

ROLE OF FACULTY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

We know intuitively that the role of faculty can have an enriching effect on the daily lives of students and their lifelong educational and career aspirations. These effective faculties also have a direct influence in enhancing student learning. Years of research on teacher quality support the fact that role of faculty make students feel good about Alma matter and student achievement. Studies have substantiated that a whole range of personal and professional qualities are associated with higher levels of student achievement.

Keywords: education, higher education, teacher, faculty, research

Faculty members are the most important components of the higher education system. Academic development of faculty members is crucial and necessary for the success of the higher education system because teaching staff are the prime movers and catalysts for all round development of students. The faculty members play a significant role not only in improving the quality of higher education but also maintaining it; the professional competency of teachers has to be of such a high level so as to impart quality knowledge to the students. This would call the continuous upgrading of the professional development of the teachers, which is key guarantee of quality education. Teachers need continuous self-development to generate knowledge that goes to contribute towards inculcating high professional competency among students. Development of teachers depends on many factors. It is closely linked with the quality of research, participation in national and international seminars, faculty exchange programs, enhancement of qualifications, exposure to recent developments, writing of books and papers, collaborating with fellow research. The major portion of this article will focus on the responsibility of faculty as collective entities and related trends within higher education.

The roles and responsibilities of college and university faculty members are closely tied to the central functions of higher education. Correspondingly, college and university faculty members undertake research, teaching, and service roles to carry out the academic work of their respective institutions. Each of these roles enables faculty members to generate and disseminate knowledge to peers, students, and external audiences. The balance among teaching, research, and service, however, differs widely across institution types and by terms of the faculty member's appointment. The teaching role of faculty members reflects their centrality in addressing the primary educational mission among colleges and universities. As faculty members teach, they disseminate and impart basic or applied knowledge to students and assist students with the learning process and applying the knowledge. In this construction of the teaching role, the teacher is the content expert,

and students are regarded as learners or novices to the academic discipline or field of study. Faculty members are expected to follow developments in the field so their expertise and knowledge base remain current. As research is an inherent component of the functions of a University, every faculty member shall take active efforts to make research contributions in his/her field of specialization. Those who act as research supervisors should spare adequate time to the research scholars for discussion and monitor their progress, so that not only the quality of work is improved but also time over-run can be avoided.

Consequently, an emphasis on faculty members as facilitators of students' learning has emerged. This focus on learning incorporates a broad set of goals for learners, such as student's mastery of content, their abilities to consider and critique, and particularly in professional fields, the development of skill sets that enable students to undertake career positions. Faculty member, as an expert in his subject can bring the subject matter in very easy way to the level of student understanding, logical and systematic. Although effective teaching is rewarded, teaching may be seen as less prestigious and less well rewarded than success in conducting research and securing external funding. At virtual universities, faculty members may not teach so much as participate in creating instructional modules and provide feedback to students on their degrees of success in mastering specified knowledge.

Each faculty member is required to maintain the record of class work, attendance and continuous assessment neatly, properly and in time. They may organize parent teacher meeting to maintain the list of students under him / her, their parent/local guardian contact address/phone/mail ID etc., so that the student's progress could be monitored and communicated to them. The class adviser shall also maintain cumulative record of attendance for the courses undergone by the student course-wise. Thus by counseling of poorly performing students and the follow up action are required to take to improve slow learners. As a faculty adviser, the faculty member is required to motivate students under his/her care and also help them while they face any other general problems till they leave the University.

The faculty is responsible for assessing students' learning, and a wide range of strategies may be used, such as tests, papers, and project-oriented demonstrations of knowledge. In addition, he / she is required to keep a file containing question papers set by him/her for the course handled, copy of answer sheets of the students after evaluation, for production to the academic audit. A faculty is required to conduct and invigilate any exam/test in the university. Such test/exam may be for the course taught by him/her or for any other course assigned by the Head of Department/Controller of Examinations of the University. A faculty member while evaluating answer scripts, oral examination/project work evaluation, should scrupulously be objective in his/her approach so that the student can earn the marks/grading for his/her performance only.

A faculty member should give their contribution prepare of new syllabus or updating of existing syllabus. A faculty is expected to be creative so as to contribute to the introduction of new academic programs in the emerging areas relevant to the society, innovative curriculum and new methodology of teaching and evaluation. In a natural sciences class, students may conduct experiments or field work in regular laboratory sessions to complement their growing conceptual knowledge and hone their inquiry skills. A faculty member is required to involve in the laboratory development activities of the Department by introducing innovative experimental setups/instruments/computer software/ computer control of machines or processes. As a member of the faculty, he / she should ensure that the various consumable and non-consumable equipment in the laboratory and workshop are maintained in working condition and are used effectively both for academic requirement, project works and research related activities by utilizing various budget properly.

