

## FACULTY ESSAYS

### TEACHING AND RESEARCH

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Teaching and research are often conceived in the public mind at best as parallel and unrelated, and at worst as conflicting and incompatible activities. The growth of the research university in the United States after World War II was linked with the slogan “publish or perish,” according to which faculty were encouraged to favor research at the expense of teaching. The press publicized cases of legendary and effective teachers who were dismissed because they hadn’t published enough. Many universities came under harsh critique from students, their parents, and the public at large for their focus on research, which was sometimes caricatured as useless, arcane, and frivolous, and for their neglect of students and of teaching.

In response, defenders of the university often affirmed that it was possible to be both a good teacher and a good researcher, pointing out exemplary professors who combined both talents. Some universities, Emory included, responded to this criticism by a renewed emphasis on teaching. In 1992 Emory’s Graduate School of Arts and Sciences introduced the Teaching Assistant Training and Teaching Opportunity (TATTO) program, which included pedagogical training in the curriculum of candidates for a PhD. The report *Choices and Responsibility*, produced by the provost in 1994, claimed that one of the major issues facing the university was finding a proper balance between teaching and research. Three years later, the Emory Commission on Teaching issued a report (*Teaching at Emory*) that, in response to this kind of criticism, recommended various ways to improve teaching, as well as recognize its role in tenure and hiring decisions.

These responses are laudable, but they seem to concede the point that teaching and research are unrelated activities. This point needs to be challenged. Historically, U.S. research universities trace their origins to the late nineteenth century, when American higher learning set aside the British model of higher education and accepted the German one. German university reform

began with the founding of the University of Berlin in 1809 under the leadership of Wilhelm von Humboldt and Friedrich Schleiermacher. The key to their reform was the *unity* of research and teaching, in which both students and professors were involved. The education, or formation (*Bildung*), of the individual occurs in the *search* for knowledge.

Today this ideal still exists in the minds and activities of many academics, for whom research and teaching are interwoven and intimately connected. The connections can best be expressed in the following way.

**TEACHING NEEDS RESEARCH**—If academic subjects were fixed bodies of “truths,” then teaching could be conceived as the communication of such subjects in the most interesting, accessible, and even entertaining way. This may work in elementary and secondary schools. But at the university level, students should be introduced to academic disciplines as they really are. Far from being fixed, they are complex and advancing programs of inquiry, more questions than answers, more problems than solutions. This is as true of ancient history and philosophy as it is of physics and neuroscience. Students learn what their subjects are really about from people who are actively engaged in the ongoing progress (and, sometimes, regress) of their discipline, who are excited about their subjects, not as observers but as participants. As *Teaching at Emory* stated (p. 10), “teaching flourishes in the context of a lively intellectual community.” Indeed it could be said that at the university, the role of teaching is to introduce students to just such a community. This is done best by its active members. The university should be wary of the idea of a “two-tier faculty.” Professors who do nothing but teach lose touch with their subjects.

**RESEARCH NEEDS TEACHING**—Research and scholarship need to be communicated to others and to the world at large, and publication and professional meetings serve this function at one level. But many academics will affirm that they never really understood their discipline until they began to teach it. Communication with students enhances intellectual inquiry in unique ways and at different levels. Advanced graduate students, who want to become researchers themselves, often ask the most sophisticated questions. Here the professor is involved in preparing the next generation of

researchers, ensuring the continuation of the discipline and influencing its future direction. At the other extreme, teaching an introductory course to freshmen requires that researchers continually rethink the fundamentals of their disciplines—the naïve questions of the uninitiated are often the most difficult to answer. These neophytes can force the researcher to place his or her inquiry in a larger context that is easily ignored or forgotten when research is narrowly focused. Teaching makes the researcher articulate and clarify the point of his or her activities to those who are not experts.

This intimate connection between teaching and research may be difficult for outsiders to see and understand, and academics feel it in different degrees. Some researchers do not teach at all, do not want to, and their research does not suffer for it. And many professors who are criticized for neglecting their teaching do indeed complain that their teaching loads are too heavy and that they interfere with their research. Many would be pleased to teach fewer courses and to have more time off for research. But few would wish to give up teaching altogether, and few would be willing to sever their ties to students. They recognize and value the unity of teaching and research.

