

The Peoria Recommendations

Suggestions on Promotion, Tenure and Evaluation for Directors of Forensics

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Introduction and Background

The reality of forensics education in the early 21st century is that there are a variety of models in terms of designing programs. A simple list of configurations can include:

- Single tenure-track director of forensics
- Tenure-track director of forensics with one or more tenure-track assistants
- Tenure-track director of forensics with one or more part-time assistants
- Single continuing-appointment director of forensics
- Single term-appointment director of forensics
- Single staff member director of forensics
- Staff director of forensics with one or more full-time staff assistants
- Staff director of forensics with one or more part-time staff assistants
- Adjunct director of forensics

All of these configurations occur within the basis of a variety of different types of institutions, including research institutions, regional comprehensive institutions, liberal arts institutions, community colleges, and other types of institutions such as for-profit institutions¹. Clearly, the Quail Roost committee was correct in calling for a document that served all of these different constituencies. This paper must do the same. However, Quail Roost was written from a policy debate paradigm. While many forensic educators have borrowed from Quail Roost in the preparation of promotion and tenure documents, it is time to reconsider Quail Roost from the perspective for directors who are part of individual events only or are part of comprehensive programs.

There are three basic reasons Quail Roost must be updated for current forensic practice: Quail Roost is designed primarily for tenure-track, Ph.D. DOFs, Quail Roost presumes a service model that may not be appropriate for IE or other types of programs, and Quail Roost was written before some major reconceptions of theories of scholarship.

Since Quail Roost, the background of forensic

educators has changed significantly. Rogers notes that the percentage of PhD and tenured DOF's has decreased, while the number of non-tenure track and staff DOF's has increased. In 2000, 20% of forensic educators had the PhD, 57% were faculty status, 26% were staff status, 17% were graduate assistants, and 44% were on the tenure track ("Forensics in the New Millennium" 7-8). Evaluation instruments designed on the traditional models of teaching, research, and service may not be appropriate for those of staff and non-tenure status.

Second, one of the presuppositions of the Quail Roost document is of a "reverse presumption" about service – that in the realm of policy debate, service often happens earlier rather than later in one's professional career (7-8). That is certainly not always true within the variety of different forensic organizations, although it can be. Instead, a conception of service that is broader-based is necessary to consider the different kinds of service that take place within the forensics community.

Finally, as this paper will later argue, Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered has had a significant impact on promotion and tenure practices at a variety of institutions. Any guidelines or suggestions for evaluation of forensic professionals must take into account how Boyer's practices have influenced higher education.

This document, therefore, seeks to strike a balance between prescriptive and descriptive. While departments and institutions vary as far as standards of evaluation, tenure, and promotion are concerned, this document seeks to advance the work of former and current forensic educators such as Ann Burnett, MaryAnn Danielson, Tom Workman, David Williams and Joe Gantt to raise the kinds of questions that directors (and assistant directors) should ask of themselves and their programs, and to suggest questions that should be asked of forensics professionals² when it comes to their evaluation. In that light, these recommendations serve both to further the professionalism of the activity as well as to align forensics with the growing movement toward assessment (Bartanen "Rigorous Program Assessment," Kerber and Cronn-Mills).

¹Earlier in the decade DeVry had several students competing in parliamentary debate.

² The term "forensics professional" shall be used throughout this paper to indicate someone who fits within any of the conceptions mentioned at the very beginning of the recommendations.

While doing so, however, it is important to recognize the caveats noted several years ago by Ed Hinck:

Comparing the work of one director with another is often more difficult than comparing the more traditional work of faculty members who teach and write in their field of expertise. However, just as we recognize the varied contributions of faculty members within the four major categories of teaching, scholarly activity, service, and professional activity, it seems important enough to describe the variations in programs and explain the educational value of those emphases. Failing to address those issues leaves directors vulnerable to the misapplication of a very limited set of standards for evaluating their work. (11-12)

To Hinck's qualifications, the author would add one additional item: without research that includes forensics research, as well as research by and about the academy, these recommendations would be meaningless.

Thus, the recommendations that will be offered seek to address several questions:

1. How do we define when a director/assistant director is an effective part of the forensics community, which is by definition educational, co-curricular, and also competitive?
2. How do we help to define how forensics uniquely impacts the areas of teaching, scholarship and service?
3. How do we account for the variations in program types when determining what makes an effective ADOF/DOF?

