

Professional Service at AdventHealth University (AHU)

1.1 Introduction

Professional service is expected in higher education. Ernest A. Lynton¹ (1995) defined four areas of professional service relevant to higher education: (1) Service to the institution—committee assignments or program building, (2) Service to the discipline—journal editing or serving on professional committees, (3) Service to the community—participating on local school boards or volunteering, and (4) Service related to the institution’s outreach mission (See section 1.3 for more examples of professional service). Professional service is part of the academic tripartite mission: scholarship² (research), education (teaching), and professional service³. However, at AdventHealth University (AHU), professional service and service (public/civic and other personal and institutional outreach missions) are considered of greater relative value than they may at other institutions.

This document focuses on academic professional service. However, because *service* is inherently valuable and a natural expression of AHU (its faculty, administrators, and staff), we believe a short discussion that addresses the spectrum (professional to personal) of service activities in the academy, will be valuable.

1.2 Service

We suggest that, in concert with commonly held expectations of the Academy, professional service is determined when the service activity *substantially integrates professional education, expertise, and experience*. To illustrate this idea, we use the following examples. First, an avian biologist gives a talk at the local Audubon chapter. Second, a New Testament theologian discusses New Testament Theology at her local church. In each case, it seems quite evident that the individual’s professional education, intellectual interests, and work experiences were directly related to the activity (See section 1.3 for more examples). In contrast, in the following two examples, we suggest that the activity is more likely a form of civic, public, or personal service. First, an avian biologist discusses New Testament Theology at his local church. Second, a bird-loving theologian gives a talk at the local Audubon chapter. In these examples, it is less evident that the individual’s professional, intellectual interests, and skills were recruited to perform the activities. AHU views these kinds of service/outreach activities as important, but they would not likely be accepted as service across Academe as compared to the first two examples. However, AHU recognizes, accepts, and encourages individual service activities. In conclusion, both professional and individual service activities contribute to individual, institutional, disciplinary, and community development because of the specialty and intensity of academic training, practice, and expertise.

¹ Lynton, Ernest, A. 1995. *Making the Case for Professional Service*. Washington, DC: American Association for Higher Education, as reported and referenced in *The Faculty Service Role*, by Patricia Crosson and Kerryann O’Meara. 2002. <http://www.answers.com/topic/faculty-service-role>, Education Encyclopedia.

² Butler, Russ & Ernie Bursley. 2010. Scholarship at ADU. Adventist University of Health Sciences, Faculty Handbook, Appendix R. ³ Boyer, Ernest. 1990. *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. John Wiley & Sons; New York, New York, USA. 147 pgs.

Activities such as journal or book editing, work on professional or institutional committees, mentoring graduate students, serving in professional organizations, or peer evaluating, for examples, are well-accepted norms of professional service in the Academy. But, what about such AHU-sponsored activities as service days in Bithlo or at Camp Thunderbird? The fourth definition above in Lynton's service categories states that service relating to the institution's outreach is professional service. Service days at AHU do constitute institutional outreach. However, carrying jugs of water, building fences, or clearing debris and mowing lawns (some AHU service-day activities) would not be activities that a faculty member would likely list as professional service for promotion or tenure at most *other* academic institutions of higher education. In contrast, committees served on and at what level, number of graduate or undergraduate students mentored, peer evaluations or the number of journals one is a reviewer on would be apropos for academic review and promotion. And because AHU is part of a larger global academic community, it is important that we strive for coherence with the Academy when considering professional service, scholarship, and education. Nevertheless, professional service and public service (individual service, personal service) are important components in the overall academic mission of AHU.

Community, public, civic, or other outreach related service activities also help bolster institutional reputation by positively impacting the community in which the institution is a part of. It is because of this positive social impact of outreach service activities (i.e., service days, personal public service, etc.) that AHU accepts and recognizes their value. As a Christian university, AHU and its faculty are committed to a moral framework in the pursuit of educational excellence³. This University seeks to inspire and equip students to enter a profession in which they will extend the healing ministry of Christ with skill and compassion. As such, the faculty also operate with both a love for learning and a sense of accountability to God. At least part of this accountability takes the form of service.

