

Sponsor: Committee of Academic Freedom and Professional Status of Faculty

Background: When faculty provide an intellectual contribution to scientific or social enquiry led by other investigators, it is considered collaborative scholarship. The tradition at Cornell University is to recognize individual accomplishments for promotion with tenure. However, faculty do provide leadership in cooperative or multidisciplinary teams that may work with public and industry partners to achieve their goals, such as by serving as co-primary investigators on proposals. Collaborative scholarship of this type is being increasingly recognized and even required by federal and non-federal funding agencies for successful grant submissions. We conducted a survey of different units at Cornell University and found that collaborative scholarship is generally valued and even expected of individual faculty in certain units for successful promotion to tenure. However, there is a general lack of clear guidance for faculty performing collaborative scholarship on the criteria required for promotion.

The resolution:

Whereas collaborative scholarship brings diversity, innovation, entrepreneurship, and effective solutions to complex problems, strengthens our standing as a research university, and enhances our ability to obtain prestigious high-level funding.

Whereas insufficient guidance on the criteria required for successful promotion is provided to faculty with an expectation for participating in collaborative scholarship.

Be it resolved that Cornell University recognizes the value of collaborative scholarship and considers engagement in such scholarship as tenurable activity, commensurate with the faculty member's distribution of effort in individual and collaborative scholarship.

Be it further resolved that the weighting of collaborative scholarship in tenure decisions will be determined by each unit; more weighting may be applied for a leadership role in collaborative scholarship.

Be it further resolved that participation in collaborative scholarship may be an expectation for an individual faculty member but is not a requirement of all faculty within a unit or department.

Be it further resolved that individual units or departments support faculty pursuing collaborative research and generate written guidelines on criteria required for promotion for faculty engaging in collaborative scholarship and for internal and external reviewers evaluating these faculty. When generating these guidelines, units should consider equity across stage of career, workload, job expectations, and title. Guidelines should include information on how faculty document and provide evidence of their role in collaborative scholarship and how their contributions to collaborative scholarship will be weighted in promotion decisions.

Be it further resolved that these guidelines be widely promoted within the unit or department and uniformly applied for promotion purposes.