

TABLE 7

The foundations for excellence: faculty and professional staff

WHITEPAPER

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Faculty committed to excellence in research and teaching is a cornerstone for advancing knowledge, delivering quality programs, creating a stimulating learning environment for students, and strengthening the University's national and international reputation. To recruit, retain and integrate the best and brightest professors, the University must create an attractive and competitive environment that supports career development, and fosters commitment.

Question 1: How do we recruit and integrate the best and brightest professors? How do we support the recruitment of specific groups (e.g., women, bilingual professors and professors from visible and cultural minorities)?

1. Target recruiting efforts to leading scholars (at both the junior and senior level) engaged in research in faculty-defined clusters of research excellence to make the UofO an exciting and dynamic place to work and to join. Clusters are dynamic and evolving and could change over time. Foster national and international relationships in the broader scholarly/peer community in these strategic clusters. Recruiting outstanding scholars creates and sustains a culture of excellence that prompts the best and the brightest not only to apply, but also to stay.
2. Offer competitive compensation packages tailored to the individual needs of each faculty. While some faculties may need to offer salary supplements to be competitive in markets with a limited supply of candidates, others may need to offer higher start-up funds for research. Other compensation elements that could vary among faculties include lab space, technical support, research facilitation, computers/equipment, and reduced teaching/administrative workload.
3. Promote Ottawa as a desirable location (e.g., emphasizing family lifestyle, green spaces, cultural communities, strengthening links with national institutions such as the NRC and the National Archives, ensuring a seamless transition (e.g., comprehensive relocation assistance, spousal placement services and childcare arrangements). This would strengthen the desirability of Ottawa for women and dual-career families.

4. Increase financial support for the recruitment process. This could include providing ‘how to’ workshops to those involved in recruiting and engaging in proactive and aggressive recruitment techniques (attending conferences, identifying universities with Ph.D. students in specific disciplines and students with Ph.D. and post-doc scholarships from external granting institutions, focusing on countries where French is language of instruction, etc.).

Question 2: *How do we retain and support faculty members? How do we promote career development? How do we increase and maintain morale, satisfaction and commitment?*

1. Help professors achieve their potential in research and scholarship by expanding the pool of highly qualified students and by providing a research infrastructure and technical support.
2. Assist professors with career planning and development. This could include providing orientation information, preparing specific feedback on annual reports, providing advice on when to apply for grants and where to publish, preparing nomination files for internal and external awards, explaining the criteria for tenure, advising when to say “no,” directing faculty to the Centre for University Teaching, and pairing junior faculty with more senior mentors). These tasks could be the responsibility of an associate dean (Faculty Career Development).
3. Reward, recognize and celebrate all forms of scholarly activity (e.g., community involvement, non-academic publications, media interaction, teaching excellence) to ensure all professors feel valued for their individual contribution. An emphasis on recognizing only research and success in securing grants is frustrating for those who are contributing in other ways or who don’t need large grants to conduct their research.
4. Create a sense of community by providing a common space for interaction (e.g., a faculty lounge similar to the concept of Café Nostalgica). Serious interdisciplinary research ideas and initiatives sprout when space is provided for social interaction.

Question 3: *How can we best utilize non-traditional resources (retirees, clinical faculty) to enhance and support various functions (e.g., teaching, research, administration, mentoring)?*

1. Create “Clinical Faculty” positions as well as “Teaching Masters” positions where appropriate. The need for clinical faculty or clinical professors is essential in professional faculties where the skills of practitioners must be brought into the classroom for training purposes and where PhDs are in short supply. The career path of clinical faculty would have to be designed to ensure that they do not become ‘second class’ citizens, that their contribution is equally valued and that they, too, have ample opportunity to progress in their career and development.

2. Promote the involvement and participation of retirees and draw on their knowledge and experience. Retirees who wish to stay involved with the University can be invaluable as spokespeople, in attracting talent, in mentoring faculty and students, as committee members, and in the more traditional functions of conducting research and teaching. We need a mechanism to cultivate and sustain relationships with these members of the University community (e.g., assigning the responsibility of 'Retiree Affairs' to someone specific in the University administration). The retirement process also needs review, to ensure that retirees do not feel alienated and bitter (e.g., a transition period could be provided). Finally, a financial compensation and benefit plan should be developed to increase their motivation to perform academic activities.

Question 4: How can we support excellence in teaching and research throughout an academic's career? What are the responsibilities of the different individuals/subgroups involved in teaching and research? How can these individuals/subgroups share the responsibility to ensure high quality teaching, professional training, and research? How will the University promote the culture of scholarship in teaching and research? How will the University ensure that quality programs are delivered and maintained?

1. Recognize and reward both teaching and research excellence. Include both teaching requirements, especially at the undergraduate level, and research ability in performance appraisals and promotion decisions.
2. Emphasize the role of teaching as well as research in the hiring process, and increase the importance of both in hiring decisions. Successful candidates should possess good communication skills in at least one language (French or English) and be perceived as able to become excellent teachers during their career. All faculty should be required to teach at least one course, so that we can effectively counter the culture of teaching as a second-class activity.
3. Increase the opportunities and incentives to participate in workshops on "how to teach" and on using teaching technologies (e.g., incentives could include lesser administrative responsibilities; increased potential for promotion). Continue to fund structures important to teaching, such as the Library Network (librarians, staff, collections and electronic resources), the Student Academic Success Service (increase awareness of students with disabilities), the Teaching and Learning Support Service. Foster stronger ties between faculties and these centres.
4. Ensure that workload consists of an appropriate and manageable balance of research, teaching and administration. A professor's 'overflowing plate' can be eased through increased support from senior demonstrators, clinical faculty, retirees, teaching masters, teaching assistants, research assistants, research facilitators and administrative assistants.
5. Simplify internal processes for grant applications and review other procedures that could be streamlined and made more 'user friendly'. Remove day-to-day obstacles and provide

clerical and administrative support for time-intensive activities (e.g., facilitating travel arrangements, booking rooms, arranging for guest speakers, etc.).

6. Increase our coordination of part-time faculty. This would include increasing quality control (e.g., ensuring that the outline is in line with the course and other sections, directing part-time faculty to teaching workshops when needed, determining pedagogical requirements), ensuring that current research is integrated into the course, and improving socialization/orientation of new part-time faculty.

Question 5: How do we support and promote a bilingual culture in faculty and other professionals? How can the University's bilingual nature be positioned to be viewed as a positive factor and an asset?

1. Recognize that although bilingualism is what makes UO distinct, that many faculty will never be more than passive in skill level in a second language and that, for some faculty, learning French or English is requiring them to acquire a third language.
2. Ensure that the skill level of the faculty member is adequate if he or she is teaching in a second language. A positive culture of bilingualism is eroded when the quality of service (teaching) is perceived to be lesser because courses are taught badly in a second language.
3. Support professors wishing to learn and improve their second language (e.g., teaching release, sabbaticals to learn a second language, immersion programs). Include second-language acquisition as part of a faculty member's career development. Ensure that the Second Language Institute offers an adequate and well-publicized range of courses and programs for faculty development.
4. Establish a social committee that promotes cultural and social activities designed to help professors improve their second language skills and learn about the two cultures.