

**K-State Exemplary Faculty:  
What Makes Them Exemplary?**

Report to the Provost and Faculty Senate  
of Kansas State University

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## Executive Summary

Twenty-eight exemplary faculty were interviewed for this study. These exemplary faculty, as identified by their peers and administrators, represent colleges and 20 departments. They include assistant to full professors with teaching, research and extension responsibilities. Nine are women, two are African Americans and two are natives of other countries. No systematic differences in faculty work based on gender and ethnicity were found. Women and ethnic minorities in the study do feel, however, that their minority status requires a greater service obligation (e.g., serving on departmental and university committees and acting as mentors).

Perhaps the most striking commonality among K-State exemplary faculty is the extent to which their teaching, research, and service activities are intertwined. In the words of the faculty we interviewed:

*“I use the research to inform my teaching and my teaching to inform my research . . . They’re intertwined.”*

Interaction with students on research projects is *“one-to-one teaching.”*

Teaching, research and service activities become intertwined in a *“continual feedback loop.”*

Teaching has the highest priority for these faculty. The following comments summarize the importance of teaching to their work:

*“That’s why we’re here.”*

*“The bottom line is what we do for the students who come through here.”*

*“If a student gives me a manuscript [for comments] then that’s my priority.”*

Exemplary faculty take their teaching responsibilities very seriously, including intensive course preparations and active learning approaches to their classes. Moreover, faculty with no formal teaching responsibilities view themselves as “teachers”-- teaching courses on an overload basis and teaching “one-on-one” in their research projects and extension programs.

Exemplary faculty tend to take either a reactive or proactive approach to organizing their time. The reactive approach is essentially “interrupt driven”-- reacting to the demands on their time by others rather than establishing a schedule of their own. “Deadlines are probably the number one driving factor” for this approach. The proactive approach seeks to organize time “in a modular fashion”-- “list-making” is a common practice of faculty who take this approach.

When spending time with students exemplary faculty hope to help them develop and mature. As stated by faculty we interviewed:

*“It’s an absolute joy to see that.”*

*“[W]e’re not trained as priests or psychiatrists. We try to interact with the students as rational adults.”*

*“[T]he most important thing is to get the students to think critically.”*

Extension faculty’s educational programs are similar in approach to courses taught on campus, but with different audiences:

*“It’s my job to read the research, to understand it, to do my own research, and then come up with a way to tell [an 80 year-old woman] what her options are and how she can make decisions that are based on research.”*

*“I try as much as possible to have my research feed into my classroom teaching and to have my teaching feed into my research. And Extension feeds into all of it.”*

Exemplary faculty feel that one of K-State’s positive characteristics is the strong commitment to teaching. “K-State is an oasis” compared to other universities where an inordinate emphasis is placed on faculty’s research. Furthermore,

*“The collegiality at K-State is outstanding . . . The egalitarianism at Kansas State is something that has always kept me here.”*

*“[T]his university is blessed with talented people.”*

Faculty opinions vary on how K-State compares to other universities in terms of resources and facilities. For some, “the resources here are excellent.” Others stressed “the constant battle we have over resources and facilities.”

What seems to make K-State faculty exemplary is their ability to intertwine their teaching, research and service activities in “a continual feedback loop.” Teaching is the focal point: teaching in a classroom, through an extension program, or as part of a research project. They believe their K-State colleagues share this commitment to teaching. For many, K-State is an “oasis” compared to other universities, where the emphasis is on research. Although there are different opinions about resources and facilities at K-State, they have a high regard for their colleagues. They feel “blessed” for belonging to a community of talented people.

## **Introduction**

Rapid and radical changes mark the world of higher education. Unprecedented innovations in technology exert demands on the design and delivery of college curricula. There are increasing pressures on faculty to maintain a strong research specialization and at the same time produce graduates, at all levels, with broadened knowledge as well as deepened expertise (Boyer, 1987). Reductions in State and Federal spending have placed increased pressures on University faculty to provide outreach services, particularly through Extension Programs. As a result, faculty are being asked to respond to a new understanding of scholarship, yet the traditional triad of faculty effort in research, teaching, and service remains the framework for evaluating faculty work. This makes it difficult for the stakeholders of higher education to gain a complete understanding of what faculty currently do and how what they do leads to excellence.

This is a report of a study designed to facilitate an understanding by Regents, legislators, and the general public about the complexity of the efforts required by faculty to meet the current demands placed on higher education. In addition to providing a clear understanding about the multiplicity of efforts of faculty, the results of this study provides important insight into faculty career development. This study focuses on defining what constitutes exemplary work by Kansas State faculty. Our aim was to discover commonalities in the exemplary work that faculty do when they teach, conduct research, provide Extension instruction and programming, or do service for others. We recognize that differences do exist in the work that faculty do in their teaching, research, and service (as well as in the different kinds of teaching, research, and service work they do). Our goal, therefore, was to identify the process through which faculty produce exemplary work in the various tasks that they undertake. What follows is a report on what we learned.

## **Exemplary Faculty Studied**

Interviews were conducted with 28 of K-State's exemplary faculty. These faculty were identified by lists of award recipients and the recommendations of K-State administrators and other faculty. Each person was identified as exemplary by more than one source. Some of the exemplary faculty we sought to interview were either unavailable or unwilling to participate in the study. However, we have no reason to expect that the activities for those faculty are different from the patterns reported here.

In order to ensure representation from across the campus, we identified exemplary faculty in the various colleges of Kansas State University and with different academic ranks and appointments. And as can be seen in Table 1, the exemplary faculty interviewed represent all eight colleges and 20 departmental units on the K-State campus. More specifically, eleven of these faculty are in the College of Arts and Sciences, five in the College of Agriculture, four in the College of Human Ecology, two each in the Colleges of Architecture, Education and Veterinary Medicine, and one each in the Colleges of Business Administration and Engineering. Among the exemplary faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences, two are in the arts, three in the social sciences, and six in the natural sciences. Different academic ranks are represented as well. Fifteen of the exemplary