A faculty member is required to arrange guest lectures, industrial visits, educational tours and accompany the students to visits/tours as student exchange program with host Institution to supplement regular lectures. A faculty member if nominated as chairperson of different committee, registrar such as Treasurer, Adviser of Professional Society functioning in the Department/University he/she shall perform such duties accordingly. A faculty member is required to coordinate National / International conferences / seminars / symposium / workshop. A faculty member should submit project proposals to the funding agencies for financial assistance to conduct seminars, conferences, etc. The faculty member has to serve as a member of any enquiry committee or as a member of various committees whenever the Department/University organizes major events such as Sports Day, Annual Day, Technical and Cultural Festivals, etc. Faculty members are liable to be assigned the responsibility of Warden of the hostels run for the benefit of students for a specific period of time and for this service they shall be given perquisites in addition to their salary. Faculty members should also take part in activities related to NCC, NSC, NSS, Red Cross Society, Alumni Association, and other activity related to Institutional development.

More emphasis is placed on the faculty research role in large universities in part because large universities also house the majority of graduate programs and provide resources to support the pursuit of research agendas. Additionally, research-oriented faculty members often participate actively in generating internal and external monetary support to underwrite their laboratories or specific research projects. Faculty rewards often are based on the extent to which faculty members contribute to their disciplines through publishing articles and books, presenting research findings, giving performances and exhibits, or disseminating their work to external audiences in other ways. Additionally, rewards may also be based on the

faculty member's success in securing funding from external public agencies or companies. The extent to which faculty members have a research role as part of their work responsibilities depends largely on the mission of the employing institution, with larger universities more likely to have research and knowledge creation as a significant part of their missions. Although higher education institutions are most often the sites for and sponsors of faculty members' research, the primary audience for most academic researchers is their national and international community of disciplinary colleagues. Faculty members with active research agendas and involvement in their disciplinary communities have been regarded as more cosmopolitan in orientation, with stronger allegiances and loyalties to their disciplines than to their home institutions.

As research publications in refereed journals of international importance not only improve the individual's image but also of the institution, every faculty member should strive to bring out such quality publications. Faculty members should publish their research output only in various esteemed journals and publications in non-refereed journals will not be recognized. Moreover, faculty members shall also strive to file patents if their research output is felt new and novel. Depending upon the research content, the faculty member may also present papers in International/National level conferences, take efforts to bring out his/her research work other than refereed journal papers, in the form of books or chapters in the books published by the international/National level publishers with ISBN/ISSN numbers. The faculty members will be provided financial incentives for publications in refereed journals taking into account the impact factor, total citation.

An important source of financing and professional recognition to the University is sponsored and funded research projects. Therefore, every faculty member should browse the web sites of various funding agencies, advertisement, etc., periodically and submit research proposals in the proper format to those agencies to secure funding assistance for research and acquiring facilities such as equipment, instruments, etc. The faculty member as a Principal Investigator can also use the services of students and research scholars, wherever possible. Many funding agencies provide funding assistance for establishment of centres of excellence. A faculty member may also examine and send proposal pertaining to his/her department or interdisciplinary ones for establishment of such Centre. Students should also be encouraged by faculty members to submit proposals for securing funding assistance for student projects from different agencies.

A faculty member should take efforts to organize refresher courses, seminars, workshops not only for the benefit of faculty members but also for participants of industry and society at large. Such programs could be self-supporting or sponsored ones. Conduct of continuing education programs / structured courses to meet specific requirement of the industry

and society is yet another way of augmenting resource for the University. A faculty member can organize such programs either one time or on continual basis year on year.

The faculty member shall follow the detailed guidelines/procedure issued by the ministry of human resource development. In order to be an effective faculty, he/she is required to update his/her knowledge by attending faculty development programs, short-term courses, professional society meetings, National/International Conferences, reading recent technical journal articles and periodicals and going through the web sites of world class Universities. These qualities of contribution of faculty will not only helpful in the development of student future but also in institution accreditation by University Grant Commission. As a result, they are responsible for contribution and sustenance of the standards of the institution. They should comply with the relevant policies, rules, regulations, norms and standards set to guide their work. While every individual member is accountable for his / her action, as member of the University community, they are collectively accountable for upholding those standards of behavior and for compliance with all applicable rules, regulations and code of conduct.

The main objective of role of faculty is to create high understanding of human values and soft skills to actualize these in their personality and behaviour of faculty and students leading to peace and harmony for sustainable success in carrier and happiness. Thus, higher education requires special emphasis and has major role to play in determining the quality of life and the pace of development of a nation and the world as a whole. It is the responsibility of the higher education system to ensure that the skills, understanding and output of the students are equal to the best in the world.

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