

Building and Sustaining a Diverse Faculty: Implications for Faculty Advancement and Reward Systems

UC ADVANCE Roundtable
University of California, Davis
Friday, April 10, 2015

Working Lunch: Are Our Current Reward Systems Outdated?

Discussion Questions

Addressing Implicit Bias in the Review and Reward System

(Bibliography references 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 13, 18, 20, 26, 28)

- A. Social science research documents the role of implicit bias across the spectrum of faculty work – in the terms used in teaching evaluations, in credit given in collaborative work, and in the expectations for participation in service activities. Training of review committees can help in mitigating the impact of implicit bias in our metrics of excellence but does this go far enough? What are the best practices for reduction of implicit bias in faculty review? Is there a need to adjust our metrics of excellence to be more inclusive of alternative career pathways? (**TABLE 9**)

- B. Our current APM policies reward achievement, not effort. Often achievement is judged by external factors such as offers from other institutions. However, research demonstrates that the requirement to obtain external offers is viewed differently by individuals and spans from the perspective of a game played merely to secure a higher salary to a genuine lack of appreciation of accomplishment by the home campus. Does this practice that encourages our top faculty to seek rewards elsewhere serve our campuses well especially if women and URM faculty are more likely to leave? What alternative practices should we employ to assess market value of faculty? Should we place an even greater value on internal versus external assessments of faculty achievement and how is that best achieved? (**TABLE 2**)

Lessening the Impact of Bias in Federal Grant Review on the Reward System

(Bibliography references 1, 2, 4, 9, 15, 16, 17, 23, 24, 27)

- C. Numerous studies have shown and continue to show the presence of bias in the federal grant review process and a lack of diversity of successful grant applicants. Success rates of faculty over 55 in securing NIH funding have grown while success rates of those under 40 have diminished (Stephan, 2010, 2012). Ginther et al (2011) reported that “. . . data indicate that black and Asian investigators are less likely to be awarded an R01 on the first or second attempt, blacks and Hispanics are less likely to resubmit a revised application, and black investigators that do resubmit have to do so more often to receive an award.” There is some debate as to the cause of this lack of diversity in funding but many attribute it to the combinatory role of implicit and pedigree bias and track record of achievement and reputation in attaining grant funding. Even though our current APM places value on publications that stem from grant applications rather than the award of the grant itself, the greater effort required by URM and younger faculty in obtaining grants may have lasting impacts on productivity as evaluated over time. Clearly obtaining federal funding is indicative of the value placed on the research program by the reviewing committee; however, given the uneven playing field imposed by a pedigree-based meritocracy and the interview data which suggest URM faculty are dissuaded from academic careers by the appearance of bias in grant awards, how can we lessen the impact of bias in successful grantsmanship in our reward system? What types of support systems (fiscally realistic) are needed to assure a diverse junior faculty will become successful in obtaining grant funding and able to sustain that funding throughout a career? **(TABLE 6)**

Managing the Conflict between Worklife Balance and the Culture of Achievement

(Bibliography references 8, 11, 12, 19, 29)

- D. There is an inherent conflict between the cost to an individual of achieving creative excellence and the personal sacrifice involved in sustaining a record of achievement. Although policies aimed at assuring worklife balance have been implemented, many eligible faculty do not take advantage of these policies believing that there is no effective way to reduce or make up for lost productivity. Currently our policies not only reward achievement but achievement attained within a defined period of time. Should we adopt a more time-flexible approach to attainment of tenure and of advancement to full professor and include a greater series of overlapping steps? Are there other mechanisms to lessen the impact of achievement within a narrow timeframe across the spectrum of a career? What are the best local departmental practices that will enable worklife balance within the department and acknowledge the importance of that balance? **(TABLE 5)**

- E. APM740 defines the purpose of sabbatical leaves as follows: “Sabbatical leaves are granted, in accordance with regulations established by the President, to enable recipients to be engaged in intensive programs of research and/or study, thus to become more effective teachers and scholars and to enhance their services to the University.” The sabbatical process was created to enable faculty to focus on research particularly in novel directions as well as fostering interactions across institutions and the creation of productive collaborations. However the traditional off-campus sabbatical leave is challenging for dual career faculty and there is a greater tendency to take quarter or semester-long leaves instead. In residence sabbatical leaves carry a teaching requirement not enabling a complete focus on creative activity. Should we change the policy for in- residence sabbatical leaves to enable an exclusive focus on creative activity? Should we consider a practice of a sabbatical-type leave for faculty who have “stopped the clock” to aid in regaining lost productivity and maintaining grant competitiveness? Should the sabbatical leave process be used for extended modified duties? (**TABLE 7**)
- F. The University has great flexibility in payroll titles for faculty. Should we develop policies/practices enabling greater flexibility in shifting between tenure and non-tenure track positions? Does tenure still have value in our current career climate? (**TABLE 1**)

Valuing the Full Spectrum of Faculty Work

(Bibliography reference 21)

- G. The 1991 Pister report on the UC faculty reward system made several recommendations for achieving a better balance of recognition for the spectrum of activities expected of faculty – teaching, research/creative activity and university, professional and community service. Does our current reward system continue to undervalue teaching and service activities? How can we enable faculty to assume major service or teaching responsibilities without negatively impacting their research careers and grant competitiveness? What are the best practices for assessing achievement in university or community service? (**TABLE 4**)
- H. In surveys faculty across all ranks and demographics complain of the devaluation of mentoring in our reward system and cite the importance and impact of mentoring at all levels, undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral fellows and junior colleagues and collaborators. What are the best metrics for excellence or achievement in mentoring? What practices would enable mentoring to be given more consideration in the merit process? (**TABLE 3**)

Optimizing the System of Review

(Bibliography references 14, 22, 25)

- I. The research and creative activity enterprise is changing from the traditional individual investigator research platform and single author books to collaborative efforts that enable novel approaches and outcomes. Currently in the reward system faculty are asked to assess their own contributions to collaborative works and faculty believe that review committees downplay their own self-assessments of contributions. What are the best practices for assessing contributions of individuals to jointly authored work and collaborative research efforts? How can we best balance a desire for external validation of effort in collaborations that by their nature are not “arm’s length”? (**TABLE 8**)

- J. Faculty often believe that the only impact of their work that is valued during review is the impact factor of the journals in which they publish. Basic research journals that are highly cited often are weighted more heavily than journals that publish translational work but the impact to society of that work may be pronounced. What are the best metrics for assessing societal impact of translational research and how can that assessment be incorporated into our review process? How can we assess other types of scholarship such as the scholarship of community engagement and outreach? Do we need to broaden our definition of research excellence to encompass other types of research and creative activity? How can we value the impact of newer modes of assessment of impact such as altmetrics? (**TABLE 10**)