

The author draws on her experience as provost at a metropolitan university (1988-93) and as director of the Forum on Faculty Roles and Rewards of the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) to discuss a national movement that is rethinking how faculty do their work and what signals they receive from their institutions, their professional societies, and other external agents about priorities. She identifies three phases of growth, culminating in a network of campus agents for change. In 1993 AAHE's Forum became a focal point for this network, sponsoring national and regional meetings, issuing publications, and supporting pilot projects.

Faculty Roles and the Reward System:

The National Conversation — Why Now?

Why an entire issue of *Metropolitan Universities* devoted to the topic of faculty roles and the reward system for faculty? And why now?

Regular readers of this journal, and the contributors to this issue, know the answers to these questions. Hundreds of colleges and universities are attempting to meet new challenges and respond to new needs without increasing the size of their faculties. Most are also trying to deal with the consequences of rapid change in some fields of instruction and research, as well as the end of mandatory retirement. Whether they are advocates of moderate reform or radical restructuring, faculty leaders and academic administrators coping with the new challenges agree on the need to rethink faculty work and the institutional rewards for faculty. A national conversation of unprecedented breadth and depth about these matters has been underway for some time.

For very good reasons, colleagues from metropolitan universities, including several contributors to this issue, have taken the lead in the national conversation. This is not surprising because metropolitan universities for some time have been serving “the new [student] majority” and have had to be very creative in responding to community demands for applied research and public service. In many cases, metropolitan pioneers are now sharing their experiences with colleagues in rural areas or in those very stable small towns across America that are the home of many flagship public universities and private liberal arts colleges.

The best known, but not the only catalyst for the national conversation about faculty roles and the faculty reward system, was Ernest Boyer’s influential 1990 monograph, *Scholarship Reconsidered*. With characteristic

breadth of knowledge and provocative wit, Boyer made us reflect on the unintended consequences for higher education of rewarding faculty for research productivity ahead of other professional contributions. Moreover, Boyer helped many of us take the next step in the critique of the system of knowledge dissemination and production we created in the 1960s. Through Boyer's analysis, those of us working at institutions that did reward faculty for teaching and public service came to realize that we, too, used an excessively narrow model to define, assess, and reward faculty contributions. Ernest Lynton, the editor of this journal, long involved in this issue, and a number of campus practitioners — the University of Maryland System's Donald N. Langenberg, the University of North Texas' Blaine Brownell, Wayne State University's Sue Marx Smock and others — then set out to develop new models more appropriate to the mission of metropolitan universities. In a way, the response of these colleagues to Boyer's call for a broader, more generous view of the profession marked the first round of the now much larger national conversation.

A second round began at about the same time, when leaders of elite research universities joined the conversation as well. Although no single catalyst explains their involvement in the conversation, it is surely no accident that during the same period of time, ca. 1990-1992, distinguished educators from the country's best-known and most prestigious institutions spoke out against the neglect of undergraduate teaching, the excesses of specialization and departmental autonomy, and the declining sense of community on their campuses. Harvard University's Derek Bok and Henry Rosovsky, Stanford University's Donald Kennedy, and the University of California's Karl Pister, in particular, contributed to and legitimized an expanding national conversation about faculty work and the need to rethink faculty priorities. Their calls for renewed commitment to undergraduate students and the campus community influenced the outlook of their peers across the country and, perhaps more importantly, the behavior of their colleagues at struggling second- and third-tier research universities.

By 1992, the independent but converging contributions of scholars and practitioners had laid the groundwork for specific initiatives and projects within each sector of higher education and across sectors. Under the leadership of Charles Karelis, the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) understood the significance of the emerging conversation about faculty roles and the faculty reward system. The Fund was instrumental, for instance, in encouraging research-oriented institutions like the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Syracuse University to rethink their promotion and tenure systems and to move — in the words of Nebraska's Bud Narveson and colleagues — from regard to reward in the evaluation of teaching. The Fund also encouraged and supported the involvement of scholarly societies and professional associations in rethinking and redefining the responsibilities of their academic members. Syracuse University's Robert M. Diamond and colleagues played a key role in coordinating this work and disseminating its results. With FIPSE and Lilly Endowment support, they also surveyed faculty attitudes toward teaching and research at hundreds of institutions. Their findings revealed a lack of clarity about the relative importance of teaching and research and a low level of confidence in the appropriateness and fairness of rewards for faculty. At most institutions surveyed, faculty blamed administrators for this unsatisfactory state of affairs, and administrators blamed faculty.

Sector-specific associations, especially the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU), the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the Association of Governing Boards (AGB), and the Council for Independent Colleges, used the findings of pilot projects and surveys to help their

members rethink faculty priorities and the faculty reward system. Each of these associations began to offer seminars, leadership-training workshops, and publications designed to stimulate reflection and introduce changes in faculty work assignments and promotion and tenure criteria. Complementing these initiatives, the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), in cooperation with other associations and with member institutions, encouraged changes in the training and socialization of graduate students planning academic careers.

