

CASE STUDY

At your institution, *The University of Where Research Rules*, research/creative activity and instruction (classroom, mentoring of graduate and undergraduate students) are viewed as separate and mostly competing activities, being evaluated separately and not rewarded equally. Indeed, research capabilities and achievements are viewed as the primary currency of tenure and promotion, and also tend to dominate consideration when recruiting new faculty and when thinking about faculty who might be poached by competitor institutions. Your institution has a long history of pouring significant money into new buildings and other resources for research, while TA slots continue to evaporate, salaries languish, and class sizes grow.

You have the distinction of serving as chair of the *School of Three Types*, comprising the following groups of faculty:

- TYPE A: people who are recognized as successful at both research/creative activity and teaching (8 total, a mixture of early- and mid-career);
- TYPE B: people who are recognized nationally leaders in research/creative activity, and in professional organizations, but are mediocre teachers (15 total, mostly latter-career); and
- TYPE C: people who are exceptional teachers but who are almost completely inactive in research/creative activity (10 total, mostly late-career and near-retirement age).

The TYPE B group dominates departmental governance, holds by far the largest number of named professorships and endowed chairs, and is generally viewed in a negative light by their departmental colleagues because they teach less owing to course buy-outs, receive consistently poor teaching evaluations, are frequently absent, care seemingly little about undergraduates, have the highest salaries, even at mid-career levels, and receive special consideration from the university's senior administrators because of their stature. Two of the TYPE B faculty lead

major research centers that fund 40% of the graduate students in the department, and provide facilities that have brought significant national recognition to it.

The Provost and VPR have communicated to your dean that the university, via an initiative from the President, is pioneering a new approach whereby “teaching and research will henceforth be equally valued, resourced, and rewarded.” This wording has been chosen carefully by the president and is meant to provide clear direction but also some degree of flexibility. Significant new funding is being made available for cross-college initiatives that bring research and teaching together in new and creative ways, and for individual departments that transform their own discipline-focused instructional activities by integrating research into them, especially at the undergraduate level.

Although the president’s initiative has significant merit philosophically and is a politically astute move in light of increasing scrutiny from the state, you immediately recognize that such a transformation will cause major upheaval in your department, especially in the short term. In fact, word of this change already has been leaked to faculty, and the TYPE B group in your program has voiced its strong displeasure, noting that the change will cause the institution to lose prestige, funding, and the ability to recruit outstanding faculty and graduate students. Indeed, some of the TYPE B faculty are even threatening to leave, taking substantial funding and students with them. The somewhat smaller and older TYPE C cohort is generally pleased at the notion that teaching will be receiving greater attention and resources, but is quite concerned that they are now going to be expected to have a more significant research portfolio.

EXERCISE: How will you communicate the value proposition of the president’s initiative to your faculty in a way that is viewed by them as an opportunity? What practical steps will you take to address their concerns? How might you use the initiative to bring the faculty together such that only one “TYPE” exists in the future – with a department that is much stronger, more collegial, and successful. Be as creative as you like, and please list any leadership or management skills you feel you lack in being able to effectively deal with this scenario.