



August 19, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Academic Deans and Chairs
From: Willy Prado, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs
Subject: Evaluation of Team Scholarship Reappointment, Promotion & Tenure

As we approach our centennial in 2025, the University of Miami has created a roadmap for a future spanning across geographic, cultural, and intellectual borders. The University has articulated a number of initiatives that will engage our passion for scholarly excellence, our spirit of innovation, our respect for including and elevating diverse voices, and our commitment to tackling the challenges facing our world.

One of these transformative initiatives is Interdisciplinary Inquiry/Team Science/Team Scholarship (hereafter referred to as Team Scholarship), with a focus on teams of scholars from multiple disciplines in collaborative, problem-based inquiry to address important and complex challenges. This initiative parallels trends seen more broadly across scholarly disciplines as well as those who fund research and scholarship, discovery, and scholarly/artistic pursuits.

Team Scholarship has a key role in the future of scholarly endeavor and it is explicitly valued at the University of Miami. Many important and complex problems require large and diverse teams of scientists working in concert, such as those fostered by our Laboratory for Integrative Knowledge (U-LINK) <http://ulink.miami.edu>.

In the current environment of collaboration and Team Scholarship, to only recognize solo accomplishment is unfair to those who participate in Team Scholarship and diminishes the strength of the university as a whole. Individual achievement and Team Scholarship are both important. The traditional focus at many universities has been to (almost exclusively) focus on individual roles. The University of Miami needs to recognize and acknowledge the efforts and contributions of faculty who also deploy their individual expertise in collaborative efforts in the same manner that we have historically acknowledged first-authorship or Principal Investigator status, for example. Faculty who engage in Team Scholarship should be able to document national recognition for their academic area of expertise.

The Provost and the Office of Faculty Affairs have already taken steps at the level of the Provost's Academic Personnel Board (APB) to address this challenge, and we will be working collaboratively with the Faculty Senate to institutionalize changes. The APB has a voting member who is nominated by the leadership of our Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI), who is the "voice" of Team Scholarship during our deliberations. Additionally, we are working to ensure that all members understand the importance of Team Scholarship and take this into account when voting on reappointment, promotion, and tenure cases.

The Provost and I are writing to ask that you begin to take steps, if you have not already, within your academic unit to ensure that Team Scholarship is properly valued and acknowledged in the context of

reviews for reappointment, promotion, and tenure. Please begin discussions with your faculty so that documents for reappointment, promotion, and tenure take such scholarship into consideration.

Evidence of success in Team Scholarship may include, but is not limited to:

- Key collaborations with other investigators and investigative teams
- Specific elements of participation that were essential for the research and scholarship to proceed; that is, the ability to demonstrate that “...but not for Faculty X’s expertise and contributions, project Y would not have been achieved.”
- Integral roles in achieving grant support due to indispensable and unique contributions, both as an individual and in Team Scholarship
- Evidence of expertise leading to success in multiple areas of investigation
- Evidence of successful teaching and student learning via an interdisciplinary course(s) with faculty from other departments and/or schools/colleges
- Co-mentoring of graduate students in interdisciplinary research projects

The fair and effective evaluation of Team Scholarship will require us to work together with our faculty to carefully consider changes to our respective evaluation frameworks and processes. What follows is a partial list of principles and practices which might be considered and adopted by the relevant voting faculty within your unit. These list of principles and practices are designed to strengthen our capacity to assess and value Team Scholarship.

- Faculty have a demonstrable area of research and scholarship in which they advance their field’s body of knowledge. That is, they are making significant contributions to their field while working on Team Scholarship.
- Evaluation committees, when evaluating teaching overall, give credit to faculty teaching interdisciplinary courses with other faculty and to faculty co-mentoring students working in interdisciplinary projects, even if they are not the primary chair of the student’s committee.
- When evaluating faculty members who are involved in Team Scholarship, evaluation committees should consider placing higher focus on high-impact team research/scholarly productivity of a sustained nature and simultaneously evaluate the impact of the faculty’s research and scholarship via their work on the team.
- Deans and Chairs should encourage those who participate in Team Scholarship to annotate the bibliography portion of their CVs, so that department and school-based review committees as well as the APB will be able to evaluate their specific contributions in particular grants and scientific publications.
- For those faculty members who are members of collaborative teams, appropriate credit might be given to activities where significant and enduring intellectual input is documented, without an expectation for such input to be noted by first/senior authorship.
- We would expect a successful team scholar to be able to document national recognition for the academic area that characterizes their work through other means, including, but not limited to:

invited presentations, editorial positions on boards of peer review journals, study section membership, and national awards.

- Roles as a core leader or individual project leader on a Program Project Grant might be considered equivalent to a PI role on an R01 grant if it involves significant effort and time commitment.
- The faculty member, in their CV and narrative statement (“Candidate’s Statement”) should be encouraged to demonstrate that their scholarly activity reaches a level comparable to those faculty who are undertaking independent scholarly activities, including evidence of research scholarship in peer reviewed journals of significant impact, and/or sustained successful competition of extramural funding (e.g., NIH, NSF).

Suggested Team Scholarship Promotion and Tenure Checklist:

1. Narrative description in Candidate’s Statement regarding their accomplishments in Team Scholarship, and the importance of their work to the discipline as well as to the Department, School, and University of Miami.
2. Annotation of publications and grants to indicate specific role, as well as specification of proportion of contribution to the process as well as the final product.
3. Solicitation of letters from at least two collaborators to help assess contribution to the collaboration. These letters will be in addition to the required 5 letters from arms-length reviewers. All letters should clearly address the “...but not for Faculty X’s expertise and contributions, project Y would not have been achieved” criterion.

Provost Duerk and I would like you to discuss these guiding principles with your relevant faculty and consider incorporating them into the next round of promotion and tenure cases. Again, we will be working collaboratively with the Faculty Senate to institutionalize these changes but want you to begin reviewing and incorporating such principles as early as this fall.