



CCPH SPECIAL SECTION

Working with Our Communities: Moving from Service to Scholarship in the Health Professions

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ABSTRACT Context: *As faculty at health professionals schools have become increasingly engaged with their communities in partnerships to improve health, new questions have arisen about faculty rewards for such activities. To sustain the community work of their faculty, institutions need to reconceptualize faculty rewards, promotion, and tenure that are relevant to community activities.*

Historical perspective: *Scholarship has evolved since the 17th century from a focus on character-building to the practical needs of the nation to an emphasis on research. In 1990, Boyer proposed four interrelated dimensions of scholarship: (1) discovery; (2) integration; (3) application; and (4) teaching. The challenge became the development of criteria and innovative and creative ways to assess community scholarship.*

Current models for community scholarship: *This paper reviews four evidence-based models to document and evaluate scholarly activities that are applicable to community scholarship.*

Proposed model for community scholarship: *We propose a new model for community scholarship that focuses on both processes and outcomes, crosses the boundaries of teaching, research, and service, and reshapes and integrates them through community partnership. We hope this model will generate national discussion about community scholarship and provide thought-provoking information that will move the idea of community scholarship to its next stage of development.*

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The past 20 years have seen a national movement in the United States aimed at engaging health professions schools with their communities. As a result, both

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communities and campuses have come together in a number of innovative ways to build effective partnerships to improve health.¹

Many of these outreach and partnership efforts build on the Schroeder *et al.* (1989) concept that the health professions schools represent a public trust. Ludmerer (1999) argues for the need to re-establish the social contract between medical education and society.

As faculty begin to redefine their roles and become more actively involved with their communities, the issue that continually arises is that of faculty rewards, promotion and tenure (Maurana & Goldenberg, 1996; Richards, 1996; Sandmann *et al.*, 2000). Both faculty and administrators acknowledge that community work is not easily rewarded in the traditional academic system. Faculty are pulled in many directions, and despite their interest in community work, they must pay attention to their own professional development. Administrators and faculty alike are beginning to recognize that we must find ways to address the application of one's discipline to societal problems through academic reward systems.

If we are to continue our progress and institutionalize the philosophy of community engagement and partnership, we must address the issue of faculty promotion, tenure and rewards.

Here, we address this issue by presenting a model of community scholarship, beginning with an historical perspective on scholarship in the United States, followed by a description of four innovative approaches to documenting, recognizing and rewarding faculty work. We then propose a model of community scholarship that includes both standards and products, recommendations for implementation, and the qualities of a community scholar. Although we have limited the discussion to the academic setting in the United States, we think that all academics who work with communities face these issues, regardless of geographic location.

An Historical Perspective on Scholarship

Traditional Definitions of Scholarship

According to Boyer, in his landmark publication *Scholarship Reconsidered* (1990), scholarship in the United States higher education system has progressed through three discrete, yet overlapping, stages. In the first stage, the 17th century colonial colleges focused on building the character of students and producing graduates prepared for civic and religious leadership. Teaching was considered a vocation like the ministry.

This perspective was dominant until the mid-19th century, the start of the second stage of scholarship. Universities began to focus on the practical needs of a growing nation. These institutions viewed themselves as having a direct role in supporting the nation's business and economic prosperity. The 1862 Land Grant College Act enhanced the role of state universities in teaching the

skills that would support the agricultural and mechanical revolutions. Education was perceived as a democratic function to promote the common good. As a result, universities and colleges formerly devoted to the intellectual and moral development of students began to include service in their mission. By the later 1800s, education was first and foremost to be of practical utility, and application of knowledge to real problems was the focus.

The emphasis on basic research was the third stage of scholarly activity. Many scholars who had studied in Europe were intent on developing research institutions focused on research and graduate education in the United States modeled after the German research universities. Since the ideal university scholar was to be detached from society, the emphasis on teaching undergraduates and providing service decreased. The Second World War accelerated the focus on research as an academic priority. The Office of Scientific Research and Development was founded. Federal research dollars were directed to universities and their scientific activities. After the war, federal support continued, and government and higher education continued their collaboration, focused on scientific progress, not service or teaching.

