PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP
at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

Drafted by 2015-2016 Faculty Learning Community on Public Scholarship

I. Introduction:

Community engagement is a defining attribute of the campus, and the current Strategic Plan identifies a number of strategic actions to "Deepen our Commitment to Community Engagement." In May 2015, A Faculty Learning Community (FLC) on Public Scholarship was established in May, 2015 to address the campus strategic goals to "recognize and reward contributions to community engagement" and "define community engagement work...in Faculty Annual Reports and promotion and tenure guidelines." At IUPUI, scholarly work occurs in research and creative activity, teaching, and/or service. In terms of promotion and tenure, faculty members must declare an area of excellence in one of these three domains.

The FLC on Public Scholarship is a 3-year initiative co-sponsored by Academic Affairs and the Center for Service and Learning (CSL). Seven faculty members from across campus were selected to be part of the 2015-2016 FLC, and two co-chairs worked closely with CSL staff to plan and facilitate the ongoing work. The FLC is charged with defining public scholarship, identifying criteria to evaluate this type of scholarship, assist faculty in documenting their community-engaged work, and working with department Chairs and Deans in adapting criteria into promotion and tenure materials. The intended audiences for this work includes faculty, community-engaged scholars, public scholars, promotion and tenure committees, external reviewers, and department Chairs and Deans. The following provides background to the campus context and a brief summary of work to date, including definition and proposed criteria to evaluate public scholarship.

II. Campus Context:

IUPUI has a long and well-established commitment to community engagement. The campus is one of the first in the country to receive classification, and re-classification for Community Engagement by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. An identified area for improvement, as noted by the reviews by both the Carnegie Foundation and the North Central Accreditation Higher Learning Commission, is to strengthen the alignment between promotion and tenure guidelines and the campus mission of civic engagement (see http://strategicplan.iupui.edu/Downloads). In 2005, the IUPUI Council on Civic Engagement drafted and the Executive Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs approved a proposal for the title of "Public Scholar" to recognize faculty who demonstrate exemplary community-engagement and this also resulted in a small number of faculty hires with this title in their formal appointment (e.g., Public Scholars in Museum Studies and Africana Studies). However, the designation of "Public Scholar" was not included on the Academic Affairs website and the term "public scholarship" was not included in campus promotion and tenure guidelines. In 2014, the terms "public scholar" and "public scholarship" were added to the campus-level guidelines for Promotion and Tenure. Although some schools are developing criteria for evaluating public scholarship, there have been no campus-level guidelines to support faculty and administrators in assessing the quality and impact of this scholarly work.

III. Definition of Public Scholarship:

In 2015-16, The members of the FLC came to agreement upon a preliminary definition that provides a useful starting point for conversation at IUPUI.

> " *IUPUI defines* **public scholarship** *as an intellectually and methodologically rigorous endeavor that is responsive to public audiences and public peer review. It is scholarly work that advances one or more academic disciplines by emphasizing co-production of knowledge with community stakeholders.*"

In arriving at this definition the FLC reviewed literature on public scholarship and used sample definitions and types of public scholarship from other universities that helped frame thinking and determine the best approach for this work at IUPUI. The following critical insights from the literature differentiate public scholarship from traditional, applied, or translational scholarship in a number of ways, including:

1. public scholarship is distinguished by **the co-production of knowledge** between faculty members and community stakeholders outside of the academy;

2. public scholarship **requires significant time investment to cultivate relationships with community stakeholders** as this is the epistemological basis of public scholarship. The demands on a faculty member's time must be factored into the evaluation of public scholarship in terms of the number and the types of outcomes produced. Given the importance of collaboration in this work, evaluators will need to credit the scholarly relevance of public audiences and venues, and they will typically need to seek some type of external review from peers outside the academy;

3. public scholarship **significantly engages with public(s) at multiple stages throughout the process of scholarship** (e.g., clarifying project questions and goals, undertaking adequate preparation, selecting appropriate methods and techniques, generating significant results) and not simply at the end stages of disseminating and critically reflecting on results;

4. public scholarship **intentionally blurs the boundaries** between research and creative activity, teaching, and service;

5. public scholarship often **involves interdisciplinary work and collaboration** due to the nature of community contexts and issues; it integrates diverse views in the production and application of knowledge as opposed to only the scholar's primary or disciplinary expertise;

6. public scholarship **has an explicit goal of a public good impact** by promoting mutually beneficial relationships and producing change, understanding, or other valuable outcomes for community partners.

Based on conversations with members of several schools' Promotion and Tenure committees, the members of the FLC provide a definition of public scholarship that articulates the campus' commitment to public scholarship as a core part of IUPUI's mission and as a clear path to tenure and promotion in research, teaching and/or service. Importantly, this definition also needs to be supported by criteria for assessing public scholarship, but campus units (i.e., schools, departments) will have to determine the details of how they support and evaluate public scholarship amongst their faculty.

Peer review of public scholarship must take into account the faculty member's investment in such activities as building community relationships, engaging in reciprocal learning and project definition, experimenting with collaborative methods, and writing grants to support collaboration with faculty, students, and public stakeholders. Specifically it is important to recognize how these investments affect a faculty member's productivity as related to traditional timelines. Peer review must also evaluate the types and the appropriateness of the outcomes produced based on the faculty member's goals, methods, and public(s). Given the importance of collaboration in this work, external evaluators must have knowledge of the processes involved in public scholarship activities and should have knowledge of the project content rather than simply coming from the faculty member's discipline. This may include scholars and experts from outside the academy.

