

**DRAFT**  
**A Proposal to**  
**Strengthen Faculty Success**  
**at**  
**South Dakota State University**  
**June, 2010**

South Dakota State University and its individual faculty members have a joint responsibility to strengthen the role and contributions of faculty to the mission of the institution. It is the responsibility of the University to recruit and retain the highest quality faculty possible, create an environment in which success is achievable and provide mentoring and evaluative feedback in a timely fashion. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to document his/her performance achievement and to perform at a level consistent with or above the expectations of his/her department based on an agreed upon set of standards.

This paper is divided into four components. Part A addresses faculty recruitment while Part B addresses SDSU's commitment to retaining faculty by fostering an academic environment conducive to excellence in the faculty role. Part C addresses ways the institution can strengthen the guidance and feedback provided to faculty as they pursue their academic career. Specific to these components are the various documents and processes employed to both develop expectations for success in the faculty role and to fairly evaluate the faculty member's performance in his/her role. The final component, Part D, addresses ways in which the University can strengthen evaluation of the faculty role. Specifically, this section addresses expectations in the three dominant roles: teaching/advising, scholarship, and service.

The ultimate goal is to guide and strengthen faculty success at SDSU. When successful, the institution will also realize a more open and transparent process, strong faculty hires, high levels of excellence in all three roles, and instructive feedback to faculty as they embark upon, and move through their career.

## **Part A: Strengthening Faculty Recruitment & Selection**

It can justifiably be argued that the hiring of faculty members is the most important decision that a University makes. The quality of hiring decisions may well impact the success of the department and its programs for 30 or more years. Thus, recruiting the highest quality faculty is the cornerstone of efforts to strengthen the faculty role at any University. In recognition of the significance of this decision and the competitive nature of the hiring process, SDSU is committed to:

- Make adequate resources available for the recruitment process to include position advertisement and announcements in discipline appropriate venues.
- Begin searches early in the recruitment cycle and coach search committees on an aggressive strategy to recruit strong pools.
- Provide training to each search committee at the onset of the search process on issues related to diversity, compliance, and best practices for conducting a search, forms and processes.
- Eliminate unnecessary delays in hiring procedures to expedite hiring decisions and offers of employment.
- Conduct searches that promote diversity, equal opportunity, and innovative approaches.
- Provide salary offers that are competitive and attractive yet equitable to current employees (90% of the Oklahoma study will be seen as a minimum and in some cases it may be necessary to offer up to 100% of Oklahoma), as well as opportunities for salary negotiation where appropriate.
- Provide relocation assistance and start up packages for all new tenure track faculty positions that are competitive and discipline and assignment appropriate.
- Assist with spousal/partner employment opportunities and networking.

Resourcing these activities and initiatives will require a partnership between the department, college, and the university and may require other sources of funding.

## **Part B: The University's Commitment to Strengthening the Academic Environment for Faculty Success**

New faculty should be expected to arrive with the knowledge base, motivation and enthusiasm required for success. However, their preparation may not have included all tools, background, and experience necessary for navigating the faculty role. In addition, established faculty may be required to take on new roles as a result of changing needs and opportunities of the institution, or changes in the nature and role of their discipline. Together, these challenges may impact faculty retention and success. To help faculty start strong and be successful in their faculty role, SDSU will provide:

- Inclusive, relevant faculty orientation programs.
- Clearly stated assignments and standards as delineated in the letter of offer and departmental standards document. (HR will need to include this language in their letter of offer samples).
- Access to an experienced, successful faculty mentor who may or may not be the department head.
- On and off campus faculty development opportunities, part of which may be included in a start up package.
- Professional activity assignments conducive to meeting expectations for promotion and tenure.

- Access to a full service Teaching and Learning Center for professional development and/or individualized assistance in the teaching role.
- Effective support for grant writing and other scholarly activities to help enable faculty to compete for additional support for research, scholarship and creative activity efforts.
- Financial support for redirection/retraining activities when significant changes in a faculty member's assignment results from new opportunities, initiatives or changing needs.
- Opportunities for leadership development to coach and train faculty interested in administrative or other leadership positions.
- BOR approved salary increases through a process reflective of performance.