In spite of the report from the President's Commission on Higher Education in 1947, the GI Bill of Rights, which concluded that US universities should be available for all citizens to pursue their educational goals, the criteria for evaluating faculty scholarship continued to narrow. Professors' promotion and tenure depended on conducting research and publishing results. As the research mission extended to all institutions of higher learning, the professoriate became more hierarchical and restrictive. The previous emphasis on undergraduate teaching influenced by the European tradition was replaced by a focus on graduate education and research. Research as the model for faculty work spread to all institutions and was further advanced by the development of the National Science Foundation in 1950.

The Academy's Obligation to Service

Equating research and publication with scholarship and promotion has disconnected the academy from the real world problems of contemporary society at the same time that the complexity and number of social, economic and environmental concerns increased (Lynton, 1995).

Colleges and universities must play an important role in addressing those concerns if we are to re-establish the social contract between education and society. Derek Bok (1990) criticized the detachment of university faculty, and stated that rarely had academics discovered emerging issues of importance and communicated these issues to the public. He charged that higher education was failing in its role as society's critic. Clearly, the academy must become re-engaged in social issues and focus on *teaching* and the *application* of knowledge, not just its discovery. This requires a rethinking and redefinition of the concept of scholarship itself.

The movement toward redefinition of scholarship

In the late 1980s the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching commissioned a report to examine the meaning of scholarship in the United States. This report, authored by Ernest Boyer (1990), assessed the roles that United States faculty perform, and how these roles relate to both the faculty reward system and the mission of higher education.

This assessment led to a new paradigm for scholarship set forth by Boyer in *Scholarship Reconsidered* (1990) that consists of four interrelated dimensions of scholarship: (1) discovery: the inquiry directed to the pursuit of new knowledge; (2) integration: making connections among disciplines and, adding new insights; (3) application: asking how knowledge can be applied to the social issues of the times; and (4) teaching: transmitting knowledge but also transforming and extending it as well. These four categories interact, forming a unified definition of scholarship that is rich, deep and broad. Boyer argues for an inclusive view of scholarship, recognizing that knowledge is acquired and advanced through research, synthesis, practice and teaching.

To move beyond research and publication as the primary criteria for reward and promotion, the Carnegie Commission next charged Charles Glassick *et al.* to determine the criteria used to evaluate scholarly work. The following standards emerged from a study of academic press directors, journal editors, granting agencies, and promotion tenure committees as applicable to assess the work of scholars: “(1) clear goals; (2) adequate preparation; (3) appropriate methods; (4) significant results; (5) effective presentation; and (6) reflective critique” (Glassick *et al.*, 1997). These standards form the basis of the model of community scholarship proposed here.

Significance of Community Scholarship

As traditionally defined, research and publication in peer-reviewed journals are no longer sufficient to evaluate an expanded conceptualization of scholarship; new and innovative methods of assessment must be developed. Considerable effort has been devoted to developing new ways to assess and present the accomplishments of scholarly work, particularly in the scholarship of teaching (Simpson & Fincher, 1999; Fincher *et al.*, 2000; Simpson *et al.*, 1994; 2000; Beecher *et al.*, 1997; Driscoll & Lynton, 1999; Michigan State, 1993). Less work has been done in the area of community scholarship despite the increasing number of faculty who are working with communities. The scholarship of discovery, integration, application and teaching all apply to community scholarship, but the principles, processes, outcomes and products may differ in a community setting. Community scholarship requires that the scholar be engaged with the community in a partnership of equals. The role of expert has to be shared, and the scholar’s relationship with the community

must be reciprocal and dynamic. Community-defined needs direct the activities of the community scholar, with the six standards of assessment as articulated by Glassick *et al.* (1997) serving as the criteria to judge the work as community scholarship.

Clear goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methods, significant results, effective presentation and reflective critique are critical to community scholarship. However, the application and assessment of these criteria for community scholarship must involve academic faculty and community partners if our scholarship is to be judged within the socio-cultural and political context of the community and account for the complexity of community issues.

Challenges to Community Scholarship

Faculty in the United States confront many challenges to participating in community scholarship. There is often a poorly understood conception of community scholarship in academic institutions with traditional academicians often thinking that community work is simply doing traditional activities in a community setting. Community work is often viewed solely as service, rather than being acknowledged as research, teaching and program development within the community. Similar to all scholarship, community work requires a great deal of effort if it is to be done in an authentic, non-exploitative and honest manner.

