**BEST PRACTICES, Academic**

**Title:** Professors’ Group Considers New Roles for Faculty Members in College Sports

**Source:** Chronicle of Higher Education


**Abstract:**

A committee of the American Association of University Professors, led by Carol Simpson Stern, is taking a hard look at the roles faculty members ought to take in college sports. Ms. Stern says, professors across the country are complaining about issues like being shut out of discussions on lower academic standards for admitting athletes.

The group is considering a series of reports prepared by one of its members, R. Scott Kretchmar of Pennsylvania State University at University Park. The faculty athletics representative at Penn State, he is proposing a set of “best practices” for faculty representatives, college athletics boards, and academic advisers. “We’re trying to establish best practices that set the bar quite high, and to challenge institutions to involve faculty in meaningful ways in athletics,” Mr. Kretchmar says. “These are written as kind of a check off sheet for faculty athletics representatives and boards -- if they come up with a poor report card, it might be a good indication that faculty are not playing much of a role,” he says.

Among Mr. Kretchmar’s suggestions for his fellow faculty representatives: maintaining independence from the athletics department; helping to create regular lines of communication among faculty members, college and university administrators, and athletics officials; and being involved in the internal working of athletics departments, particularly in their dealings with other departments on campus.

His recommendations for athletics governing boards include making sure that faculty senates have a say in who serves on such boards; making sure that academic policies and standards for students apply to athletes as well; and keeping all of their activities open to the scrutiny of administrators and professors.

**Title:** Auditing Higher Education to Improve Quality

**Source:** Chronicle of Higher Education


**Abstract:**

Today, a small but growing number of institutions both in America and abroad are achieving significant quality improvements through academic audits. The objective of an academic audit is to elicit thoughtful conversations about how to produce tangible improvements in education quality without having to spend more money.

Rather than trying to micromanage teaching, an audit asks how professors organize their work and the kinds of data they use to make decisions, as well as how faculty members can use the resources available to them and work collegially to do better. An academic audit relies on the following simple and widely held tenet of academic life: “Professors want to provide quality education, and they will do so when supported by good processes.” Good education-quality processes systematize a department or other unit's approach to quality, instead of leaving it mainly to unmonitored individual initiative.
This toolkit was written to assist Department Chairs in retaining their faculty across all ranks. These best practices should be applied to all faculty, not just the stars of a department. Retention efforts, when applied equitably to all faculty, can improve the general climate for everyone and can lead to better productivity and greater satisfaction for all faculty. Faculty retention is critical to the health of a University department both for morale reasons and also for economic reasons, as faculty replacement costs tend to be much higher than retention costs.

This document addresses nine key areas which can impact faculty retention. These practices help all faculty and are particularly important to women and underutilized minorities. This executive summary includes nine recommendations to department chairs. Details of how to implement these recommendations can be found later in this document.

The Office of Naval Research's Best Manufacturing Practices (BMP) Program was created in 1985 to help businesses identify, research, and promote exceptional manufacturing practices, methods, and procedures. Its objective is to empower defense and commercial customers to operate at a higher level of efficiency and effectiveness.

The above website lists many best practices for the Applied Research Laboratory, The Pennsylvania State University.
Plagiarism has always concerned teachers and administrators, who want students’ work to represent their own efforts and to reflect the outcomes of their learning. However, with the advent of the Internet and easy access to almost limitless written material on every conceivable topic, suspicion of student plagiarism has begun to affect teachers at all levels, at times diverting them from the work of developing students’ writing, reading, and critical thinking abilities.

This statement responds to the growing educational concerns about plagiarism in four ways: by defining plagiarism; by suggesting some of the causes of plagiarism; by proposing a set of responsibilities (for students, teachers, and administrators) to address the problem of plagiarism; and by recommending a set of practices for teaching and learning that can significantly reduce the likelihood of plagiarism. The statement is intended to provide helpful suggestions and clarifications so that instructors, administrators, and students can work together more effectively in support of excellence in teaching and learning.

(From Beloit College - http://www.beloit.edu)
A primary goal of all employment interviews is to find out if the candidate is the right person for the position. However, a commonly overlooked aspect of these visits is that “the candidates are interviewing you at the same time you are interviewing them.” Therefore, it is important to make the interview experience as positive as possible. In a competitive recruitment environment, it is important to consider all aspects of the candidates visit: the accommodations; transportation; free time to see the campus and community; a well-scheduled interview day; well-attended seminar; pleasant meals; activities for their spouse/partner and/or children if they accompany the candidate; and an opportunity for them to get questions answered about our research and teaching programs and relocating to the area.