<b>Table 1: K-State's Exemplary Faculty Interviewed</b>					
<b>Last name</b>	<b>First name, MI</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Title (in 1998)</b>	<b>College</b>	<b>Department</b>
Barkley	Andrew P.	M	Associate Professor <sup>4</sup>	Agriculture	Agricultural Economics
Briggs	Deborah J.	F	Associate Professor	Veterinary Medicine	Diagnostic Medicine
Clarke	Mary P.	F	Professor	Human Ecology	Foods and Nutrition [Extension]
Cochran	Alfred W.	M	Associate Professor	Arts & Sciences	Music
Cocke	Charles L.	M	Distinguished Professor <sup>1</sup>	Arts & Sciences	Physics
Consigli	Richard A.	M	Distinguished Professor <sup>1</sup>	Arts & Sciences	Biology
Dryden	Michael W.	M	Associate Professor	Veterinary Medicine	Diagnostic Medicine
Fox	Rodney O.	M	Associate Professor	Engineering	Chemical Engineering
French	Marion J.	F	Assistant Professor <sup>3</sup>	Education	Elementary Education
Gill	Bikram S.	M	Distinguished Professor <sup>1</sup>	Agriculture	Plant Pathology
Hamscher III	Albert N.	M	Professor <sup>1,3</sup>	Arts & Sciences	History
Heller	Mary F.	F	Professor	Education	Elementary Education
Higgins	Randall A.	M	Professor	Agriculture	Entomology [Extension]
Higgins	Daniel	M	Associate Professor	Arts & Sciences	Chemistry
Holden	Jonathan	M	Distinguished Professor <sup>1</sup>	Arts & Sciences	English
Katz	Jeffrey P.	M	Assistant Professor	Business Administration	Management
Keller	John W.	M	Professor	Architecture	Regional & Community Planning
Kiefer	Stephen W.	M	Professor <sup>3,4</sup>	Arts & Sciences	Psychology
Klabunde	Kenneth J.	M	Distinguished Professor	Arts & Sciences	Chemistry
Leach	Jan E.	F	Distinguished Professor <sup>1</sup>	Agriculture	Agriculture Experiment Station
Rolf	John E.	M	Professor	Human Ecology	Office of Community Health
Smith	Ann Stalheim	F	Associate Professor <sup>2,3</sup>	Arts & Sciences	Biology
Suleiman	Michael W.	M	Distinguished Professor <sup>1</sup>	Arts & Sciences	Political Science
Swanson	Janice C.	F	Associate Professor	Agriculture	Animal Sciences & Industry [Int'l Programs]
Webb	Farrell J.	M	Assistant Professor	Human Ecology	Family Studies & Human Services (FSHS)
Wigfall	Labarbra	F	Associate Professor	Architecture	Landscape Architecture
Wilken	Carolyn S.	F	Assistant Professor	Human Ecology	FSHS [Extension]
Zollman	Dean A.	M	Professor <sup>2</sup>	Arts & Sciences	Physics

**Other awards:** 1/Commerce Bank Distinguished Graduate Faculty Award; 2/University Chair for Distinguished Teaching Scholars; 3/Commerce Bank Undergraduate Outstanding Teaching Award; 4/Presidential Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching

faculty interviewed are full professors, six of whom are Distinguished Professors, nine are associate professors, and four are assistant professors. With regard to varieties of appointments, four of the faculty have at least a partial appointment in cooperative extension, one has a partial administrative position as director of a department-based international program, and considerable variation exists among the others in the official allocation of their responsibilities regarding teaching, research and service. For example, in terms of classroom teaching responsibilities, 19 of the exemplary faculty teach both undergraduate and graduate classes, six only teach graduate classes, two only teach undergraduate classes, and two have extension but no classroom teaching responsibilities. These differences in the institutional settings and types of appointment will serve as the primary bases for comparison in the analysis that follows.

One can also see in Table 1 that nine of the 28 exemplary faculty we studied are women. Ethnicity is not reported in the table, but it is worthy of note that two of the persons interviewed are African Americans and two others are natives of countries that would qualify them as members of ethnic minorities by Affirmative Action guidelines. Our intent was to use both gender and ethnicity as bases of comparison in the analysis of what exemplary faculty do. Women and ethnic minorities in the study did tend to feel their minority status requires a greater service obligation (e.g., serving on departmental and university committees and acting as mentors for female and/or minority students). However, no systematic differences based on gender or ethnicity were found in K-State exemplary faculty's approach to their work. This report will focus, therefore, on the comparison of exemplary faculty across different institutional settings and types of appointments.

### **What Exemplary Faculty Do: Intertwine Activities**

Perhaps the most striking commonality among K-State exemplary faculty is the extent to which their teaching, research and service activities are intertwined. Despite the faculty we studied having substantial variations in the official allocation of their time for teaching, research and service, they all see strong connections between the different aspects of their work. This is especially true for the connection between teaching and research. One individual put it this way:

*"I use the research to inform my teaching and my teaching to inform my research. When I have to prepare for a class and I have to read things, sometimes I get ideas from that to help me understand what I should be doing in some of my research endeavors, and some of my research endeavors help me to clarify issues for the students in class. And sometimes we even talk about things I'm working on because it points to an example of why we're doing these things in class. They're intertwined."*<sup>1</sup>

The extent to which research and teaching are intertwined increases in the upper-level courses, and particularly in graduate courses. *"At the undergraduate level, my research is just more of an example, as ideas that are recent and easy to communicate. As you move toward the graduate*

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<sup>1</sup>Italics are used to denote direct quotations of the exemplary faculty we interviewed.

level, [research and teaching] become closer and closer, and by the time you get to the Ph.D. level it seems that your research and teaching are so intertwined that they are almost the same activity.” All of the exemplary faculty who teach graduate students concurred with this opinion on the integration of their research and graduate teaching. Moreover, they stressed that when they collaborate with graduate students in research, it is a teaching activity as well. As one person put it,

*“When people talk about teaching everybody considers classroom teaching. But to be honest with you, the greatest amount of time spent on teaching is on a one-to-one basis. Like when I have my students in my lab [some of whom are actually undergraduates], spending the afternoon doing experiments with them; really, this is one-to-one teaching.”* He goes on to say, *“I thoroughly enjoy teaching. Everything I have ever accomplished, I owe to my students. I really mean that, and you can put that right up front.”*

All of the exemplary faculty who have research laboratories stressed that much of their teaching occurs in their interactions with students who work in their laboratory. One noted that whereas he only occasionally teaches a formal class, due to his 100% research appointment, *“I’m teaching all the time, everyday. I have students working in my lab, people knocking on my door to ask for my advise on how do something related to their own work, and so on.”*

They do not see the one-on-one teaching they practice with their students as a one-way process, however. It is viewed more as a two-way process of “active learning” (Bonwell and Eison 1991):

*“I have eight to twelve students working in my laboratory and I’m constantly asking them to challenge everything that we do. My philosophy is that if you work in my lab, you should question everything that happens--not openly, but come in and shut the door and ask me, ‘Why do we do this?’ I basically tell them, ‘If I can’t answer you, then maybe we’ve got a problem we need to take care of.’ And there’s been more than once that students have questioned something that we do and brought a solution; and now we’re doing it better. So I guess that’s still part of teaching, because when I have students working in my lab I’m constantly giving them articles to read on certain subjects and we get together once a week and talk about it--even during the summer. So it’s a continual teaching environment in which I’m basically reinforcing their interests.”*