Resourcing these activities and initiatives will require a partnership among the faculty member, the department, college and university and may require other sources of funding.

## **Part C: Strengthening Guidance and Feedback to Faculty**

Faculty will be most successful when strong guidance and feedback are provided by peers, department head and/or dean at timely intervals during one's career. Guidance, mentoring and feedback are especially critical during the formative stages of one's career. However, even after major milestones are achieved such as tenure and promotion, guidance and feedback are important in order to understand areas of strength and/or areas for strengthening, alignment of one's efforts with the strategic direction of the university, and to access professional development and renewal opportunities at appropriate junctures throughout one's career.

No single process or document can achieve a comprehensive system of guidance and feedback. This section outlines a robust plan which brings together several processes/documents to be used at various stages in one's career.

### **I. Professional Development Plan (PDP)**

The [Professional Development Plan](#) should provide a strong road map for faculty to guide their actions and outcomes as they pursue their role and as they move toward, and through tenure and promotion processes. It should also be a road map to faculty in annual evaluations for merit salary increases. Paramount is the need to convey high expectations and to state outcomes in such a way that achievement is clearly understood and measurable. In developing Professional Development Plans, the following must be deliberated by faculty and administration:

- Assistance shall be provided to faculty by the department head and dean to include providing feedback on drafts until a strong PDP is developed. Included in this assistance may be access to good examples from other faculty members.

- The PDP should list specific and measurable outcomes, and should not simply list assignments. Vague outcomes (e.g. “I will conduct research”) are not measurable and should be revised so they can be documented when one has achieved the outcome (“I will have an active scholarly program which will yield 1 refereed publication per year and 1 conference presentation every other year.”).
- Annual feedback on progress toward meeting the objectives stated in the PDP must be offered to faculty members.
- Revisions are made by faculty as appropriate if his/her role changes.
- PDP’s must be kept relevant so they can be used in an on-going fashion.
- Consideration must be given to the culminating review such as third year review, tenure and/or promotion, or post-tenure review. The question one must ask is, “when successfully implemented, will this professional development plan ensure a positive (culminating) review?”

## II. Annual Evaluation (PSE)

The [Professional Staff Evaluation \(PSE\)](#) process is an annual review of the faculty member’s progress in his/her role. It is an opportune time to review the PDP and provide feedback as to progress on goals/objectives outlined in the PDP. The use of the Departmental Standard’s Document provides benchmarks for faculty and administrators on expected levels of achievement to meet, exceed or substantially exceed expectations in each role and at each rank. Standards Documents should be developed by faculty and approved by the Department head, Dean and university-level committee. It is very important that Standard’s Documents lay out high levels of expectations for faculty so that they can be successful in the tenure and promotion process. Low expectations should not be included in a Standard’s Document because these will not be recognized as sufficient to achieve tenure and promotion. Given this, SDSU will:

- Revisit all Standard’s Documents in the next year (2010-2011) to ensure that expectations are sufficiently high in all roles, and particularly in scholarship/research/creative activities. In the process of doing so, a comparison of standards (by discipline) to relevant peers should be conducted to determine if SDSU is comparable in terms of expectations for tenure and promotion.
- Refrain from the use of course overloads for tenured and tenure-track faculty and instead utilize other employment strategies such as adjunct, term contract (part or full time), and graduate assistantships because assigning course overloads to tenure-track and tenured faculty can have long-term negative consequences to faculty career success.

## III. Third-Year Review

The purpose of the [third-year review](#) is to assist tenure-track faculty (and continuing term contract clinical faculty who typically are considered for promotion (for example, clinical faculty in the College of Pharmacy) in assessing their progress toward tenure midway through the tenure eligibility period. The

review is for advisory purposes only and is to be a constructive, developmental evaluation. If used appropriately, feedback can be instrumental to successfully achieving tenure and promotion. SDSU will:

- Implement a third-year review process to begin as a pilot in 2010-2011 for all tenure-track faculty who are in their third year beginning in 2011-2012.
- Develop a task force to review third-year review processes at peer institutions.
- Propose a third-year review process for SDSU and evaluate the third-year review process using appropriate governance bodies such as Faculty Senate, University Management team, Dean's Council, etc.

