

Reflections on Service

As a faculty member, we have a duty to provide service to our research community, university, department, and the general public. During the last year, I have actively contributed to service at all these levels.

My service at the University level include: serving as the department delegate in the Faculty Senate since May 2019, chairing the Student Affairs committee, member of the Faculty Executive committee, and member of the Arts and Science Curriculum committee. The senate plays an important role in the University community by bringing out the voice of the faculty and enabling shared governance. In the past year, the combination of the pandemic and the social unrest in the country has given me a chance to witness active debates and passionate discussions in different meetings and this has given me a larger perspective of the university community and their challenges and I believe I'm richer for these experiences.

During the November national elections, our student affairs committee worked with campus life and faculty volunteers to support and arrange logistics for students to confidently exercise their right to vote. Also, based on suggestions from the faculty executive committee, Prof. Grabowski and I built a secure discord server for use in emergency communications by the University community. While this was built for potential use during elections, it could be of future use to the community in other emergency situations. I'm working with the Students Affair committee currently to gather ideas on how to address students' COVID-related health issues such as stress, anxiety, grief, and mental issues. We are working on sending recommendations to the faculty senate executive committees on this topic.

At the department level, I designed and got approval for a new course Data Analytics and Visualization which will be one of the courses in our planned Data Analytics track. This is the third course I designed and developed since my appointment in SUNY Potsdam. I've been an active participant in all our Board of Advisors meetings because I believe that our external advisors need to have a full picture of our activities so they can meaningfully contribute to our growth. Before the pandemic, I was actively leading the department's participation in open houses and in Major Affairs to inform and attract undeclared majors to our program.

I take my advising role very seriously. I met with all my students online in the last two semesters. I take particular care to ensure that students who might be falling behind get the help that they need. I try to find out why they may be underperforming and try to help in any way I can, including pointing out resources available to them. I encourage students who are doing well to keep them motivated. I use the advising opportunity to remind and inform students about outside university opportunities that I get to become aware of from my contacts. These include internships, research experience opportunities such as NSF's REU program, etc.

I have a keen interest in furthering our student's experience during their time here. As an example, I'm an active advisor for my department students' club: Association of Computing Machinery - Women (ACM-W). I participate in all the meetings and on-campus activities and arrange and accompany the students to off-campus conference trips. For the most recent ACM NYCWIC conference, I worked closely with our students to review and revise the poster and our efforts paid off with a best poster award. I present a yearly seminar to the students, to seed research ideas in them and these often get taken up as their senior projects. I also conducted resume workshop for our students along with Dr. Ladd in Fall 2019.

For my professional service, I advise graduate students, review papers for journals, present and organize workshops and seminars. I also bring in experts from outside to present to the department about latest research and open opportunities in Big Data and related fields.

At the community level, I'm serving on the advisory board of two PCORI (Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute) Projects conducted by St Lawrence health systems (SLHS). In this board, on the first one, I provide a patient perspective and assisted medical researchers in St. Lawrence Health System in submitting a proposal to PCORI to study CTD-ILD (connective tissue disease-associated interstitial lung disease) while on the other project (PCORI-DISRUPTS Developing InfraStructure for Research to Utilize Patient-centered Techniques), I'm a member of the stakeholder advisory board. As part of this committee work, I help organize seminars related to public health and offer it to St. Lawrence community. The most recent seminar, entitled "Vax vs Fiction" was widely attended by the campus community.

I also provide community service with my role as a mentor for the "Friends of India Association" (FIA). FIA brings together students, staff, and community with interest in Indian culture and helps new students from India when they first come to Potsdam. As a mentor, I help with the club's organization and functioning and am one of the primary organizers of FIA's annual Diwali show.