

**Psychology Department Statement of Significant Professional Activity
St. Olaf College, January 2011**

The Department of Psychology supports and evaluates the professional development of its faculty in ways that reflect the mission of the college and the discipline of psychology. We acknowledge that teaching is the main priority of faculty and endorse the view that excellent teaching is sustained and enhanced by professional engagement and continual growth of knowledge and skills. The Department of Psychology expects faculty to be active in professional scholarship and research activities.

With its focus on mind and behavior, the discipline of psychology spans a wide range of areas, including neurological and cognitive processes, the development of children and families, personality, psychological disorders, interactions between social groups, and clinical practice and applications. Psychology also employs a diverse set of methodologies. We view this diversity as a strength and are committed to supporting the full breadth of psychology. We also value interdisciplinary work and encourage connections with programs across campus, such as Neuroscience, Asian Studies, Computer Science, Environmental Studies, and Family Studies.

In acknowledgement and appreciation of the diversity that exists within Psychology, we support multiple ways of demonstrating professional activity and scholarship. Over time, faculty should have a comprehensive professional activity program, with activities demonstrating achievement and service to the field of psychology and promotion of the intellectual growth of students. At the same time, we do not expect any single faculty to engage in all areas of scholarship, and we realize that the mix and emphasis among activities may shift at different stages in a person's career. We also recognize that the pursuit of excellence in these areas needs to be sustainable, allowing faculty members to achieve excellence in professional activity, teaching, and service while still having a full life outside of their professional commitments to St Olaf.

Our thoughts about professional activity are informed by American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines. At the most general level, we endorse APA's mission "to advance the creation, communication and application of psychological knowledge to benefit society and improve people's lives" (<http://apa.org/about/index.aspx>). More specifically, we have adapted the APA's Task Force on Defining Scholarship in Psychology framework (Halpern et al., 1998) that articulates different categories of professional activity. The four categories that we use are defined as follows:

Original research	The creation of new knowledge, collection of original data, advancement in methods of inquiry, and theory generation or testing, with dissemination of this activity occurring in a refereed scholarly journal, professional conference, or other peer-reviewed context.
Integration of knowledge	The integration and synthesis of new knowledge into a larger context, such as the publication of review articles, meta-analyses, and interdisciplinary books, or presentation of integrative work in professional settings.

Application of knowledge	The use of psychological knowledge and evidence in applied settings to benefit society or improve people’s lives, to inform professional or nonprofessional audiences, to contribute to decision making or problem solving, or to guide the development or evaluation of programs or resource materials. The application of knowledge may also be reflected in positions of leadership and service in academic and community organizations.
Scholarship of teaching & pedagogy	Original contributions to the practice of teaching that synthesize information in new ways, as well as documentation and dissemination of such contributions through peer-reviewed public presentations and publications. The development of textbooks, media, or other educational materials for use in or out of the classroom and lab, as well as research activity focusing on ways to promote learning.

While different faculty members’ professional activity may consist of different mixes of one or more of the categories described above, a comprehensive professional activity program in the Department of Psychology should include:

- *Components that directly involve St. Olaf students, have a significant impact on St. Olaf students, or have a significant outreach component.* While all research and scholarship activities advancing and applying knowledge in psychology are valued, we are deeply committed to undergraduate education. As such, we place particular value on research that actively involves and collaborates with St. Olaf students. Other forms of professional activity that are less likely to directly involve undergraduates but still have a positive impact on students are also valued. For example, students cannot be directly involved in a faculty member’s clinical or consulting practice but can benefit to the extent that the faculty member successfully incorporates this experience into his or her teaching.
- *Components that advance and disseminate psychological knowledge within the broader community.* Faculty members are expected to engage in scholarly activities that advance the field of psychology (e.g., through the collection and analysis of original data, or the synthesis of work in the field), and disseminate their knowledge within the broader scientific community. Faculty are encouraged to present their results at professional meetings, and submit manuscripts for publication in scholarly journals and in books. Faculty seminar presentations or talks at symposia are other examples of disseminating knowledge within the broader scientific community. Research in psychology is often collaborative, and consequently, publications often involve co-authors. Students should be included as co-authors when they have contributed substantially to a project.

