



OCPD FREE*

**Faculty Resource for Educational Excellence*

Upcoming Events

[Click here](#) for an at-a-glance view of our upcoming events for the next 3 months!

Office of Continuing Professional Development (OCPD)

Shari Whicker, EdD, MEd

Assistant Dean, Faculty
Development
Senior Director, Office of
Continuing Professional
Development
Director, TEACH (Teaching
Excellence Academy for
Collaborative Healthcare)
Virginia Tech Carilion School
of Medicine
Carilion Clinic

Professional Development

Mariah Rudd, BS, Manager
Sandra Dehart, Curriculum &
Media Specialist
Deborah Ferron, Secretary

Continuing Medical Education (CME)

Paul Dallas, MD, Medical
Director
Linda Wells, CHCP, Manager
Paula Robertson, CHCP,
Senior CME Program
Specialist
Carol Gibson, CME Program
Specialist
Susan Curtiss, Secretary

Academic Productivity – What Does it Mean and How Do We Measure It?

What comes to mind when you hear the term “academic productivity?” Does it create a nice warm feeling inside, or does it provoke feelings of concern or even anxiety? If you’re like me, you often go back and forth between the two ends of the spectrum. Measuring the academic productivity of a faculty member often focuses on such metrics as published journal articles or abstracts, grant submissions and awards, presentations at various meetings, hours spent in the classroom or lab, or other similar activities. For clinicians, measurement of clinical productivity is a prominent concern often overshadowing these academic activities. Academic productivity has been the subject of research and scrutiny over the years. Within higher education in general, it has been said that people outside the university are often most concerned about the quantity of work, while people inside are most concerned about the quality of work.¹

Academic work is very nuanced and unique in various disciplinary settings. It is important to recognize this fact, and to value academic work at every opportunity. As part of a newer medical school and academic health center, our faculty continues to grow in terms of our productivity and our commitment to the ideals of the professoriate. I hope you feel as privileged as I do to work in our academic setting here at VTCSOM and Carilion Clinic.

How about another question: what do you think about when you

"The more often you share what you've learned, the stronger that information will become in your memory."

-Steve Brunkhorst

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hear the term "Digital Measures?" Several years ago, our medical school decided to invest in a productivity database program and settled on Digital Measures. It took several years to build the system, train "super users" in each department as well as faculty members, and discover how to take full advantage of the system itself. For some, using this database has greatly simplified the preparation of a variety of tasks and enabled us to gain insights into the strengths of our faculty. For others, it may be viewed as "a necessary evil."

For those of us who work with the database daily, we are now contemplating how to integrate these functions into the larger systems of the university, no small task when you consider that we now have between 800-1000 individuals in the system. Please keep in mind that Digital Measures is simply a tool. However, it serves several important functions for the school, such as facilitating annual performance evaluations and providing information for reporting and accreditation purposes. More importantly, it is designed to be useful for YOU, our faculty, in keeping track of your work over time and supporting the advancement of your career. In my view, the database is more than a data repository; I believe it tells a story. The data contained in Digital Measures is, in many ways, a powerful story about the incredible contributions you are making every day to the lives of your patients, colleagues, and the community. It presents a compelling picture of a vibrant group of academic faculty who are dedicated to our common mission!

If you should need assistance in using Digital Measures to tell YOUR story, please contact either the designated Digital Measures specialist in your own department, or call upon our Offices of Faculty Affairs and/or Faculty Development. In this regard, please welcome our new Faculty Affairs staff member Brendle Wolfe! Brendle is our new Digital Measures Administrator. You can reach her by phone at (540) 526-2566 or email her at brendlew@vt.edu. Welcome Brendle, and thanks for being part of our story!

David W. Musick, PhD, Senior Dean, Faculty Affairs

¹Reagan, GM. The Concept of Academic Productivity. The Educational Forum 1986; 50 (1): 75-85.



Send us an email



*Give us a call
at 540-855-6862*