

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT PAPER

**SCHOLARLY CONTRIBUTIONS AND THE PORTFOLIO PROCESS
FOR PROMOTION TO PROFESSOR**

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ABSTRACT: Qualifying the value of faculty scholarship is an important factor in determining faculty promotion. Recent changes to the University of Wisconsin-Extension faculty documents provide guidelines for assessing scholarly work of faculty. Scholarly work is shown through “creative intellectual work, reviewed by the scholar’s peers who affirm its value, added to our intellectual history through its communication, and valued by those for whom it was intended.” Six members of the Department of Family Development chose to submit portfolios for the promotion to Professor. This paper describes the research of measuring scholarship and the specific examples of faculty scholarship contributions submitted for the promotion to Professor.

SITUATION:

Several Universities throughout the country, including the University of Wisconsin, are leading the way in attempting to define the role of outreach and scholarship in today's society. The Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land Grant Universities sponsored a project entitled "Returning to our Roots: The Engaged Institution". The Kellogg Commission has focused attention on the need for higher education institutions to become more fully engaged with their communities and address society's most pressing issues.

In 1997, the University of Wisconsin-Extension revised and adopted Articles of Faculty Governance incorporating scholarship. As a result, faculty in the Department of Family Development had the option to choose the existing tenure review process or the new review process reflecting scholarship. A total of six out of eight faculty members applying for promotion for professor in 1998 chose to have their work evaluated using the new tenure process.

The most significant challenge of this review process is the need to understand and define scholarship in order to assess and evaluate performance of faculty for promotion.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Increase understanding of scholarship as it relates to extension education in the Department of Family Development.
2. Provide examples of scholarly work that were produced by faculty promoted to Professor.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND:

Scholarship is not easily defined or easily measured. Much of the discussion of scholarship currently taking place within universities was stimulated by the work of Ernest L. Boyer and presented in his 1990 book Scholarship Reconsidered, Priorities of the Professorate (Boyer, 1990). Boyer described specific characteristics of scholarship but did not define scholarship per se. He proposed four separate, yet overlapping, functions of the professorate including: the scholarship of discovery; the scholarship of integration; the scholarship of application; and the scholarship of teaching.

At Oregon State University, Boyer's book provided the impetus for discussion by a faculty committee. The committee's objectives were to develop a collective understanding of what scholarship implies and to describe the nature of scholarship at a university in concise terms that would be understood by faculty in all disciplines, and by nonacademics as well. This faculty group at Oregon State University defined scholarship as "creating something new that is validated and communicated". They described the following five forms of scholarship that were similar to the four proposed by Boyer: teaching and learning, discovery, artistic creativity, integration and application (Weiser, 1995).

Glassick, Huber and Maeroff in Scholarship Assessed Evaluation of the Professorate, offer standards to evaluate scholarship, including questions to use in assessing if the standards have been met (Glassick, Huber, Maeroff, 1997). It is their belief that: "All works of scholarship, be they discovery, integration, application, or teaching involve a common sequence of unfolding stages. We have found that when people praise a work of scholarship, they usually mean that the project in question shows that it has been guided by these qualitative standards: Clear Goals, Adequate Preparation, Appropriate Methods, Significant Results, Effective Presentation, and Reflective Critique."

The University of Wisconsin-Extension has also been involved in efforts to embrace outreach and scholarship as a valued part of faculty work. Academic departments recommend promotion in faculty rank, including tenure. University of Wisconsin-Extension differs significantly from resident campuses with respect to program content, clientele, teaching methods, and financing. University of Wisconsin-Extension faculty are located on the University of Wisconsin campuses or in county/area offices. They have a specific expertise with a broad community-based constituency.

In 1995, the University of Wisconsin-Extension established an ad hoc task force to review current practices of the tenure process. The charge of the task force was to review the responses and comments from departments and faculty regarding the recommendations for restructuring

the tenure process and to develop detailed language for the implementation of the proposed tenure process. One of three sub-committees of this task force addressed tenured faculty review with a focus on scholarship. After much discussion and careful consideration, the committee recommended incorporating the Oregon State University model of scholarship.