One other observation needs to be made before continuing. This document draws upon two decades of forensics and higher education research. In some cases, the points being made here will be familiar to long-term members of the forensic community. In many of those cases, the points made were prescient long before they were recognized in the larger community. In other cases, good ideas that simply were forgotten are being advanced again because of their intrinsic value.

The Professionalism of Directors: Bridging the Pedagogical and the Competitive

One of the unique challenges that a director of forensics faces is that she or he has the ability to offer educational philosophies that guide an entire program. Assistant directors, particularly those who have oversight for a particular portion of a program (for example, individual events or a particular type of debate) also have this same ability. While this ability to set the educational philosophy is often ground in negotiations with both the host depart-

ment (as applicable) and/or the larger institution as a whole, it is clear that the director should be able to offer justifications as to the existence and the educational viability of forensics. Along those lines, and of those suggested by Keefe, we should consider the following questions to be essential to ask forensic educators (49-50).

1. What is your coaching philosophy?

While this question sounds fairly straightforward at first, most forensics professionals recognize that this can easily become a fairly complex question. In the forensics community, we have developed a variety of attitudes and perspectives about how forensics should operate, both on a team (micro) and community (macro) level. A successful coaching philosophy should recognize both the micro and macro level.

On the micro level, forensics professionals should be able to answer at least three different questions: how do we expect students to generate speeches³, what role should we as coaches play in the development of our students⁴, and what kind of squad we should develop.⁵ We should, as forensics educators, be able to clearly delineate and identify the kind of role we want to play in the development of our students as forensics team members, both in micro and macro contexts.

On the macro level, we have a variety of good illustrations from the realm of policy debate. Dr. Ede Warner's Louisville project and Towson State University's 2008 CEDA National Championship team are two examples of programs that have successfully raised questions of how debate should function. Warner has posted extensively on Edebate as well as published an article examining the philosophical assumptions under which his program operates.⁶

2. What is your judging philosophy?

The question is familiar to those who coach debate, as several organizations such as CEDA, NCCFA, NPDA, NPTE and the NDT already explicitly require written philosophies as a part of the tournament entry. However, several members of our community, including at the 3rd developmental conference, have made the calls for individual events

³ Among other places, the issue is raised in Daniel J. O'Rourke, "Criticizing the Critic: The Value of Questions in Rhetorical Criticism." *National Forensic Journal* 3.2 (Fall 1985): 163-166.

⁴ See Leah White, "The Coach as Mentor." *National Forensic Journal* 23.1 (Spring 2005): 89-94

⁵ Carolyn Keefe, "Developing and Managing a Peer Forensics Program." *National Forensic Journal* 9.1 (Spring 1991): 65-75; Sheryl A. Friedley and Bruce B. Manchester, "Building Team Cohesion: Becoming 'We' Instead of 'Me.'" *National Forensic Journal* 23.1 (Spring 2005): 95-100.

⁶ Ede Warner & Jon Brushke, "'Gone on Debating: Competitive Academic Debate as a Tool of Empowerment.'" *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* 22 (2001): 1-21.

coaches to do the same. As Przybylo argued, “A judging philosophy is dynamic or ever changing. Our views and criteria should develop as one grows as a judge and educator” (20). Przybylo argues for, at the minimum, the following areas to be covered:

- A General Philosophy Statement (overall view of your positions)
- “Overdone” material/topics
- Different rules (NFA, AFA, Phi Rho Pi, etc.)
- Listening behavior of students in the round
- Language (dirty words, sexist language, etc.)
- Movement and Book-as-Prop
- Use of script
- Current sources
- Types of comments written on the ballot
- Use of speaker points
- Organization of ballot
- Appearance of student
- Time violations
- Statements for each event

Przybylo’s series of questions are a good start toward establishing a personal philosophy. One might expect, when it comes to questions of tenure, promotion and retention, that members of the community should recognize awareness of some of the critical issues within various events⁷.

