Defining Public Scholarship

**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, which advances one or more academic disciplines by emphasizing the co-production of knowledge with community stakeholders [Wood et al., 2016].

Public scholarship represents an expression of 21st century scholarly work that is increasingly collaborative, transdisciplinary and digital [Five Colleges’ Digital Humanities, 2015; Holland, 2005; Lommerse et al., 2014; Post et al. 2016]. The production of public scholarship exists along a continuum of scholarly practice, which yields a diverse array of traditional and alternative scholarly products (Boyer, 1990; Colbeck & Wharton, 2006; Ellison & Eatman 2008; Kezar et al. 2018; Stanton 2012).

Framing public engagement, as a dimension of faculty research and creativity activity, is influenced by disciplinary norms of what constitutes knowledge and knowledge making. In addition, it is informed by the intended purposes of inquiry [e.g. social change, innovation, democratic practice, improved health outcomes, community building, public policy, etc.] and how communities of interest are defined and engaged. In combination, these factors have resulted in a proliferation of labels currently in use to refer to faculty public engagement. A selection of these labels include: community-engaged, publicly-engaged, translational, social justice, activist, collaborative, etc.

Whichever label a faculty member selects, it is important that candidates discuss their public scholarship in the dossier consistently, paying particular attention to specific traditions and expressions of public engagement in faculty work (Barker 2004; Peters et al., 2010) and their specific epistemological, axiological and ontological foundations (e.g. Fricker, 2007; Mertens, 2009; Van de Ven, 2007). For purposes of clarity and convenience, IUPUI has elected to use the term "Public Scholarship" in both the campus definition and criteria.

Public scholarship, as a framing of research and creative activity, is distinguished by its purposes, processes and outcomes, including:

- the co-production of knowledge between faculty and diverse community stakeholders,
- significant time investment to cultivate relationships with community stakeholders,
- engagement with public(s) at multiple stages across time,
- interdisciplinary work and collaboration, and
- an explicit goal of a public good impact.
Recommended Purposes of this Document

This document, as well as its future sister documents “Strategies for Developing and Documenting Public Scholarship in Teaching,” and “Strategies for Developing and Documenting Public Scholarship in Service,” are intended to serve two audiences [Figure 1]. First, these strategies are intended to support faculty as they develop, refine and implement a scholarly agenda that will lead to successful tenure, promotion or advancement. Second, the success of candidates relies not only on their individual efforts but also in sound mentorship and fair evaluation from colleagues and subsequently external reviewers (Gelmon et al., 2013; O’Meara, 2016; 2018). As a result, primary committee members and chairs may find the strategies listed here of use as well.

Figure 1. Primary and Secondary Audiences.

While intentional planning is valuable to all faculty seeking advancement, research suggests that early planning is more critical to the successful advancement of faculty that integrate public engagement into their academic work, particularly research and creative activity [Colbeck, 2002; Colbeck & Wharton, 2006; Franz, 2009; 2011; 2016; O’Meara, 2016].

Supporting engaged faculty to successful tenure, promotion and advancement is also an important strategy for strengthening campus diversity and retention efforts in relation to faculty and students. While more research is needed, available studies indicate that faculty of color, women faculty and faculty from other underrepresented groups tend to express deeper commitments to and participation in public scholarship [Post et al. 2016; O’Meara & Saltmarsh, 2016; Sturm et al., 2011].
A Note About Public Scholarship as Transdisciplinary Inquiry

Public scholarship as research and creative activity may adhere to disciplinary, inter-, multi- or transdisciplinary norms for inquiry and collaboration. In this regard, transdisciplinarity may be the least familiar of these terms. Transdisciplinary inquiry integrates academics (researchers, educators, artists and designers) from unrelated disciplines with non-academics participants to investigate a common goal in order to create new knowledge and theory (Tress et al., 2006: 17) [Figure 2]. Transdisciplinary inquiry focuses on complex issues and problems. Indeed, the issue, rather than disciplinary methods, concerns or theories guides inquiry (Leavvy, 2016: 14). As Holland et al. (2010: 27) note, transdisciplinary inquiry “does not forego specialization or specific expertise but rather builds networks and alliances…to transform the very concept and practice of “expertise” itself.