## ETHICS IN THE ACADEMY: KEEPING GROWTH RESPONSIBLE IN THE RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

by *Juliette Stapanian Apkarian*, associate professor, Department of Russian and East Asian Languages and Cultures, Emory College; and *Richard Rothenberg*, professor, Department of Family and Preventative Medicine, School of Medicine, and professor, Department of Epidemiology, Rollins School of Public Health

Emory's accelerated move to enhance its research profile raises a myriad of questions, many with ethical overtones. Some of these questions pose formidable challenges that will be difficult—even painful—to resolve. The battle for national rankings fosters conflict within the institution. Although conflict can be healthy, struggles can generate competing ethical imperatives, adversarial rationales, and unintended consequences. Emory's process of development, then, must include a continual questioning of the very assumptions and practices we employ.

We must question the assumption that rapid growth is the best strategy by which greatness is achieved. Scale clearly does have a relationship to prominence, and growth does have intrinsic value. But rapid growth also has many hazards, and, unmonitored, can offer the most risky of ethical pathways. This risk is greatest when growth becomes its own imperative.

What, then, are the true benefits and real costs of rapid growth versus incremental or modulated growth at Emory? And who are the true beneficiaries of this growth? Rapid growth may increase entrepreneurship in both positive and negative ways. While rapid growth can facilitate cross-fertilization among specialties, it also can disrupt this interaction. Growth both increases visibility even as it can involve uncomfortable reliance upon outside funding sources. While enlarging the potential base for community, accelerated growth can also fracture community and undermine allegiance to the institution. “Bidding wars” for productive investigators may be waged at the expense of cultivating personnel and projects already in place.

Rapid growth unquestionably affects the quality of life (physical and intellectual) of the university. Moreover, the meaning and impact of research—how we define scholarship, how and

why we choose our projects and define our priorities—all have ethical dimension. Our choices of whom and what to acknowledge, respect, and reward exert formative influences on the patterns of university growth. And the values we demonstrate in this regard are the models we convey to our students.

Emphasis upon research affects graduate and undergraduate teaching in many ways. While it can offer marvelous opportunities for students, it can also limit their access to faculty and invite exploitation of graduate students, staff, and “faculty equivalents.” But are there less obvious relationships, too? There may be, for example, unfortunate links between research patterns and problems such as rampant grade inflation or insufficient appreciation of inequities in service loads among faculty. In today’s world, research universities increasingly find that they must act as businesses in order to survive. But some goals of research universities differ importantly from those of corporations. Ethically, the university must protect those meaningful differences, while recognizing and regulating the patterns and pressures that it shares with the corporate world.

***The world of the university emerges from many tensions:***

- between the interests of the marketplace and the interests of pure knowledge
- between the drive to compete and the desire/need for collaboration
- between the goals of researchers and the rights of subjects
- between the expectations of the outside community and the demands of the institution

While teaching, research, and service are all interrelated, scholars often find themselves torn into pieces among them. The trade-offs we must make among them and the short-cuts we might decide to employ are matters of complex and ongoing ethical concern.

In an era of increasing competition for limited resources, one of the most critically limited of resources for faculty at Emory is that of time. The impact of this may have serious implications for the integrity of research and for its relationship to teaching and service. Time—tenure/promotion clocks, publication and grant

deadlines, publishers' response times—dictates much about university life. It also drives decisions we make about how and whether we mentor colleagues, foster intellectual community, and nurture our personal lives. As we “raise the research bar” on tenure and promotion, the ethical as well as pragmatic aspects of these dynamics require careful scrutiny.

Tensions between competing demands, between quality and quantity of research, and between aspirations for individual careers and institutional loyalty are all part of the reality of university life. While benchmarks for measuring success may differ over time and among varying cultures within the university, variations should not be arbitrary. How we negotiate the dynamic space between the realm of ideas and the marketplace should be a matter of ongoing discussion among all levels of the university. And while ethical behavior is the responsibility of members of the academic community toward their home institution, it is also the responsibility of “the institution” toward its members.

Maintaining a vibrant, productive, and humane intellectual community is a dynamic process. It involves continual assessment of our values, continual evaluation of our criteria for success, and ongoing attention to our procedures for nurturing it. The ability to deepen knowledge responsibly and to shape growth ethically requires both a clear statement of the university's core mission and a reasoned balancing of teaching, research, and service.

## EMORY'S CULTURE OF DISTRACTED EXHAUSTION

by *Rebecca Stone-Miller*, associate professor, Department of Art History, Emory College

Many faculty are experiencing a “culture of distracted exhaustion” due to Emory’s ambitious growth, recent history of plentiful resources (for certain initiatives, not faculty research especially), out-of-proportion service requirements, and lack of faculty governance. Many professors feel their jobs have been rewritten toward administrative institution building and away from intellectual, academic, and contemplative values.