#### **IV. Tenure and Promotion to Associate Professor 2010-2011 Tenure and Promotion Criteria and Guidelines**

Similar to hiring, decisions to award tenure and to promote faculty members are among the most important made by the University because they determine the quality of faculty for years to come. Tenure should be granted to a faculty member when it is in the best interest of South Dakota State University to do so.

Tenure and promotion to Associate Professor is a major milestone in one's academic career. Granting tenure is a significant commitment by the institution to a faculty member and the outcome of this process greatly influences a faculty member's long-term commitment to the institution. Therefore, SDSU will:

- Wherever feasible, encourage the peer review process to begin at the department level.
- Improve the external peer review of the tenure dossier (require a minimum of four letters and a maximum of six letters; include actual letters in the dossier rather than summaries; and revise the external review process so as to ensure anonymity of reviewers).
- Revise Tenure and Promotion guidelines to include a standardized content outline, personal statement including context of role and responsibilities, actual copies of external letters, departmental standards document, Part B of PSE from prior years, professional development plan, and other appropriate supporting documentation.
- Strengthen tenure and promotion committee composition at department, college and university levels. For example, committee composition should be faculty members who have themselves been successful in the tenure and promotion process. Faculty should not evaluate others for a rank which they themselves have not achieved.
- Provide training for department heads and deans in:
  - expanding the methods/strategies for assessing teaching;
  - fairly but rigorously evaluating productivity in all three roles using the professional development plan and (if appropriate) feedback from third year review, and with consideration given to assignment and discipline; and
  - accurately reporting percentages of assigned time on routing form.

- Provide training sessions for faculty in preparing their third-year review, tenure, promotion or post-promotion review dossier.
- Provide orientation for tenure and promotion committee members to ensure accurate interpretation of expectations and standards, and consistency and fairness in the process.

## **V. Promotion to full Professor**

Promotion to full Professor should only be awarded to those faculty members who have clearly demonstrated leadership through significant accomplishments and contributions to their discipline. The candidate must prove that he/she is a leading scholar and teacher or provider of public service in accordance with assigned responsibilities. In making a recommendation to full Professor, those reviewing the application must determine that since the last promotion, the candidate has made contributions of significance and demonstrates independence and quality in teaching, scholarship and specific and/or general service. Achieving full Professor rank requires consideration of performance in all three roles: teaching, research/scholarship, and service. While equal weight need not be given to all three roles, full Professors are expected to clearly demonstrate excellence in at least two, if not all three roles. It would be extremely rare to award promotion to full Professor rank if excellence is demonstrated in only one role. Ideally, to achieve full Professor one can demonstrate national reputation or stature. Therefore, SDSU will:

- Increase standards and expectations for promotion to full Professor; placing greater emphasis on criteria such as leadership to one's discipline/university, independence in accomplishments, and national or international stature.
- Ensure that promotion to full Professor is based on merit and must be earned based on significant accomplishments since the last promotion or hiring (if hired as an Associate Professor). Should any doubt remain at any level of review, it is expected that those reviewing promotion materials recommend further time and effort be given to achieve the rank of full Professor versus granting the rank prematurely.
- Recognize that to achieve this rank one must realize that near-full potential has been realized in his/her professional role and the documented outcomes clearly support this fact.
- Strengthen the peer review process for promotion to full Professor including the implementation of internal review committees and peer critique through external letters.
- Request review committees to assess promise of continued and sustained productivity.

## **VI. Post-tenure review**

Tenure is a mutual relationship and has consequences of long life and great magnitude. Faculty members expect continuous employment and institutional commitment to their roles, while the institution expects continued professional growth and ongoing productivity in all roles. Subsequent to the award of tenure, the performance review of a faculty member provides a mechanism to gauge the productivity of the individual and should be designed to encourage a high level of sustained performance. It is important to note that the post-tenure review must be conducted in a

