

# BEYOND SCHOLARSHIP: Recognizing the Multiple Roles of the Professoriate

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## INTRODUCTION

In the introduction to *Scholarship Revisited* Boyer noted

“*For American Higher Education to remain vital, we urgently need a more creative view of the work of the professoriate.*” (p. xii)

This paper and the model presented herein responds to that need.

Boyer’s earlier reconsideration (1990) of the priorities of the professoriate was a landmark effort to revitalize higher education and the faculty role. However, recent research (Braxton, 2001; Franklin & Theall, 2001; Theall & Centra, 2001), as well as the shared experiences of faculty development and evaluation practitioners, and anecdotal evidence suggest that after more than a decade of high-profile discussion, Boyer’s conceptualizations have not had a major, measurable impact on college teaching, faculty development practice, or the assignment of rewards for teaching excellence.

Decades of work in the practical aspects of designing, building, and operating comprehensive faculty evaluation systems have led us to the conceptualization of the roles and work of higher education faculty as belonging to a larger, more comprehensive *meta-profession* model. That is, the professoriate is seen as practicing a “meta” profession in the sense that a college professor must perform at a professional level in a variety of roles that require expertise and skills in areas that often extend beyond the faculty member’s specific area of scholarly expertise. Thus the *meta-professional* model described here represents an attempt to develop the “... *more creative view of the work of the professoriate*” called for by Boyer and to go beyond his proposals to an even broader view of the professoriate and the profession of college teaching.

The purpose of this creative and wide-ranging *metaprofession* model is to promote a better understanding of the full complexity and variety of faculty work. The model provides a structure for conducting research, delivering faculty development programs, designing faculty evaluation systems, and developing administrative policies that lead to improved teaching and learning. Finally, by promoting a better understanding of the complexity and variety of faculty work, it becomes possible to move closer to Boyer’s goal of renewing both the vitality and status of the professoriate.

The meta-profession model significantly clarifies the relationship between faculty evaluation programs, faculty development programs, and the assumptions underlying their structure and operation. The General Meta-professional Model presented recognizes and defines the multiple roles faculty are expected play in the arenas of teaching, research, and service and clearly relates them to operational procedures in both designing and implementing effective faculty evaluation and faculty development programs.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Faculty engage in a variety of activities necessary for the successful achievement of both their personal professional goals and objectives as well as the mission and goals of their department and institution. These activities may require not only expertise in a given content area but also skills and expertise in a host of other sophisticated psychological, technical, organizational, and group processes that are not necessarily related to their content field. In short, college faculty are expected to assume a variety of roles and to perform at a high professional level in each role. Many of these roles do not necessarily depend on the faculty member’s formally recognized area of expertise. Rather, some roles – such as advising, serving on curriculum committees, or managing complex projects – may require expertise in areas outside the faculty member’s own field. In short, in order for a department, college, or university to function properly faculty must assume a multiplicity of roles. In today’s climate of increasing demand for accountability, the emphasis on outcomes-based assessment, and the impact of technology in teaching, there is a need to reconsider the interactions of the skills and expertise within the broad multiplicity of roles that a successful faculty member must assume.

What is required is a more global and comprehensive view of the profession of college teaching that explores the intersections of the multiplicity of roles faculty must play, rather than presupposing all faculty roles are an extension of scholarship.

## A Global Perspective of the Professoriate

Research and practice in both faculty evaluation and faculty development strongly suggests an alternative, global, and useful conceptualization of the role of the college teacher. In developing comprehensive faculty evaluation systems it has been noted that the conventional conceptualization and definitions of faculty roles as involving Teaching, Research and Service are almost universally insufficient (Arreola, 1979, 1986, 1995, 2000a, 2000b; Arreola, Aleamoni & Theall, 2001). That is, the process of developing a comprehensive faculty evaluation system inevitably points to the need to define a broader range of roles in order to accommodate the scope and complexity of faculty performance (Aleamoni, 1987b).

