Faculty Support and Undergraduate Research: Innovation in Faculty Role Definition, Workload, and Reward

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Changing Nature of Faculty Work

- Teaching
- Scholarship
- Demographics
- External Factors
Expanding Expectations for Teaching

- Knowledgeable about pedagogy and high impact learning practices
- Mentor students
- Engage students in undergraduate research
- Continuous professional development to incorporate new technologies into teaching
- Connect students to the community
- Interdisciplinary teaching
Expanding Expectations for Scholarship

- Institutional expectations for increased scholarly productivity
- Pressure to obtain external support for research
- Participation in interdisciplinary research
- International collaboration
Demographics

- Women are 50% of academic workforce
- More dual career families
- Balancing career and family an issue for women and men
External Factors

• Decreased funding for higher education
• Increased use of contingent faculty
• Pressure to reduce cost of higher education
• Public expectations for student/faculty interaction
• Increase in for-profit universities
• Online education and MOOCs
Considerations

• Integrating undergraduate research into the curriculum
• Including undergraduate research in tenure and promotion policies
• Adapting workload structures and policies to include undergraduate research
Valuing Undergraduate Research

Defining and Reframing Challenges:

- Faculty Workload and Curriculum Integration
- Tenure and Promotion
Faculty Workload: CHALLENGES

- UR contributes powerfully to transformational learning and student development

- BUT, UR experiences are typically outside of the formal curriculum and therefore on top of assigned workload
REFRAMING

- Apply a more holistic (and more current) model to defining faculty work and workload
- Move undergraduate research from the periphery to the center: Redefine faculty work and curricula to incorporate undergraduate research
Defining Faculty Workloads

- Dominant approaches to faculty workload:
  - Faculty workload policies
  - Management of course offerings
  - Variation in faculty roles
  - Support for pedagogical variation
Defining Faculty Workloads: New Directions – Key Questions

- Where in a developmental curriculum sequence do high-impact practices have the highest impact?

- What learning experiences are important scaffolding for high-impact practices such as undergraduate research?
Tenure and Promotion: CHALLENGES

- UR contributes powerfully to transformational learning and student development

- BUT, UR experiences are typically outside of the formal curriculum and therefore on top of assigned workload
CHALLENGES

- UR is often viewed as competing with rather than contributing to faculty professional development

- UR creates challenges for meeting traditional T&P criteria:
  - Time
  - Perceived value
CHALLENGES

1. Often takes longer to complete a project with a student than on your own

2. UR less likely to lead to the most highly valued products in the T&P process

3. Engaging in UR and its outcomes rarely part of T&P criteria

4. Takes time away from those projects that are typically most valued
REFRAMING

- Take the same approach as did to workload
- Holistic Model: any faculty activity can contribute to all areas – teaching, scholarship and service.
- Thus, UR can be seen as contributing to all areas of faculty work.
TRIAD OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Teaching
- Undergraduate Research
- Scholarly Activity
- Service
Translation to T&P Criteria

1. Teaching
   - UR-embedded curricular innovation
   - Independent studies, honors theses
   - Documented learning outcomes

2. Scholarly Activity
   - Student involvement in faculty research
   - UR projects
   - Products

3. Service
   - UR-related activities, on and off campus
Concluding Comments

Motivating institutional change

• Impact of undergraduate research on students

• Societal benefits of undergraduate research

The importance of faculty, administrative, and student leadership
Questions?

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