Exemplary faculty who do not have research laboratories also practice a one-on-one teaching of graduate students that is intertwined with their research, most notably as a student’s major professor. One person described her approach to advising graduate students as follows:

*“It gets woven into their classes, in that I help students think about utilizing their time at K-State economically, so they can make progress toward their dissertation, publishing, and getting out of here. I advise them to think about how they can use*

*their papers that are required for certain courses to help them make progress toward narrowing down their dissertation topic; things like that.”*

In addition, all of the exemplary faculty in this study pointed to the collaborative research they have done with students to indicate how research and graduate teaching are intertwined. Here too they view the teaching that occurs in the collaboration as a two-way process. Said one, *“I’ve learned as much as they have.”*

With regard to undergraduate teaching, the process is generally viewed by the exemplary faculty in this study as more of a didactic process, with faculty presenting information to the students. But they do believe their teaching benefits from their research activities. As one person put it, *“If I’m not up on the latest research and publishing in the field, then obviously I’m cheating the students. I mean if I don’t do this, then in essence I’m repeating what’s in the textbook or what was acceptable, published, a couple of years earlier. It seems to me that research and publishing is a part of the teaching process, and of being a good teacher.”*

Occasionally their research experience allows them to communicate more subtle information than examples or research findings relevant to the course topic. One of them put it this way:

*“Sometimes you can tell things that you do in your scholarly research, not for the specifics, but to let students see how connections can be made. I was describing to a class for example how there might be valuable things in documents that you haven’t considered related to your subject. I was going through French prison registeries from the eighteenth century and I saw this interesting entry: ‘Today, at 9:30 in the morning, so-and-so was brought in and found guilty of theft at the city of Poitier.’ On this particular day, the clerk was loquacious and said, ‘So-and-so was convicted of theft by cutting people’s purses at the puppet shows that have just started at the Place de Grave,’ which is where they usually guillotined people. Here in the prison register, one finds that there were these Punch and Judy puppet shows in a certain area of town, and that they had just started. It’s a perfect example of how some times things that you are not at all interested in are in one place and the things that you are interested in are in places that are not self-evident. It’s that kind of thing that you can teach students, that beneath the simplicity of things there’s great complexity. And at times what seems to be very complex is a fundamental simplicity.”*

The same individual went on to say that the way in which his undergraduate teaching influences his research is that,

*“I get warmed up. Because by going into class, meeting with students and listening to them talking, it gets me warmed up for doing research. There are not too many ideas that pop into your mind you haven’t thought of before [when you teach a freshman course], but it gets you started; it kind of gets you in the academic mood.”*

Some of the exemplary faculty in this study have received ideas while doing their undergraduate teaching. For example, a chemistry professor responded to the question on whether his undergraduate teaching informs his research as follows:

*“I taught freshman chemistry for a number of years and, boy, there's nothing like learning that stuff when you teach it--I mean learning it cold. And then my thoughts began to get more and more organized in terms of, oh, fundamental properties, thermodynamic properties. We try to teach students about beginning thermodynamics even in freshman chemistry. Now that led me in my research to predict some chemical reactions through simple thermo chemistry that I had not thought about before. Here teaching freshman gave me some of my research ideas . . . And, actually, the research went on to work so, yeah, there's lots of overlap.”*

Whether the influence of teaching is to get faculty in the “academic mood” or to actually give them ideas for their own research, the consensus among K-State exemplary faculty is that their teaching and research activities are closely intertwined. Indeed, according to one, both teaching and research can be viewed as scholarship: *“I think it takes the same type of intensity and effort to communicate ideas effectively and to be successful in educating or communicating with people. And I think it's often just as important to do that side of our job as it is to do the more formal research for our own professions.”*

Perhaps the most compelling example of the integration of teaching and research activities was provided by an exemplary faculty in elementary education, who gave the following account of how her teaching and research became virtually inseparable as aspects of her scholarly work:

*“One of my projects was to go into a kindergarten classroom and teach the letter of the week. One day it was the letter ‘d’ and I was trying to determine whether kindergartners can write about, or draw, alphabet letters in any kind of a coherent way. Because emerging into literacy, kindergartners can't write at all except maybe their name. So I was looking at their emergence into literacy. And the data from that research then became integral to the undergraduate class I was teaching at the time. Because vignettes from that setting become very important to explaining the emergence of literacy in kindergarten-aged children. A good example of this is the kid in the research who, when asked him to draw his favorite d word, he drew this picture of a space ship. I said to him, ‘Kirk, tell me about your picture.’ And he told me about space and he said it was a space ship and it was launching. So I asked him, ‘Were there any d words in your story about the space ship?’ ‘Well no,’ he said, ‘but I made a d, and then I turned it into a space ship.’ This opened up a whole new realm of questions I could ask myself about the emergence of literacy and children's intentions and teachers intentions. And I asked my graduate students, ‘Was my objective met? I asked the children to write about their favorite d word, but here, he really didn't have one. He'd rather write about the space ship.’”*

Not all exemplary faculty have teaching and research activities that are as clearly intertwined as in this example. It seems though that striving to integrate them as much as possible is common among K-State exemplary faculty. Those who have graduate teaching responsibilities find that their research and graduate teaching are tightly intertwined, such that “they are almost the same activity.” The connection between undergraduate teaching and research is generally not as strong, although the exemplary faculty who teach undergraduates approach their undergraduate teaching as scholarly activity, at least in terms of what Boyer (1987) calls the application and integration dimensions of scholarship. That is, they stay abreast of the current research related to the undergraduate classes they teach, which may or may not include their own research, and seek to show how it applies to the course subject. In addition, they seek to integrate the course materials in a way that catches students’ interest and, hopefully, motivates them to learn the course material as thoroughly as possible and to engage in critical thinking on the subject.