Introduction
General Organizational Tools
Visiting Candidate Checklist
  * Search Committee Chair Communication
Planning the Interview Visit
  * Reimbursement of Candidate Expenses
  * The letter or email to the candidate
  * Transportation
  * Hotel
  * Restaurants
  * Activities for spouses & partners
  * Childcare resources
On-campus Interview Day
  * Schedule
  * Communication with the candidate
  * Sample schedules
  * Seminars
  * Recommended activities
Post-interview Follow-up
Additional Resources

(Similar policy can be developed university-wide.)
The interests of the departments and programs, of the College and the University, and of individual faculty members are best served when the people we hire are constructively mentored and reviewed. Constructive mentoring and reviewing of tenure-track faculty works to help such faculty meet high standards of rigor, depth and innovation in scholarship, and to realize their full potential as scholars, teachers, and members of the academic community. When we grant tenure to a faculty member, we acknowledge the high contributions that person is making to our scholarly and learning community; we also acknowledge the institution's wise choice in hiring and wise and enabling mentoring of the new faculty member. Given all that is at stake, both personally for the candidate and institutionally, in hiring and tenure, the mentoring and reviewing of tenure-track faculty is some of the most important work we do.

Covers Principals, Best Practices within a Department and Best Practices within a College.

The Task Force on Reduction of Academic Costs was formed to address current and future fiscal conditions. The specific charge of the task force was to:

1. Review the instructional costs associated with programs with low enrollments and/or completions. As part of the review, the task force should examine a variety of productivity measures, including the student credit hours, research and public service funds generated per faculty member. The task force should calculate the cost savings associated with the consolidation, discontinuation, or other recommendations for low enrollment degree programs.

2. Review duplicated programs, particularly those that are high cost or unnecessarily duplicated, across the four campuses of the University of Missouri. Calculate the cost savings associated with the elimination of a duplicated program, the impact of the program closure on State needs, and alternative means to provide access to a similar program for the affected students.

3. Review the faculty workload policy in the Collected Rules and Regulations (310.080) and similar policies for each campus. Consider variations in the workload policies together with the possibility of capping enrollments as a way to lower instructional costs and maintain academic quality.

The above URL is the report.
**BEST PRACTICES, Academic**

**Title:** Best Practices for Promotion and Tenure

**Source:** University of Alaska


**Abstract:**
The aim of this document is to provide guidance for faculty who are eligible to stand for tenure and/or promotion, and to faculty serving in the unit-peer and/or university-wide review processes. It is also intended to provide guidance to department chairs, deans, and directors.

While this "Best Practices" document represents the best thinking of quite a few UAF faculty and administrators, its content represents guidance and advice rather than official UAF policy.

**Title:** Best Practices (Re Academic Integrity)

**Source:** Oakton Community College

**Addl Info:** [http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/facultyhandbook/taylor_best_practices.htm](http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/facultyhandbook/taylor_best_practices.htm)

**Abstract:**
Note: the following is posted with the permission of its author, Prof. Bill Taylor of Oakton Community College (Des Plaines, IL). It stems from "a new initiative that we are in the process of developing here at Oakton that's based on the assumption (growing out of research that Don McCabe has done) that if faculty commit themselves to talk about and modeling integrity in their professional lives, this will help encourage students to do the same. Feel free to use this as well, although it's still a work in progress.

**Title:** 2005 Best Employment Practices For Part-time Faculty

**Source:** Washington State Board for Comm & Tech Colleges

**Addl Info:** [http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/college/_hr_bestpractices.aspx](http://www.sbctc.ctc.edu/college/_hr_bestpractices.aspx)

**Abstract:**
Part-time instructors bring unique skills and expertise into workforce preparation and academic classrooms. Employing part-time instructors allows colleges to offer more classes, when and where students need them and the ability to respond to emerging student, community and business needs. However, low salary levels, variable working conditions and over-reliance on part-time faculty have contributed to staffing concerns in Washington State and nationally - as colleges and universities absorb greater numbers of students without appropriate funding.

Responding to this concern, the 1996 Legislature adopted provisions requiring an audit of part-time faculty compensation and employment practices and the identification of “best practices" related to part-time faculty employment. A Taskforce was established, the best practices listed and recommendations made to the college districts, State Board and Legislature. Updates were reported in 1997 and 1998.

