

## Proposal for Faculty Colloquium and Career Development for Professorial Faculty

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***We propose that all Professors in the College of Engineering present a colloquium on their achievement and plans to their peers, followed by a planning discussion with the Dean and their Head of School, on a regular seven year cycle. The primary goal of the Faculty Colloquium and planning discussion is to enhance faculty professional development, job satisfaction and performance.***

### Why should we do this?

*Commitment to faculty development:* Our guiding principle is that continual professional development, supported by thoughtful planning and goal setting, should be part of academic professional life for all faculty. A professional development program benefits faculty who wish to expand their horizons and allows Purdue to leverage the valuable experience and capabilities of senior faculty who may be want to take on new roles at the university.

*Opportunity for national leadership:* Purdue does not have any campus-wide, standardized post tenure review process which is in line with a number of other peer institutions. However, this puts us below best practice at US peer universities e.g. Carnegie Mellon, and internationally e.g. University of Queensland. The Provost Task Force on Tenure and Promotion is likely to recommend some form of post tenure review and we have an opportunity to be proactive in developing a novel and positive process that can be an example both within Purdue, and nationally.

*Flexibility in career development:* The traditional approach to faculty performance has a fairly set view of the role of faculty in research, teaching and service and performance is measured with a limited number of metrics (e.g. number of papers published, number of PhD students graduated, teaching evaluation statistics). As faculty careers evolve, some will achieve greatest impact and greatest job satisfaction through more flexibility in where they put their effort. This diversity should be encouraged and celebrated. While **mean** value of the job balance will remain, increasing the **variance** of the distribution of tenured faculty activity is a good thing. The current system also encourages risk-averse behavior. We should encourage and even reward more risk taking where significant impact is possible.

*Encouraging and recording impact, synergy and leadership:* For some senior faculty, development will offer an opportunity to emphasize significant impact or leadership. These are difficult to define except perhaps by examples. Many peer institutions are also struggling with these issues. Quantitative measures may not be appropriate for high level, integrating achievements which may be unique in character. In fact, the narrative of the vision, goals and outcomes may be a better way to assess performance. The proposed faculty colloquium and planning discussions give an opportunity to capture and celebrate impact, synergy and leadership as demonstrated by our own faculty.

## How would we implement it?

Professorial faculty would undertake the Faculty Colloquium and planning discussions seven years after either their promotion to full professor, or their appointment to Purdue, and then at seven year intervals after that. At steady state, about 30 professors within the college would present their achievements and plans in the form of a Faculty Colloquium each year.

For the planning discussions, the faculty member would submit a brief planning template addressing the questions:

What is the impact of your achievements in the last seven years?

What is your vision for the next seven years and what is your plan to achieve that vision?

How can the School and College assist you in this endeavor?

The planning discussions should take place with a small group in a position to enact decisions made in the discussion e.g. the Dean and the Head of School.

For some senior faculty, development will give an opportunity to emphasize significant impact or leadership. These are difficult to define except perhaps by examples such as:

- Leading role in working parties and committees, which influence national policy e.g. FDA, NAS, White House committees
- Commercialization of research developed at Purdue e.g. startup companies
- Leadership in development of curriculum or learning environments which has impact outside, as well as within, Purdue.
- Leadership in major team based research centers and initiatives.
- Expanding opportunities for Purdue in global initiatives

For the colloquium and planning process to have impact, it would need to come with incentives which could include:

- Agreed and funded professional development opportunities
- Seed funding for developing major initiatives in research, education or engagement
- Flex time to focus on initiatives
- Opportunities to become proficient in another discipline
- Flexible leave of absence plans e.g. to kick start a start up company
- Opportunities to redirect a faculty career, e.g., from a research-dominant effort to a teaching focus

The Faculty Colloquium should precede the planning discussions. The colloquium offers an opportunity to share and celebrate a colleague's academic career, and to give the speaker a chance to articulate their future vision. This approach is closer to the European model where it is good practice that faculty present a colloquium on their work within the University on regular basis. In keeping with our philosophy of flexible career development, the colloquium would not necessarily be a traditional

research seminar, but could address curriculum development, entrepreneurial activity etc, or emphasize the *synergy* between different academic activities.

We envisage the colloquia to be integrated into School seminar series and suggest the schools reduce the number of external speakers, e.g. by two per semester, to allow space for the Faculty Colloquia without increasing the overall seminar load on faculty and graduate students. Colloquia would be widely advertised with attendance from colleagues in other schools and colleges encouraged. The College might choose a small number of the colloquia each year to be special events. These would be chosen to highlight the diversity of impact of our faculty across education, scholarship and engagement, and from different discipline areas.