In summary, a first conclusion is professional service differs from community, public, or personal service activities in that it is significantly tied to the academic professional's education, scholarship, and training. However, the boundaries between categories of service are "fuzzy", as are the boundaries between professional service and scholarship, or scholarship and education, etc. What we suggest, then, is that a spectrum of service activities exists. At one end, professional service is very easy to recognize (committees, journal/book editing, formal evaluations, and site visits, for examples) and at the other end are those service outlets that one pursues because of personal values and desires. The professional service end of the spectrum is also considered more relevant to the higher education mission. The personal service end represents an individual's pursuit of civic engagement and positive change. Both ends of the spectrum are valuable and important, but one end is more closely linked to the duties of academicians; but as stated above, both ends of the "service" spectrum are recognized and considered valuable by AHU. A second conclusion is professional service activities (as described and discussed above and as seen in section 1.3) are more readily accepted between institutions of higher education. A third conclusion is public, civic, personal, or institutionally sponsored service activities ("missional" or outreach service) are advocated, accepted, and recognized by AHU. These service activities naturally emanate from Christian academic professionals and represent a more inclusive vision of a contributing academician. Nevertheless, these service activities are to be considered *in addition to* and *not in lieu of* well accepted higher-education professional service activities. And a final conclusion is each AHU professional can

³ Holmes, Arthur, F. 1987. *The Idea of a Christian College*. Eerdmans, Publishing; 106 pgs.

record different service activities and present reason-based arguments for which type of service, professional or individual/civic/public, they represent. In other words, AHU likely accepts a more inclusive view of academic service than other institutions and the AHU academician has the freedom to discuss which type of service the activity represents. Some professional service activities are more relevant (but not completely definitive) for rank and promotion and other areas of service, public or civic for example, are likely more appropriate for annual review and reporting. In summary, academic professional service and civic, public, or institutional mission-outreach activities are important contributions by the professional academician that bolster individual, departmental, and institutional excellence within both the academy and the community.

1.3 Examples of Professional Service

The list of professional service activities presented will not be exhaustive and some of these activities may not be relevant to this institution or to a particular discipline. However, looking at examples of and discussing professional service activities can likely help accomplish at least three things at AHU. First, it would likely reveal to AHU academicians that the many activities they have already been doing are professional service. Second, it would likely stimulate ideas and creativity that would result in new professional service outlets. And, third, it would help provide a basis for a common conceptual framework of what professional service is across AHU departments and disciplines.

The first example to consider is this document. It is professional service because it was developed through institutional committee participation (service to the institution) that was initiated in response to institutional needs. That this document is not scholarship rests on the conditions that it was neither externally peer- nor editorially reviewed for publication. However, committee members did critique and contribute to this document's composition and content, which is a form of peer-evaluation and collaboration. Even though none of the committee members involved in creating this document specialize in the academic study of professional service, each member cited above has contributed to the composition of this document and as a result have performed professional service; each member on the committee had to utilize all aspects of his/her intellectual and professional training to substantively address and contribute to the understanding of academic service as it relates to AHU.

We have discussed that professional service in the academy is linked to the individual's intellectual training and professional expertise. When trying to discern how a particular activity contributes to either professional or civic/public service, the following set of questions could be of guidance.

- How do I benefit professionally?
- How do I benefit the department?
- How do I benefit the institution?
- How do I benefit my discipline?
- How do I benefit the committee(s) I serve on?
- How do my service activities benefit the civic institution?
- How do I benefit the outreach mission of my institution? Department? Discipline?
- How does my professional training, scholarship, teaching, or intellectual interests contribute to the success of the service activity?
- What committees can I serve on? (Examples: department, institution, or profession)

- Is it my professional expertise or my personal interests, or both, that is/are being recruited to perform the service activity? (Is the value of my contribution greater because of my professional expertise or personal interests?)
- Of special consideration, how do I benefit my students (in class, in the department, in the school) through my service activities?

Professional service in conjunction with Boyer's scholarly domains indicates that the academic spheres of scholarship, education, and professional service are not completely independent. They represent different but complementary expressions of professional performance. Furthermore, AHU faculty, administrators, and staff practice professional service by framing service as it relates to our institution's four main core values: spirituality, excellence, stewardship, and nurture.

