

Overview & Top Lines

Obstacles to address



- Service is not evaluated for quality or impact; it is simply counted.
- All service is important, especially at a land grant institution.
 - *“Looking outward is part of our mission; we are compelled to provide service to the community.”*
 - *“As citizens of the University, we should all be doing service work such as committees.”*
- Creating metrics to show excellence may make this more like a game and less about the mission of the university, more about bean counting and being strategic about what service you are doing.
 - *“If we’re making sure all the boxes are checked so we’re excellent in everything, that takes away from the mission and the goal of broadening the bar. It feels icky. Either we value service, or we don’t value it.”*
- It may be worthwhile for faculty to keep a record of service activities and reflect on them periodically, even if it is service that does not necessarily count in the evaluation or promotion process.

Overview & Top Lines

Indicators of success



- The largest theme to emerge from the discussion about indicators of success was impact, which had more than twice as many comments as any other theme. The four types of impact most frequently mentioned were:
 - Service outputs
 - Impact on the larger community
 - Impact on students and faculty
 - Impact on the department and program
- The second largest grouping of comments expressed the sentiment that the concept of service will need to be more clearly defined; a handful of people commented further that metrics for measuring service should be defined at the local level, and that they will likely vary depending on context, discipline, and/or seniority level.

Themes



What makes it difficult to evaluate service?

Consider your own research, teaching, and service as well as the work of your field/discipline. What do you see as obstacles that need to be removed or addressed to incorporate service into the evaluation and promotion process?

A. Not sure what counts as service

- Some distinctions need to be made in this area; service to the university or one's college/department is different from service to the profession or discipline. Chairing a committee is different from joining an existing effort. Service that is expected or an obligation differs from that which provides joy, and service that is part of one's job is not the same as innovative or new service.
 - *"Need to make a distinction that the 'service' in your job description—like in the libraries, or as program administrator—is not the same as service outside your job description."*
 - *"For people who provide service as a main part of their job (e.g., counseling), it is impossible to tease out which part is work and which part is service."*
 - *"Some service involves 'passion projects' such as extension activities. Other service is more conventional such as serving as editor of a journal."*
- Service to discipline or profession was noted as missing from the Provost's comments; this is a significant amount of labor for some people, and there is disagreement about whether this is valued.
 - *"In my department, I have been told that 'service is what we do for our department'; service to outside entities isn't recognized as such."*
- Work that certain fields do for other disciplines (e.g., statistics) may not result in publications but still is a service. It is unclear if it counts if it is not service to your discipline, department, or program.

Themes



What makes it difficult to evaluate service?

Consider your own research, teaching, and service as well as the work of your field/discipline. What do you see as obstacles that need to be removed or addressed to incorporate service into the evaluation and promotion process?

A. (continued) Not sure what counts as service

- Some service projects that fall into the “*service to humanity*” category may be useful to communities but might not be cutting edge or offering something new. It may be helpful to define what is more important: renown or filling a community need. For example, research with inner-city schools is vital but not new or groundbreaking.
- It would be useful to see a list of department/college-specific examples of the types of activities that could be included under the umbrella of service (and a list of ways that one can exceed the expectation).

B. Accounting for disproportionate effort and inequity

- Faculty in small programs do a disproportionate amount of service merely to keep their programs afloat. Programs can have a small number of faculty but not necessarily a small number of students; faculty still must do the lifting, the same amount of committee work, but with a reduced pool of labor. Likewise, units with unusual structures (e.g., School of Music) have significant service requirements for programs within the unit. These factors should be made explicit in the promotion/evaluation packet.
- Service is differently viewed and valued across departments and positions.
 - “*Service falls disproportionately on women, BIPOC people and junior faculty.*”
 - “*Some positions have 0% service contractually (for example research PTK faculty).*”
- Inequities were noted.
 - “*When service is not voluntarily taken, but forced on you, like when you’re the only scholar who is a woman of color so you’re needed on a committee, this is not rewarded.*”

Themes



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Consider your own research, teaching, and service as well as the work of your field/discipline. What do you see as obstacles that need to be removed or addressed to incorporate service into the evaluation and promotion process?