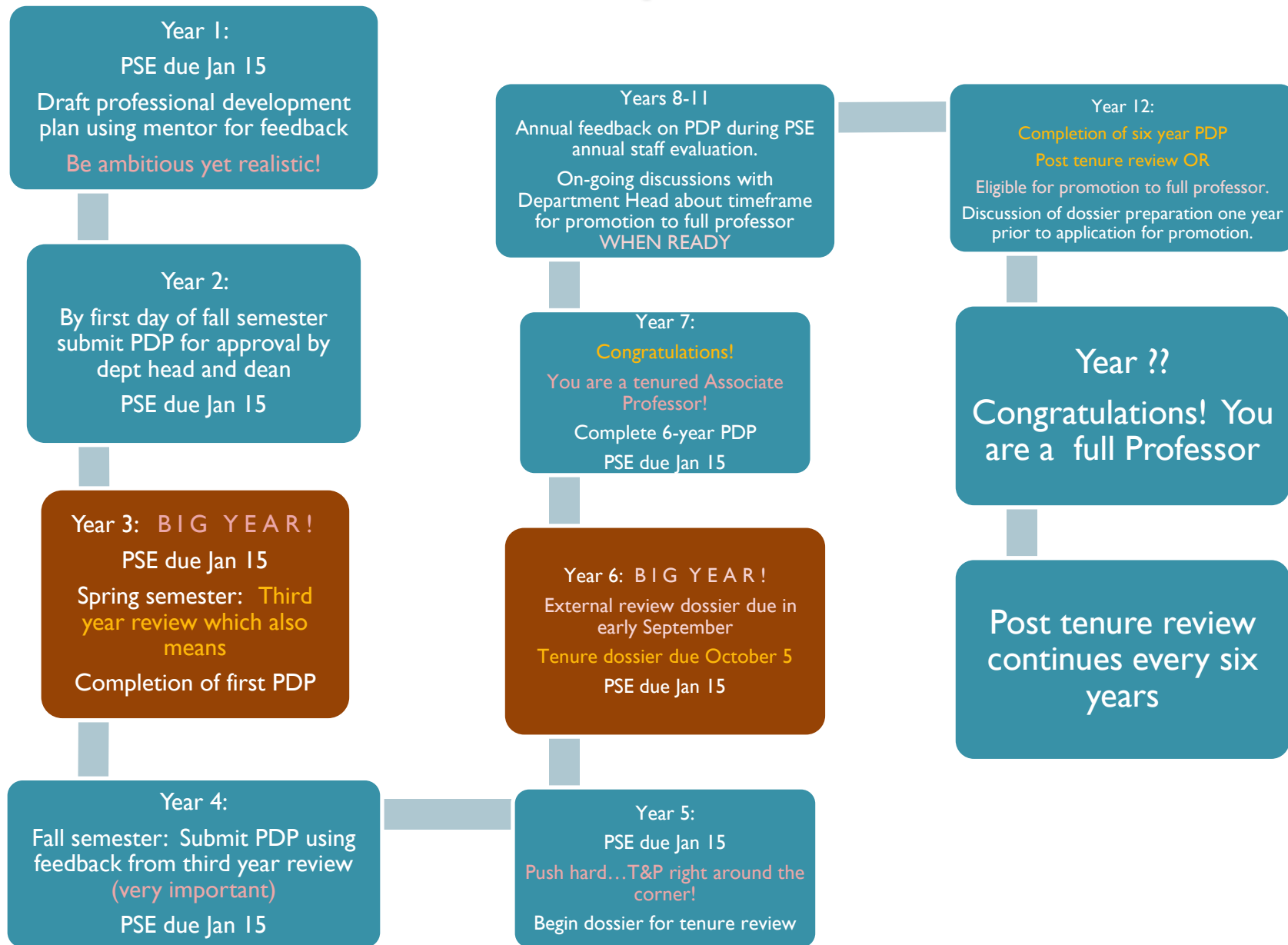
manner that protects academic freedom and quality of education, and this process is not a reevaluation of tenure nor is it a process to show cause for dismissal (AAUP, 2010). Rather post-tenure review provides a comprehensive, cumulative written assessment of one's work since the granting of tenure or since the last review.

Post-tenure review should be thought of as a substantive review to evaluate the results of the six-year PDP and provide input in creating the next six-year PDP. Post-tenure review can also be a time to reaffirm the institution's commitment to the faculty member by reinvesting in him/her through professional development opportunities such as sabbatical leave, leadership development programs, fellowships, and/or other forms of professional renewal.

