

Beware the Hired Guns—They Could Shoot Us in the Foot

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In the Academy, promotions and advancements are based on *teaching, research* and *service*. All of our academic institutions and academic associations subscribe to these basic three areas in which faculty must demonstrate competency and preferably excellence. Millions of words have been written about this triumvirate and its importance to the maintenance of excellence in an academic career. We too in AACP deal with these issues on a yearly basis primarily through our standing committees but we have also established commissions to expressly direct the Association's focus toward these three areas and their changing interpretation within the Academy.

It is obvious that the three criteria are not in alphabetic order and that the first obligation of our profession is listed first, teaching. Yet, in the last four decades, the discussion about and in many cases the criteria for advancement have appeared to make research assume a primary position. All of us can describe in some detail a tenure decision where an outstanding researcher with poor teaching credentials was promoted, contrasting sharply to the excellent teacher with a meager research output who was forced to find another position in a "less intensive" research institution. My intent here is not to discuss a shifting of the balance from research to teaching, because I do believe that excellent research should be a criteria for promotion. However, I am greatly concerned with our shortsightedness in not also insisting that excellent teaching accompany excellent research and excellent service.

The Association has recognized the importance of identifying good teaching and we have received publicity from the academic community for our planned implementation of the Master Teacher Program. Although I strongly support our efforts to reward excellent teaching and enhance the image of the teacher-scholar, I am concerned with a trend which I see developing in all discipline areas, including those represented by the academic sections of our Association. Frequently, established faculty members are rewarded and younger faculty members are recruited with promises of reduced professional teaching loads. Today, the attractiveness of a faculty position may be reflected in the small number of teaching hours required of the academician. Often, the justification for such arrangements suggests that those who teach best, and prefer to do that, should be allowed to teach, while those who do research best and prefer to do that should be relieved of their teaching responsibilities, at least at the undergraduate and professional level. What we see today, often in basic science departments but more and more in clinical practice departments also, is the employment of the hired gun. That is, an individual who does not hold a full academic title, but rather one of the "adjunct" series that proliferate at many universities. These individuals are hired specifically to teach professional students. In most cases, these individuals are excellent teachers who spend a great deal of time developing outstanding syllabi, lecture sequences, clinical correlations and unique practice experiences. Yet, these individuals, because of their "adjunct" faculty status, often have no vote in the organization of their department and the promotion and tenure process. In my view, this approach is extremely shortsighted, and we are in essence shooting ourselves in the foot.

In the past, it was frequently argued that good research was an important component of a good teacher. This is how we justified to our legislators and governing boards the importance of maintaining a strong research program in our colleges and schools. Yet

today, an outsider looking at academia would say that good research primarily leads to no teaching, not necessarily good teaching. The public views professors as teachers. Today, there is no strong sentiment or abiding faith in science or research. If the public is convinced that the "real" professors do no teaching, or only minimal teaching, and that the "real" teaching is performed by hired guns, it seems obvious that they will conclude that the academics have skewed the priorities of their profession away from the intent of society. Cost savings will be substantial when research is deemed to be a luxury which is unaffordable at the present time.

It could be argued that the public's interest in the distribution of research, service and teaching responsibilities only will be felt in the public universities. However, we all know that, in fact, the lowest teaching loads are presently found in the public universities and that private universities are quick to follow an economy measure which takes hold in publicly supported institutions. Up to the present time, the hired gun phenomena is not as prevalent in schools of pharmacy as in schools of medicine. Thus, we still generally require our tenure track faculty members to be responsible teachers as well as carry out strong service and research programs. Yet, the trend is apparent, and it should concern us all.

I have been fortunate in my academic career to have chaired a strong department with recognized scientific excellence. However, I have always felt it imperative that I personally maintain an active teaching role, both at the professional and graduate levels and that each of the members of my department realize their responsibilities to be productive and conscientious teachers. No special privileges in terms of reduced teaching loads are given to any member of the department because of outstanding research or service performance. In addition, our "adjunct" faculty, those who generate their support through research grants, are also required to fulfill a comparable teaching component to that of the tenure track faculty.

This is not to say that my department does not assign a reduced teaching load to a new faculty member who is just beginning his/her career and attempting to implement both his/her research, service and teaching assignments. Just as I do not expect a new faculty member to immediately have research funding, I do not expect a new faculty member to teach a full load. Furthermore, when research grants are received such as career development awards which mandate reduced teaching responsibilities, we comply with these directives. However, all faculty members know that after a one or two year beginning period or when their specific "career development award" expires, their teaching will be at an equivalent level with other members of the department. Furthermore, it is made clear from the day of hire, that excellent teaching is required for promotion, in addition to excellent research and excellent service.

Perhaps I am living in a dream world at UCSF and have a unique situation. I do not believe so. Rather, I believe that it is imperative that deans and department chairs emphasize that teaching is a priority, just as is the case for excellent research and service. It is we who have created the dilemma which we face. I believe that it is our responsibility to be aware of the potential skewing of academic responsibilities which administrators can bring about. Finally, I believe that all members of the Academy have a responsibility to teach including deans, department chairs and research professors, and that this teaching responsibility must include pro-

professional student instruction. It is the leaders who must lead. If the leaders give the impression that administration precludes teaching responsibility, it is very difficult to see how we can defend the

concept that research and service also do not preclude teaching responsibility.
