

DEFINING SCHOLARSHIP AT KALAMAZOO COLLEGE

Faculty Personnel Committee

November 1, 2007

Members of the faculty at Kalamazoo College have all experienced frustration as we prepare descriptions of our scholarly activity for personnel reviews. The questions “what activity counts as scholarship?” and “have I done enough of the ‘right’ kind of work?” are often fraught with anxiety. The Faculty Personnel Committee has observed that this tension is due to a perceived lack of connection between two elements:

- (1) the work each of us actually does in pursuing our careers as scholars, and
- (2) the kinds of work and the modes of presentation that the committee will deem appropriate for a successful review.

The committee seeks to clarify the second point in a way that takes into account the wide variety of scholarly and creative work being done by faculty at the college. Toward this end the Faculty Personnel Committee has adopted the following model for our faculty colleagues to use as a guide when presenting a description of our scholarship to the committee. The model is based on the work of Ernest Boyer, with some modifications that we believe make it most applicable to the broad range of faculty scholarship at Kalamazoo College. It consists of four separate, but in some cases overlapping descriptions, of scholarship. The committee believes that each of our faculty colleagues can profitably make use of one or more of these descriptions when framing their own work for personnel reviews. In some cases, an individual’s research will fit perfectly within a single description. In many other cases, aspects of several descriptions will be most useful. We want to state emphatically that the committee would never expect any individual to utilize all of the descriptive forms. Untenured faculty are, however, expected to discuss the type(s) and nature of their scholarship, as well as anticipated outcomes, with their Department Chairs and the Provost so that all parties remain “on the same page” throughout the review process. .

THE BOYER MODEL

Ernest Boyer writes in *Scholarship Reconsidered* that we might think of four separate but overlapping types of scholarship, which he names as the scholarship of discovery, integration, engagement, and teaching. In order to orient the College to this model, to foster reflection on the specific nature of one’s scholarly and creative interests, and to make more visible Boyer’s useful framework and terms, we excerpt definitions and brief reflections on these four. Understanding that such brevity may not fully capture the scope of each category, however, we encourage colleagues to return to Boyer’s text in order to enter more fully into the rationale for and defining characteristics of each area.

We support the positions of many professional organizations, such as the Association for Theatre in Higher education, the College Music Society, and the College Art Association, who have stated that creative work can be congruent with any of the four types of scholarship. As with any other kind of work, in order to be considered scholarship, such creative work must be presented publicly or published, peer-evaluated, and accessible to other members of one’s professional community.

The Scholarship of Discovery

As the “first and most familiar element in our model,” this type of scholarship might be seen as the traditional notion of research informing the academy. Boyer writes: “No tenets in the academy are held in higher regard than the commitment to knowledge for its own sake, to freedom of inquiry and to following, in a disciplined fashion, an investigation wherever it may lead.” This type of scholarship is seen as adding to the “stock of human knowledge” and, in doing so, giving evidence of the process and passion that gives vitality to educational institutions.

Products of such scholarship are typically book or article length manuscripts, grant proposals, scholarly presentations, creation of an original art work, music compositions, or plays. Indications of success would include the acceptance and/or recognition of the product by one’s peers in appropriate

venues, e.g. acceptance for publication, grant award, significant performance/exhibition of a work of art, or invitation to present one's work or to collaborate—in short, recognition of the value of one's work within one's field.

The Scholarship of Integration

With integration, Boyer addresses a kind of work that cuts across disciplinary boundaries; it does so by “placing the specialties in larger context” and “illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating nonspecialists, too” (Boyer, 18). According to *Scholarship Reconsidered*, “The scholarship of integration also means interpretation, fitting one's own research—or the research of others—into larger intellectual patterns. Such efforts are increasingly essential since specialization, without broader perspective, risk pedantry. The distinction we are drawing here between ‘discovery’ and ‘integration’ can be best understood, perhaps, by the questions posed. Those engaged in discovery ask, ‘What is to be known, what is yet to be found?’ Those engaged in integration ask, ‘What do the findings *mean*? Is it possible to interpret what's been discovered in ways that provide a larger, more comprehensive understanding?’” (Boyer, 19) The scholarship of integration will most often take place at the interfaces of disciplines, creating or combining knowledge to offer new paradigms or insights.