3. What is your teaching philosophy? How do you demonstrate effective teaching?

Whether we are full-time tenured DOF’s or staff members who coach, this question is essential to answer. Even though teaching may be only a part of our responsibilities, given that forensics is at its core an educational activity⁸, we must still be able to articulate two different aspects of teaching:

1. What is our own pedagogy, and how have we derived it?

⁷ This has long been a strand of forensic research. See Brian Ott, “Bridging Theory and Practice: Toward a More Pedagogical Model of Rhetorical Criticism,” *National Forensic Journal* 16 (1998): 53-74; Stephen M. Croucher, “Like, You Know, What I’m Saying: A Study of Discourse Marker Frequency in Extemporaneous and Impromptu Speaking,” *National Forensic Journal* 22.2 (Fall 2004): 38-47; Leah White and Lucas Messmer, “An Analysis of Interstate Speeches: Are They Structurally Different?” *National Forensic Journal* 21.2 (Fall 2003): 2-19, among others.

⁸ See Russell Church, “The Educational Value of Oral Communication Courses and Intercollegiate Forensics: An Opinion Survey of College Prelegal Advisors and Law School Deans,” *Argumentation and Advocacy* 12.1 (Summer 1975): 49-50; K.M. Bartanen, “The Place of the Forensics Program in the Liberal Arts College of the Twenty-first Century: An Essay in Honor of Larry E. Norton,” *The Forensic* 84.1 (1998): 1-16; K. Stenger, “Forensics as Preparation for Participation in the Academic World,” *The Forensic* 84.4 (1999): 13-23; Susan Millsap, “The Benefits of Forensics Across the Curriculum: An Opportunity to Expand the Visibility of College Forensics,” *The Forensic* 84.1 (1998): 17-26.

2. How do we understand our role as teachers within forensics?⁹

Both of these are covered elsewhere within this document.

4. How do you see your program within the context of various forensic organizations? Do you know what the various organizations stand for?

Although in an ideal world, directors and other professionals should first determine their philosophy and then decide what organizations their teams should be members of, the fact of the matter is that most programs tend to decide what organizations they are part of based on what kinds of forensics they want to do. To that end, then, I would contend that the program should be able to articulate where it fits in. For example, in the realm of parliamentary and Lincoln-Douglas debate, programs often confront the question of whether they are traditional or more policy-based¹⁰. Such considerations are also critical for programs at faith-based institutions. To what extent should the forensic team uphold elements of the university’s faith tradition?¹¹

Additionally, care must be taken to consider whether a program can successfully be part of multiple organizations, and when such things as tournaments conflict, which organizations will a program more closely identify with? In recent years, NPDA has conflicted with CEDA; directors of programs that do both (such as the University of Wyoming, University of Puget Sound, Whitman College, etc.) have to make decisions as to which organization’s tournament to support. Such decisions should be made in the context of the goals and the pedagogy present within each program.

5. How do you see forensics as an educational opportunity?

The goal behind this particular objective is to have directors and other professionals articulate what kinds of students they draw into the forensics experience. In the realm of policy debate, for example, some programs (such as Vermont, Louisiana-Lafayette, and others) are known for drawing novices into the activity. In individual events, several colleges universities (Bethel University, Normandale Community College, Southwest Minnesota State, etc.) require some of their students to participate in

⁹ Leah White, “The Coach as Mentor,” *National Forensic Journal* 23.1 (Spring 2005): 89-94.

¹⁰ I recognize this is a simplification; however, it illustrates the general principle of identifying one’s own program in the light of other peers. This is more a function of the “Here’s what my program is like” approach.

¹¹ For example, many evangelical schools do attend the National Christian College Forensics Invitational, but not all do. Questions of whether or not a program should separate itself from others are perfectly fair and appropriate questions to raise.

forensics in order to graduate.¹² Since we clearly do not serve all of our student populations, it is important for us as forensics professionals to more clearly articulate the kinds of students we attract to our teams, as well as how those students fit within the educational mission of our respective colleges and universities.¹³

6. How would you define your program? If someone were to ask you what makes your program unique, how would you answer?

I mention this particular question last because in some ways, it is the summary of the previous five questions. Most of the previous questions are designed to be affirmative answers (i.e., “I seek to engage students in critical thinking”). However, we often answer the last question in the negative (“My program isn’t like program X, Y or Z.”).