Thus, the purposes of post-tenure review are: 1) to facilitate continued faculty development, consistent with the academic needs and goals of the University and effective use of institution resources; and, 2) to ensure professional accountability by a regular, comprehensive evaluation of every tenured faculty member's performance. Subsequently, SDSU will implement the following:

- The post-tenure review will be undertaken every six years following tenure or the last review and at the conclusion of the six-year PDP. Post-tenure review will be waived, however, for any faculty member who notifies the department head and dean in writing of his/her intent to retire or resign within two years of the next scheduled review. An extension may be granted at the discretion of the dean when circumstances place an undue burden (e.g. health issues, family emergency or military duty would be examples) on the faculty member and/or department to complete the review during the sixth year.
- Wherever possible, post-tenure review should be linked to professional development opportunities at SDSU (e.g. sabbatical, nomination for leadership development programs, fellowships, etc.), professional recognition (e.g. award nominations, distinguished professor nomination), expanded responsibilities (e.g. coordinator role, campus governance leadership position, administrative role, etc.), or other types of faculty renewal opportunities.
- Post-tenure review will "piggy back" on the annual PSE process and thus, separate processes will not be necessary in that given year.
- The University will develop specific procedures for the post-tenure review. The procedures shall include the composition of the peer review committee and a procedure to select the committee, dossier content, expectations for written assessment by the peer review committee, role of department head and dean, and feedback/communication of results of the post-tenure review to appropriate individuals including the faculty member and university administration.

# Road Map to Success





## Part D: Strengthening Evaluation of the Faculty Role

To be most effective, evaluation of various faculty roles should be thought of as both formative and summative. Formative evaluation occurs during the implementation of one's role, for example mid-point or mid-course, and can provide valuable feedback to strengthen or improve one's performance. Summative evaluation occurs at the conclusion of one's role (e.g. at the end of the course or the end of one's research project) and examines the effects or outcomes of this role.

### I. Teaching & Academic Advising

Teaching is a complex and multifaceted activity. The current COHE contract ([Appendix G](#)) provides an excellent orientation to teaching expectations for a faculty member. To facilitate the evaluation of their teaching, faculty should describe and document multiple aspects of their teaching ability, often referred to as a teaching portfolio. All faculty should include the following items in their annual professional staff evaluation's self-assessment of their teaching accomplishments:

- A statement of the faculty member's approach to teaching and learning specifically addressing how he/she gauges the level of student learning.
- A list of courses taught during the review period, the number of credits for each course (for labs, studios and clinical, contact hours), and the number of students enrolled per course.
- Student evaluations ([IDEA survey](#)) with some indication of improvement over time so as to reach an optimal level of teaching excellence.

Because no single tool can adequately assess instructional performance, evaluation of this role requires multiple measures to ensure that a comprehensive, fair and just evaluation is used. It is expected that those in direct supervisory positions will employ a minimum of at least two (2) other strategies/techniques beyond the IDEA survey to evaluate teaching performance. Materials appropriate for evaluation of teaching can be taken from a list of possibilities that are frequently used and accepted in higher education. Evidence can stem from one of four sources: the instructor, other professionals, students, or student learning. Examples of measures include but are not limited to:

#### Evidence from the instructor:

- Review of course syllabi and materials.
- Evidence of successful innovation including use of technology or other innovative teaching strategies.
- Video tape of teaching.
- Contributions to teaching that extend beyond the classroom.

#### Evidence from Other Professionals:

- Peer observation in the classroom.
- Department head/supervisor observation in the classroom.

Evidence from Students:

- Feedback from students either through focused interviews or questionnaires with established procedures or student letters (established procedures for inviting letters).
- Feedback from recent alumni.

Evidence of Student Learning:

- Review of student work samples.
- Student learning as evidenced through program accreditation findings, licensure or registration exams, entrance exams, or other types of objective evidence of student learning.

Other outcomes or evidences of teaching and learning as appropriate

The combination of the three required components (first three bullets in Part D), along with at least two other measures provides a robust portfolio of feedback and outcomes related to one's teaching.