For community scholarship to be valued, recognized or rewarded by the institution, it must be perceived not as an inferior activity, but as an equal form of scholarship. The challenge for community scholars is to clearly use Glassick *et al.* (1997) six standards of scholarship in the context of community. Community activities may look very different from the scholarly activities in a classroom, laboratory or library, but they are informed and guided by the same standards of scholarly rigor in the pursuit of new knowledge. In recent years, several academic institutions and/or professional associations, building on Glassick *et al.* (1997) criteria, have begun to grapple with the task of revising and expanding the traditional definition of scholarship to meet the changing roles and responsibilities of faculty.

Models for Assessing Community Scholarship

For this paper we selected four evidence-based models that creatively document and assess scholarly activities. These models contain features and approaches that are applicable to community scholarship. Two models involve the development of a faculty portfolio, a third applies a set of six criteria that underlie the process of scholarship, and the final model is based on a set of four competencies with specific requirements for the various professional ranks (see Table 1).

Table 1. Models of community scholarship

College/university/ organization	Scholarship model	Purpose of model	Key points of model
Michigan State University	Points of Distinction Project	To develop a guidebook to assist deans, department Chairs, Directors, and individual faculty develop, document, evaluate, and recognize quality community scholarship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identifies four dimensions of quality outreach: significance, context, scholarship and impact. ● Includes examples of quantitative and qualitative indicators of success. ● Provides planning tools and recommendations for developing a faculty outreach portfolio to chronicle significant outreach initiatives in which a faculty member has participated (Michigan State University Evaluating Quality Outreach Faculty Working Committee, 1996).
Medical College of Wisconsin	Educators' Portfolio	To document educators' activities and provide evidence of quality of peer review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identifies 10 major educational areas of responsibility for faculty. ● Provides a framework that can be adapted to showcase a faculty's best work, not all his/her activities. ● Provides examples from recently prepared faculty portfolios. ● Acts as a template that can be revised for a community scholarship portfolio (Simpson <i>et al.</i>, 1998).
Association of Schools of Public Health	Demonstrating Excellence in Public Health	To encourage public health institutions to "reconsider the definition and scope of what constitutes scholarship, and how this relates to their mission, as reflected in their strategic objectives and reward structure".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● States that academic public health and public health practice intersect at the point of applied, inter-disciplinary pursuit of scholarship, in the form of research, teaching, and service (Association of Schools of Public Health, 1999).

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Table 1. (Continued)

College/university/ or organization	Scholarship model	Purpose of model	Key points of model
Alverno College	Competency-based model for faculty rank	To develop a set of competencies that faculty must master to progress to the next professional rank (beginning assistant professor, experienced assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recommends evaluation of scholarly accomplish- ments based on a set of standards set forth by Boyer (1990) and Glassick <i>et al.</i> (1997). ● Recommends a series of policy options to assist with the needed capacity increase for practice- based scholarship in academia. ● Expands the traditional definition of scholarship to include activity and service both within the college and in the larger community, while also clearly identifying specific expertise and skills that must be demonstrated in order to progress to the next professional rank (Alverno College Faculty, 1986).

Table 2. Standards for assessment of community scholarship*

Clear goals

1. Are goals clearly stated, and jointly defined by community and academics?
2. Has partnership developed goals and objectives based upon community needs?
3. How do we identify community issues? Are needs and issues recognized by scholar and institution?
4. Do both community and academia think the issue is significant and/or important?
5. Have partners developed a definition of what “common good” is?
6. Have partners worked toward an agreed upon “common good”?
7. Is there a vision for the future of partnership?

Adequate preparation

1. Does scholar have knowledge and skills to conduct assessment and implement program?
2. Has scholar laid groundwork for program based on most recent work in field?
3. Were needs and strengths of community identified and assessed using appropriate method?
4. Have individual needs taken a back seat to group goals and needs?
5. Do scholar and community consider all the important economic, social, cultural and political factors that affect the issue?
6. Does scholar recognize and respect community expertise?
7. Have community–academic partners become a community of scholars?
8. Does scholar recognize that community can “teach”, and that community has expertise?
9. Does scholar stay current in the field?