Development of Professional Activity Over Time

It is expected that the level of responsibility and leadership of an individual faculty member will increase with experience and rank. Promotion will be based on successful teaching, continued growth as a scholar and leader, and significant contributions to the overall academic environment.

We believe that candidates for tenure and promotion to associate professor should exhibit excellence in teaching and contributions in professional activity as described in this document. Candidates for tenure and promotion should be engaged in a research program that involves students and/or contributes to student learning. At this level of review, we also note the promise of contributions. We expect that candidates with few publications or presentations will have work in progress that is available to be reviewed as part of their dossier.

Candidates for promotion to full professor should show evidence of excellence in teaching, sustained significant professional activity, and significant contributions to the department and College. Candidates should have made significant scholarly contributions since their last promotion, such as scholarly presentations, publication of articles, a book, or other scholarly achievements.

Examples of Professional Activity

The list below illustrates various examples of professional activity, in categories for organizational purposes only.

A. Research Activities: Original Research and/or Integration of Knowledge.

- ◆ Research that involves undergraduates, pursued during the academic year and/ or the summer as best fits the faculty member's research program.
- ◆ Publication of articles in refereed journals, published symposia, books, or other collections. Typically we give greater value to publications that have been evaluated by a peer review process than those that have not. Publications with students are valued highly.
- ◆ Presentations at refereed national, international, regional, or local professional meetings. Presentations with students are valued highly.
- ◆ Submission or receipt of grants to fund individual or institutional research, integration and synthesis across topics or disciplines, professional growth, or purchase of equipment. Recognizing that grant applications require significant investment of time, energy, and expertise, we value submission as well as acquisition of grants.

Research activities valued, but at a lower level:

- ◆ Invited seminars, panel discussions, or other talks.
- ◆ Publication of abstracts and non-refereed publications associated with presentations of research at professional meetings.
- ◆ Submission of manuscripts for publication.
- ◆ Presentations to a general, non-scholarly audience.

B. Professional Applications: Application of Knowledge.

Because these activities may involve issues of confidentiality and because they may or may not result in traditional academic output, these activities may be best evaluated via an external letter from a professional peer with first-hand knowledge of the faculty member's professional activity.

- ◆ Psychotherapy or counseling (e.g., in private practice, with individuals or groups). This includes maintenance of appropriate state licensure and fulfillment of continuing education

requirements.

- ◆ Social policy analysis.
- ◆ Consulting work for human service organizations, community agencies, or other psychology-relevant groups.
- ◆ Submission or receipt of grants to support application of psychological knowledge and evidence in applied settings.

C. Pedagogical Activities: Scholarship of Teaching and Pedagogy

- ◆ Publication of educational works such as textbooks, chapters in books, laboratory manuals, or articles in teaching journals.
- ◆ Submission or receipt of grants to fund individual or institutional resources or teaching activities or to support the development of pedagogical materials or pedagogical research.
- ◆ Participation in outreach-oriented educational activities.

D. Other Professional Activities

- ◆ Organizer or leader of symposia, courses, or workshops related to professional activity.
- ◆ Chair of a session at a professional meeting.
- ◆ Editor of a scientific journal.
- ◆ Reviewer of textbooks, journal articles, or grant/fellowship applications.
- ◆ Membership and/or leadership in professional organizations.
- ◆ Attendance at professional development courses, workshops, seminars, or professional meetings.
- ◆ Creation of software, programs, or media with applications in psychology.

Reference

Halpern, D.F., Smothergill, D.W., Allen, M., Baker, S., Baum, C., Best, D., et al. (1998).
Scholarship in psychology: A paradigm for the twenty-first century. *American Psychologist*,
53, 1292-1297.