

CANR-Faculty Statement on Scholarly Activities, Scholarship, and Impact

Spring 2012

Purpose. This statement has been created by the Faculty within the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (CANR) to clarify the definitions and expectations for scholarly activities, scholarship, and impact in the context of review for reappointment to Assistant Professor (after the third year probationary period), and for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure to enable new faculty to understand current expectations. Additionally, the purpose of this statement is to enable mid-career faculty to understand how expectations have changed over time for promotion to the rank of Professor, and for Senior faculty to use within mentoring activities. Further, the goal of this statement is to share with the University our types of work and what we do. The criteria the document contains identify how we can move our work from scholarly activity to scholarship. The definitions and examples within this statement can be applied to teaching, research, extension/outreach, service and administration. It is important to remember that the evaluation of scholarly activities, scholarship, and impact will be consistent with an individual's programmatic thrust and CANR appointment.

This document is to provide a faculty voice to join the existing documents of: *Promotion and Tenure: Philosophy and Protocol*; *Dean's-Level Expectations*; and *Elements of a Strong RTP Package*, which are used for portfolio review by the CANR RTP Committee. All of these documents can be found on the CANR web page at the following link:

http://www.canr.msu.edu/canr/search_results?search=yes&query=Scholarship+Across+the+Mission.

Process. During the fall of 2011, a faculty representative from each unit was invited to attend the Faculty Scholarship Retreat, which was convened by the CANR Office for Faculty Development. Existing documents and scholarship across the mission statements from CANR units were reviewed and used as a basis for discussion of how to define scholarly activities, scholarship and impact as they apply to the expectations for reappointment, tenure and promotion within the context of the CANR and MSU missions. From those discussions, the statements within this document were created. The document has been vetted with Faculty within each unit by the respective College Advisory Council (CAC) representative, and has been approved by the CAC during December 2011. The document has also been vetted with the CANR Dean, Chairs and School Directors for their feedback. The statement is intended to lend clarity and transparency to the RTP process within CANR.

Scholarly Activities

All professional activities of the CANR Faculty are expected to be scholarly. *Scholarly activities* do not necessarily result in works of scholarship; however, works of scholarship are always culminations of scholarly activities. Examples of scholarly activities include:

- Papers, such as abstracts or proceedings, that are not peer-reviewed
- Non-competitive funding such as contracts or repeatedly renewed grants where proposed research funding is highly probable.
- Presentations to professional or stakeholder meetings
- Non-competitive exhibits, performances, or built works

- Public press materials
- Scholarly Activities that have not been peer validated or adopted by others such as:
 - Development of educational or pedagogical materials
 - Bulletins
 - Audio-visual productions
 - Handbooks
 - White papers
 - Workshops
 - Information databases
 - Development of germplasm
 - Student products
 - Bibliographies
 - Book reviews
- Student advising (undergraduate and graduate)

Scholarship

The essence of *scholarship* is the thoughtful discovery, transmission, and application of knowledge, including creative activities, that is based in the ideas and methods of disciplines, professions, and interdisciplinary fields. Scholarship is deeply informed by the most recent knowledge in the field, is skillfully interpreted and deployed, and is carried out with intelligent openness to new information, debate, and criticism. Scholarship meets three defining criteria: the activity creates something new, the work is peer-validated, and the work is publicly disseminated and available. Forms of scholarship include discovery of knowledge; multidisciplinary integration of knowledge; development of new technologies, methods, materials or uses; application of knowledge to problems; dissemination of knowledge; and interpretation in the arts. The outputs of scholarship are given a special place in evaluating Faculty performance at MSU and these objective creations are distinct from both the scholarly activities that undergird them and the impacts that flow from scholarship.

The objective outputs of scholarship are creative works that receive critical and appropriate validation (e.g., peer-review) and are publicly disseminated or accessible. Works of scholarship are viewed as the critical objective products of scholarly activities, and examples of such works include:

- Refereed publications
- Juried competitions
- Successfully funded competitive grants
- Peer reviewed/competitive exhibits, performances, and built works
- Patents, crop/cultivar releases, and licenses
- Books and peer validated/competitively selected book chapters
- Scholarly activities that become validated upon adoption by others:
 - Pedagogy development
 - Bulletins
 - Handbooks
 - White papers
 - Workshop materials

- Information databases or software
- Audio-visual productions and new media
- Policy

Impacts

Impacts of scholarship and scholarly activities can be defined as their effects on practice, thought, and systems. Each faculty member contributes a body of knowledge to society, and assessment of impact is an attempt to integrate the quality of productivity over a career. Thus, individual flexibility needs to be allowed in the use of criteria, and weighted for career stage, to evaluate impact by examining changes over time, as well as the depth, breadth and quality of the impact. The ability of the impact to catalyze/instigate positive and sustainable change while aligning with the mission of CANR is valued.

Examples of impact include:

- Significant improvement in economic, social or environmental conditions of a community, region, agency, industry or other sector
- Invitations to present or write
- Generation of major gifts to endow a program
- Citations of work by others
- Adoption or use of work by others
- Awards, honors, and professional recognition
- Invitations to serve on review panels or to review papers or proposals
- Leadership in field/discipline and duration of such leadership
- Awards or competitive work by students
- Placement and career success of former students in the discipline/industry
- Students taught and student responses to classes

Summary

This document defines scholarship as a creative work that is peer-reviewed and publically disseminated. It is important that we define and apply basic, uniform principles of scholarship across the multiple forms of scholarship in CANR. It is critical to always remember that scholarship is not defined by what one does, but by the results and impacts on target audiences.