

Research

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Nebraska's land-grant university. "Every state has a land-grant institution that is expected to do research," Splinter said. "UNL is Nebraska's land grant, and it's expected to both teach and do research."

"Research is one of our areas of responsibility. It's part of our mission."

Land grants began in the 1860s when Congress allotted funds to each state for the creation of agriculture and mechanical arts schools. The schools were expected to carry out research in the two fields, he said.

These schools grew and diversified, transforming into many of today's "state" universities. They brought their original emphasis on research in these two fields to their new roles. The emphasis has carried into the university's other disciplines.

Research gives UNL an edge over non-research institutions, Splinter said, because professors have a first-hand knowledge of the latest developments in their disciplines.

Constance Kies, a professor of nutritional science and hospitality management, said that faculty in the College of Home Economics are required to conduct various amounts of research. Faculty without specific research appointments are expected to spend about 25 percent of their time in research activities, she said.

Kies said her appointment is 50 percent, which means she is expected to spend half of her time teaching and half researching.

The importance of research in a professor's career depends on the university and the discipline involved, she said.

"If you want to teach in a university with graduate studies, research is important," Kies said. "For the most part, graduate degrees are research degrees. It's hard for a professor to teach about (research) if they aren't doing it themselves."

"It is absolutely essential to any discipline. It must be done. Disciplines won't advance without it."

Without research, a professor's career might not advance either, Splinter said.

How Professors spend their time

All amounts are percentages of time

Activity	Number of hours per week								
	Under 1 hr.	1-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	17-20	21-34	35-44	45+
Teaching	.3	7.2	26.2	32.0	17.6	10.1	5.9	.5	.1
Preparing for teaching	.3	8.4	22.9	25.2	17.3	13.8	9.4	2.0	.7
Research and scholarly writing	20.2	27.9	16.4	12.4	7.3	6.7	6.3	1.8	1.0
Advising or counseling students	2.6	56.6	29.5	8.0	2.0	.9	.4	.1	--
Committee meetings	4.6	68.8	20.6	4.3	1.1	.3	.1	--	--
Other Administration	36.5	38.6	11.5	5.8	3.0	2.3	1.7	.4	.2
Consultation with clients or patients	68.8	20.7	6.3	2.2	.8	.6	.4	.1	.1

Source: Stan Liberty, Intern vice chancellor for academic affairs

Scott Maurer/DN

Workload

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"Most disciplines require that an individual publish some works," he said. "It influences decisions when promotions come around."

But, Splinter said, exceptions exist to these requirements. A professor who is proficient at either teaching or researching can excel, he said.

"There are people who prefer to teach, who aren't strong researchers. These people have gone through the system. The system does adjust."

This adjustment means having strong researchers do the research while strong teachers pick up the extra classes, Splinter said. Each department must create a balance, he said.

Peter Bleed, an anthropology professor, said UNL emphasizes research but doesn't push so hard that professors are encouraged to neglect their teaching responsibilities.

"I don't think UNL places too much emphasis on research," Bleed said. "I've never seen a good professor who lets research get in the way."

The task force plans to establish a base for providing information about how UNL's individual departments allocate their time and efforts, he said.

An analysis of the distribution of faculty effort rather than a workload study is a better characterization of what the task force and the Legislature are doing, Liberty said.

"Workload is a very inappropriate term for what we're doing," he said. "Faculty will be very sensitive to that." UNL doesn't have an institutional information base regarding faculty workload and productivity, Liberty said. But recent questions about a management professor's traveling expenses are an indication of the need for one, he said.

Concerns were raised among legislators and faculty about the professor's traveling reimbursements, which amounted to about \$40,000 over a 30-month period. But administrators said the business he conducted while trav-

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eling brought in about \$1.3 million in grants and other funding for UNL.

Liberty said the professor's traveling expenses appeared excessive until they were viewed in the context of the revenue brought into UNL as a result.

Because of problems such as these, Liberty said, the information base UNL designs must consist of more than just separate strings of statistics — it must place them in a general context.

"Data are good for raising questions, but not for answering them," Liberty said.

The UNL task force, with input from Kathy Tenopir, a legislative fiscal analyst, will devise preliminary plans for the comprehensive information base.

"We get questions that look at only one side of the coin," Liberty said. "You need to look at what's being produced for an investment."

He said the task force plans to take a sampling of units from UNL and compile faculty data on a standardized basis.

Tenopir said the first step is defining what various terms mean for NU's different campuses.

"We need to standardize the data so that it means the same thing in each place," she said. "The Legislature realizes that with different roles and missions, the data will come out different for each campus."

In response to a separate request for information regarding instructional excellence, Liberty presented the NU Board of Regents last Friday with a national study, which when compared to UNL, indicated that:

- full-time equivalent UNL faculty teach an average of 8.48 credit hours per semester.
- UNL's percentage of tenured faculty is 68.4 percent, 2 percent higher than the institutional average.
- UNL's proportion of faculty with doctoral degrees is 67.4 percent, 6 percent higher than the institutional average.

He said UNL's status as a research university may account for some of the differences. The national study was based on a survey of more than 35,000 faculty at 400 institutions, including non-research and private as well as public and non-research institutions.

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