THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Vancouver Senate Nominating Committee
c/o
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November 6, 2009

To: Vancouver Senate

From: Nominating Committee

Re: **Culture of Service (approval)**

Motion 1: *That the report of the Nominating Committee on "Culture of Service" be received.*

Motion 2: *That* ***Recommendations 1*** *through* ***3d*** *be approved.*

At the January 2009 meeting of Senate, the Nominating Committee was directed to consider ways in which to enhance the "culture of service" amongst members of the University community and to review ways in which service to the University is currently evaluated. The Committee was also directed to explore mechanisms by which faculty, students and staff can be encouraged to actively participate in the governance of the University and its units and report on its deliberations by the May 2009 meeting of Senate. The Committee was subsequently granted an extension, with a revised report back deadline of November 2009. The report presented herein is intended to fulfil the reporting responsibility assigned to the Committee.[1]

Diminished Culture of Service – Observations

Active faculty involvement in academic oversight and institutional governance and support is essential to the fulfillment of the strategic goals of the University. To the extent that service occupies a central place in an institutions research and teaching missions, it is reasonable to expect robust faculty engagement and leadership in understanding and advancing service as a core value of the university. This is not always the case due in large part to an actual or perceived lack of emphasis on the importance of institutional service responsibilities. Service – particularly within the University – tends to trail as a distant third behind research and teaching. Despite increases in service expectations, service is not recognized comparably to teaching and research within academic communities.

This disengagement shrinks the pool of faculty who are willing to serve and limits the collective experience and expertise necessary for proper academic governance, thereby making academic governing bodies such as the Senate less representative and less responsive to the faculty and University at large. The Committee's consultations indicate that the impact of a diminishing 'culture of service' touches upon all aspects of institutional service and governance.

In its consultations, the Committee found anecdotal evidence of a 'diminishing culture of service' across the campus. While faculties and students self-select for a variety of different

[1] While the referral speaks to "faculty, students and staff," the Committee's discussions have primarily focused on the issue of service with respect to faculty, being the major representative group on Senate and because staff service falls under different administrative provisions. Students have been consulted separately and the results of that consultation have been forwarded to the Vice-President, Students and are available through the Senate secretariat.

types of service, there remains a critical lack of participation in many areas. For example, the Faculty of Graduate Studies must sometimes issue upwards of 40 invitations to secure a chair for a doctoral examination committee. The Committee also found evidence of diminished student participation in and representation on decanal search committees. Similarly, of the 24 student positions available on a Faculty Council, only five are currently filled, reflective of the general trend in decreased engagement in university service. This evidence is consistent with several recent discussions on member participation in the activities of certain standing committees of Senate.

The Committee recognizes that many faculty are already making extraordinary contributions to the academy and community. However, evidence is primarily anecdotal. There are few mechanisms available for recording service and fewer mechanisms for aggregating contributions to gain a broader sense of what service is already being provided.

Diversity of Service

The service role of faculty is expansive and often vaguely defined. The internal and external dimensions of service are distinct but are often lumped together under the rubric of 'faculty service.' Internal service supports the intra-university functioning of the academic profession and higher education as a whole and is linked to the premise of the centrality of faculty in academic decision-making . The Committee recognizes the plurality of internal service, from participation in departmental committees, student support and administrative work. Faculty members are expected to participate in the decision-making councils of the University, and to share the necessary administrative work of their departments, faculties and the University. Service to the University also compasses service to the larger academic community, performed through (among other duties) reviewing academic publications, membership on editorial boards, adjudication committees, granting councils and other learned associations. Faculty member also serve the University, directly or indirectly, through service to the external community.

External service contributes towards the public mission of the University through community engagement, contribution to professional associations and publications, consulting, service-learning and community and civic service. These types of service opportunities are often more attractive than service to the University as the former appears to be more readily rewarded than the latter. External service is generally viewed as enhancing one's eligibility for promotion, tenure, and merit as compared to internal service. Moreover, the Committee was concerned to learn of a particular stigma attached to internal service, namely that there must be nothing more exciting for this individual to do. Nonetheless, the Committee recognizes the significance of internal service to both the practice of faculty, most notably in such areas as Medicine and Law, as well as to the University's community engagement.

Service expectations necessarily continue as faculty members progress through the professorial ranks. Protected research time for junior faculty, prior to tenure, emphasizes career development and engagement in traditional forms of scholarship. Service expectations are therefore lower than for more experienced faculty. This institutional investment is reciprocal; tenured faculty are expected to exhibit a level of service commensurate with their academic rank and experience.

