

# **Academic staff activity profiles: from theory to practice**

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The tension between teaching and research is widely reported (de Jonghe, 2005), but there are increasing pressures from service and community engagement as academic work becomes intensified. In 2008 Southern Cross University in regional Australia was presented with two challenges: how to enhance teaching without devaluing research and how to incorporate the growing significance of service and community engagement into academic work. The University wanted an approach that maximised staff satisfaction and career development while at the same time ensuring the requirements of the organisational unit are met and overall productivity improved. The solution involved the redesign of academic staff activity profiles and was framed around Boyer's (1997) four categories of Scholarship, coupled with Service, to describe five areas of possible academic activity. Community engagement was seen not as a separate scholarship but as a component of each of the 5 categories. This showcase tracks the implementation of this theoretical solution through the development of an academic portfolio, reconceptualisation of policy around promotion, performance management and review coupled with intensive consultation and professional development activities. By 2013 the University had implemented the solution over two rounds of performance review and promotion involving academic staff and had incorporated new positions of 'teaching scholar' and 'research scholar' into the process. Initial evaluation of the solution through data on staff participation are reported.