Part of defining the philosophy of the program is to make a decision of whether or not the program should be specialized or broad-based. Rogers makes the case for the broad-based program, contending, “If we give up and compartmentalize our programs doesn’t that make them all the more vulnerable to external critics who argue that we are educating within only a narrow band of experience?” (Forensics in the New Millennium 8). McGee and Simerly advanced the argument that “In an era of forensics specialization, no program or program director can do all things well” (282). They also advanced arguments about resource allocation and experience of the director to make this case.

Forensic educators should be able to articulate why they have chosen the course they have through pedagogical rather than pragmatic lenses. If a program chooses to only offer individual events, then the director should be able to make that case. If the program tends to focus in particular areas, such as Lincoln-Douglas debate, limited preparation debate, and so forth, the program should be able to provide a justification. In short, the test of a director should be as Joseph Cardot once argued: “The director or coach of today must help decision-makers see the educational, social, and personal relevance of forensics” (81).

7. How do you know that your program is effectively meeting its goals?

Bartanen (“Rigorous Program Assessment”) notes the problem with much current assessment of programs: it tends to be process rather than outcome-based (37). While studies have been done concerning the role of forensics within the university as a whole¹⁴, most programs tend not to ask questions about what kind of outcomes the program desires, and whether or not those outcomes have actually been implemented.

One of the means of assessment should be to include students who are part of the program. The Denver conference on individual events recommended that “forensic coaches have the duty to articulate to students their program’s philosophy, goals, rules and expectations” (Karns and Schnoor 7). Part of an assessment instrument should be to find out how students perceive the goals of the program, and to see whether those goals are actually being achieved.¹⁵ In addition, we can profitably include peer evaluations (such as those already required as external referees/reviewers), reviews from former coaches and DOF’s, and so on.

Directors and Teaching

Clearly, the expectation is that as instructors in a college classroom, forensics professionals are expected to be effective teachers. The question of whether or not teaching also applies to forensics has been long debated in a variety of tenure and promotion committees. Because of the kind of coaching that we often do, which can be one-to-one, one-to-a few, it is often not recognized in the same way as teaching a normal course. However, there are at least two reasons to consider forensics as teaching.

First, to be an effective coach requires the recognition of learning styles. Bartl notes that a learning styles approach to coaching can be extremely effective. Since this approach borrows from what has already been established within educational pedagogy, its applicability is readily apparent.

Second, within forensics, we have the unique ability to see a student’s performance multiple times and to give it far more feedback than we are typically able to do in our courses. In addition, in our role as judges, we are asked to provide feedback to students from other institutions, and in that sense, confirm whether students have sufficiently mastered the competencies expected within forensic events, and

¹² This is covered more fully in Michael Dreher, “Component-Based Forensic Participation: Using Components to Build a Traditional Team.” *Southern Journal of Forensics* 2.3 (Fall 1997): 236-243.

¹³ An often cited justification is that forensics students tend to be brighter than the typical college student, thus, raising the academic profile of the institution. Additionally, this is the justification offered by Urban Debate Leagues (UDL) for their existence. The Rogers *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate* article cited in the bibliography provides a research-based substantiation for this argument.

¹⁴ Mike Allen, Sandra Berkowitz, Steve Hunt, and Allan Loudon. “A Meta-Analysis of the Impact of Forensics and Communication Education on Critical Thinking.” *Communication Education* 48 (1999): 18-30; Joe Bellon, “A Research-Based Justification for Debate Across the Curriculum.” *Argumentation and Advocacy* 36.3 (Winter 2000): 161-175.

¹⁵ Such an approach can be found in Janet Kay McMillian and William R. Todd-Mancillas. “An Assessment of the Value of Individual Events in Forensics Competition from Students’ Perspectives.” *National Forensic Journal* 9.1 (1991): 1-17.

indeed, whether or not they are effective in the realm of public speaking. As such, we not only teach our students, we teach the students of our colleagues as well.

Directors and Service

Different institutions have different levels of expectation as far as service is concerned. This document will consider that service can happen both within the forensics community and externally, such as in service-learning.