- *Professional Service as an Expression of Spirituality*
A long tradition of spirituality understands service as a form of worship, if done with humility. For the serving scholar at AHU, providing a service that benefits others is an expression of respect to the Creator of all beings and all knowledge. Thus, even the consistent, respectful, and effective participation on committees and in professional meetings may be a form of serving the Divine.
- *Professional Service as an Expression of Excellence*
The excellent serving scholar is only satisfied and fulfilled when professional service advances the academy, the discipline of the scholar, the institution, and the community. The rapid expansion of knowledge in the health sciences requires regular attendance at, participation in, and leadership of the discipline of the scholar, as well as the committees of the academy. The serving scholar pursues greater effectiveness through participation, collaboration, and service. Excellence in the elements of professional service will be evident among all serving scholars and commensurate with experience and opportunity.
- *Professional Service as an Expression of Stewardship*
Stewardship calls for careful oversight of resources—both material and human resources. For the faculty member at AHU, this careful oversight includes thoughtful participation and leadership in committees, professional organizations, and mentoring of students and colleagues. Stewardship calls for reducing loss and increasing value of the academic discipline. Each faculty member is responsible for increasing value through role modeling, participation, and leadership for students, colleagues, and the community.
- *Professional Service as an Expression of Nurture*
AHU strives to foster an atmosphere of cooperative learning in which the serving scholars are assisted in developing their potential. Mentoring of students and colleagues presumes a responsibility to share one's knowledge gained through

experimentation and experience with one's peers and younger scholars⁴. The inestimable value of mentoring requires the serving scholar to be actively engaged in this service to the academy, members of the discipline, and the community.

1.3.1. Examples (not an exhaustive list):

(I) *Suggestions of Professional Service Activities*

1. Committee work (member/chair; from departmental to national level in professional memberships)
2. Professional/scholarly presentations
3. Reviewing/editing peer-reviewed scholarship, books, grants, journal papers, meeting abstracts, syllabi, course proposals, program proposals, program/departmental/institutional reviews of other institutions, self-study
4. Program building, curricula development
5. Site visits to other educational institutions: accreditations, program development, professional development, student development, consultation, and writing a self-study
6. Internal reviews: program, course, departmental (at own institution too), annual reports
7. Organizing meetings: departmental seminars/symposia, local, regional, state, national organizations
8. Peer evaluating: teaching, collegiality
9. Letters of recommendation: faculty (within and external institutions), students, promoting of faculty for awards (departmental, institutional, professional, national)
10. Community: (depending on faculty training) school boards, zoning boards, fostering community education/awareness, workshops/presentations
11. Participation in layperson organizations dedicated to specific knowledge interests: Audubon/Sierra clubs, patient advocacy groups, environmental agency/clubs, development bureaus, pollution watch groups, human health citizen groups, environmental "societies"
12. Consulting
13. Conducting a study to help solve a departmental problem
14. Conducting a study to help formulate departmental or institutional or academic discipline policy
15. Seminar conducted for laypersons based on one's area of expertise
16. Presentation of one's area of expertise to a lay organization with similar interests
17. Writing documents for internal (department, institution, discipline) circulation

(II) *Suggestions for ranking professional service activities.*

1. A first distinction regarding professional service can be defined geographically: a. Institutional
 - b. Community
 - c. National
 - d. International

⁴ See Romans 1:11-12. New International Version (similar translation in many translations/versions)

- For example, organizing an international professional meeting is considerably more effort (and more exposure for the institution) than organizing a departmental symposium. Even though both activities constitute professional service, the former represents a greater degree of effort.
- 2. A second distinction can be viewed by level of committee work within the institution.
For example,
 - a. Program
 - b. Department
 - c. School/College
 - d. Institution
- 3. A third distinction is level of service on a committee. For examples,
 - a. Committee member
 - b. Committee chairperson: more work than a committee participant
- 4. A fourth distinction: what is the activity to the Community?
 - a. Public service as an academic professional
 - Professional service (in a public service role) occurs when a faculty member uses their *expertise* to engage the general-public sector
 - b. Professional service as a community of professionals
 - Professional service within the community occurs when a faculty member serves with other local like-trained professionals to accomplish community goals (could also occur as a result of multiple members of the same institution working together)