As a result, the University of Wisconsin-Extension revised and adopted Articles of Faculty Governance Criteria for Faculty Appointment and Promotion in University of Wisconsin-Extension. Within this document, scholarship is defined as: “creative, intellectual work that is reviewed by the scholar’s peers who affirm its value, and is added to our intellectual history through its communication. Scholarship includes, but is not limited to, teaching and research. The creative work of artists, the insight of those who integrate disciplines, and the effort of those who foster the application of others’ scholarship are all forms of scholarly work. Common to all forms of scholarship is the act of communication and validation. Different forms of scholarship will have different audiences and different means of communication. All scholarship must be validated. The creative work of every scholar must be valued by those for whom it was intended as well as by the scholar’s peers.” (University of Wisconsin-Extension, 1997).

The Department of Family Development is one of the academic departments of the University of Wisconsin-Extension. Faculty and academic staff in this department profess expertise in the discipline of family development, which is the growth and development of individuals and families. In 1998, faculty in the Department of Family Development requesting promotion had the option to be reviewed based on the existing or new tenure process. A total of six out of eight faculty members applying for promotion for professor in 1998 chose to have their work evaluated using the new tenure process.

Faculty members chose to be reviewed using the new process for several reasons:

- 1) A major section in the portfolio documentation is the faculty members’ multi-year and three past annual plans of work and accomplishment reports. These documents demonstrate the faculty member’s ability to analyze the local situation, identify program priorities, design an action plan, implement the plan and evaluate impacts. By utilizing these existing documents information did not have to be rewritten.
- 2) The eight page summary statement provided an opportunity for the faculty member to analyze career contributions, reflect upon the most significant parts, develop a framework for describing the contributions, and explain the impacts and implications for the intended audience, as well as for the profession.
- 3) Writing the summary statement provided the faculty member the motivation and stimulation to plan future program directions.
- 4) The new process allowed faculty with administrative responsibilities to demonstrate scholarly contributions in non-traditional programs.
- 5) The summary statement of professional contributions and scholarship provided valuable documentation that could be shared with key stakeholders, including county board of supervisors, community leaders, and University of Wisconsin-Extension county and state colleagues.

The new review process provided challenges for the first group of faculty in the department choosing this option as well as for faculty members reviewing their peers. The most significant challenge of this new review process is the need to understand and define scholarship in order to assess and evaluate performance of faculty for promotion. Judgments regarding what does and does not constitute scholarly work is difficult. Due to the fact that scholarship is not easily defined or measured, this is an evolutionary process.

METHODS USED:

One way to achieve a better understanding is to look at examples illustrating scholarly Extension programming. The following examples showcase creative intellectual work, communication of results and validation by peers.

Family Impact Seminars

In 1995, this faculty member submitted an application and was selected as one of four local sites to pilot Family Impact Seminars for local policymakers. These seminars are policy forums designed to bring a family focus to policymaking. This faculty member adapted a successful national and state model to fit the needs and interests in Jefferson County. A three-member executive committee and a 25-member advisory committee of local policymakers was recruited to plan, conduct, and evaluate the seminars.

This faculty member has been instrumental in all aspects of the seminar including the following: 1) educating the committee members on the goals of the seminar model; 2) identifying and recruiting speakers that can present research-based, objective, nonpartisan information; 3) serving as chairperson and facilitating monthly advisory committee meetings; 4) designing a planning process to review and expand present policies or develop and implement new policies; 5) evaluating outcomes, and 6) communicating results.

Five annual seminars have been held with an average attendance of 125 participants. In 2000, to evaluate the collective impact of the seminars, 28 individuals participated in one of the three focus group sessions. Results revealed that the seminars are 1) well received by policymakers in the county, 2) utilized to establish and strengthen interagency and public-private connections, and 3) used to create and modify programs and policies impacting children and families.

The three other faculty members that had conducted Family Impact Seminars and this faculty member submitted a proposal to the program area for funding to evaluate the seminars and an evaluator was hired. In 1997, the seminars were evaluated and a report entitled, "Local Family Impact Seminars: An Evaluation Report of Wisconsin Pilot Projects" was written. Due to the documented success of the seminars, a state program support coordinator was hired to expand the seminars to other local sites.

The creation and success of local Family Impact Seminars have been communicated with others through a presentation, "Family Policy Alternatives Education: Local Family Impact Seminars" at the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences conference, and in a

paper published in a national association journal. This program received the Public Policy Education Team Award from the same national association in 1997.