Some radical measures are now called for to bring research to its proper place. Emory should look to those schools “above” it if it wants to truly move up on the strength of issues other than endowment. For instance, the relation of research to teaching may be quite different in top-ten universities (e.g., Princeton’s teaching load is 1/1). Fewer good faculty members might leave Emory if the situation were more conducive to their own work, and better people would take jobs here, thus creating an upward spiral in the intellectual atmosphere at Emory.

This is a key time to introduce positive ideas and plans, rather than to complain. More ideas such as the new Senior Fellows in Humanities need to be implemented. Less focus on growth and more on development would benefit everyone, make jobs more manageable, and help create common goals. As part of these plans, the university should trust the faculty more, require only brief paperwork, and institute some gentle checks and balances to create equity among faculty members. These kinds of rewards/punishments would be welcome given revamped, more reasonable, academic and intellectual expectations. Promoting creativity, as well as productivity and novelty, should be a top priority of the institution. This new emphasis may not look neat and tidy, may not happen overnight, may require some unprecedented initiatives; however, it would meet several goals by improving faculty members’ lives, research, and prestige—as well as improving Emory itself.

Currently faculty members do not have enough time to do their best research because precious time that could be used for research is taken up by extra teaching that does not “count,” and by too much service (university, college, and departmental). To alleviate this, Emory should acknowledge the time demands of smaller

projects undertaken with students, such as serving as the director or reader of dissertations, MA theses, and honors theses. Also, faculty and administrators should acknowledge that certain types of teaching demand more resources, energy, and new structures than others. For instance, teaching outside one's specialties/interests (usually involving large surveys) involves higher stress levels and heavier time commitments as one studies many other fields and attends conferences outside one's research interests.

Another demand on faculty time comes from administering and/or attending programs, new initiatives, lectures, symposia, etc. There needs to be some downscaling and housecleaning, but done carefully and with lots of consultation from faculty.

Research, as a component of a larger category of scholarship, is not really adequately or completely defined, recognized, or rewarded. Thus, motivation is low and results are less than optimal. Scholarship is not identical with publications—scholars inspire others, give and receive information. Thinking does not result in publications every time or at regular intervals, and activities other than publications are scholarly (e.g., museum exhibitions, websites, programs for the community, television shows, and databases). Furthermore, in reviewing works of scholarship, quantity is not necessarily quality.

Overall there needs to be greater awareness at Emory that creativity happens in and out of the office. If faculty members are to be creative and productive, they must live a full life in which family circumstances are also taken into account. And while most faculty members are consumed by research, teaching, and service, students and administrators should be made aware that if faculty members are not at their beck and call, it is probably because they need time to think. Emory will achieve much research distinction if it does everything possible to protect this “time to think.”

## ASSESSING EMORY'S CORE VALUES

by Carol Worthman, Samuel C. Dobbs Professor of Anthropology,  
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The commission's assessment of Emory's research values and practices has been informed by surveys of the cultures and forms of research at Emory, as well as comparative institutional data. The following reflections on the university's ethos (defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "The characteristic spirit, prevalent tone of sentiment, of a people or community; the 'genius' of an institution or system") devolve from this effort and particularly from discussions with colleagues in Committee One of the commission (assigned to look into the "what" of research). The profile is not exhaustive, nor would most commission members agree on which features should be foregrounded or backgrounded. Rather, these assessments are offered in the belief that reflection and critique lead to more debate and growth.

### *Foregrounded*

**SKILLS AND PRAGMATICS.** Emory is strong on the transmission of skills that rely on research expertise and on research that supports pragmatics. The professional schools (of which biomedicine is most dominant) firmly ground this orientation to both skills' transmission and meeting of pragmatic needs. Concurrently, Emory's scholarly and professional skills-oriented tradition tends to emphasize transmission more than innovation and critique, social order rather than social change.

**DISTRIBUTIVE TRANSMISSION.** Emory is also committed to distributive transmission of knowledge and, to a lesser extent, to capacity building, a commitment centered in the college.

**COLLABORATION.** The basic sciences at Emory all report extensive collaboration across university departments, particularly in the realm of clinical research.

**MORAL-ETHICAL.** The university has a strong tradition of moral-ethical training and discourse related to its significant theological

sector. The tradition orients to a thoughtful, cumulative approach to research that builds on and thus maintains established paradigms in that sector. The college's emphasis on responsibility and accountability further reflects this orientation.