It is not as common for K-State exemplary faculty to intertwine their service activities with their teaching and research activities. Some have accomplished this to a greater degree than others, which again is conditioned mostly by the institutional setting and the type of appointment they have. In general, exemplary faculty in more applied fields have more strongly integrated their service activities with their research and teaching than their colleagues in fields with a more academic orientation. An exemplary faculty in the College of Agriculture put it this way:

*“In the College of Agriculture our mission is toward not just the professions but also toward producers and constituent groups in the state. And I have tried to take my research output and not only get it in the form of refereed journal articles but also write it up for lay people in extension bulletins and also make presentations to people within the state. So I’m moving toward, oh, how would I describe it, multiple audiences for the same research output.”*

Another exemplary faculty, who is a professional planner as well as a faculty member, described his work as a “continual feedback loop” between his teaching, service and research:

*“I’ve been fortunate to travel all around the world, almost everywhere. And in my travels I’m usually applying rural scholarship, rural economic development, which of course feeds back into my classroom. I can say, ‘This is what I found in Malaysia,’ for example. I see it as kind of a continual feedback loop: classroom to practice, to the scholarship of teaching, to communicating with peers, and back to the classroom again.”*

Among exemplary faculty who are not in an applied field, service activities usually are not regarded as part of such a continual feedback loop. They recognize service as important, but they often see service activities as interfering with their teaching and research. Said one, “I don’t like service that has nothing to do with scholarship or teaching.” When their service activities are related to their teaching and research, however, exemplary faculty in more academic fields describe their service activities much like the descriptions above. For example, one individual discussed how his service work with a student organization is intertwined with his teaching and research:

*“Strategic management is a field that looks at the firm as a level of analysis. The way we teach that is through the case study method. We use Harvard case studies of businesses in our classes, having students read these in-depth cases about companies, and then we pose for them what the problems are and what are alternative solution sets, and then help them develop skills that work within those confines. In the service area, the student organization has case competition teams that go to international case competitions. I coach the teams on analyzing the cases and presenting their solutions to the judges. And in the research area, I just had a grant approved to develop cases that can be used for agri-businesses and land-grant universities. And I’ll be using students to help write the cases and do the company assessments. [My teaching, research and service activities] intertwine very heavily.”*

In terms of the kinds of service activities they do, most K-State exemplary faculty referred to service they do for the university. The most frequent response to our question on the kinds of service activities in which they are involved was “*committee work*.” This included serving on various committees for their department, college and/or the university. Most also mentioned service they provide to their profession, either as journal editors, reviewers, or serving as officers in professional organizations. A few also referred to service they provide to the local community.

It should also be noted that, with few exceptions, “committee work” and similar service activities are viewed as the most difficult aspect of their work to manage. For most exemplary faculty, service is a relatively small component of the official allocation of their time. One noted that she is expected to carry out her service activities in “*my non-existent spare time*.” But the service activities often take a considerable amount of the exemplary faculty members’ time--much more than the official allocation. As the person just quoted put it, “[*Sometimes*] it seems like you spend all your time doing that.”

### **How Exemplary Faculty Organize Their Time**

Exemplary faculty put a lot of time into their work. All the faculty we studied mentioned that they work evenings and at least part of the weekend. Those who estimated the amount of time they work on their various activities indicated they work more than fifty hours per week, with most indicating they work at least sixty hours. They regard the large number of hours they put into their work as part of what comes with a faculty position. As one of them noted, “*This is not a forty hour job*.”

Although working a large number of hours seems to be a commonality among exemplary faculty, they have different approaches to organizing their time. The basic difference in their time management strategies seems to be whether they are mainly reactive or proactive. The former strategy is driven by deadlines and other definitions of urgency that come from others with whom faculty work. These faculty essentially react to the demands placed upon their time by others, which reduces their ability to control how their time is organized on a day-to-day basis. By contrast, faculty who take the proactive approach seek to control how their time is organized. A common

strategy is making lists of tasks that need to be done and reserving specific times to work on selected tasks.

One of the exemplary faculty we interviewed aptly described his reactive approach as “*interrupt driven*.” That is,

*“How I organize my time is a question of whether I organize my time or my time organizes me. I actually believe that during the academic year, to use a phrase the computer jocks use, I’m pretty much interrupt driven. I do what needs to be done at the moment, as opposed to coming in the morning with a plan . . . I mean, I usually come in, I check my e-mail, and by the time I get all that solved, some student is standing at the door or someone needs something to be done . . . In terms of actually sitting down in the morning and saying, ‘Here’s what I need to get done today,’ I do that in the sense, ‘Here are the deadlines that are facing us right now.’”*

Other faculty who take the reactive approach expressed similar views about not having much control over the organization of their time. They tend to work on their various responsibilities intermittently, in between the times when they are responding to demands placed upon them by others. And what they do at a specific time depends on which activities appear to have the most urgent deadlines. As another individual who takes the reactive approach put it,

*“Five minutes, ten minutes, twenty--whenever it happens. It’s however and whenever, and then deadlines. Deadlines are probably the number one driving factor. Whether it’s deadlines caused by declining resources and you need other grants in certain areas, or deadlines caused by a progress report being due, or a student wants to graduate or has a defense, or whatever it might be.”*

Deadlines thus play a central role in the reactive approach to organizing time. Deadlines result in some tasks being defined as more urgent than others, which requires individuals to “interrupt” activities in which they might otherwise be engaged so that they can meet one or more deadlines they face. With this approach, faculty organize their time as a reaction to what appears to be the most urgent deadline, not as a means of controlling when they will work on selected tasks.

Other exemplary faculty take a more proactive approach to organizing their time, through which they seek to control when they work on selected tasks. This approach involves two interrelated activities: (1) making lists of things to do and (2) reserving fairly large blocks of time for working on selected tasks. One individual who takes the proactive approach said she organizes her time as follows: “*I make lists of things I have to do. I think that list-making . . . guides me as much as anything in terms of organizing my time in a modular fashion.*” She goes on to say that she sorts her “things to do” into teaching, research and service activities and allocates them to blocks of time in which she focuses on tasks related to a particular type of activity. Her teaching activities are organized around her course schedule, which normally has her teaching undergraduate classes Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings, plus a graduate class Monday evenings. Her service activities also have a fairly regular schedule, with most faculty and committee meetings scheduled

on a Monday, Tuesday or Thursday. As for her research, *“I try to arrange blocks of time, like a Tuesday afternoon or all day on Friday, to devote to my library research and my field-based research.”* She regards Friday as *“my research day and I don’t see students [on that day] unless absolutely necessary.”*

A major objective of the proactive approach is to minimize interruptions to the activities a faculty member has planned for a given block of time. For example, the individual just quoted works either at the library or at home on Fridays in order to minimize interruptions to her research activities. Similarly, another faculty member who takes this approach prepares his lectures in the evenings, which is a time when he can give his undivided attention to this activity. A third faculty member with a proactive approach utilizes office space in a different building from her department's building to work on her scholarship activities.

*“I find that the scholarship part requires the most concentration . . . And so, since I’m a morning person, I try to schedule the first three hours of every day for scholarship. And then I make a transition around 10:00 or 10:30 and come over here [to the department building] for my class and then the rest of the day is dealing with the teaching and the service.”*

Meeting deadlines also is important to faculty who take the proactive approach. In contrast to those who take the reactive approach, however, the proactive faculty organize their time with the intent of preparing for deadlines *“long ahead of time.”* One individual who takes this approach uses his calendar as a planning book.