**Academic Advising**

Advising is an important component of the instructional role as the advisor/student relationship is one where students can gain advice, academic information, and more fully achieve their educational goals. Evaluation of academic advising outcomes should include:

- Number of students advised at both the undergraduate and graduates levels.
- Thesis or dissertation advising as major advisor or committee member (please specify your role).
- Honors student thesis advising.
- Undergraduate research advising.
- Internship assistance with placement, advising/supervision, fulfilling requirements, etc.
- Other mentoring activities such as application preparation for graduate school or nationally competitive scholarships, serving as a reference, assisting with career placement needs, etc.
- Academic advising improvement such as improved communication with advisees, new methods of academic advising, timely intervention on academic performance issues, etc.
- Other academic advising outcomes.

## **II. Scholarship**

Scholarship and creative activity includes both activity and product or outcomes, and employs dynamically interacting processes of discovery and creation, teaching and dissemination, engagement and application, and integration (Boyer, 1990). Products or outcomes developed through these processes are public, open to peer critique, and available for use by others.

Per the current COHE contract, all faculty are expected to engage in scholarly activities ([Appendix G](#) - Statement Concerning Faculty Expectations). Faculty members are not exempt from this role due to teaching assignment and/or overload. In the Scholarship and Creative Activity section of [Appendix G](#),

please read....”The mission of a university requires of each faculty unit member a serious commitment to scholarship.” However, the assignment of each faculty member should be taken into consideration when evaluating how well the scholarly role was carried out. It is expected that assignment will influence “how much” or “what types” of scholarship one might expect. It is important to consider a full array of scholarly outcomes including those that directly relate to the teaching role and to securing funding to support one’s research/scholarly work. The key to scholarly dissemination is that there is a peer critique component and the information is disseminated to a broader audience, typically through a conference paper, some type of publication, or an exhibition or performance. Other forms of scholarly work may yield patents, inventions, grants, or national recognition (COHE contract, [Appendix G](#) – Scholarship and Creative Activity section). Attending a conference is NOT scholarship but presenting one’s research/scholarship at a conference is. Scholarship includes but is not limited to:

- Publishing peer reviewed journal articles or other scholarly writing.
- Exhibiting through a juried (peer) reviewed process.
- Creative performances with public critique.
- Presenting peer reviewed conference papers.
- Publishing peer-reviewed books or monographs.
- Disseminating peer reviewed scholarship of teaching and learning (this can include curriculum development, teaching strategies/techniques, assessment, innovations in learning approaches, etc.).
- Receiving peer reviewed grant awards or industry grants awarded due to reputation and expertise of faculty member.

### **III. Service**

Service at SDSU is typically divided into “Specific Service” related to one’s appointment such as Extension, librarian, service labs, or other service-oriented positions, and “General Service” which includes service to the university (program, department, college, and university), service to one’s profession, and service to the broader community.

Cooperative Extension and other professional service centers/labs fulfill SDSU’s land grant mission by providing professional expertise and disseminating information to benefit society. Specific service such as these shall be addressed in one’s assignment and includes specific outcomes identified in the unit’s Standard’s Document and in one’s Professional Development Plan.

General Service is expected of all faculty. General Service does not imply merely attending departmental or college meetings or membership in professional association(s), but includes involvement in faculty governance such as serving on and providing leadership to committees, task forces, or representing one’s peers on Faculty Senate. Likewise, service can be to one’s profession such as serving on committees or providing leadership through elected office. Professional service to the broader community implies the use of one’s expertise and refers to work that draws upon one’s professional expertise and/or is an outgrowth of one’s academic discipline. Service activities:

- Should focus on outcomes of service rather than simply an extensive list of many service activities. Service should carry the most weight when the outcomes of the service are significant---such as when the faculty member is contributing substantively to faculty governance on campus.
- May include assignments such as coordinator of a program, activity or role (e.g. research).
- Typically includes Extension (as mentioned, this is “specific service”).
- Include other types of outreach such as recruitment, K-12 linkages, involvement with one’s industry/profession at the local, state or national levels, etc.
- Raise the profile and status of SDSU.
- Contribute to the development of one’s profession.

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