

Russian and Central European Studies Department
Statement on Professional Activity
February 21, 2002

The Russian and Central European Studies Department (RCES) strongly encourages teaching, scholarship, and community service by its faculty. As a multidisciplinary program, the Department recognizes that its diverse faculty perform their professional work in varied ways. Some faculty work in conjunction with disciplinary departments according to criteria established by those departments. Others work wholly within the framework of RCES. Therefore, RCES takes an expansive view of professional activity, not insisting on rigid standards, but using critical judgment in evaluating a broadly defined range of professional work.

At the same time, RCES takes primary responsibility for its core Russian language faculty, since they do not share their teaching and other professional work with particular disciplinary departments. For that reason, RCES offers the following general guidelines when evaluating its core faculty for annual reviews, tenure, and promotion. For these faculty professional activity is weighted in descending order of importance: teaching, scholarship, and community activity.

Given the difficulty the Russian language presents for American students, RCES language faculty must devote disproportionate time and effort to classroom teaching and extra-classroom teaching-related activities such as individual tutoring, Russian language conversation table, and cultural activities that involve extensive use of Russian language (e.g. the annual Russian Christmas Party with its Russian skits, songs, poems, etc.), and Russian choir. Excellence in classroom teaching involves devising and using effective teaching strategies and technologies. It also means creatively engaging students in

language work outside the classroom. Finally, excellence in teaching means the scholarship of teaching: keeping abreast of the literature about language teaching, collaborating with colleagues on teaching approaches, and curricular development. One example might be teaching Russian as part of the College's wider curriculum (FLAC). In general, RCES expectations for effective teaching are those outlined in the faculty manual as standards for faculty evaluation.

RCES encourages scholarship in either one of two broad categories: (1) scholarship traditionally understood as primarily books, articles, papers presented at conferences, public lectures, reviews, participation in panels at professional conferences and conventions, and so forth. In other words, what is sometimes called the "scholarship of discovery," or primary research; (2) the scholarship of teaching and learning. Here the focus is on theory and experimentation in the classroom. Such work might be collaborative, but it might take the form of publications or conference papers that report on the results of classroom experiments.

For RCES, service to the College and community means the same as the criteria outlined in the Faculty Manual: contributions to administration and planning for the department and the College, and contributions to the life of the College on campus and in the wider community.