Figure 2. Qualities of Transdisciplinary Collaboration. (Adapted from: MacGregor, 2017).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualities of Transdisciplinary Collaboration</th>
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<tr>
<td>• The inquiry focuses on complex, wicked, intractable problems (e.g. poverty, violence, racism, inequality, resource depletion, climate change, etc.)</td>
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<td>• The issue/problem of interest requires a collaborative, dynamic team approach that has to be effectively managed and led</td>
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<td>• The project team comprises members from the academy (disciplines), civil society, and the private and public sectors yielding a rich collection of diverse views on the issue at hand</td>
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<td>• Consensus is achieved through collaborative problem framing and joint understandings of how to address the problem (not majority agreement)</td>
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<td>• Group work generates a common result called ‘shared, transdisciplinary knowledge’ created from integrating and synthesizing divergent input</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Transdisciplinary knowledge has to be disseminated and diffused so it can actually be used to address the problem/issue at hand.</td>
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Suggested IUPUI Criteria for Evaluating Public Scholarship

The criteria listed below are drawn from the concept paper on Public Scholarship developed by the Faculty Learning Community on Public Scholarship (Wood et al., 2016). These criteria are adapted from prior work by Glassick et al. (1997) and Jordan (2007).

1. Clear Academic and Community Goals
A scholar should clearly define objectives of scholarly work and state basic questions of inquiry and means of co-production of knowledge. Clarity of public purpose and identification of the ‘public’ or community involved provide 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 their field as well as the practices of public scholarship. Hence, Promotion and Tenure Committees consider a longer timeline for faculty engaged in public scholarship.

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. The engagement of communities, not only as participants but as co-producers of knowledge, 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 who are the focal point of the scholarship. 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 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, with their community partners, 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 from or are affected by 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.

Planning Strategies to Develop and Document Products of Public Scholarship as Research and Creativity Activity

This section provides an orientation to the production of engaged scholarly products. It is organized with an eye to support candidates in strategic planning and agenda setting. It includes information about how and what to document throughout a project’s cycle. This section is divided into two parts.

Part A presents a brief overview of the development cycle; Part B offers a table that maps each phase in the cycles against the draft criteria for public scholarship. In addition, the table outlines specific actions, examples of evidence and items for documentation. The list provided, however, is not exhaustive.

To increase the likelihood of success, faculty members should begin planning and documentation early in their appointment. Ideally, planning should begin in the first year of appointment, particularly for those for whom public or community engagement is integral to their scholarly agenda in research and creative activity. For those for whom public engagement may be limited to a single project or a subset of their work, documentation should begin early in the project as outlined below. Because public
scholarship focuses on the creation of actionable knowledge that advances both academic and community goals, candidates should also prepare to document evidence of impact from both traditional and non-traditional products.

A. Phase model and associated processes of development in public scholarship

Faculty that integrate public engagement into their research and creative activity proceed through phases of inquiry similar to those involved in more traditional forms of scholarly work. These phases include Design and Development (Phase 1), Implementation (Phase 2) and the Demonstration of Impacts (Phase 3) [Figure 3]. The co-generation of knowledge and the co-creation of public good impacts serve to distinguish research and creative activity framed as public scholarship.

As noted by the clock gears and pink arrows, the emphasis on the “co-ness” of inquiry and impacts points to the importance of iterative work both within individual phases and across cycles of inquiry. Some examples might include the design and integration of deliberative processes that provide lay or other public stakeholders shared authority for developing research questions [Design and Development phase] or the triangulation of the results [Implementation phase].

Minimally, faculty engagement in public scholarship results in transactional and mutually beneficial outcomes for academic and community stakeholders. Maximally, the goals and processes of public scholarship can lead to transformational outcomes like social justice (Wallerstein et al., 2008; Wallerstein & Duran, 2010). The iterative character of each project phase, and indeed the entire project cycle, highlight the importance of relational and partnership processes as key dimensions that influence the rigor, validity and outcomes of public scholarship. Examples of process indicators are highlighted in the strategies table under item B below.

