under the current atmosphere of greater productivity in all phases of job performance, faculty at OSU-ATI will have the license to create new knowledge in a discipline of their choice. Creation and dissemination of new knowledge brings distinction to the institution and to the faculty member responsible for it.

Faculty will have to become more creative and resourceful when managing the new balance between teaching, scholarly activity and service. Opportunities for regional, community and professional service will abound as a result of OSU-ATI's unique mission as a two-year technical college and its location 85 miles from the Columbus campus. Faculty could easily spend excessive amounts of time reacting to service demands and not enough time devoted to teaching and scholarly activity. Possibilities exist for converting purely teach-

ing objectives into scholarly activity opportunities through teaching methodology research.

The importance of building linkages with colleagues within the OSU system and with the agricultural industry to accomplish faculty performance objectives will intensify. The new continuing education programs being developed at OSU ATI will offer teaching challenges to accommodate audiences with somewhat different objectives. However, these challenges will bring scholarly activity opportunities with the development of teaching materials for wider audiences than just the traditional student body and will provide a chance for faculty to gain new perspectives on teaching.

## Summary and Conclusions

Although influences from several different sources have been at work in recent years to convey an expectation of more scholarly activity, quality teaching will remain the top faculty priority. Formal policies concerning workload and faculty evaluation often appear threatening at first glance. However, upon further study, these new policies will enhance total program quality while giving faculty the latitude to concentrate on the classroom. Expectations of faculty have changed slightly as a result of the policies and now include more scholarly activity and a more comprehensive evaluation of teaching. Faculty are in the process of adjusting to enhanced scholarly activity expectations brought about by the new policies and the atmosphere they created. These new expectations bring with them opportunities for building new working relationships with the agriculture industry and colleagues throughout academia.

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