Within the forensics community, the common assumption is to think primarily in terms of the national organizations. There are ways in which forensics professionals can engage in service, however. The first is the tournament itself. Not every school is able to host; not every professional is able to direct. Those who do are indeed the lifeblood of the activity. What is needed, however, is more of an assessment tool by which we can establish the effectiveness of the hosting experience. Numbers of schools are a poor indicator; given the nature of the tournament calendar, tournament attendance will vary. However, as a community, we should encourage tournaments that offer variations in different events¹⁶, as well as to provide standards by which we know that hosts and tournament directors have been successful. This paper will not list such standards, as they are best left to regional and local communities. The 3-round Tuesday afternoon tournaments in Minnesota, for example, serve a much different audience than the national draw of the Sunset Cliffs, for example.

Service also happens within regional and local associations. Recognition should be given to those who do such tasks as write topics for tournaments, serve in tabulation rooms, on executive boards and councils of regional forensics organizations, and so on.

In short, we should ask the question of how the professional is engaging the larger forensics community, and what role that person has in serving the community. We should recognize that service happens in a variety of different ways.

Directors and Scholarship

This paper will argue, as others, that scholarship should not be confined to traditional views of scholarship as being simply conference presentations, refereed journals and/or books. Indeed, many in the academic community has come around to the idea

that scholarship should be more broadly grounded along the lines of Ernest Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate. The idea of utilizing Boyer's framework is not new; a variety of coaches have successfully used these arguments in promotion and tenure cases¹⁷. In expanding on Boyer's notion and how it could be helpful for evaluation purposes, one important caveat must be emphasized: Boyer's conceptions do not in any way suggest that such research is easier or less rigorous as compared to traditional research; indeed, in many ways, such research is harder to do and harder to explain. The four elements of research Boyer considers are: the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of integration, the scholarship of application, and the scholarship of teaching (16). These four types of scholarship will be explained in terms of the forensics community, as well as how they can be conceived of in various stages of a forensics professional's career.

Boyer suggests that the scholarship of discovery is most similar to traditional research and is based on the notion of a commitment to knowledge for its own sake. This kind of scholarship, in Boyer's view, often includes the creation of original work.

In our forensics community, we have heard the calls for additional research, and those won't be repeated here. However, it is also the case that creative activities, such as directing a Readers' Theater, involves the creation of original work as well. To make the case for Readers' Theater, the following is an example of the kind of argumentation Boyer suggests:

Is the scholarship presented publicly or published? Yes.

Is it peer-evaluated. Certainly. We often tend to choose judges in events such as RT that show unique understanding of the event.

Does it have an impact on the field? Good Readers' Theaters force us to reconsider what the event should be, and indeed, what should be discussed within RT. ARTa is an excellent illustration of this principle.

Boyer's second type of scholarship, the scholarship of integration, refers to where disciplinary boundaries come together. This is often seen in, for example, in the integration of oral interpretation and performance studies literature.

The third type of scholarship, the scholarship of application, is phrased by Boyer in terms of "How can knowledge be responsibly applied to consequential problems? How can it be helpful to individuals as well as institutions? And further, can social problems themselves define an agenda for scholarly investigation?" (21). Boyer then argues, "New intellec-

¹⁶ See David E. Williams, Christopher T. Carver and Russell D. Hart "Is It Time for a Change in Impromptu Speaking?" *National Forensic Journal* 11.1 (Summer 1993): 29-40; Scott Jensen, "Equal Opportunity?: The Impact of Specialized Tournaments on Forensics Pedagogy, Forensics Professionals, and the Forensic Laboratory," *Proceedings of the 3rd National Developmental Conference on Individual Events*. Ed. Shawnalee Whitney. Houston: Rice University, August 1997, 66-72.

¹⁷ The author used it for promotion to full professor in 2004; he is indebted to Bob Groven of Augsburg College, who also used the idea. This idea is also discussed in Todd Holm and Jerry Miller's "Working in Forensics Systems," *National Forensic Journal* 22.2 (Fall 2004): 23-37.

tual understandings can arise out of the very act of application” and that in several disciplines, “theory and practice vitally interact, and one renews the other” (23).