Appropriate methods

Partner involvement:

1. Have all partners been actively involved at all levels of partnership process, assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation?
2. Has development of partnership’s work followed a planned process that has been tested in multiple environments, and proven to be effective?
3. Have partnerships been developed according to a nationally acceptable framework for building partnerships?

Approach:

1. Are methods used appropriately matched to the need?
2. Do methods build in community involvement and sustainability?
3. What outcomes have occurred in program development and implementation?
4. Do scholar and community select, adapt and modify the method with attention to local circumstances and continuous feedback from community?
5. Do programs reflect culture of community?
6. Does scholar use innovative and original approaches?

Significant results

1. Has program resulted in positive health outcomes in community?
 2. Has partnership effected positive change in community and academic institution?
 3. Have models been developed that can be used by others?
 4. What has been the impact on community?
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Table 2. *continued*

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5. What has been the impact on academic institution?
 6. Have external resources (e.g. grant and fund-raising) been affected by the program?
 7. Are results effective as judged by both community and academia?
 8. Do scholar and community commit to long-term partnership?

Effective presentation

1. Has work (outcomes and process) of partnership been reviewed and disseminated in community and academic institutions?
2. Have there been presentations/publications on community-based efforts at both community and academic levels?
3. Are results disseminated in a wide variety of formats to appropriate community and academic audiences?

Ongoing reflective critique

1. What evaluation has occurred?
 2. Does scholar constantly think and reflect about the activity?
 3. Would community work with scholar again?
 4. Would scholar work with community again?
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*Developed using Glassick *et al.* (1997) standards.

Proposed Model for Community Scholarship

Judith Ramaley, President of the University of Vermont, is a leading proponent of rethinking the traditional concepts of teaching, research and service. Building on the work of Boyer, she has challenged academia to replace traditional thinking with a new paradigm of learning, discovery and engagement. In this section we present a model of community scholarship that is based on Ramaley's paradigm: (1) learning that combines rigorous academic curriculum with meeting needs of communities; (2) discovery that emphasizes community-oriented research; and (3) engagement that moves beyond the concept of service to the formation of strategic campus–community partnerships to improve health. In this model, which builds upon the four described in the previous section, community scholarship focuses on both process and outcomes, crosses the boundaries of teaching, research and service, and reshapes and integrates them through community partnership.

Definition of Community Scholarship

We define community scholarship as the products resulting from active, systematic engagement of academics with communities for such purposes as addressing a community-identified need, studying community problems and issues, and engaging in the development of programs that improve health. Building on the definition for teaching as scholarship proposed by Hutchings and Shulman (1999), community work becomes scholarship when it demonstrates current knowledge of the field, current findings, and invites peer review.

The community work should be public, open to evaluation, and presented in a form others can build on.

Standards for Assessment of Community Scholarship

Using Glassick *et al.* (1997) as a framework, we have developed a set of criteria for the assessment of community scholarship (see Table 2).

Products of Community Scholarship

Often scholarship in communities takes the form of products, and falls into several categories: guidebooks; technical assistance; program outcomes; and disseminated materials. These products represent the outcomes of our community work, and can be reviewed by peers and built upon to advance the field. The products may be disseminated through local departments, regional or national clearinghouses, websites, or through traditional outlets (journals, publications, presentations)(see Table 3).

Recommendations and Future Directions

The following are recommendations (see Table 4) for implementing the community scholarship model developed by the authors. We hope that they will stimulate an evolution from community service to scholarship.

Table 3. Products of community scholarship

Community scholarship products

Resources

1. Guides to effective program development (how to's)
2. Technical assistance
3. Tools and strategies to assess community strengths/assets and concerns
4. Tools, strategies and processes to effectively measure program outcomes

Program outcomes

1. Improved community health outcomes
2. Increased community leadership for health
3. Increased community funding for projects
4. Integration of students and residents into community-based efforts (or creative education

Dissemination

1. Presentations to community leaders and policy-makers
2. State, regional, national presentations
3. Journal articles
4. Leadership at community, state, national levels

Other

1. New partnerships and coalitions, existing collaborations that are strengthened
 2. Program development grants (external funding)
 3. New or innovative approaches to old issues
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Table 4. Recommendations