*“How do I organize my time? Well, this calendar is how I organize my time. I mean I probably could use one of those planning books a lot of people use, but I developed a system where I keep things in a weekly calendar . . . As I look at this calendar, I see what’s coming up, I prepare for it long ahead of time.”*

Other proactive faculty described a similar approach to meeting deadlines. For these faculty members, it is not a matter of which deadlines *“are facing us right now,”* but how their time can be organized in a “modular fashion” so that they can prepare for the deadlines they will be facing in the future.

Whereas the exemplary faculty we studied tend to take either a reactive or proactive approach to organizing their time, they do occasionally adopt practices from the other approach. Those who take the reactive approach occasionally must shield themselves from interruptions in order for them to complete the activities required by a particular deadline. For example, the individual who described his approach as *“interrupt driven”* stated,

*“when that deadline nears I just clear out other things. I get kind of nasty, saying, ‘I’m not available,’ or even close the door. One nice thing about having an open door policy is that when your door is closed, people tend not to bother you. Or I go home if I have to, just get out of here. I mean, I really do all of the tricks that need*

*to be done. Not answering the phone and so forth, just to make sure that I am not interrupted at the rate I have been, just so I can get things done.”*

Conversely, a faculty member who makes a priority list each morning as part of her proactive approach acknowledged,

*“I have to be flexible about my priority list. Just this weekend I planned to work here [in my office] on Sunday, and I had a list of projects, and I injured my knee. So then I had to switch my priority list to be . . . [what I could do while] I was lying down and having my foot up. And so I took home the things I could do [there] . . . So I always have to view that priority list as working until some new factors come in and I have to change it.”*

Another individual summarized how faculty often must deviate from their planned activity in order to respond to interruptions during the block of time they have reserved for it: *“There are planned aspects of things, but many times situations come up that need attention.”*

Comparison of exemplary faculty who take the reactive and proactive approaches did not discover any systematic differences based on institutional settings, gender or ethnicity. Included among those who take the reactive approach to organizing their time are faculty in the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities, plus faculty with extension and non-extension appointments, women as well as men, and members of various ethnic groups. The same is true for faculty who take the proactive approach. It seems, therefore, that the approach faculty take to organizing their time is largely a function of their personal style.

### **How Exemplary Faculty Relate to Students**

The relationships that exemplary faculty have with students, colleagues and others are frequently characterized by a high degree of reciprocity, or give-and-take. When faculty interact with students they teach but also learn; when they work with other faculty or colleagues they critique and challenge but also expect to receive criticism; and, in their dealings with people outside academia they seek to translate their research findings into useful applications but also find new ways of framing key research questions. We did not observe the stereotypical image of the college professor who works in isolation and possesses limited social skills among the exemplary faculty interviewed for this study. Instead, we observed socially competent individuals who interact successfully with many different types of people in varied settings. Our focus in this report is on how they relate to students.

Many of the exemplary faculty expressed how much they enjoyed working with both undergraduate and graduate students. Part of their enjoyment comes from the faculty learning as much from their students as they give to them. One individual expressed what was a common theme in the interviews: *“Everything I have accomplished, I owe to my students.”*

In their relationships with students both inside and outside the classroom, exemplary faculty seek to help students develop and mature. They see this as one of the most gratifying aspects of their work. Several faculty we interviewed echoed the sentiment expressed by one of the faculty we interviewed when she said, *"It's an absolute joy to see that [the students mature]."* When asked if he felt it his responsibility to help students develop and mature, another individual responded, *"Yes, why are we here?"*

Exemplary faculty believe their role is to enhance intellectual and professional development by fostering critical thinking skills among their students. For example,

*"I think the most important thing is to get the students to think critically--not just necessarily accept everything we say as gospel, but to challenge . . . A lot of students come here thinking everything should be black or white, right or wrong. But there's a lot of grey out there. You know, whether it's medicine or some other branch of learning--psychology, sociology, whatever--not everybody's going to agree. That doesn't make me right and you wrong, or vice versa. It's just that there may be more than one answer to a problem and as long as they can start critically evaluating the input, then they can come up with a logical answer. Now the answer a student comes up with may be different than the answer I come up with, but at least he or she went through they right thought processes to get there. If we can do that, then I think we've come a long way."*

Showing students how to apply their critical thinking skills in their course work is also believed to help prepare them for their professional careers, which exemplary faculty see as part of students' maturation.

*"I try to help students realize that there is this entire body of literature they can look into on their own. So from that perspective I try to help them mature in that I try to get them thinking about how to further their education on their own . . . I also try to help them mature in terms of their scientific writing abilities. I have them write a short paper on an article they've read. I encourage them to express their own ideas based on what they've learned . . . In any position they get into after graduation they'll need to be able to present their ideas. So I try to help them mature from that perspective."*

Exemplary faculty who work with graduate students foster students' maturation as professional researchers. For example, one professor explained how he continually tries to engage his graduate students in writing research proposals and reviewing manuscripts, in hopes it will help prepare them for the next stage of their academic career.

*"At the graduate level, they have to participate in writing a grant. Not [just] reading what I wrote . . . Students participate in all of my grant writing. And they have to write their own manuscripts . . . In addition to that, when I have to review manuscripts from journals I let the students read them. And I say, 'Now tell me what*

*do you think about this manuscript. What are the good points, what are the bad points? What do you think?' I try to expose them to all of the nitty gritty so that if they go into academia they know what they're going to be facing."*

The majority of K-State's exemplary faculty interact with students outside the classroom on a regular basis. Typically, when faculty and students meet outside the classroom it is to discuss students' academic progress and class performance. However, faculty also spend time discussing job opportunities and how to behave in an interview or at a professional meeting. Some of the faculty we interviewed are advisors for student organizations, which further increases the time they spend interacting with students outside classroom settings. Said one,

*"The nature of the advising I do with the student organization involves a lot of contact with students because they have evening meetings they attend, and they have conferences they go to. The coaching occurs on the weekends, when they're not in class, to teach them how to do case analysis for the [conference] competitions. So there's a lot of interaction."*

Interactions with students outside the classroom are viewed as a means for students to feel more comfortable with the learning environment in the classroom itself. One of the exemplary faculty we interviewed noted that interacting with students outside the classroom is helpful because they are able to see him as a "real person."

