



College of Liberal Arts

Revisiting Service in Departments

Strategic Planning Process

July 1, 2021



COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY



Revisiting Service in CLA Departments

Guidance from the CLA Strategic Planning Team, Task Force 3 – June 2021



This document was created with input from Task Force 3, department chairs, and documents from various departments and committees (including Sociology, Anthropology, Communication Studies, Journalism & Media Communication, and the Dean’s Office).

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This document is intended to help guide discussion of faculty service within CLA Departments. While some departments have already engaged in high-level discussions of service and have produced explicit expectations and clear rubrics, other departments have been sidelined in their efforts to think more intentionally about service and its equitable distribution and evaluation. This document will be most helpful to those at the early stages of their service discussions, though there may be some helpful considerations for those who have already completed this task.





Creating a Culture of Service

Service to department, college, university, profession, and community are fundamental to faculty governance, to the creation of a thriving academic community, and to our land grant mission of acting in support of the common good. It is beneficial to promote a culture of service so that it is not seen as burdensome or as a distraction from one's "real work" or one's "own work." A culture of service views this work as a collaborative enterprise to promote our shared teaching, learning, and scholarly missions. Service experiences within the department and college may also be understood as significant leadership development opportunities for faculty and may serve as important platforms for advancement within the department, university, community, and profession.

Considerations

In revisiting service expectations and evaluations within individual departments, the following areas should be considered to ensure equitable distribution and completion of department labor.

Faculty Appointment & Rank

This document is designed to be used by and for faculty of all appointments and ranks with appropriate expectations communicated in departments. Service distribution and evaluation should be guided by the established effort distribution assigned to each faculty (5-15%, or higher).

It should also be noted that some activities are considered part of basic "departmental citizenry" and are necessary but not sufficient for meeting service expectations. Examples of such activities include attending department meetings, advising and mentoring students, writing letters of recommendations, conducting peer evaluations, and participating in departmental activities, like seminars, lectures, and retreats.

Recommendations for different appointments & ranks:

- **Tenure-track Faculty:** Some departments have low service expectations for untenured faculty to allow more focused attention to scholarly production. While considerate, this may have drawbacks for fostering a commitment to and culture of service in early career faculty and for cultivating leadership skills that are expected in higher ranks. It is recommended that TTF fully engage in departmental service opportunities while perhaps postponing more time-consuming activities (leadership positions, directorships, search committee chair) for post-tenure.
- **Tenured Faculty:** Associate and full professors have increasing expectations for department leadership and for college and university service. Full professors are expected to do the most service (in both quantity and quality). It is important to note that outward-focused service to one's field is not a substitute for valuable participation in department work and leadership.
- **CCA Faculty:** It is recommended to be mindful of high teaching loads and low service effort distributions for most CCA faculty, while also appreciating CCAF interest in being involved and considered full members of the department. Some departments have created separate service rubrics for CCAF that emphasize engagement, collaborations, and teaching opportunities across the department, college, and university.





Equity

Departments should be mindful of the way service shows up and is performed by members with marginalized identities. For example, women often take on extra burdens of departmental work that often go unrecognized or are generally undervalued. Similarly, faculty who are members of minoritized groups (such as BIPOC, LGBTQ, first-gen, international, etc.) may be performing additional mentoring and student support work, serving on ad hoc college and university committees and panels, and/or engaging in community projects and initiatives. Departments should consider ways to account for this labor and to support faculty from becoming overwhelmed by supplemental duties.

In addition to accounting for these various forms of overwork, departments should consider equity in leadership opportunities. While performing work that may be undervalued, unquantifiable, and often invisible, faculty from marginalized groups may miss opportunities for personal mentorship and advancement within departments as well as the college and university. Developing a robust peer mentoring program for faculty within or between departments may help to alleviate extra burdens experienced by some faculty.

Transparency in Expectations & Evaluations

Clearly stating the service expectations each department holds for its faculty and fairly evaluating the service contributions of each faculty member is crucial to the collaborative spirit of our service work. That being said, weighing and evaluating service efforts are complex because of the varied types of work, the amount of time required to satisfy an obligation, the quality of one's contribution to the task, and the impact of any specific service project.

Despite this difficulty, each department should, at minimum, create a guide to define the importance of service activities, provide examples of appropriate service, and design a department-specific rubric that will establish clear and agreed upon parameters that can help in both the assignment of service duties as well as their evaluation upon completion.

To account for its complexity, some departments consider the following four dimensions of service work in constructing rubrics and evaluating different service obligations:

- Impact—service that creates positive change; creates new opportunities, maintains outstanding programs at a very high level;
- Quality—service that is careful, rigorous, timely, and competent. Service that aids the outcomes of the organization, unit, or committee. Service that supports the unit, organization, or committee and not only the needs of the faculty member;
- Variety—at any given time and over years, diversity is service across department, college, university, discipline, and community; service that engages a variety of issues in these settings, ex., undergraduate, graduate, scholarship, executive committee in the department;
- Quantity—number of service commitments met with competence at any given time.





Rubric Models

Please see the appendices for examples from departments that have recently updated and approved service rubrics for their departments. Departments that are just entering (or revisiting) their service overhaul discussions are invited to adapt one of these models (or create another one altogether) to best address its needs while keeping in mind the considerations raised here and elsewhere. Opportunities to review and adjust rubrics after initial implementation are encouraged.

We may roughly characterize the rubrics in the following ways:

Choose your own adventure

- Rubric #1 from Communication Studies: These rubrics (one for TTF; one for CCA) list many possible types of service contributions (dept, college, university, profession, and university). The rubrics also identify (in a somewhat open-ended way) the type and variety of activities that will lead to a “meets expectations,” “exceeds expectations,” or “superior” rating across the various faculty appointments and ranks.
- Rubric #2 from Journalism & Media Communication (JMC): JMC provides a similar model to Communication Studies, but in a more streamlined fashion. Additionally, this rubric sets expectations for service in at least two (of three) categories: 1) Professional, 2) University, College, Department, and 3) Community Service, Outreach, and Leadership.

Point system

- Rubric #3 from Sociology: Sociology has produced an “Average Department Service Workload Tool” that identifies the approximate number of hours per semester for many of its standard service positions as well as the “total weight” of these specific duties during the fall and spring semesters. There is also a memo that explains how this Workload Tool is used in committee assignments and in merit and T&P reviews.
- Rubric #4 from Anthropology: Anthropology has produced a Service Metric Guideline that scores typical service based on workload (ranging from 1-4). It then identifies the service load expectations for untenured and tenured faculty.