C. Quality vs. counting of service is important

- There are not a lot of metrics for how effective or meaningful service was, e.g., no outside communication with external partners.
 - *“Letter writers from outside the University could comment on our service, but we don’t unless it was extraordinary. This could raise visibility of service performed.”*
- Discussion about what counts under service and how to value it is fairly easy. What is more complicated is trying to figure out what the standards are by which one decides a certain level of service reaches extraordinary level, average level, or substandard level. The category of service seems like a marginal item in the APT process. It does not have its own standard.
- Service should align with our multiple conversations about equity.
- As a land grant institution, special weight should be given when service is provided to underserved populations.
 - *“We should put our money where our mouth is when valuing those ‘working in the trenches.’”*

D. Service is undervalued

- Service currently counts for very little in evaluation and promotion.
 - *“Service may even be discouraged or seen as a distraction for faculty going for tenure who need to focus on research.”*
 - *“It is hard to compel people who do not have service in their contract to engage in service activities. They tend to do a bad job if they don’t want to be there.”*

Themes



Identifying measures of success

How will we know whether to give someone a high rating in the area of service? What would they be doing or accomplishing if their work demonstrated excellence in service?

Data collected via online brainstorm tool, Ideaboardz

A. Impact of service

- Suggestions that related to the impact of a faculty member's service made up the largest theme from this session's Ideaboardz exercise. Most of the suggestions grouped into one of four subtopics:
 - **Impact on the larger community** (5 comments) – focused on the impact a faculty member's service has on the local community with which they are engaged.
 - **Service outputs** (5 comments) – suggested using outputs that result from service as an indicator of success. Some examples given included new policies or programs created, or things that were developed or improved.
 - **Impact on students and faculty** (2 comments) – focused on noting the positive impact service could have on students and instructors.
 - **Impact on department and program** (2 comments) – centered on measuring the impact of service on a faculty member's department or program (e.g., improvements made to internal practices)

Themes



Identifying measures of success

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Data collected via online brainstorm tool, Ideaboardz

B. Need to think about how we define service

- The second largest theme expressed the sentiment that the concept of service will need to be more clearly defined. A few of the suggestions in this category grouped into a subtopic:
 - **Different metrics depending on context/discipline/seniority level** (3 comments) – expressed the view that metrics for measuring service should be defined at the local level, and that they will likely vary depending on context, discipline, and/or seniority level.

C. Leadership roles

- This theme suggested paying attention to leadership roles that a faculty member has held as part of their continued service.

D. Reviews/evaluation

- This theme focused on the importance of outside evaluation as a measure of a faculty member's successful service. Some examples included external evaluation, letters of support or testimonials from partners and stakeholders, and community feedback.

E. Time spent on service

- These comments suggested tracking the amount of time a faculty member spends on service.

Themes



Identifying measures of success

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F. Need a good tracking system

- This grouping of comments focused on the importance of a tracking system. Specific suggestions included service dashboards, outside activity reports, and “service tracking buddies.”

G. Connection with local community

- This theme suggested measuring the extent to which a faculty member’s service involved or was focused on the local community.

H. Awards/recognition/visibility

- This group of comments focused on visibility through service awards and recognition a faculty member receives.

I. Personal statement from faculty members

- This theme proposed allowing faculty members to write personal statements to communicate, in their own words, what they have done that constitutes service and to explain the value of it.

J. Consistency/sustainability over time

- The comments in this theme highlighted the importance of consistency and sustainability over time when measuring successful service.

Themes



Identifying measures of success

How will we know whether to give someone a high rating in the area of service? What would they be doing or accomplishing if their work demonstrated excellence in service?

Data collected via online brainstorm tool, Ideaboardz

Notes

- There were additional comments that did not fit into any of the listed themes.
- There was conversation among some about the attention and diligence required to track service and how time consuming it can be, especially for chairs, to compose or compile feedback on faculty members' service for review committees.
- There was also a good deal of discussion about the importance of a good tool for tracking service. There was support expressed for service dashboards—a public facing internal site listing typical service based on ranks. Several people felt this would create accountability (make visible those who are evading service), ensure everyone receives credit for the work they are doing, and potentially prevent people from becoming overburdened.



Themes from Chat

In a few words, share your reaction to the comments you just heard from the Provost.

Several participants expressed appreciation both for the opportunity to discuss service and for the Provost's notion of *"broadening the bar so that service contributions are counted and valued."*

What is something that caught your attention today?

A few participants referenced the discussion about quality rather than performative service:

- *"Service should not be a box that needs to be checked."*
- *"Importance of mentoring in helping colleagues assemble the 'right' portfolio for them at rank. Balancing 'finding your joy' with 'checking the box.'"*