**COMMUNITY.** A significant consequence of the previous emphasis is the strength of community orientation at Emory. Faculty are expected to be good citizens and to take responsibility for collective needs and concerns. Conflict or contestation and strong passion are avoided, and self interest is downplayed.

**AUTHORITY.** Emory has a firm culture of authority, grounded not only in the educational mission and expertise that faculty embody, but also in an institutional culture of strong administration. Conversely, the charismatic vision, passionate intelligent action, and divisive potential of strong leadership are downplayed at Emory. Similarly, diversity of all kinds has arrived lately to the institution and has become a site of continual effort and progress.

**SUPPORT BASE.** The amount and sources of income for the various parts of Emory reflect social value and resource allocation. The contrast in amounts and sources of funding among biomedicine (medicine, public health, nursing, allied health), Emory College, business, law, and theology demonstrate the relationship between resource availability and sources of social value. This relationship means that Emory must juggle the highly valued and resource-rich domains with the less so, in order to float all boats. Imaginative, strategic allocation of university support can go a long way to realizing the principle that we are one university—one intellectual community dedicated to the advancement of knowledge and human capacity on all fronts.

### *Backgrounded*

**CRITIQUE, INNOVATION LINKED TO PRAXIS.** Emory assuredly is not a hotbed of intellectual ferment or revolution. This feature can be comfortable, but the weak traditions of critique and contestation may actually undermine the vibrancy, productivity, and innovativeness of research. Further, it may make it more difficult to

achieve critical mass for generating research capacity. Finally, innovation linked to praxis (e.g., in social policy, technology) is largely absent.

**TECHNICAL.** The absence of engineering and architecture schools largely underlies the thinness of technical research traditions at Emory. But these have implications for some areas that Emory does in part claim (biomedicine, chemistry and physics, math and computer science), though recent efforts have aimed to address the gap through linkages with other institutions.

**INTERNAL FORTITUDE.** Emory is a relatively young institution and an arriviste in its sphere of aspiration and perceived peers. Its ambition has been profoundly galvanizing, but remains weakly allied with patience and courage—some of the university’s goals are achievable, but only in decades. Nonetheless, present actions and policies generally are couched in and assessed over rather short time frames. Emory has yet to muster the courage to make long-range plans and take the requisite risks in intellectual, not just fiscal, terms. Finally, Emory still lacks sufficient depth of faculty, intellectual culture, and supportive human capital in administration to meet its aspirations.

**THE LIFE OF THE MIND.** The word “thinking” seldom appears in discourse at Emory, which is emblematic of how the life of the mind remains in the background. And yet, that life is vital to the university’s intellectual mission. Moreover, ethical issues arise when institutional demands conflict with the needs for creativity and intensive engagement required for enduring research excellence. Institutional aspirations and development place a heavy premium on community needs that will pay off in the future, but exact costs in the present exacerbate such tensions. The spaces in which the life of the mind advances are as diverse as the members of the intellectual community, but the creation of the capacity for space-making so that such life may flourish is weakly articulated. Hence, the means tend to overshadow the motives and meanings of research.

**TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE.** Emory lacks a confident tradition of excellence, understandable in view of its history, but pernicious

with respect to recognition and promotion of existing excellence, and to attainment of the confidence and courage to be patient, take intellectual risks, think creatively, and assume leadership. Furthermore, a tradition of excellence challenges all members of the research community to live up to that tradition.

**SELF-EVALUATION ALLIED TO ACTION.** The commission process of internal data collection, reflection, and assessment has been valuable, but its real impact depends on consequent action. Emory excels at self-evaluative exercises, but fails to act boldly and systematically on the results of such exercises. The challenge is to draw from substantive analyses that provide the grounds for more rational planning and effective resource allocation that reflect nuanced understandings of the research missions of the university.

**CONSTITUENCIES.** We note in passing that constituencies differ by agenda and values; therefore, value depends on the constituency. No institution can address all constituencies with equal efficacy, for their values often conflict. Hence, Emory needs not only to identify its key constituencies clearly, but also to consider the nature and extent of conflicts among their values that may constrain the missions of the university. Evaluation of research can be particularly challenging in this regard, because the community of professional peers forms the constituency for evaluation of researchers' work. But most of these peers are external to the university, which can set up tensions between the requisites for personal recognition and advancement, and the needs of local peers and community. On the other hand, institutional demands for rapid growth and advancement not infrequently sap rather than sustain the capacity for escalating research excellence. Emory requires the maturity both to juggle inevitably conflicting constituencies and to thoroughly invest in researchers along with the continually evolving intellectual landscapes that support their best work.