

Management Discipline's Role In Higher Education In The 21st Century: It's Time To Redefine Faculty Performance Expectations

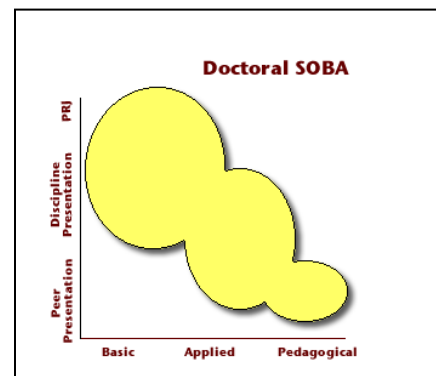
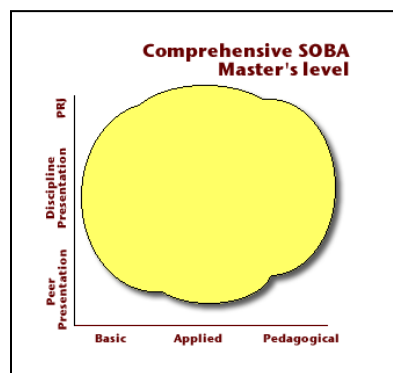
Eric J. Romero, (E-mail: ericromero@panam.edu), University Of Texas, Pan American
David L. Sturges, (E-mail: dsturges@panam.edu), University Of Texas, Pan American

ABSTRACT

This paper critiques the traditional evaluation model for management faculty which has an over-emphasis on publications. This model leads to irrelevant of intellectual contributions and minimal impact on management practice. We propose a new evaluation model for management scholars that improves the quality of intellectual contributions and the impact on management practice.

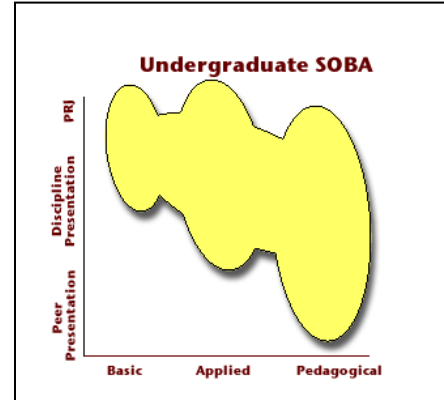
The debate about the role and expectation of intellectual contribution by faculty in U.S. Business Schools has raged significantly since the early 1990s when an upsurge of resistance to traditional models of research production held by the American Association of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) as an accreditation criterion led to the initiation of the Association of College Schools of Business and Programs (ACSBP). Although the research production expectations were not acknowledged as the only AACSB criterion leading to enough dissatisfaction among non-AACSB accredited business schools that a new accrediting body was called for, it was among the most prominent of concerns.

In response to the accreditation competition, the AACSB revamped its standards in the early 1990s with the intent to open accreditation criteria to "Mission" related activities, as illustrated in these figures. This was an effort to adjust accreditation criteria to allow more business schools in the U.S. and the rest of the world to achieve accreditation through AACSB. The new standards

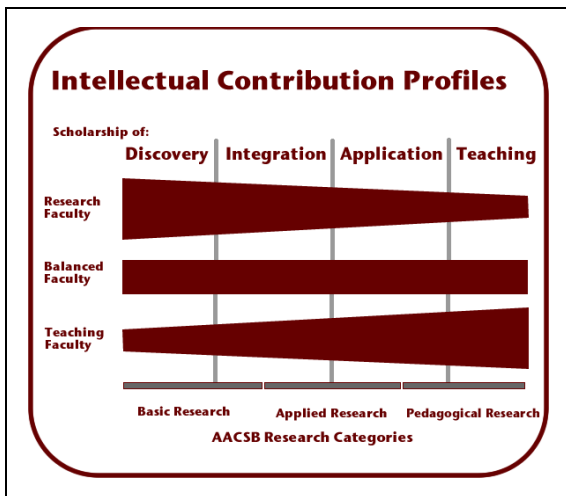


made an attempt to redefine intellectual contribution to broaden its interpretation leading to a broader set of categories to establish creditable intellectual contribution records for all types of business programs, including those at colleges and universities defining their mission as "liberal arts tradition" or "teaching institutions." The standards defined intellectual contribution in terms of "basic research," "applied research," and "pedagogical research."

