

THE EVOLUTION OF THE ACADEMIC CAREER: CHANGING VALUES, EXPECTATIONS AND DIRECTIONS

Patricia M. Hopkins, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona,
3801 Temple Ave., Pomona, CA 91745; (909) 869-4597

ABSTRACT

Faculty entering the profession in the 1980s and 1990s choose to teach at institutions according to whether they preferred primarily a research focus or a balance of research and teaching. Those who choose to be more active in teaching were openly discouraged by their mentors who pushed for an academic research focus. A faculty member at a research institution was primarily engaged in developing journal articles, engaging in research with nominal teaching duties. While those faculties in more balanced institutions predominantly taught classes, became actively involved in advising, university service as well as student organizations and also engaged in a wide range of professional development activities. Universities basically structured resources according to these expectations.

In recent years external professional accrediting bodies have evolved in their mission and standards which subsequently influenced the criteria for members to receive and maintain accreditation. Unfortunately, many balances teaching/research institutions have not reallocated adequate resources to reflect expectations.

This has resulted in:

- Older faculty required achieving and maintaining academic qualifications despite high teaching loads and university service expectations.
- Lack of resources to support research activities in the form of student assistance, reduced teaching loads.
- Difficulty in recruiting new faculty.
- Difficulty in maintaining a professional qualified part time pool.
- Limited number of outlets for pedagogical research.
- Lack of incentives to achieve and maintain academic qualifications.
- Changing characteristics of student population who need more not less attention and advising.
- Lack of personal interface between faculty and students due to electronic media and internet classes.
- Changing atmosphere in the academic department where interaction is rare.

The purpose of this topic is to obtain ideas to improve the situations facing many mid career and late career faculty. To also solicit feedback on how faculty are coping with changing conditions.