All college faculty are drawn from a pool of professionals prepared to practice and/or conduct research in a specific content area. When an individual is hired as a faculty member for the first time s/he comes to the position with what may be called “*base profession*” skills and knowledge including:

- Content Expertise
- Techniques for Keeping Current in the field
- Practice and/or Clinical Skills appropriate to the field
- Research Skills and Techniques appropriate to the field

This set of skills, techniques and knowledge, which characterize a faculty member’s *base profession*, has traditionally been assumed to be sufficient to enable the individual to be an effective teacher. Current selection and hiring processes for college and university faculty positions are often predicated on this assumption. However, research in the field of the evaluation of faculty teaching performance has shown this assumption to be incorrect (Aleamoni, 1999).

Although the skills and knowledge associated with a faculty member’s *base profession* are necessary for effective college teaching, they are *insufficient*. In its full professional expression college teaching has been found to require at least four different, though related, professional dimensions:

- Base Profession Skills and Knowledge (especially Content Expertise)
- Instructional Design Skills
- Instructional Delivery Skills
- Instructional Assessment Skills

That is, faculty must, of course, be expert in the field that they are teaching. However, the act of practicing one’s *base profession*, whether it be architecture, biochemistry, dentistry, engineering, etc., is substantially different than that of interacting with learners in such a way that they, too, gain the skills, knowledge, and practice skills of that profession. Faculty must be able to design and deliver a set of experiences to the learner such that, if the learner engages the experiences, there is a high probability learning will occur. In addition, the faculty member must validly and reliably assess the learner’s progress so as to both enhance the learning process and, ultimately, certify that learning has in fact occurred. The areas of Instructional Design, Instructional Delivery, and Instructional Assessment are professional endeavors in and of themselves (doctorates are offered in all areas). Thus, at least four different arenas of professional performance are required of the college professor.

Outside the classroom the college professor may also be expected to advise students, manage projects involving personnel and budgets, chair departments, serve on important committees and task forces, raise funds, recruit students, etc. These activities and roles may require professional level skills in a number of non-base-profession areas. These “*META-Professional*” skills and areas of expertise include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Instructional Research Techniques</li><li>• Psychometrics and Statistics</li><li>• Epistemology</li><li>• Learning Theory</li><li>• Human Development</li><li>• Information Technology</li><li>• Technical Writing</li><li>• Graphic Design</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Public Speaking</li><li>• Communication Styles</li><li>• Conflict Management</li><li>• Group Process</li><li>• Resource Management</li><li>• Personnel Supervision and Management</li><li>• Financial and Budgetary Analysis and Development</li><li>• Policy Analysis and Development</li></ul>
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Clearly, a faculty member may be expected to perform at a professional level in a multiplicity of areas outside their recognized area of expertise.

Thus the professoriate may more appropriately be conceptualized as a *meta-profession*. That is, a profession that is built upon the foundation of a *base* profession by combining elements from a variety of several other different professional arenas. This conceptualization makes possible a much more realistic and comprehensive view of the multiple roles played by the faculty member so as to facilitate both faculty evaluation and faculty development practices and procedures. However, the model, being multi-dimensional is difficult to convey in two-dimensional form. Thus the full *meta-profession* model is presented on the separate CD as a set of 5 dynamically interlinked matrices. (If the CD is not available a basic version of the interactive matrices may be found at <http://www.cednet.com/meta>) The following figures representing the dynamic matrices are included in the APPENDIX (starting on page 6) of this paper:

- **Figure 1: SUMMARY Matrix** [presents an overview picture of the meta-profession in relation to the base profession]
- **Figure 2: TEACHING Matrix** [presents an expanded view of the Teaching role and its meta-profession elements]
- **Figure 3: SCHOLARLY/CREATIVE ACTIVITIES Matrix** [same as above but for Scholarly/Creative Activities]
- **Figure 4: SERVICE Matrix** [same as above but for Service Activities]
- **Figure 5: Special SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING AND LEARNING (SoTL) Matrix** [focus on SoTL elements]

Each matrix contains a number of cells representing interactions between a specific faculty role and the various *base-* and *meta-profession* skill sets. Clicking on the cells links to a description of the interaction as well as a discussion of the faculty evaluation, faculty development, research, and policy development implications of the interaction.