“Basic Research” was defined as the “creation of new knowledge.” (AACSB, 1993, p12). “Applied Research” was defined as the research of practice. And “Pedagogical Research” was defined as inquiry into more effective and efficient methods and techniques of transmission of discipline information and understanding to learning groups—students, professionals, and general community. In addition, the portfolio approach associated intellectual contribution outlets that were more in line with the type of research, again depending on the school’s mission. The outlets ranged from refereed journal outlets (RJ) to discipline related presentations and proceedings, and peer presentations such as local university faculty development presentations. This typology allowed faculty who defined themselves as “teaching faculty” to achieve intellectual contribution by publishing their teaching innovations in pedagogical outlets. No longer was peer reviewed “basic research” the only recognized publication productivity in U.S. business schools. In fact, the AACSB standard called for an evaluation of a business school’s intellectual contribution “portfolio” based on the school’s mission. A mission that includes doctoral education should result in a portfolio more heavily weighted to “basic research.” A school with masters degree as the primary graduate degree had a portfolio with “Applied Research” as an emphasis. And a school with undergraduate education as its primary mission component would have a significant contribution to “pedagogical research.” According to interpretations of the standards, expectations were not based on eliminating responsibility for a specific category from a school’s portfolio based on its mission. Rather, the three categories were expected to be distributed in slightly different profiles depending on the school’s mission.



In the early 2000s, AACSB again revamped the standards for accreditation, changed the name of the association, and made an attempt to achieve broader adoption of the portfolio approach than was being seen in accreditation reviews. This change is perceived to be motivated by a move to include international membership in the association and, eventually, accreditation, with the realization that academic philosophies toward business research are different outside the U.S.



As AACSB redefined its definition of “research productivity” or “intellectual contribution,” a movement in the academic community began to broach the idea of even more radical redefinition of intellectual contribution as foundation of the definition of “scholarship,” which was perceived to be a fundamental element of the higher education philosophy of learning and teaching. In the 1990s, Boyer published the seminal work, “Scholarship Reconsidered.” Boyer’s concepts have been adopted, or at least given lip service by higher education administrators, as a reasonable and relevant view of research expectations.

Boyer suggests defining research into four categories of scholarship: the Scholarship of Discovery, the Scholarship of Integration, The Scholarship of Application, and the Scholarship of Teaching. Boyer carefully distinguishes between the categories in broad descriptive

terms in an attempt to include all academic disciplines within the structure. For example, he defines Scholarship of Discovery as “research for its own sake” (Boyer, 1990, p17). This is a category of research that probably has greater significance in the sciences than in professional schools such as business or law. Learning what happens when a test tube of one thing is dumped into a test tube of another is in this category. Business and management issues are not so clearly parsed into minute variables that can be mixed in a controlled environment just to see what happens.

Reviewing the AACSB revamped view and the Boyer categories, a picture begins to emerge regarding the overall intellectual contribution efforts of business school faculty. Figure 1 shows a depiction of the relationships between Boyer’s and AACSB’s typologies. For example, the emphasis on much business research to suggest managerial implications creates a product as Basic Research that is a cross over between what Boyer refers to as Discovery and Integration. Similarly, AACSB’s Applied Research bridges Boyer’s Integration and Application. Lastly, Pedagogical Research bridges Boyer’s Application and Teaching Scholarships.

<p>Professional Service Intellectual Contribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technology Transfer• Technical Assistance• Policy Analysis• Program Evaluation• Organizational Development• Community Development• Program Development• Professional Development• Expert Testimony• Public Information <p>Lynton, 1995</p>
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In addition to the new definitions of scholarship and professional service should be reviewed for its potential role in intellectual contribution evaluation. Lynton’s seminal work on professional service defines it as “work based on the faculty member’s professional expertise that contributes to the mission of the institution” (Lynton, 1995, p17). Interpretation of this definition expressly excludes institutional citizenship (university committees), disciplinary citizenship (to the academic discipline), and community citizenship (being a good citizen). Therefore, the faculty activities meeting these criteria involve: (1) technology transfer, (2) technical assistance, (3) policy analysis, (4) program evaluation, (5) organizational development, (6) community development, (7) program development, (8) professional development, (9) expert testimony, and (10) public information (Lynton, 1995 p17).

This definition of professional service is distinct from traditional views in academia, which tend to lump this category with the practice of institutional citizenship as an evaluation criterion. However, as more and more schools of business seek the AACSB accreditation, this view of professional service and its underlying intellectual contribution should gain a greater role as fulfillment of some of the mission objectives. Review of the professional service role of universities reveals an overlap of Boyer’s categories of Integration, Application and Teaching Intellectual Contribution. Further, this view of professional service is very much included in the AACSB categories of Applied and Pedagogical intellectual contribution (Lynton, 1995, p 19).