*"I have found that if you can get a conversation going with students outside the classroom, it changes the whole learning environment for the better. If you become a real person who has strengths and weaknesses, a family and a house, and flaws, I have found that once students get to know the real professor, they plug into the material on a more comfortable level and I think that they can learn it easier than if there's a separation there."*

Advising students is the most frequent way in which faculty interact with them outside the classroom. The advising sessions often take a considerable amount of time, but the exemplary faculty we interviewed see advising as an important use of their time. Said one,

*"Sometimes you're in here for two hours with a student, either working out their schedules or working out their problems, or helping them through things, and that takes time . . . We're sort of their home away from home, to a certain extent. If they don't have somebody to talk to or have contact with, that's a shame."*

Occasionally, the problems that a student is trying to work through involves personal sensitive issues in his or her life. Most exemplary faculty do not feel they are the appropriate person to help students deal with sensitive personal issues, however. As two different faculty members put it:

*“You have to realize that we're not trained as priests or psychiatrists. We try to interact with the students as rational adults, dealing with rational adults, in any way that we can.”*

*“You may end up doing a little of that [life counseling], but if it's a serious problem there are people who are trained to deal with that, and I'm not one of them, and I don't kid myself that I am.”*

Although they do not see themselves as professional counselors, several faculty did mention that they see themselves as role models for students. Their tasks are many and varied in this capacity, with a common theme being how to present a professional demeanor. Faculty use different strategies to develop professionalism among their students. A faculty member in the College of Business always wears a suit when he teaches and requires that his students wear business attire when they make their formal class presentations, in order to simulate they would act in the business world. Other faculty speak more broadly of the way they relate to students serving as a role model.

*“The way you relate to people in the classroom teaches them a lot about either the way they want to relate, or the way they don't want to relate, to other people. To me my job isn't just to walk in there and deliver a lecture. I develop a relationship with my students.”*

Comparisons of faculty by their institutional affiliations did not discover any systematic differences in how they relate to students. All of the faculty we interviewed for this study believe it is their responsibility to help students develop and mature. Furthermore, they concurred that the focus should be on helping students develop and mature as “*rational adults*”—as one of the individuals we interviewed put it. This is the focus not only of faculty who relate primarily to young students on campus, but also to extension faculty who relate more to adult clients off campus. One of the latter described her responsibility to help clients develop and mature in a way that was quite similar to how her on-campus colleagues described their responsibility toward students: “*I think that's always part of what you're about, to promote feelings of self-competence . . . We use the term self-efficacy . . . and being able to [help them] grow and mature.*” Although a few individuals did indicate that they have tried to help students deal with personal sensitive issues, most indicated they did not feel qualified to provide such assistance. No systematic pattern was found among the few faculty who did help students in this way.<sup>2</sup>

The exemplary faculty interviewed at K-State interact with students in various settings, including classrooms, advising sessions, research projects, student organizations, field placements and casual conversations. Regardless of the setting, the faculty in this study are committed to helping students develop and mature as part of their education. Their approach is mainly that of

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<sup>2</sup>They included two men and two women, with appointments in three different colleges.

interacting with students and others as rational adults. And when they are able to foster critical thinking skills and other attributes they see as part of being a mature, rational adult, *“It’s an absolute joy to see that.”*

### **Focus on Extension Faculty**

The focus thus far has been on what K-State exemplary faculty do in their campus-based work. But many K-State faculty have extension appointments, which involves faculty work that is probably the least understood by the stakeholders of higher education. Even many members of the K-State faculty have a limited understanding of what our extension colleagues do. For example, “extension work” is often regarded as service work by faculty who are not part of Cooperative Extension. And research is often viewed as something that is not included in the work that extension faculty do. We found, however, that both of these perceptions are incorrect with respect to the exemplary extension faculty we studied. In hopes of providing a more accurate portrayal of what extension faculty do, we focus in this section on extension faculty.

Regarding the notion that extension faculty are primarily engaged in service work, all of the extension faculty we interviewed insisted that their extension work primarily involves teaching, not service. As one extension faculty member put it:

*“The difference between what we do in Extension, which is outreach education, and service is that we have developed an identified program that encompasses an entire subject matter, as opposed to a spontaneous presentation that someone might do for a Rotary Club that they call service. I have a complete program that’s based on aging and health care that involves outreach, research and education. The audience is different [than for the on-campus classes]. That’s my audience behind you in those pictures. As opposed to your typical campus audience. And they happen to be in Pittsburg, Kansas.”*

Another one of K-State’s exemplary extension faculty members concurred: *“It’s not service; it’s education. We have service activities too, like committee work and service for professional and community organizations, but our programs are education.”*

The extension faculty’s description of how they teach their program subject matter also bears a striking resemblance to the descriptions of how exemplary faculty approach teaching in their on-campus classes. The individual with the program on aging and health care talked about her extension work as follows:

*“It’s my job to translate research that’s done on this campus, across the country, and across the world; to translate that research into something that is useful to an 80 year-old woman who’s trying to decide whether she should go to a nursing home or not. It’s my job to read the research, to understand it, to do my own research, and then come up with a way to tell her what her options are and how she can make*

*decisions that are based in research. It's a hell of a lot different than giving a speech to the Rotary Club."*

Recalling the discussion above of whether teaching could be regarded as scholarship, based on this description one would conclude that extension education also includes the integration and application of dimensions of scholarship (Boyer 1987).

The extension faculty suggested that their teaching could be more difficult than teaching an on-campus class. As one put it, *"In a class on campus, you can get by with a lot more b.s., because you typically have a whole semester to cover the subject matter. But in teaching my program I often have only 2 hours to teach my audience complex nutritional information."* Another extension faculty member noted an additional challenge of extension education compared to teaching on campus:

*"In Extension you should be prepared to deliver on an impromptu basis in response to the needs of your audience. Whereas in a classroom session often you have a series of objectives that you set, in Extension you go out there with your program but you have to be prepared to respond to their objectives, what they want to get out of the program . . . If you can't relate it to local conditions and understandings, you know, their practical experience, then you've lost your audience."*

The approach that extension faculty take in their outreach education actually has striking similarities to the "active learning" approach that is being advocated for teaching in classroom settings (Bonwell and Eison 1991). And the exemplary faculty in this study who have taken the active learning approach in their classrooms provided similar descriptions of their approaches to teaching. One described her approach as follows, *"I went into class the first day and my students had to negotiate an entire syllabus. Was that interesting! I've done that twice now, but I can't keep doing it every semester. It's so tiring. You find yourself constantly revising everything and it's just non-stop."* We gather that K-State extension faculty would say this comment relates to their own teaching experiences.