Typically, when we consider the kind of research presented at our national conventions, it often falls into this scholarship of application. We also see it in review pieces at developmental conferences¹⁸, specialized conferences such as ARTa¹⁹ and PKD, and in our journals²⁰. This kind of scholarship is common within the realm of interpretation, as forensic educators examine the interaction between oral interpretation, theater, performance studies, narrative theory, and in some cases, musical forms such as hip-hop²¹ and so forth.

Practical Applications of Directors of Scholarship: To Publish in Forensics or Not?

This question is one of great concern to the forensics community, for as Kay pointed out nearly 20 years ago, a bias does exist against forensics research. Kay, a former DOF and then chair of the Department of Speech Communication at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, saw the purpose of his paper “is to plead with members of the forensic community to ground their research interests in matters which simultaneously serve the community of forensics and the community of scholars who are dedicated to the understanding of human communication” (61). While this paper doesn’t disagree with Kay’s perspective, it instead argues for a broadening of the perspective, to contend that what we do does interact with the communication discipline.

Evaluation of Forensic Educators: Can One Size Fit All?

The beginning of this paper argued that there were at least nine different categories of educators. Clearly, the standards for promotion to full professor at a Research Extensive universities should look different than the standards at community colleges. In a parallel way, standards for staff members are likely to be (radically) different than for faculty members. This portion of the paper will present sev-

eral different ways we can evaluate forensic educators that can work across a variety of different kinds of settings.

1. Does the forensic professional understand the key issues of the field?

One aspect of Boyer’s work that has been relatively unexplained is his third chapter in *Scholarship Reconsidered* on the faculty. Boyer argues the following:

“...it is unrealistic, we believe, to expect *all* faculty members, regardless of their interests, to engage in research and to publish on a regular timetable. For most scholars, creativity simply doesn’t work that way. We propose an alternative approach. Why not assume that staying in touch with one’s field means just that – reading the literature and keeping well informed about consequential trends and patterns? Why not ask professors periodically to select the two or three most important new developments or significant new articles in their fields, and then present, in writing, the reasons for their choices? Such a paper, one that could be peer reviewed, surely would help reveal the extent to which a faculty member is conversant with developments in his or her discipline, and is in fact, remaining intellectually alive (27-28).

Such an approach could easily be incorporated into a teaching portfolio. This would allow forensic professionals to take a broad approach that considers the entirety of forensics within communication, political science or other disciplines, or focuses more narrowly on particular events.

Diamond’s criteria for considering an activity also provides some means by which we can assess whether the reflection we as forensics professionals are doing meets scholarly criteria:

1. The activity of work requires a high level of discipline-related expertise.
2. The activity or work is conducted in a scholarly manner with clear goals, adequate preparation and appropriate methodology.
3. The activity or work and its results are appropriately and effectively documented and disseminated. This reporting should include a reflective critique that addresses the significance of the work, the process that was used, and what was learned.
4. The activity or work has significance beyond the individual context.
5. The activity or work, both process and product or result, is reviewed and judged to be meritorious and significant by a panel of one’s peers (78).

2. Does the forensic professional show mastery of

¹⁸ See Trischa Knapp, “Returning to Our Roots: A New Direction for Oral Interpretation.” *Proceedings of the 3rd National Developmental Conference on Individual Events*. Ed. Shawnaale Whitney. Houston: Rice University, August 1997, 29-34.

¹⁹For example, one panel at the 2008 ARTa conference by Amy Andrews and Crystal Lane Swift concerned “Argumentation/Interpretation: Do Performances Have to Argue?”

²⁰ Among many different possibilities, see Todd V. Lewis, David A. Williams, Madeline M. Keaveney, Michael G. Leigh “Evaluating Oral Interpretation Events: A Contest and Festival Perspectives Symposium.” *National Forensic Journal* 2.1 (Spring 1984): 19-32.

²¹See Theresa Sotto, “The Poetics of Hip Hop,” ArtsEdge/Kennedy Center series, <http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/3656/>

key competencies?

Previous research by Workman, Williams and Gantt, and Danielson and Hollwitz have tried to focus on key competencies of the director of forensics. Workman suggests that there are six critical competencies: instructional, financial management, leadership and responsibility, administrative, interpersonal, and professional (84-85). Williams and Gantt's survey identified the administrative as being the most frequently mentioned cluster of DOF duties, followed by team management and coaching (61).