All of these projects and initiatives have made a contribution to the national conversation and, one hopes, a positive difference on many campuses. But the single most important initiative of the past two years has come from the American Association for Higher Education. Initiated in fall 1992, AAHE's Forum on Faculty Roles and Rewards has built on the work of Ernest Boyer, the questioning of institutional values and priorities that has occurred at elite research universities, the experiments of creative practitioners at comprehensive and regional universities and, last but not least, the thoughtful scholarship of Peter T. Ewell, Ernest Lynton, Eugene Rice, and others. Support from FIPSE and other sources made it possible for the Forum to organize two national conferences on faculty roles and the faculty reward system, with a third conference planned for January 1995 in Phoenix.

Participants from metropolitan universities — typically, teams of faculty leaders and administrators — were very well represented at the national conferences, and currently make up the single largest group on the Forum's mailing list. This is not surprising, given the choice of issues and strategies on the part of AAHE's President Russell Edgerton and colleagues.

In a paper written for the Forum's first national conference at San Antonio, January 1993, and subsequently published in the July/August 1993 issue of *Change*, Edgerton reminded us that our conversation about faculty priorities and the faculty reward system was occurring against a background of ever more intense public scrutiny. It was easy, Edgerton wrote, to dismiss polemical and simplistic portraits of professors as underworked, overpaid parasites on society. It was not easy to explain to legislators and trustees what professors do when they are not in the classroom or otherwise working directly with students. The questions would keep coming, Edgerton wrote, because more and more Americans want access to higher education for themselves or their children, and because they insist on access at the lowest possible cost. Through the Forum, AAHE urged its 8,500 members — faculty leaders and administrators — to realize that the external demands for accountability would not go away and to take action before the probing questions about institutional productivity gave way to heavy-handed regulation.

To assist campus-based agents of change, the Forum sponsored a number of "lines of work." Virginia Commonwealth University's Jon F. Wergin, who served as Interim Forum director in fall 1992, surveyed institutions that were experimenting with new ways of accounting for faculty productivity. At Kent State University, Rochester Institute of Technology, Virginia Polytechnic University and other institutions, the idea behind the experiments was to account for the productivity of units — typically academic departments — rather than trying to measure the productivity of each individual professor.

Wergin and others at AAHE believe that this approach would satisfy the legitimate concerns of legislators and trustees with regard to productivity in higher education, yet would also protect colleges and universities from micromanagement, and allow for differentiated workloads and assignments among faculty members.

AAHE's Patricia Hutchings took on an interesting line of work concerning peer review of teaching. Hutchings and her AAHE colleagues noted the traditional

reluctance of professors to engage in open and public discourse about their teaching even while routinely engaging in such discourse about their research. They noted, as well, that in the culture of our universities, what is not peer reviewed is generally not valued. In collaboration with Stanford University's Lee Shulman, a leading proponent of teaching as "community property," Hutchings identified a dozen universities willing to develop and implement protocols for peer review of teaching.

A third approach, pursued by Ernest Lynton and colleagues, focused on definitions of and rewards for extramural professional service. The premise for this line of work was the same as that behind the peer review of teaching project. Colleagues at metropolitan universities, where extramural professional service is expected of most if not all faculty, have been especially interested in the outcome of this line of work.

Most of the articles in this issue resulted from work sponsored by the Forum on Faculty Roles and Rewards. Ernest Lynton's essay on knowledge and scholarship, a condensed version of much longer pieces he has written on the subject, provides the theoretical framework within which the national conversation about faculty roles and the faculty reward system is taking place. With Boyer's *Scholarship Reconsidered* as a point of departure, Lynton encourages theorists and practitioners alike to go beyond the traditional categories for defining and rewarding faculty work — teaching, research, and service — and to think holistically about faculty work.

Hutchings, Zainaldin, Mellow, and Burgess, in different ways and from different perspectives, make the case against the culture of competition, individualism, and neglect of corporate responsibilities that prevails on many campuses and particularly where career advancement has been linked too strongly to external recognition (in the words of economist Burgess, to external market value) and not strongly enough to internal recognition (internal market value).

The contributions of Fairweather, Diamond, Costello, and Elman offer hope that, given the right set of circumstances, campus leaders trying to break the mold may find powerful allies outside their communities. In a fascinating reversal of past practices, Costello and Elman remind us, accrediting bodies are now ahead of member institutions in advocating more flexible approaches to faculty workloads and rewards. Similarly, most of the scholarly societies which participated in Diamond's collaborative project are now ahead of their rank-and-file members in rethinking professional roles and responsibilities.

Peter Ewell's essay, originally commissioned for the AAHE Forum's second national conference in New Orleans, January 1994, sums up poignantly the continuing miscommunication — and indeed the lack of common discourse — between campus leaders and external critics of higher education about fundamental issues of accountability and public policy. The opinion pieces of Maynard Mack of the University of Maryland, College Park, Ivan Legg of Memphis State University, and Carl Patton of Georgia State University, provide an appropriate counterpoint to Ewell's essay. Campus practitioners with first-hand knowledge of the communication gap between higher education and its critics, Mack, Legg and Patton do not offer easy solutions or panaceas. Mack, from the perspective of a strongly research-oriented institution, asks us "to examine with utter honesty how well we are serving civilization." Legg and Patton offer evidence that metropolitan universities are well equipped to lead a movement of change and renewal that started with a national conversation about faculty priorities, and is now progressing from reflection and words to action.