

December 14, 2018

To: Department and Division Heads and Chairs, Academic Directors
CC: Associate Deans

Dear Colleagues:

As vice provost for faculty and academic affairs, I review promotion and tenure cases and see first-hand how academic units value the scholarly work of their faculty. Unit reports, unit leaders' letters, and a unit's 7.12 statement all explicate what the unit values and expects from its faculty. The extent to which particular kinds of work are valued is communicated both by affirmative statements and by the absence of such statements.

The University's Faculty Tenure policy states, in section 7.11, that "Interdisciplinary work, public engagement, international activities and initiatives, attention to questions of diversity, technology transfer, and other special kinds of professional activity by the candidate should be considered when applicable." In recent years, I have observed that expectations and values associated with these and other areas are not always consistently communicated throughout the promotion and tenure process. In this memo, I point out some of the areas where alignment has been a concern and ask that you consider with your colleagues whether and how your 7.12 policy clearly articulates the values and expectations of your units.

Equity and Diversity

The University of Minnesota values diversity and equal opportunity. Specifically, we seek to "leverage the transformative power of equity and diversity to advance excellence in teaching, research and community engagement at the University of Minnesota." In order to achieve our mission, "we envision a University where equity and diversity are: 1) Integrated into the work and lives of every student, faculty, and staff member. 2) Recognized as core institutional values, and will inform thinking, policies, and practices throughout the University. 3) Inherently intertwined with academic excellence and the development of leaders for a globally inclusive society."

Please consider how the equity and diversity goals of the University are embedded in the explicit and implicit expectations you have as you evaluate faculty. For example, how is scholarship focused on or completed in partnership with a minoritized group valued? How are articles published in mainstream or specialized journals valued? How is advising of students and student groups valued? How does the department value a faculty members' impact on underserved communities or advancement of the equity and diversity goals of the university?

Engagement

The University of Minnesota values public engagement as "the partnership of University knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good."

Please consider how the goals of the University related to public engagement are embedded in the explicit and implicit expectations you have as you evaluate faculty. For example, how are publicly-engaged research, publicly-engaged teaching and publicly-engaged service valued? How are partnerships with community partners and the meeting of community needs valued? How are the impacts of publicly-engaged work both in the community and in the scholarly field assessed and valued?

Teaching and Learning

The University of Minnesota's mission commits us to share "knowledge, understanding, and creativity by providing a broad range of educational programs in a strong and diverse community of learners and teachers, and prepare graduate, professional, and undergraduate students, as well as non-degree seeking students interested in continuing education and lifelong learning, for active roles in a multiracial and multicultural world."

Please consider how the goals of the University related to teaching and learning are embedded in the explicit and

implicit expectations you have as you evaluate faculty. For example, what are the multiple ways in which teaching (to include classroom teaching, advising, and mentoring) is defined and assessed? How is scholarship that focuses on teaching and learning valued? How is ensuring that one's teaching and advising are accessible to students with disabilities valued? How is the incorporation of multicultural understandings in one's teaching valued?

Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Collaboration

Provost Hanson recently articulated, "A major initiative across the University of Minnesota is the promotion of team leadership and multidisciplinary collaborative team solutions in education and research in order to take on "grand challenges." The partnerships we need to foster also extend to involvement with the community. In my role as Provost, I am strongly supportive of recognizing faculty contributions in team science during the promotion and tenure process."

Please consider how the goals of the University related to interdisciplinarity, collaboration and team science are embedded in the explicit and implicit expectations you have as you evaluate faculty. For example, how is credit assigned for projects or publications with multiple authors? How are publications in journals outside one's own discipline valued? How are interdisciplinary teaching, advising and collaborations recognized?

Global and International Contributions

In the University of Minnesota's System-Wide Strategic Plan Framework, the purpose of the system is articulated as follows: "As a System, the University of Minnesota will connect and leverage its distinctive statewide resources to provide outstanding education, conduct and disseminate globally significant research, produce inspiring works of visual and performing art, and offer Extension and outreach programming that enhances the quality of life in Minnesota, the nation, and the world." The expectation is that faculty consider the ways in which their work enriches their local communities and the world beyond.

Please consider how the goals of the University related to global and international contributions are embedded in the explicit and implicit expectations you have as you evaluate faculty. For example, how does the unit determine the extent of a faculty member's international reputation? How are international partnerships and collaborations that enrich a faculty member's research, teaching and service assessed and valued? How does the unit assess and value the global impact of a faculty member's scholarly work?

Responsible Conduct

The University of Minnesota's Faculty Tenure Policy states that "What the University of Minnesota seeks above all in its faculty member is intellectual distinction and academic integrity." While intellectual distinction is reasonably viewed as primary in promotion and tenure evaluations, it is reasonable that when a faculty member's behavior impedes their ability to teach, research or provide service effectively, that behavior can be taken into account in their evaluation. How does your unit's 7.12 articulate the behavioral expectations for faculty as they relate to fulfilling scholarly expectations?

In many units, contributions to the areas outlined above overlap and inform each other. For example, one might do engaged research in partnership with minoritized communities in several places around the globe. Please consider how you will value contributions of your unit's faculty when their work advances the University in multiple areas.

Thank you for your leadership in ensuring that your 7.12 statements clearly articulate the values of your unit, especially related to those areas mentioned above. If you would like to look at other unit's 7.12 statements to consider how they address these areas, you can do so at <https://faculty.umn.edu/promotion-tenure/approved-712-statements>. If you need to speak with someone about the revision process, please contact Ole Gram at gram@umn.edu.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Ropers-Huilman