Through adoption of Engrossed Senate Bill 5087, the 2005 Legislature renewed its commitment to understand and improve part-time instructors working conditions by directing the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to convene a taskforce to review and update the best employment practices report completed by a 1996 Taskforce.
One new faculty member commented, “mentoring … does not need to be formal but it does need to be explicit and supported.”

The consultative and collegial organizational culture of the University of Guelph supports a flexible, informal model of faculty mentoring, delivered locally at the departmental and college level. This ensures that the models and activities selected are most conducive to the unique culture of each department and academic discipline. The nature of mentoring relationships must be left to the individual partners to determine, i.e. focus on research, teaching, and general orientation or work life balance, frequency of meetings, format of meetings, etc.

All faculty can benefit from mentoring, therefore it is important that all faculty, whether they are new, tenured or untenured, mid-career or established career, be included in mentoring initiatives.

The following suggestions, taking from current practices at the University of Guelph, are for the consideration of the stakeholders, and should not be considered to be all inclusive. As mentoring becomes a more deliberate activity, it is certain that additional best practices and recommendations will develop.

Faculty retention remains an elusive art for many independent schools. We all recognize that it is desirable to retain superb teachers, but there are many issues and ambiguities that need to be teased out of the stock phrase “faculty retention” in order to have meaningful results on this front.

BEST PRACTICES, Academic

Title: Quality Handbook
Source: Goldsmiths University (England)
Addl Info: http://www.gold.ac.uk/media/Quality%20Handbook%202011-12.pdf
Abstract:
This handbook is intended to be a guide to the College’s quality assurance policies and procedures. Even if you are not directly involved on a regular basis in these activities, we hope it will be a useful source of information and a starting point, whether you are involved in preparing a new programmed for approval, preparing to undergo a Periodic Programmed/Departmental Review or are writing an Annual Programmed Review Report. The handbook aims to give a brief and clear description of each process and points you to more detailed sources of information and guidance where appropriate.

As teaching or support staff, we all share the College’s aim to provide an excellent learning experience for students and to enable them to achieve their potential while studying at Goldsmiths. Based on this collective responsibility for the quality of our provision, there are College and Departmental policies and procedures to assure the standards of awards and the quality of learning opportunities and to support the enhancement of learning and teaching.

Title: Academic Misconduct - Plagiarism
Source: La Trobe University (Australia)
Abstract:
La Trobe University regards academic honesty as the foundation of teaching, learning, and research. It requires its academic staff and students to observe the highest ethical standards in all aspects of academic work.

As a response to a perceived increase in plagiarism in the general academic community, Academic Committee has asked a Working Party to thoroughly review the University's policy on plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct. The Working Party accepts that new students may not understand fully appropriate referencing and acknowledgment of the work of others and recommends that new students be educated comprehensively in these aspects. There should also be detailed information available to students on plagiarism. Clear and mandatory procedures have been defined for staff and alleged cases of serious plagiarism will be handled by two committees. Penalties for plagiarism should be considerably strengthened, involving in serious cases suspension from the University. It is suggested that better education of students about referencing and plagiarism, together with strong penalties, will decrease substantially the incidence of plagiarism.
A guidebook titled, “Celebrating Teaching at American University: Best Practices” is being distributed to faculty this fall. It is a compilation of best practices in the classroom that was prepared for the Center for Teaching, Research, & Learning by Marilyn Goldhammer, Adjunct Professor and Consultant in Residence in the School of Education, Teaching and Health. Here’s how she describes the goals of this publication:

“We have created this guide as a resource for new and existing faculty who want to explore innovative and creative ways to engage students in the learning process. It also provides a way for faculty to share strategies and approaches that have worked well in the classroom.”


Take an online walk through the Department Chairs’ Toolkit. This Web site provides useful resources for department chairs including: key campus contacts, a full list of chairs and directors, documents, policies, reports, and recommended readings. Subjects include budget, personnel, data for decision making, faculty programs, and professional development offerings.