Some institutions, such as the University of Michigan, the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign have embraced this view and have begun to redefine faculty responsibility expectations based on internally and externally targeted audiences (Lynton, 1995, p 19). As the public perception of accountability rises, particularly for publicly supported institutions, then the evaluation of faculty performance must take on a greater component of professional service and the application of intellectual contribution to the accomplishment of mission objectives to external target audiences.

THE CHALLENGE

The challenge for academic institutions in the U.S. in the 21st Century is to capture this modified view of the job of the professorate into operational definitions and assessment applications that clearly guide faculty performance expectations in directions that serve the individual professor as a professional academic and contribute to organizational goals and objectives set to ensure the relevance of the academic unit in the culture, society and the economy. This paper focuses on the problems associated with the use of traditional and stereotypical views of “publication” as the main factor in making tenure and promotion decisions. This traditional evaluation practice often leads academics to focus on quantity of publications rather than on the quality and relevance of their intellectual contribution. The result is frequently irrelevant and unimportant research, publication or intellectual contribution. Donald Kennedy, president of Stanford University in 1991, made the following statement when addressing his faculty:

Significant changes in the process of appointment and promotion are needed, so as to decrease the pressure on quantity (not quality) of research production....we can agree that the quantitative use of research output as a criterion for appointment or promotion is a bankrupt idea. The over production of scholarship is one of the most egregious aspects of contemporary academic life: It tends to conceal really important work by its sheer volume: it wastes time and valuable resources (Anderson 1996, p84).

The time and resources used to produce irrelevant research could be used more effectively on teaching, consulting activities, community service and relevant intellectual contribution.

In the field of management, millions of dollars are spent producing intellectual contribution, most of which is never used by business practitioners or anyone else. Scott Cowen, Dean of the School of Management at Case Western Reserve University, estimates that “as much as 80 percent of management research may be irrelevant,” and wonders “if the majority of it is of any significant value to executives in terms of influencing their daily actions, behaviors or business practices” (Anderson 1996, p98-99). The Dean of Dartmouth’s Amos Tuck School of Business Administration indicates that, “a lot of what passes for research has no value.” Richard West, Dean of New York University’s graduate school of business said in October of 1990, “the writing in these academic journals is often crap. They say nothing in these articles and they say it in a pretentious way. If I wasn’t the dean of this school, I’d be writing a book on the bankruptcy of American management education” (Anderson 1996, p98-99).

The field of management was created to solve management problems and to promote the development of useful theories. Bausell (1994) defines meaningful intellectual contribution as having “the potential of actually helping people and improving the human condition.” Too much management intellectual contribution fails to meet this definition. According to Anderson (1996) “most academic intellectuals have a degree of contempt for those professional intellectuals who write for money, referring to such efforts as “popular” writing, with the word popular implying work that can be comprehended by the general public and that of a lower order of intellect.” He also said, “The men and women who write for and speak to huge, important audiences have only a fraction of the status enjoyed by their academic brothers and sisters who write for and speak to small, select audiences.” This situation needs to be reformed. The applicability of current intellectual contribution would be enhanced if it focused on current management problems and if it were made more accessible and readable for a larger portion of the population.

THE NEW FACULTY PERFORMANCE MODEL

The main solution to the irrelevant intellectual contribution problem is to use other factors to evaluate faculty performance in tenure and promotion decisions rather than merely focus on the number of publications. This suggestion means that many institutions will have to redefine their faculty performance expectations as have the UNC-Chapel Hill, the University of Michigan, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Lynton, 1995 p 21). More real world problems could be solved and the field could be developed further if more universities used a variety of evaluation factors. What follows are some suggestions for a new evaluation model and a new direction for management educators.

Intensify The Emphasis On Teaching

The trend toward placing increased emphasis on teaching should continue. Universities exist not only to create knowledge but also to disseminate knowledge. Teaching should be a major, not a minor, role for university faculty. This being the case, teaching skills should factor heavily in tenure and promotion decisions. Focusing on teaching encourages faculty to spend less time on unnecessary intellectual contribution. Under the new model, teaching is not limited to the concept of a faculty member standing in front of seated horde of students and merely regurgitating information taken from a book. Teaching, as a performance evaluation component, should be based on Lynton’s concept of Professional Service and Boyer’s concepts of Pedagogical and Teaching categories of intellectual contribution.

In this application, the intellectual contribution or scholarly activity includes the dissemination of new information to students, as well as the innovation of methods to improve student-learning experiences. This makes intellectual contribution to internal or external audiences regarding teaching content or methods a significant scholarly activity that deserves emphasis as a part of the faculty responsibility expectation.