Please note that the interaction cells are different colors. *These colors represent an estimate of the frequency of application of the skill set interacting with the specific role.* See the LEGEND at the bottom of each matrix for the meaning of each color. However, the matrices shown represent a *work in progress* thus not all cells may yet be colored or interactive. To explore the model simply click on any term or interaction cell of interest in any of the matrices.

As can be seen in both the matrices in the Appendix as well as on the CD (or web site), the meta-profession conceptualization replaces the ‘Research’ role in the traditional faculty role model of ‘Teaching, Research and Service’ with the more encompassing role of ‘Scholarly/Creative Activities.’ In the basic ‘Scholarly/Creative Activities’ matrix (Fig. 3), *scholarship* is defined as activities focused exclusively on the faculty member’s recognized area of content expertise and includes four different types of expression:

- *Proficiency – the attainment of advanced levels of expertise one’s content field (keeping current).*
- *Discovery – all forms of research.*
- *Dissemination – promulgating the results of research via publications, presentations, exhibitions, etc.*
- *Translation – translating research findings into new and beneficial products, services, performances of value to the professional and/or general public community.*

Within this larger conceptualization of the generalized meta-profession model, Boyer’s conceptualizations of the scholarship of teaching, application, etc., become more easily operationalized within faculty evaluation, faculty development, and personnel policy systems.

In the special ‘Scholarship of Teaching and Learning’ matrix (Fig. 5), the definition of *scholarship* is expanded to include *proficiency, discovery, dissemination and translation* in both the base profession and the *meta-profession* content and skill elements. Thus, for example, *discovery* (which includes research activities) is expanded to include not only research in one’s base profession content area (*traditional definition*) but in any of the other areas, or combination of areas, of expertise that comprise the meta-profession skill sets.

## EDUCATIONAL IMPORTANCE

### Application and Impact of the Meta-Profession Model

As noted earlier, it is important for any model of the college teacher's range of professional performance responsibilities to provide useful insights into both faculty evaluation and faculty development efforts. In addition, the model must provide guidance for the determination and implementation of personnel policies affecting the entire faculty reward system (Aleamoni, 1987a).

In Faculty Evaluation systems: By acknowledging the professoriate as a meta-profession that builds upon and extends beyond each faculty member's content expertise, the various skill and performance elements required in teaching, scholarship, and service as described earlier, become more clearly identified. The careful identification and definition of the meta-profession role components provide the basis for more objective, performance-based assessment and evaluation procedures that result in fairer faculty evaluation systems. Data from such faculty evaluation systems can then be more confidently and easily used in all forms of personnel decisions including promotion, tenure, continuation, and pay raise decisions (Arreola, 2000a).

In Faculty Development programs: As noted above, the meta-professional paradigm expands the possibilities in designing faculty evaluation systems. However, the impact on faculty development programs is both direct and obvious (Aleamoni, 1997). The simple 'rule of thumb' is that if a specific faculty performance is to be evaluated, there must be some resource available to enable the faculty member to gain expertise and proficiency in that performance – especially if that performance area falls outside their recognized area of content expertise. Faculty development efforts in various aspects of psychology, educational technology, the public speaking, and organizational management and leadership, for example, may be required to assist faculty with the full range of their meta-professional performance expectations.

In Research Programs: The meta-professional model as represented in the various matrices provides a rich and powerful tool for promoting research in higher education. Each cell in a matrix representing an interaction between a specific skill set and a specific role immediately brings forth a series of researchable questions. For example, the interaction between the specific Teaching Role of Distance/Online Teaching and the skill set "Instructional Delivery Skills", calls forth a series of researchable questions on the relationship between the 'television performance' characteristics of an instructor (teaching via interactive video) and student learning.