Danielson and Hollwitz's survey of DOF's identified four essential components and four relevant components of the DOF's position. In their study, the essential components included: arranging students' participation in off-campus tournaments, administering the speech and debate program, coaching speech and debate participants, and accounting and bookkeeping. The four relevant components of the DOF position were: recruiting students for speech and debate programs, teaching speech and debate classes, directing on-campus tournaments, and counseling and advising speech and debate students. They then went on to suggest that two other components may possibly be included: college and community service involvement, and moderating speech and debate student groups (13-14).

Clearly, previous studies have suggested that there are a variety of competencies that surround the forensics professional. This paper would contend that the professional, in conjunction with her or his supervisor (dean, department chair, etc.), mutually agree on the important competencies and then demonstrate how those competencies are to be measured.

3. *When appropriate, has the forensic professional established her/himself as an effective teacher in her/his field of study?*

Because of the nature of some forensic positions being primarily staff positions and/or adjunct positions, those professionals may not necessarily be teaching traditional undergraduate or graduate courses. However, in the sense that forensics coaching can be considered a form of teaching, then in a way, all who coach are teachers.²²

I label this in a strategically ambiguous way because I mean it in three contexts: teaching within

one's discipline, coaching and teaching students, and teaching future forensics professionals.

Teaching in one's discipline has certainly gained a great deal of importance over the past several decades, and it is not the primary focus of this particular paper. I would suggest, clearly, that those who are effective teachers in their courses should be rewarded and recognized. As we evaluate colleagues from other institutions, we should not be afraid to ask about their teaching in other courses.

This paper has already discussed the notion of coaching and teaching students, so I won't elaborate on that here. I will focus on the final element: teaching future forensics professionals. Many in the forensics community have lamented the decrease in terms of doctoral-level programs that educate forensics professionals; at the same time, MSU-Mankato has developed an MFA program for forensics professionals. But the impact of the trend is that much of what passes as teaching today takes place informally.²³

4. *Has the program clearly identified its mission, and has the forensics professional successfully operated within its mission?*

Mission statements, for example, can help to both shape the professional's thinking as well as to serve as a reminder of the focus of the program. An example of part of the mission from the author's program serves as an illustrative example:

- Our program serves the needs of the Department of Communication Studies, our sponsoring department. Forensics serves as a laboratory for students who take our courses, and it serves as a co-curricular way of giving students the opportunity to teach and be taught by others outside of our own institution.
- Our program serves the needs of students of all majors. It is a way for students to learn more about communication as well as the world around us, and gives students opportunities to practice what they have learned.
- We seek to serve the forensics community through our commitment to first-time forensics students. We are the sponsoring school for Novice Nationals, a tournament for first-year intercollegiate competitors. Also, we encourage students with no previous experience to compete either as part of our courses or as part of our team.
- We believe that each student who is on our team is on the team for a reason. Our role is to help the student identify the reason, and find the ways in

²² Clearly, our literature has suggested that ballots, and indeed events, perform an educational function. Additionally, the Spring 2005 (volume 23, no. 1) focus issue of the *National Forensic Journal* included a variety of articles based on the educational focus of various genres and events. As just one example, see George LaMaster's "Understanding Public Address Events" (32-36); also in that issue were Brendan Kelly's "Basic Training: An Assertion of Principles for Coaching Oral Interpretation for Intercollegiate Forensics Competition" (25-31), Ian Turnipseed's "Understanding Limited Preparation Events" (37-44) and Audra Diers' "Understanding Lincoln-Douglas Debate" (45-54).

²³ See Thomas Workman, "Solving for a Healthy Future: Creating National Standards for Training Future Directors of Forensics." *Proceedings of the 3rd National Developmental Conference on Individual Events*. Ed. Shawnalee Whitney. Houston: Rice University, August 1997, 83-86.

which we can minister to and through each student.²⁴

Conclusion

The Peoria Recommendations are meant to be a starting point for both further discussion within the forensics community as well as for individual forensics professionals to consider the key questions of how professionals function within the community, and how professionals should be evaluated within the community. Without clearer standards, the role of the forensics professional will continue to be marginalized as committees who do not understand forensics are asked to evaluate forensics professionals.

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²⁴ <http://comm.bethel.edu/forensics/mission-statement>