Unfortunately, the field of management is not at this stage yet. Frederick Long of Ohio State indicates that “the bottom line is that teaching has to be only acceptable.” According to Lederman & Mooney (1995) “There’s stuff done to show the public that we are making [teaching] efforts...but when shoved against the wall, its research that’s central.” Most universities still have a long way to go in regard to emphasizing the importance of teaching.

Encourage Practitioner Oriented Lectures And Seminars

Providing more lectures and seminars for business practitioners would also lead to the creation of relevant intellectual contribution. These modes of teaching provide interaction with managers and therefore give academics a realistic sense of what practitioners really need in terms of solutions. Applicable intellectual contribution would likely be pursued as a result of increased interaction with executives and managers. Such intellectual contribution would improve the school’s reputation for the same reason that consulting would. Practitioners would recognize the school and its faculty as a major source of novel ideas and creative solutions. Such lectures and seminars are a source of significant income for universities, which in turn could provide higher pay for professors, scholarships for students, and other pressing needs. Everyone would benefit if more schools utilized executive seminars and lectures to meet tenure and promotion requirements.

Practitioner Oriented Publications

Accepting practitioner-oriented publications for tenure and promotion requirements would reduce irrelevant intellectual contribution and enhance the effectiveness of the field by reaching a wider audience. Since many managers read periodicals such as Business Week, Forbes, Fortune, and The Economist, articles in these publications should apply toward tenure and promotion requirements. While some universities consider practitioner-oriented publications in tenure and promotion decisions, most universities do not. Giving faculty credit for these kinds of publications would increase the amount of intellectual contribution that is used by practitioners in solving real world problems. It would also encourage the production of relevant intellectual contribution since the editors of these publications are unlikely to publish articles that are not useable by their readers.

Encourage Consulting

Consulting is something that is rather common for business professors. It is usually something that they do to supplement their income so it is not part of their academic duties. At many universities, consulting experience, no matter how important, is not recognized for tenure and promotion review purposes. Considering consulting experience in tenure and promotion reviews would lead to relevant intellectual contribution. Consulting allows faculty to have direct interaction with practitioners and it gives them a better understanding of what problems managers are facing. It is also an effective way for researchers to generate applied intellectual contribution questions. Another benefit of consulting is that a university’s reputation can be improved as a result of increased consulting if the faculty of that school become recognized as experts in solving real business problems. Harvard is a good example of a school that is prominent, in part, because of the consulting activities of its faculty. Consulting also provides a source of more current and useful material that can be integrated into classroom material. Both the intellectual contribution and teaching components of an academic’s role can be enhanced if more universities were to encourage consulting and use it for promotion and tenure purposes.

Implement Relevant Intellectual Contribution Guidelines

One of the primary concerns for most tenured-track faculty members is getting tenure. In many schools, the main requirement to achieve this goal is numerous publications in academic journals. According to Lederman & Mooney (1995) “In almost every negative tenure case, inadequate research was cited as the major reason.” Often, it

does not really matter if practicing managers will ever use published intellectual contribution. Articles do not need to make sense or be creative to count toward tenure, it is the act of publishing itself that is the goal.

Universities need to focus on the quality of intellectual contribution not the quantity. Schools need rational and practical methods to evaluate the quality of intellectual contribution produced by their faculty. By developing such methods, some of the irrelevant intellectual contribution that is currently being encouraged could be avoided. It might be useful to have an advisory board or roundtable of business and management leaders and other interested stakeholders that could provide input and feedback on intellectual contribution topics. This would still allow for a free flow of ideas but in a context that would encourage intellectual contribution on issues important to a broad range of stakeholders. Perhaps some control over what is produced would lead to more relevant intellectual contribution. Too much time, effort and money is being wasted on intellectual contribution, which is produced for the sole purpose of being published and to meet tenure and promotion requirements.

There is no rational reason why universities and interested stakeholders should not have some input into the type of intellectual contribution that is produced by their faculty. GM does not tell its engineers to develop whatever products they want, they have to follow guidelines for profitability and other factors. Guidelines in academics seem practical for similar reasons. If guidelines to ensure relevance and applicability were implemented by more schools, better intellectual contribution would be produced. Some basic guidelines could be that intellectual contribution must benefit the local community, be used in the classroom, and be undertaken to solve real problems that managers are experiencing.

CONCLUSION

Although the tenure and promotion review process has been changing at some schools, this has been the exception rather than the rule. The various stakeholders that are affected by management education deserve a better product. The suggestions outlined in this paper would contribute to better management education as well as high quality and useful intellectual contribution. If these guidelines were implemented, more practitioners would use management intellectual contribution, teaching would be improved and society would benefit as a result of such reforms.

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