In Policy Development: The development and implementation of administrative policies and practices relating to the process of making faculty personnel decisions (hiring, promotion, tenure, etc.) may be guided by the meta-profession model. Specific identification of the elements of professional performance required of a faculty member, both within their recognized area of content expertise as well as in other areas of expertise, would serve to guide the development of personnel policies that recognize a more complex, but complete, set of faculty performance expectations. The meta-professional model also permits the development of policies that enable faculty to be rewarded on the basis of success in accomplishing their unique pattern of meta-professional responsibilities, rather than placing inappropriate emphasis on simply 'research' or even 'teaching'.

The traditional 'Teaching-Research-Service' model of faculty evaluation on which many personnel policies are based was established when the sine qua non of faculty performance was content area expertise. Faculty were hired and retained based solely on their ability to be productive contributors and representatives in their field of content expertise. Teaching was conceptualized as simply delivering information to the student apprentice who was expected to develop his/her own strategies for learning the delivered information. Therefore, many personnel policies were based on an evaluation system based solely on their content expertise and their stature in that field. The meta-professional model identifies and recognizes the intersections of multiple areas of professional performance and thus permits the development of fairer, more appropriate, faculty personnel policies.

### In Conclusion

The professoriate is conceptualized as practitioners of a more comprehensive meta-profession rather than a confederation of content-specific professional groups, as has traditionally been the case. As college teachers faculty are seen as a broad unified set of professionals whose practice extends beyond their specific content expertise to the broader areas of psychology, the performing arts, organizational management, and leadership. The generalized meta-professional paradigm described above derives from the experience of designing, developing and implementing large-scale faculty evaluation and faculty development programs by the authors. The meta-professional model grows from practical application, rather than theory, and thus has immediate practical applications for faculty evaluation, faculty development, educational research and policy development. Although the model has grown from practical experience, its theoretical foundation is firm and is supported by research in a variety of areas. It is noted that Boyer's conceptualization of the scholarship of teaching, application, etc., may be more readily operationalized when seen as a special case of the General Meta-Professional Model.

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# APPENDIX

Figure 1: SUMMARY MetaProfession Matrix

Skill Sets		Faculty Roles		
		TEACHING	SCHOLARLY/ CREATIVE ACTIVITIES	SERVICE
<b>BASE PROFESSION Skill Sets</b>	<a href="#">Content Expertise</a>			
	<a href="#">Practice/Clinical Skills</a>			
	<a href="#">Research Techniques</a>			
<b>META-PROFESSION Skill Sets</b>	<a href="#">Instructional Design</a>			
	<a href="#">Instructional Delivery</a>			
	<a href="#">Instructional Assessment</a>			
	<a href="#">Course Management</a>			
	<a href="#">Instructional Research Techniques</a>			
	<a href="#">Psychometrics/Statistics</a>			
	<a href="#">Epistemology</a>			
	<a href="#">Learning Theory</a>			
	<a href="#">Human Development</a>			
	<a href="#">Information Technology</a>			
	<a href="#">Technical Writing</a>			
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<b>LEGEND (Cell Color = Frequency of Use)</b>	<b>RARELY</b>	<b>FREQUENTLY</b>
	<b>OCCASIONALLY</b>	<b>CONSTANTLY</b>

**Figure 2: TEACHING MetaProfession Matrix**

SkillSets		Faculty Role: Teaching					
		Standard Classroom	Large Lecture	Small Group	Clinical/ Practicum	Tutorial	Mentoring
<b>BASE PROFESSION Skill Sets</b>	<a href="#">Content Expertise</a>						
	<a href="#">Practice/Clinical Skills</a>						
	<a href="#">Research Techniques</a>						
<b>META-PROFESSION Skill Sets</b>	<a href="#">Instructional Design</a>						
	<a href="#">Instructional Delivery</a>						X
	<a href="#">Instructional Assessment</a>						
	<a href="#">Course Management</a>						
	<a href="#">Instructional Research Techniques</a>						
	<a href="#">Psychometrics/Statistics</a>						
	<a href="#">Epistemology</a>						
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<b>LEGEND (Cell Color = Frequency of Use)</b>	<b>RARELY</b>	<b>FREQUENTLY</b>
	<b>OCCASIONALLY</b>	<b>CONSTANTLY</b>