Figure 3. Process model illustrating phases in the production of public scholarship.
B. Planning strategies to document public scholarship as research and creative activity

The strategies presented here have been adapted from Jordan (2007). The table that follows maps phases of research and creative projects [i.e. Phase 1 - Design and Develop, Phase 2 - Implement and Phase 3 - Demonstrate Impacts] against the draft criteria for public scholarship. In addition, the document also provides recommendations on the types of evidence and documentation that candidates should gather and curate to make their case for excellence in research and creative activity through public scholarship.

Please note that the table presented below is not intended to serve as a rubric to evaluate a project or body of scholarship. Rather, consider it a planning tool. Depending on the nature and goals of specific projects, not all actions may apply to every case.

Figure 4. Strategies table for documenting public scholarship as research and creative activity.

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<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Documentation</th>
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<tr>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8</td>
<td>• Formulate research questions and project goals based on issues and problems impacting communities (engage with community members; co-develop approach to inquiry; co-define roles and goals; strategize communication, planning, means of negotiating conflict) • Develop funding (partnerships and grants) • Co-define shared fiscal management and decision processes</td>
<td>• Community forums, community focus groups, surveys that document community needs and concerns • Mechanisms for bi/multi directional communication between community members and investigators • Community members included on planning or working committees, take an active role in proposal writing or development • Plans integrate project into existing community advisory groups • Budget for line items that support community activities or resources</td>
<td>• Community representatives requesting assistance on specific community issues. • Proposals reflect collaborative effort and community-based impact • Letters of support from community documenting their participation in designing the study/project • Evaluation and modification of project design and methods in response to community feedback • Participation by and acknowledgement of community members at various points throughout project (from conception through development, dissemination, and impact measurement) • Examples of transparency and sharing power in decision making [e.g. MOUs, Community IRB]</td>
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## Phase 2: Implement

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<td><strong>3, 4, 6, 8</strong></td>
<td><strong>Identify and recruit community members with a vested interest in co-producing research and/or being affected by research.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Design instruments and data collection techniques that fit local populations (tested with community groups and partners, informed by local needs and interests)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Regularly evaluate relationship strength with participants and alter communication and interaction strategies as needed.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Develop data analysis and interpretation strategies with community partners</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Conduct project using “good science,” design and/or inquiry (research techniques, pedagogies, ethical standards and practices)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Determine intervals for interim reporting of progress to community and to funding sources</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Community members work on planning or review committees; community members hired and trained as recruiters, data collectors</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Incorporation of opinions, suggestions and expertise of community that highlight the diversity of viewpoints in the project</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Advisors/partners inform potential barriers to participation; recruitment and retention strategies take community into account</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Decision process for project development involves a variety of partners in multiple ways</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Data collected or measurement instruments show community input</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Systematic process exists for community advisors to evaluate instruments, give feedback on language, and address issues of cultural sensitivity and relevance.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Detailed profiles of roles community partners play; demonstrates equality or collaboration in the process</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Recommendations are focused on the needs of the stakeholder groups</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Process includes language and information relevant to community partners and grounded in community-based and disciplinary knowledge.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Documentation of consensus of project protocols and shared decision processes</strong></td>
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## Phase 3: Demonstrate Impact

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<td><strong>4, 5, 6, 7, 8</strong></td>
<td><strong>Translate findings into actionable knowledge</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Disseminate findings in different formats for community and scholarly audiences;</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Select outlets and formats that are accessible and relevant to the community/ies of interest</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Engage and acknowledge community members at various points of the project; maintain respectful community engagement</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Community partners involved in the development of recommendations and actions</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Multiple versions of information available where appropriate</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Community members participate in writing and dissemination of findings (articles, presentations, etc.)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Community members and partners use and share information with others</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Examples and context for action items</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Explanation of dissemination outlets that reflect needs of different groups (scholarly, community)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Articulate the integrated nature of your work in your personal statement</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Develop an impact statement</strong></td>
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**Need assistance or have questions?**<br>Contact Mary Price, Director of Faculty Development, IUPUI Center for Service and Learning, 317-278-2662 or price6@iupui.edu.
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Reference Cited and Selected Readings on Public & Community-Engaged Scholarship


O’Meara, K. (2015, April 10). Equity-minded reform in academic reward systems: Supporting diverse faculty and diverse forms of scholarship. Keynote address at workshop presented under the auspices of UC Davis ADVANCE, University of California, Davis.