The second misperception of extension faculty's work is the extent to which it involves research. A common perception is that although extension faculty may disseminate research information, they do not engage in research activities themselves. This perception may apply to some extension faculty, but not to the exemplary faculty we studied. One of them even drew a parallel between extension work and research:

*"The way I look at Extension is that it's somewhat like a research project, with a different objective than publications. The objective for an Extension program is to enable someone to come to a conclusion with information they already have, together with information that you provide, which hopefully leads them to a deeper understanding and a better use of resources."*

Often the information that extension faculty provide comes from their own research. And their research activities are usually intertwined with their outreach education and service activities. As one extension faculty member, who also teaches on campus, put it, *“I try as much as possible to have my research feed into my classroom teaching and to have my teaching feed into my research. And Extension feeds into all of it.”* Similarly, another member of K-State’s extension faculty said that much of his own research is designed to provide local data on problems analyzed by researchers in other parts of the country--or the world.

### **How Exemplary Faculty View K-State**

When asked how they compare K-State to other universities with which they are familiar, the exemplary faculty we interviewed generally have a positive assessment of K-State. They are especially positive about the commitment to teaching at K-State. One of them proclaimed that, compared to other universities where she believes an inordinate emphasis is placed on faculty’s research,

*“K-State is sort of an oasis, at least in terms of the commitment to undergraduate teaching and the quality of undergraduate teaching.”*

This was a common theme in the exemplary faculty’s comparisons of K-State with other research universities they know. Another exemplary faculty member made a similar comparison, noting that quality teaching by faculty did not seem to be rewarded where he did his graduate studies. He characterized that institution as,

*“an intensive kind of research environment . . . [in which] teaching is almost an unrewarded, kind of unimportant, aspect of scholarship. [But] I got into academics to be involved with classrooms, as scholarship, in a balanced way with typical research.”*

Several faculty credited K-State’s administrative structure for the greater appreciation of quality teaching at this university. One individual said that was an important factor in her decision to come to K-State.

*“I needed to know there was a priority [on teaching] here and I wanted to know that priority came from the top down—it wasn’t something the faculty were fighting to try to get to be a priority . . . [I needed to know] that you are recognized as a quality teacher, just as you are recognized as a quality researcher or a quality extensionist. Those three should get equal treatment. And I would say K-State probably comes the closest to that, even though I hear people complain sometime. I think, ‘Gosh, if you’ve never been anywhere else you would be amazed what it’s like out there at other places.’ I have family at other places, and I know what it’s like. I say K-State is poised near the top, if not at the top, in that regard.”*

Another individual indicated that she came to K-State because of its reputation for producing outstanding undergraduates in her field. She attributed that reputation to the quality teaching at K-State.

*"Based on the students I saw coming out of this school, I always thought it was the best teaching university in the country. What I mean is . . . students who come to Harvard are good students to start with. That's not true for all of the students who come here, but something happens between when they start and when they come out of here, and I call that solidly good teaching. And it produces the best students--especially my college--it produces the best students in the country."*

Most of the faculty we interviewed do not rank K-State as one of the top research universities in the country, however. One individual put it bluntly:

*"[Another university] is a top 25 research institute; K-State is not."*

He and several others classified K-State as a "second" or "medium" level research university. They see the major difference between K-State and a top research university as the latter's stronger resource base. One of them described the difference as follows:

*"[Top research universities] put a lot more resources into the faculty, whether it's research assistants or other [types of] support for the faculty. The structure is stronger."*

Not everyone agreed with the reference to "*the constant battle we have with resources and facilities*," however. Several of the faculty we interviewed agreed with the individual who claimed, "*The resources here are excellent*." Opinions vary by colleges, with exemplary faculty in the College of Agriculture being generally more positive about K-State's resources and facilities than faculty in the other colleges. One faculty member of the College of Agriculture acknowledged this difference and attributed it to his college's resource base.

*"Yeah, I think the College of Agriculture is different. I think our resource base is different and that leads to different experiences and different attitudes. Our teaching load is lighter and that frees up more time to get things accomplished . . . [T]hat may lead to some of the [different] experiences that people have and [to their] attitude toward resources available at Kansas State."*

A faculty member of a different college, but who also expressed satisfaction with the resources available to him, suggested the variability of resources varies by department.

*"It's dependent on the individual department. . . . [My department] is a first-class institution. To be honest, it's because we've been able to bring outside funds into the department to keep us up-to-date."*

Another faculty member who also is in a department with faculty who have been successful at obtaining outside funds to support their research, suggested one reason for the departmental variation is K-State's system for allocating funds for the indirect costs of faculty work that is supported by grant money.

*“When departments here earn grant money a large portion of the indirect costs of that money comes back to the department. It's about 35 percent [at K-State], whereas at other campuses around the country it's five or ten percent.”*

He added that this system provides “*an incentive for individual faculty members and individual departments,*” which he applauds. But he added,

*“It's a blessing to have a large amount of indirect costs come back to the department, but it's a bane when people know you have this money and make you spend it for things that maybe the central administration might have done at another campus.”*

K-State's exemplary extension faculty are mostly positive about resources available for their extension work at K-State. One of them noted that in her specialty area, “*We are better staffed than in most states.*” Another member of the extension faculty did express concern about what is perceived as a declining resource base for extension work at K-State.

*“It used to be I would go to conferences and come back and be thankful that I was at K-State, but it's not like that anymore. We used to have more resources, more support . . . but I don't see that now. Resources have either dried up or . . . [shifted] across campus.”*

The other extension faculty we interviewed did not express similar concerns, however. This was true for an extension colleague of the same college as the person just quoted. On balance, then, K-State's extension faculty who do exemplary work feel they are provided the resources they need for their educational programs.

Although opinions varied on the resources available at K-State to support faculty's work, the exemplary faculty we interviewed were very positive about their K-State colleagues. Said one, “*[T]his university is blessed with talented people.*” K-State faculty are viewed as highly collegial too. One of the exemplary faculty expressed a sentiment shared by most of faculty in this study:

*“The collegiality at K-State is outstanding . . . The egalitarianism at Kansas State is something that has always kept me here.”*

## **Conclusions**

Some conclusions can be drawn from this analysis of K-State exemplary faculty. First, what seems to make exemplary faculty exemplary is their ability to intertwine their teaching, research and

service activities in such a way that they “*feed into each other.*” Not all of the exemplary faculty studied are able to intertwine their service activities with their teaching and research, but all of them seek to inform their teaching with their research. And their teaching often informs their research. This is especially true for teaching graduate students, who are generally regarded as colleagues by the faculty in this study. At least one individual even goes so far as to say, “*Everything I have accomplished, I owe to my students.*” Teaching undergraduates often provides inspiration for faculty’s research; sometimes simply to “*to warm them up,*” but other times they have been inspired with ideas for their own research.