**Figure 3: SCHOLARLY/CREATIVE ACTIVITIES MetaProfession Matrix**

Skill Sets		Faculty Role: Scholarly/Creative Activities							
		Proficiency: Base Profession	Proficiency: Meta- Profession	Discovery/ Creation Base Profession	Discovery/ Creation Meta-Profession	Dissemination Base Profession	Dissemination Meta- Profession	Translation Base Profession	Translation Meta- Profession
		<b>BASE PROFESSION Skill Sets</b>	Content Expertise						
	Practice/Clinical Skills								
	Research Techniques								
<b>META-PROFESSION Skill Sets</b>	Instructional Design								
	Instructional Delivery								
	Instructional Assessment								
	Course Management								
	Instructional Research Techniques								
	Psychometrics/Statistics								
	Epistemology								
	Learning Theory								
	Human Development								
	Information Technology								
	Technical Writing								
	Graphic Design								
	Public Speaking								
	Communication Styles								
	Conflict Management								
	Group Process								
Resource Management									
Personnel Supervision/Management									
Financial/Budget Development									
Policy Analysis & Development									
<b>HOME</b>									

<b>LEGEND (Cell Color = Frequency of Use)</b>	<b>RARELY</b>	<b>FREQUENTLY</b>
	<b>OCCASIONALLY</b>	<b>CONSTANTLY</b>



**Figure 4: SERVICE MetaProfession Matrix**

SkillSets		Faculty Role: <b>SERVICE</b>			
		Base Profession	General Community	Institution	Meta-Profession
<b>BASE PROFESSION</b> Skill Sets	<a href="#">Content Expertise</a>				
	<a href="#">Practice/Clinical Skills</a>				
	<a href="#">Research Techniques</a>				
<b>META-PROFESSION</b> Skill Sets	<a href="#">Instructional Design</a>				
	<a href="#">Instructional Delivery</a>				
	<a href="#">Instructional Assessment</a>				
	<a href="#">Course Management</a>				
	<a href="#">Instructional Research Techniques</a>				
	<a href="#">Psychometrics/Statistics</a>				
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<b>LEGEND (Cell Color = Frequency of Use)</b>	<b>RARELY</b>	<b>FREQUENTLY</b>			
	<b>OCCASIONALLY</b>	<b>CONSTANTLY</b>			

Figure 5: *Special Case* – SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING/LEARNING Matrix

Skill Sets		Faculty Role: Scholarly/Creative Activities (SOTL Special Case)							
		Proficiency: Base Profession	Proficiency: Meta- Profession	Discovery/ Creation Base Profession	Discovery/ Creation Meta-Profession	Dissemination Base Profession	Dissemination Meta- Profession	Translation Base Profession	Translation Meta- Profession
<b>BASE PROFESSION Skill Sets</b>	<a href="#">Content Expertise</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Practice/Clinical Skills</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Research Techniques</a>				X				
<b>META-PROFESSION Skill Sets</b>	<a href="#">Instructional Design</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Instructional Delivery</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Instructional Assessment</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Course Management</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Instructional Research Techniques</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Psychometrics/Statistics</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Epistemology</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Learning Theory</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Human Development</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Information Technology</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Technical Writing</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Graphic Design</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Public Speaking</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Communication Styles</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Conflict Management</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Group Process</a>				X				
	<a href="#">Resource Management</a>				X				
<a href="#">Personnel Supervision/Management</a>				X					
<a href="#">Financial/Budget Development</a>				X					
<a href="#">Policy Analysis &amp; Development</a>				X					
<b>HOME</b>									

<b>LEGEND (Cell Color = Frequency of Use)</b>	<b>RARELY</b>	<b>FREQUENTLY</b>
	<b>OCCASIONALLY</b>	<b>CONSTANTLY</b>