IV. Proposed Criteria for Evaluating Public Scholarship:

All scholarship, traditional or community-engaged, must meet common expectations established by the discipline, the department, the school, and the campus. While there are many forms of scholarship that benefit the community [applied research, clinical research, commercialization, pubic intellectualism, translational research, tech transfer, etc.] the very nature of public scholarship warrants its own language articulating and describing scholarly work. The FLC adapted the following criteria for evaluating public scholarship activities from existing literature and frameworks used by other universities. These eight criteria are intended to be well-accepted, high-level features, practices, and activities of public scholarship. The criteria outline the components of a rigorous approach to work with and on behalf of community partners and public audiences.

1 Clear Academic and Community Goals

A scholar should clearly define objectives of scholarly work and state basic questions of inquiry. Clarity of public purpose provides a critical context for evaluation of scholarly work.

2 Adequate Preparation in Content Area and Grounding in Public Scholarship

A scholar's ability to conduct meaningful work depends upon mastering existing knowledge both in one's field and practices of public scholarship. Hence, Promotion and Tenure Committees can consider a longer timeline for faculty engaged in public.

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1. Wetherbee, L. (2010). Learning about scholarship in action in concept and practice: A white paper from the academic affairs committee of the University senate Syracuse University. Reflections: A Journal of Writing, Service Learning, and Community Literacy. Ellison, J., & Eatman, T.K. (2008). Scholarship in public: Knowledge creation and tenure policy in the engaged university. Syracuse, NY: Imagining America. University of South Florida, Office of Community Engagement and Partnership http://www.usf.edu/engagement/faculty/community-engaged-scholarship-toolkit.aspx#anchor1

2. Adapted from: Jordan, C. (Editor). (2007). Community-Engaged Scholarship Review, Promotion & Tenure Package. Peer Review Workgroup, Community-Engaged Scholarship for Health Collaborative, Community-Campus Partnerships for Health.

3 Appropriate Methods: Rigor and Community Engagement

Meaningful scholarly work must always be conducted with appropriate rigor. In the case of research or creative practice, rigor facilitates valid project design, data collection (if part of project), interpretation & communication, so that valid conclusions can be drawn from the findings. In the case of teaching, rigor ensures that teaching methods and curriculum are grounded in practices known to produce student learning outcomes and in appropriate theoretical frames and research-based evidence. In many instances the engagement of communities can enhance rigor and facilitate the study of issues and questions that would not be as effectively studied apart from such interaction. Community engagement can also enhance the rigor of teaching and facilitate understanding of issues or theories presented in the classroom. Those engaged in public scholarship should provide evidence to demonstrate that rigor is maintained, or even enhanced, through such approaches.

4 Significant Results: Impact on the Field and the Community

Scholars and community partners should be invited to evaluate whether or not they achieve their goals and whether or not this achievement has an important impact. A primary goal of community-engagement is that impact be beneficial to the communities in which such scholarship is conducted. The assessment of impact must go beyond just the reporting of positive, neutral, or negative outcomes of any given project. The scholar should explicitly describe the new knowledge they created or applied and what impact is has had, or may likely have in the future, on the field and the community(ies) of interest.

5 Effective Presentation/Dissemination to Academic and Community Audiences

Central to scholarly pursuits is the effective presentation and dissemination of results. Scholars should use effective oral, written, digital, tactile and/or visual communications skills that enable them to convert knowledge into formats that a public audience can readily understand and disseminate in formats used by the community most directly involved/implicated by the project.

6 Reflective Critique: Lessons learned to Improve the Scholarship and Community Engagement

Scholars should demonstrate an ability to critically reflect on the process of their work, their community partnerships, the issues and challenges that arise and how they are able to address these. Scholars should demonstrate an ability to consider such questions as: why did this project succeed or fail to achieve its intended outcomes; what could be done differently in succeeding projects to improve outcomes; is this project an idea that is deserving of further time and effort?

7 Leadership and Scholarly Contribution

In addition to being a recognized contributor to their disciplinary or interdisciplinary field, scholars should demonstrate that their work has earned them a reputation for rigor, impact, and advancement and application of knowledge within their discipline, within the arena of public scholarship, and/or within their defined community of public stakeholders. In addition, scholars should demonstrate an ability to serve in leadership roles. One of the most consistent criteria for promotion or tenure in the academy is evidence of a national or international reputation,and scholars may argue on the basis of a reputation in their public stakeholder community.

8 Consistently Ethical Behavior: Socially Responsible Conduct

Consistently ethical behavior links scholarship to personal virtues and community values. This reference suggests that scholarly work must be conducted with honesty, integrity, perseverance and courage. Ethical behavior considers that scholars will foster a respectful relationship with students, community, participants, peers, and others who participate in, benefit or are affected by in their work. Ethical behavior ensures the responsible conduct and the respectful engagement of communities and individuals in research, teaching research, teaching, service and creative activity. Ethical behavior must consider cultural or community implications as well as university policies.

Next Steps

Over the next two years (2016-2018), the Public Scholarship Faculty Learning Community will continue to build on insights generated through the completion of the Concept Paper. In particular, we will work with colleagues across campus to develop resource materials that can support candidates, review committees, faculty administrators and external reviewers in evaluating excellence in public scholarship. This will include the development of a rubric, sample products, tip sheets and planning timelines. We will also contribute to a workshop series developed in cooperation with Academic Affairs and University Faculty Council to address the learning needs of reviewers, department chairs and candidates.

We anticipate that this scope of work will make a substantive contribution to:

• strengthen the campus environment for generating high quality public scholarship,

• develop a critical mass of faculty and administrators that have a deeper understanding of public scholarship and can evaluate it effectively,

• support academic units in ways that create supportive conditions that lead to the retention and advancement of faculty committed to the practices of public scholarship.

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