Products of such scholarship are typically book or article length manuscripts or grant proposals, scholarly presentations, creating (through exhibition, performance, or publication) an original art work, music composition, or play. Indications of success would include the acceptance and/or recognition of the product by one's peers in appropriate venues, e.g. acceptance for publication, grant award, significant performance/exhibition of a work of art, or invitation to present one's work or collaborate---in short, recognition of the value of one's work within a field or fields outside one's traditional area.

The Scholarship of Engagement

The *scholarship of engagement* involves the generation and/or synthesis of knowledge with the goal of having it put to use by practitioners to address consequential problems. Because the audience of applied scholarship is not necessarily others in one's discipline, but is often practitioners outside of academia, the products of this kind of scholarship are often different from the products of the scholarship of discovery or the scholarship of integration, though the standards and methods of generating the new knowledge tend to be the same.

The products of the scholarship of discovery and the scholarship of integration are typically manuscripts written for publication in peer-reviewed journals, and success is measured by their actual publication. The products of scholarship of engagement may include these more conventional forms, but are more likely to take other forms, such as reports, seminars, workshops, computer programs, manuals, videos, using an art work or performance, or the creation of an art work or performance, to forge partnerships with off campus communities. The indicator of success is usually evidence that the product was used and deemed valuable by the practitioners to which it was aimed, though, again, more conventional indicators may apply as well, such as publication in journals, books and monographs, receipt of competitive grants or contracts, etc. In addition to work produced explicitly for practitioners, scholars of engagement should present descriptions of this work in broader forums so that the work is exposed to comment and critique by one's professional community. It is also important to note the difference between public service and applied scholarship. While most scholarship of engagement could also be considered public service, most public service is not scholarship of engagement. To be viewed as scholarship, the work must flow directly out of one's (inter)disciplinary expertise and involve the generation of new ways of thinking.

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

In Boyer's model, the fourth type of research is the scholarship of teaching. Given the direction of the academy and our college in relation to our primary mission, we wish to revise this terminology and thus speak of teaching *and learning*. This scholarship self-consciously and reflectively examines the practice of teaching in one's field, with the intent of stimulating active learning that encourages

students—and faculty—to be critical and creative thinkers. In this form of scholarship, pedagogical practices in one's field should be the subject of careful analysis and on-going scrutiny, with a focus on the actual acts of teaching and learning.

The products of the scholarship of teaching and learning can be the conventional forms (articles and books for example) but are more likely to take other forms, such as model curricula, formulating and applying a new pedagogy and assessing student outcomes, designing and assessing technology-based learning, reports, seminars, workshops, computer programs, manuals, videos, etc. The indicators of success are usually evidence that the product was recognized and deemed valuable by members of one's professional community, as well as more conventional indicators such as publication in journals, books and monographs, receipt of competitive grants or contracts, etc. Scholars of teaching and learning should present descriptions of otherwise unpublished work in broader forums so that the work is exposed to comment and critique by one's professional community.

DESCRIBING AND DOCUMENTING SCHOLARSHIP

In documenting scholarship for the FPC in their personal statements, candidates are strongly encouraged to address the following criteria (Glassick et al, Chapter 2), which will be used by the Committee to evaluate scholarship. These criteria, however, need not be addressed point-by-point, nor should they be addressed for every scholarly activity. We recognize that many of these criteria are assumed as part of the editorial process when indicators of success include traditional peer-reviewed publications. At the same time, responses to these criteria should be evident in the candidate's description of scholarship. When successful scholarship is indicated by other, less traditional means, all of these points should be explicitly addressed by the candidate and should be supported by the comment and critique of others in the field, as discussed above.

Purpose: Does the scholar describe the purpose of the work clearly as well as articulate important questions in the field?

Preparation/Background: Does the scholar demonstrate knowledge of existing work in the field? Does he or she bring the necessary skills and resources to the project?

Methods: Does the scholar articulate a clear methodology and its appropriate application to the project?

Presentation: Does the scholar present the work effectively to intended audiences in forums appropriate to the project? Is the work accessible and available to other members of one's professional community?

Significance: How is the scholar's work important to the field?

Reflection on Future Work: Where does the scholar see his or her work going from here?

REFERENCES

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