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1. Develop better methods to evaluate promotion and tenure practices related to community scholarship. Key to this process is the development of specific position or task descriptions for faculty involved in community work that describe the added dimensions of scholarship that a PhD or MD brings to the development of community activities. Also central to improved promotion and tenure practices is the development of a community scholarship portfolio. This portfolio will include definitions, standards of assessment, products, methods of documentation, examples of faculty CVs, etc.
 2. Develop a national network of senior faculty in the field of community scholarship. This network will have multiple tasks:
 - (a) Serve as mentors for other faculty in developing their work in communities and developing portfolios for promotion. These faculty will also serve in the important role of national references when junior faculty go forward for promotion at their respective institutions.
 - (b) Serve as expert peer reviewers for the products of community scholarship that were outlined in the previous section. They will refine and issue the standards for community scholarship. Faculty can submit guidebooks, curriculum outcomes, etc. to these faculty for review.
 - (c) Serve as expert peer reviewers of community-based initiatives. Faculty can submit programs at various stages of development for review and feedback. Criteria could be based on the concepts of continuous quality improvement.
 - (d) Create a series of cases on community scholarship that can be used for faculty development.
 3. Cultivate and educate administrative leaders, senior faculty, and leaders of national associations in health professions education to serve as champions for community scholarship and to advocate for policy change.
 4. Develop opportunities for community members to be meaningfully involved in the process of community scholarship. Address such questions as: Can community members be scholars? What is the role of community members in the faculty promotion process? What are strategies to reward community members for their involvement in community-based activities?
 5. Develop a community toolkit for community scholarship. This toolkit will include much of the material discussed above: position and task descriptions for faculty involved in community work; the community scholarship portfolio, contact information for the mentor network, evaluation materials, cases on community development, and other available resources. It can be distributed through national associations.
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Summary: The Qualities of a Community Scholar

Glassick *et al.* (1997) identify three qualities of a scholar: integrity, perseverance, and courage. Integrity refers to honesty in academic pursuit and fairness in working with colleagues. Perseverance is viewed as vigorous inquiry over an academic lifetime, and likens good scholars to good craftsmen “who seek to perfect their craft over a lengthy period.” Courage is the ability “to risk disapproval in the name of candor.”

These three qualities are very appropriate for those faculty engaged in community scholarship. Community scholarship challenges faculty to take risks and strike out in new directions with nontraditional partners.

We would add a fourth quality to Glassick's list: "leadership". Each of us can be a leader in our moving forward the concept of community scholarship. That leadership is embodied in our willingness to do the following:

- Challenge the status quo: we must be willing to look beyond traditional reward systems and take risks to redefine them.
- Create a shared vision: we must envision the power of community scholarship and encourage others to join with us.
- Create meaningful collaboration: we must advocate from values inherent in community-academic partnerships that build trust, share power and provide support.
- Serve as role models: we must practice what we preach and implement the standards of community scholarship.
- Bring passion to our work: we must support each other's efforts, and celebrate each other's success as we advance health in our community and knowledge in our field.

The road to community scholarship is long and filled with many obstacles. However, the rewards are great as we have the opportunities to make a significant difference in the quality of life of our communities. We hope that this paper helps to catalyze a discussion in this area, and provides useful information to move this idea to the next stage of its development.

"There are three kinds of groups: those who make things happen; those who wait for things to happen; and those who wonder what happened." We must be the group that makes things happen if health, scholarship, and community are to become an integrated whole.

Note

1. Examples of these initiatives include the Health of the Public Program funded by the Pew Charitable Trust, the Community Partnerships with Health Professions Education Initiative funded by the Kellogg Foundation, the Partnerships in Training and Interdisciplinary Generalist Initiatives funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Health Professions Schools in Service to the Nation Program and Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, initially funded by the Corporation for National Service, and the Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program funded by the Bureau of Health Professions. Other federal agencies, not traditionally focused on health, have also provided opportunities for health professions schools to engage in their community. Examples include the Community Outreach Partnerships Centers funded by HUD, the Urban Community Partnerships Program funded by the Department of Education, and the Drug Free Communities Program funded by the Department of Justice.

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