Department chairs are key leaders/administrators on a university campus with important responsibilities over budgets and personnel, as well as overall leadership over the academic mission of the unit. But because of the decentralized nature of our institution and the volume of materials available, department chairs, department administrators, deans and others some times do not know about the resource materials, training opportunities, policies, web sites and other resources available to help them perform their duties.
**Title:** Best Practices for Video Use and Online Courses  
**Source:** University of Central Florida  
**Addl Info:** http://video.ucf.edu/bestpractices/  
**Abstract:** As with many things in academia, there are thousands of ways to develop, create, and deliver video. This area has been created to help you sift through the multitude of ways and find the most effective uses for video. Within this section you'll find a place where groups showcase their research and development into best practices for video use. Not only will you get an opportunity to read about Best Practices being developed, you'll also be able to see samples and read how individuals have utilized the best practices that are shown throughout this section.

Best Practice Categories

- Best practices for Video Use in Online Courses
- Best Practices for Video Use on the Web

---

**Title:** Linking Faculty Pay to Performance: A Multi-Mission Model  
**Source:** University of South Florida  
**Addl Info:** http://www.sacuco.org/awards/bestpractices/archive/2009bp/  
**Abstract:** Since approximately eighty percent of the total USF College of Medicine budget is allocated to faculty and staff compensation, the Dean charged a college-wide Council to develop a Pay for Performance System that would improve productivity and maximize salary dollars by setting clear performance expectations for faculty and staff, directly linking their pay to their performance.

Even though the AIMS Pay for Performance Plan is in its first full year of implementation, the project has already benefited the College of Medicine in the following ways:

- The “culture” is changing to focus on outcomes and improved productivity
- Patient Care productivity has increased over the past two years
- Performance data is readily available, saving hundreds of hours of staff time in compiling reports from 13 separate data bases
- Clinician faculty response to requests for education program support has increased
- Clinical Departments are developing discipline specific metrics to supplement the College-wide performance criteria
- Raised awareness among clinicians regarding distribution of educational responsibilities within divisions and payer mix impact on revenues
- Helped to strengthen relationship with our major teaching hospital as hospital performance metrics are included in the AIMS Plan

For additional information, contact Financial Affairs
Central Piedmont Community College implemented a four-day, 40-hour week schedule for the 2009 summer semester, a 12-week period. This initiative was a major change in the College’s approach to instruction and general College operations during the time frame of mid-May to August 2nd. The impetus for this experiment was that the College was experiencing significant funding cuts that would inevitably impact the way general operations of the institution could be conducted. The College’s administration was concerned about any possible negative impact that would be experienced by students by changing course offerings to a Monday through Thursday schedule rather than the College’s normal schedule of operation of seven days per week. The College strategically approached the shortened instructional week by systematically reviewing course schedule requirements early in the planning process. The College’s instructional unit began course-by-course reviews to determine how best to meet student needs while reducing the number of days and hours that the College’s facilities would be open and in use. At the same time that the instructional impact was being evaluated, the physical impacts of closed facilities and potential cost savings were estimated by the facilities operations department. Additionally, cross-functional teams evaluated the expected consequences of a reduced schedule of operations. The actual outcomes resulted in no reduction in the number of course offerings, a significant increase in full-time equivalency (FTE) earned for the term, and more efficient use of facilities with documented savings in physical operations.

Florida’s public universities are subject to extensive and very detailed reporting of all faculty, graduate assistant and faculty adjunct activities funded by the state. Florida’s Required Number of Classroom Teaching Hours for University Faculty Members, (Florida Statutes 1012.945, also known as the Twelve-Hour Law) requires that each full-time equivalent faculty member who is paid with state funds teach a minimum of 12 classroom contact hours per week or do equivalent assignments each term. Another Florida requirement, the submission of an Instruction and Research file, adds more reporting detail, to include all courses taught and credit hours generated by each faculty, graduate assistant or faculty adjunct and the percentage of time in these instructional activities, as well as all non-instructional activities, such as research and public service—all at the individual employee level.

As a result of Florida requirements, plus the (A-21) effort reporting requirements by the federal government, Florida State University has to do extensive effort and activities reporting at the end of each semester (for exempt employees) or monthly period (for non-exempt) employees.
Lipscomb University has been faced with the challenge of remaining competitive in the higher education market without compromising quality during a national recession. Innovative and collaborative programs are being implemented following the advice of Tennessee State Senator Lamar Alexander to make college education more affordable.

A new Community College Initiative, a Three-Year Education Plan, and a Veteran Scholars Initiative are three innovative programs that have been recently implemented. These programs, with the collaboration of deans and faculty with government agencies and community colleges, will provide a quality higher education that is affordable to consumers.