Second, contrary to the perception that university faculty are not dedicated to teaching, the faculty in this study have a profound commitment to teaching. As one of them put it, “*That’s why we’re here.*” Faculty who do not have formal teaching appointments nonetheless view themselves as teachers. Often they teach classes on an overload basis; frequently it involves “*one-on-one teaching*” with students or clients with whom they work. And faculty who have teaching appointments take their classes and other teaching responsibilities very seriously.

Third, there is not a set approach to organizing faculty’s time. Exemplary faculty take one of two basic approaches to organizing their time. They either take a reactive approach that is “*interrupt driven*” or a proactive approach that organizes their time “*in a modular fashion.*” Those who take the former approach find themselves reacting to the demands on their time by others rather than establishing a schedule of their own. “*Deadlines are probably the number one driving factor*” for this approach. Those who take a more proactive approach rely on “*list-making*” practices they have developed to organize their time according to a schedule they have established for themselves. The need to meet deadlines also plays a role in this approach, but the proactive faculty seek to prepare for deadlines “*way ahead of time*” rather than the more reactive approach of dealing with “*the deadlines that are facing right now.*” Which approach an individual takes seems to be a function of his or her personal style and not tied to one’s academic discipline or institutional setting. Moreover, these two approaches define general practices, with individuals combining elements of both approaches. Those who generally take the more reactive approach often must be more proactive in how they organize their time, whereas the more proactive faculty often find themselves reacting to interruptions and other interferences in the schedule they have established.

Fourth, exemplary faculty do not look upon their students as merely recipients of the faculty’s knowledge. In their interactions with students the faculty we studied seek to learn from students as well as teach them. And these faculty are committed to helping students develop and mature through their interactions with students, whether the interactions be in the context of teaching, advising sessions, or casual conversations. Faculty recognize, “*we’re not trained as priests or psychiatrists.*” What they do see themselves as trained for is to foster critical thinking skills and other attributes that contribute to students developing into mature, rational adults. And when they observe such development in students, “*It’s an absolute joy to see that.*”

Fifth, our perception of what extension faculty do needs to be altered. What exemplary extension faculty at K-State do primarily is teach. Their audience is different from their colleagues who teach in classrooms on campus, but they clearly are providing an education to their audience;

effective extension education requires a scholarship that is fundamentally similar to what is required for effective teaching in a classroom. Indeed, we believe that as college classroom teaching moves toward a more active learning approach, extension faculty have much to offer to their colleagues who wish to adopt that approach. Exemplary extension faculty are also active researchers. Again, the audience of their research may be different than the audience of other faculty, but the basic approach appears to be the same.

Finally, K-State is regarded as a positive setting for faculty to produce exemplary work. This is especially true for the teaching aspects of faculty work (in terms of both on-campus courses and extension educational programs). A strong commitment to teaching is recognized among faculty as well as the administration by most of the exemplary faculty we interviewed. Indeed, one proclaimed, "*K-State is an oasis,*" compared to other universities where an inordinate emphasis is placed on faculty's research. On the other hand, K-State is not regarded as a top research institution by most of the exemplary faculty in this study. This is not to say they believe exemplary research is not produced by K-State faculty. Rather, it seems the quality of the resource base to support research varies by departments and colleges. And exemplary research is produced by faculty who are in departments where there is a "*constant battle . . . over resources and facilities.*" A recurring theme among K-State's exemplary faculty, regardless of their department or college, is the belief, "*[T]his university is blessed with talented people.*" This talent, coupled with the belief, "*the collegiality at K-State is outstanding,*" seems to be the major reason for the positive view that exemplary faculty have of K-State.

Our conclusions on how K-State's exemplary faculty approach their work apply not just to them but to their K-State colleagues in general. The findings reported here are similar to the findings of a general survey of K-State's faculty—including the faculty interviewed for this study (Fullagar et al. 1999). Similar to exemplary faculty, K-State's general faculty reported working more than 50 hours a week. The formal teaching requirements of exemplary faculty are also similar to what K-State's general faculty have. What distinguishes exemplary faculty is the time they put into informal communications with students. Another distinction found by Fullagar et al. (1999) was the tendency of exemplary faculty to communicate more frequently with their professional colleagues than the general faculty, plus exemplary faculty are more involved in presenting scholarly work to professional conferences. Exemplary faculty also are more likely to serve as guest speakers or provide expertise to government agencies or other organizations than the general faculty. Based on these findings, it appears that what distinguishes exemplary faculty from their K-State colleagues is the time they commit to the communication of information and ideas to students, colleagues and people outside academia.

### **Appendix: Research Design**

The research reported here is based mostly on personal interviews with K-State faculty who were identified as exemplary by their peers. Each person interviewed was treated as a case study of an exemplary faculty individual, with the intent of obtaining in-depth information on what each person does in his/her work. We also sought to obtain each person's perspective on what constitutes exemplary work by faculty. We followed Grounded Theory (GT) procedures for comparing the

cases, which are analytic procedures designed to discover patterns and variations among cases being studied (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Charmaz 1983; Corbin and Strauss 1990). As Burawoy (1991, p. 281) puts it in his review of different approaches to case study research, the GT approach is a “generic strategy [that] looks for similarities among disparate cases...” Similarities are discovered through what grounded theorists call “constant comparisons” of the cases being studied. The objective of these comparisons is to account for patterns and variations in the data obtained from interviews and/or observations. Corbin and Strauss (1990, p. 9) note that “[m]aking comparisons assists the researcher in guarding against bias, for he or she is then challenging concepts [of what is similar among disparate cases] with fresh data.” For example, are faculty who are excellent in their teaching, research, and/or service work similar in the way they prioritize their tasks? What is similar about the tasks to which they give the highest priority? In what ways is this process different across faculty in different--or similar--situations, and how can these variations be explained?

Consistent with the GT approach, selection of exemplary faculty for the case studies proceeded on theoretical grounds. As Corbin and Strauss (1990, pp. 8-9) put it, “One varies or contrasts the conditions as methodically as possible in order to determine what has an impact on the phenomenon in question.” To address the phenomenon of exemplary work among K-State faculty, we focused on three general conditions of faculty work: (1) the institutional settings in which faculty work; (2) the types of appointments that faculty have; and, (3) personal characteristics that could influence how others interact with a faculty person in his/her work. The first two conditions are derived from research by Blackburn and Lawrence (1995), who found that faculty work varies by the type of academic institution and by the types of appointments they have. Included under the third condition are individuals’ gender and ethnicity, which have been found to be significant sources of variation in professional experiences (cf., Kanter 1977; Feagin and Sikes 1994). Moreover, we studied faculty who have been identified as exemplary in their teaching, research, and/or service work. We turn next to a brief description of the exemplary faculty included in our case studies.

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