Through its consultations, the Committee found significant variation in the recognition of service within faculties and departments and at the wider university level. Service is not consistently recognized; while some faculties place greater emphasis on recognition of service to the external community, several faculties have responded to the Committee's request for input with examples of faculty awards in recognition of service within the University. For example, the Faculty Scholar Award recognizes outstanding contributions to the Faculty of Law, both in administrative and student support capacities, awarded in the form of a research grant. The Faculty of Education Murray Elliott Service Award honours outstanding faculty contribution to the delivery and development of the Teacher Education Program. Similarly, the School of Nursing, the Faculty of Land and Food Systems and the Faculty of Medicine have in place mechanisms and awards to recognize outstanding service to the faculty or department. However, there remains an absence of a faculty service mechanism at the University level. There is currently no University level service award for faculty members as there are for staff (i.e. President's Service Award for Excellence and President's Staff Awards).

Recommendations

Throughout its discussions, the Committee has sought to find ways in which the 'culture of service' can be reinscribed at the University. While the Committee recognizes the significance of service outside of the University to both the practice of faculty, most notably in professional Faculties, as well as to the University's community engagement, the Committee's review has focused on service in the University, noting that service outside the University often contributes to faculty professional and career development that is more readily recognized in the annual Merit and PSA review processes.

Successful strategies for promoting service within the University should be proactive and should emphasize that service by faculty and students is a core component of academic governance. In addition to the strategies outlined below, the Committee recommends that Deans and Principals, in collaboration with the Offices of Faculty Relations and the Provost and Vice-President, Academic review their internal faculty orientation processes for new faculty to ensure an appropriate emphasis on service as a core component of an academic career and its relation to the pursuit of research and teaching excellence. The orientation process should reinforce service as an integral part of the University's academic vision and mission. Units head should further consider how to most effectively deploy non-academic staff to alleviate administrative pressure on faculty while still preserving and supporting the role of faculty in their exercise of necessary academic judgment.

The Committee explored ways in which to once again inculcate service to the University as a core value and recommends the following strategies:

1. **That the President convey to the Senior Appointments Committee Senate's advice that service expectations and service measures be more clearly articulated.**

   <u>Commentary:</u>
   Service is one component of the tripartite review of personnel for promotion. A balanced record of research, teaching and service should be recognized as the optimal combination of accomplishment. The University's expectations of service vary depending on one's tenure status and rank. A higher level of service should reasonably be expected from associate and full professors, including significant service to the University. In order to cultivate a culture of service, the promotion process should outline explicit service expectations by professorial rank.

The Committee recommends, for example, that section 10 of current UBC CV template ('Service to the University') be expanded to include additional subcategories, signifying both departmental and university level service and denoting the major types of service activities faculty may be involved in, e.g., standing committees, ad-hoc committees, task/working groups, designated service assignments etc.

2. **That Deans and Principals, in association with heads of other academic units, ensure that service expectations are clearly articulated and communicated to faculty.**

   Commentary:
   For example, the annual report submitted by each member of a Faculty (generally in the form of a CV) should require a narrative of service and a concise listing of such activity, highlighting internal university service. Department Heads responsible for preparing dossiers should gather information from as many sources as necessary in order to offer a fair assessment of the faculty member's record of service.

   Deans and Department Heads could develop expected or typical service 'paths' for faculty in their particular departments or units to serve as models for their faculty. They should also evaluate the academic importance of service roles the faculty member has filled, the effectiveness of the faculty member's work in those roles and the appropriateness of the service record given the faculty member's professorial rank. In this regard, faculty members should compile a narrative account of their University and other service in their curriculum vitae and annual career progress report.

3. **That the University executive consider:**
   a. **The need for clear and consistent messaging from the senior administration to the University community about the importance of service;**
   b. **Potential ways to recognize and communicate the importance of service in University activities, statements, and policies;**
   c. **The establishment of University-level awards for service by faculty, potentially including a president's prize for faculty service or a research grant awarded for outstanding service. Such awards may be monetary or non-monetary.**
   d. **The establishment of an integrated University-wide orientation for new faculty including an orientation to service culture and opportunities.**

   Commentary:
   These recommendations represent the purport of responses to Committee inquiries and parallel the findings of student consultation, via the Student Senate Caucus and the Alma Mater Society Council, particularly the need for University-level recognition of student engagement in service activities.

The Committee wishes to express its gratitude to Senate & Curriculum Services staff for their assistance. The data gathered by the Committee for the drafting of this report is available upon request.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Rhodri Windsor-Liscombe
Chair, Senate Nominating Committee