

Reorganizing and Realigning Departments

Universities with strong tradition of teaching which are dubbed teaching intuitions are faced with the need to change and include much more research in their faculty portfolio. This is most necessary for 21 century education due to several factors. Prime among these are dwindling state dollars to support teaching education. Therefore, they are forced to consider other means to support faculty salary thus allowing faculty to remain on board. The paradigm shift that is needed is for faculty to develop superior grants acquisition ability by serving on proposal review panels, attending proposal writing workshop and serving as program officers in agencies that fund grants. Another difficulty that has to be overcome is the heavy teaching loads that these faculty are subjected to. It does not allow for much of the above mentioned.

In such institutions, like ours, there is maybe one College where faculty have split appointment and have competitive research grants and projects. The question is how do we change the culture of the Institution and make this be the rule rather than the exception. I propose the we need to reorganize the whole University and align Departments that are appropriate and have a tradition of teaching but no research with those that have been successful in acquiring grants. The main point here is to form teams of researchers consisting of able grants-men with a track record of success and neophytes. They would seek funding together but allow the able grants-men with the best record to serve as the PI. With this approach, once such teams are developed and are successful, the faculty who were inexperienced in acquiring funds can eventually become PI in future grants acquisition attempts. With such a cascading effect, over time the Institution in general will eventually change and a culture of research and scholarship will ensue.

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