

## Defining the Teacher-Scholar in Biology

The Department of Biology, as evidenced in its Departmental Mission statement, strongly supports the University view that faculty should be actively engaged in the process of acquiring new knowledge in their chosen disciplines, and in sharing their own research with colleagues and the general public. Biology faculty should bring their scholarship to their lectures and laboratories, using it as means of involving students in biology as an ongoing process of discovery. Faculty should also take students into their research, thus exposing them to the way that science is carried out, and to the ethical standards of the scientific community. The concept of a teacher-scholar thus inherently blurs distinctions between teaching, scholarly growth, and service currently used by the University to evaluate faculty merit. In the sections that follow we have indicated elements that, while primarily supporting the section in which they have been placed, may contribute substantially to excellence in other areas. The list is not exhaustive, and other elements defined in the University's Collective Bargaining Agreement may be considered in addition to those described below.

### Teaching

Consistent with the goals and values of West Chester University, teaching is viewed by the department as the primary mission of its faculty. Excellence in teaching can be demonstrated in a number of ways. The following un-prioritized elements are considered measures for evaluating teaching success.

**Course teaching:** Material included in lectures and laboratories should actively engage students in learning about both the process and content of modern biology

**Supervision of student research:** Faculty should welcome students into their laboratories to participate in ongoing research, and should encourage and actively mentor student-originated research projects conducted by undergraduate and MS students (also applies to Scholarly Growth)

**Supervision of off-site student internships:** Faculty responsibilities include both student advisement on campus and site visits

**Modification of existing courses:** Available information, student interests and career opportunities in biology change over time; faculty should modify existing courses sufficiently to reflect these changes.

**Developing new courses, curricula and programs of study:** Faculty members are expected to participate in departmental initiatives to reorganize course offerings to reflect changes in the discipline.

**Supervision of student presentations at scientific meetings:** Students producing high quality research should be encouraged to present their results at professional meetings, and further supported in ways that add maximum value to the experience (also applies to Scholarly Growth)

**Grant applications for teaching initiatives (e.g. “equipment grants”):** Efforts to obtain external funding in support of curricular development are strongly encouraged, and are an indication of commitment to teaching

### **Scholarly Growth**

Scholarship in Biology may vary according to sub-discipline, and includes both research and the sharing of research with others. Particularly strong emphasis is placed on the infusion of scholarship into student learning.

**Peer-reviewed research publications:** Both the number and quality of publications are important elements of productivity

**Non-peer reviewed research publications:** Faculty contributions to other technical and non-technical journals, newspapers and other media are an important means of conveying the results of scholarship to colleagues and the public (also applies to Service)

**Grant applications for funding research programs:** Awarded grants should carry more weight than unsuccessful grant applications, but both provide strong evidence of scholarship

**Invited scientific seminar presentations:** Seminars given at other institutions sharing research results

**Presentation of abstracts and posters at scientific meetings:** This is a frequent means of evaluating scholarly productivity, and often provides evidence of research that may not yet have reached the stage of publication. The sequence of authorship is of slight importance in defining the extent of research involvement supporting such presentations. Attendance at scientific meetings, but without presenting research, nonetheless provides evidence of scholarly growth

**Patent applications:** Patents are a reasonable, but not necessarily expected, indication of successful applied research

**Initiation of new research programs:** Scholarly growth may often involve shifts in research, as a result of changes in the discipline, opportunities for collaboration, the availability of resources, student-generated projects, or personal interest. Such shifts are often accompanied by a temporary lag in many of the metrics often used to demonstrate research productivity, but are an important demonstration of added breadth as a scholar

**Research collaborations:** Involvement in projects with colleagues either at West Chester University or at other institutions is an important means of scholarly growth

if it leads to publications, presentations or other measures of productivity as described above

## **Service**

Faculty members in Biology are expected to contribute their time and expertise to the university, colleagues at other institutions, and to the public. Scholarship may facilitate some forms of service, as indicated below.

**Participation in departmental and university-wide committee work:** Both the importance of the committees to the department and university, and the degree of participation, are important elements in evaluating service

**Authorship of a textbook:** This an important service to the discipline, and can also be a means of melding scholarship with student learning (also applies to Teaching)

**Serving as a referee of scientific articles for journals:** Agreeing to provide peer review of papers under consideration for publication in journals is both an important service to the discipline, and an indication of professional recognition by colleagues (also applies to Scholarship)

**Evaluation of grant proposals:** Evaluation of grant proposals, and serving on panels, for funding agencies (also applies to Scholarship)

**Evaluation of scientific qualifications of outside scientists when requested** (also applies to Scholarship)

**Service to professional scientific organizations:** Participation as an officer in professional organizations, committee member, journal editor or associated editor, and service at professional meetings (e.g., as a workshop or session chair, or meeting organizer) provide strong evidence of service to colleagues in the discipline (also applies to Scholarship)

**Service to the public:** The sharing of expertise with the public may include the presentation of non-technical seminars, panel discussions or workshops, and media interviews

**Scientific consulting:** Use of acquired expertise in consulting provides an important service to the public, helps to maintain or extend scholarship, and can lead to projects involving students (applies to both Scholarship and Teaching)

**Facilitating the work of colleagues:** activities that contribute to the productivity of other faculty, either at West Chester University or at other institutions, are an important service to the university and to the discipline

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