Jefferson County Family Impact Seminars was selected as one of five local program success stories for the faculty/staff conference entitled “Our Public Work: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow” held in Madison in May 1999. A videotape was produced and portions of this video, as well as additional footage of interviews with two Jefferson County UW-Extension colleagues, were used for a national video satellite conference produced by the Learning Institute for Nonprofit Organizations. The live satellite program entitled “Outcome Measurement: Are You Making A Difference?” was held in January 2000.

Bridging Hmong American

Southeast Asian families have been living in Wisconsin for more than twenty years. Many have learned the language, found jobs, become homeowners, and are an important part of our community. As more families have immigrated to Northeastern Wisconsin, many have settled in Outagamie County. The newer immigrants are still learning the language and are becoming accustomed to the services and way of life in our area. Language continues to be a challenge for some families. Learning the English language has become a goal for many, but has not been realized by all, especially the elders of the community. English as a second language research has proven that individuals learn best in their native tongue.

Local agencies and services have addressed a variety of challenges that Hmong families face. Outreach had been a challenge. To better inform Hmong families about the help available and to address community issues, the “Bridging Hmong American” project was initiated in 1992. The shows are twenty-seven minutes in length and air once a week on the local programming channel. Tapes of the shows have been copied and made available at the Appleton Public Library, Department of Health and Human Services, local schools and the Hmong American Partnership office. Other communities have utilized the programs including St. Paul, Minnesota, Sheboygan, Green Bay, Oshkosh, LaCrosse, and Manitowoc, Wisconsin.

The process and programming that has evolved in the Bridging Hmong American project is mainly behind the scenes and is evidenced by many hours of working with members of the English and Hmong community. Cooperative Extension took the leadership in writing the initial grant for the start of the project and established the initial advisory committee consisting of mainly Hmong families. The advisory committee identified the critical issues on which the Hmong community felt they needed more education. Parenting, self esteem, understanding the social security system, legal issues for families, celebrating family traditions, food safety, domestic violence, positive family time, understanding the educational system, nutrition, fish safety, and immunizations were just some of the issues identified.

Since May of 1992 over one hundred twenty shows have been produced. Issues of the community have been brought to the forefront and Hmong community leaders and agencies have been tapped to address the issues important to educate community leaders. The end result, the TV show is also secondary to the other accomplishments realized by the production.

Cooperative Extension has established an educational role and credibility with the Hmong community. Relationships have been built with the Department of Health and Human Services, Maternal Child Health, Economic Support, Mental Health Services, HeadStart, Department of Natural Resources and Northeast Wisconsin Legal Services. The project was presented in an article for “The Reporter” a publication of the National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences. A poster session was presented at the Galaxy Summit of Extension Professionals in Cincinnati Ohio. The Wisconsin Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences recognized the project for their award in Diversity.

Healthy Families: An Intensive Home Visitation Program

This faculty member’s programming efforts evolved from working closely with families and individuals at the program level to working at the agency level with decision-makers on public policy issues. The faculty member created an environment and structure to bring people together with a shared vision of increasing education and support to families in Walworth County. The faculty member was a leader in the creation and implementation of the Family Resource Coalition of Walworth County, Inc. which laid the foundation for a community-based system of comprehensive, coordinated and family focused programs and services.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation selected Walworth County as one of three national research and demonstration sites to demonstrate the feasibility of building Healthy Families America upon the existing Cooperative Extension delivery system. Healthy Families is a prevention program aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect through home visits. Healthy Families serves as a gateway to coordinating children and family services providing the valuable front-end of a service delivery system for families. Participant families reported more use of well-baby check-ups, less use of emergency room services, and longer duration of breastfeeding than non-visited families. Program families also reported more use of formal supportive services. The creation of public and private partnerships has resulted in the institutionalization of Healthy Families Walworth County, UW-Extension’s first home visitor program serving the needs of families for the first few years of their babies’ life.

As a result of the Healthy Families program, community service providers initiated formal referral processes and coordination of services between agencies. There was an increase in the education, resources and support available for families. The program was culturally-sensitive as services were offered in English and Spanish.

Healthy Families Walworth County has gained local, statewide and national attention. Three Healthy Families programs were in operation in Wisconsin prior to the Kellogg project in 1995. Three years later, Wisconsin had home visitation programs serving parents of newborns in 43 communities. Hundreds of agencies, colleagues and professionals from Wisconsin and other states as well as Australia have visited or received information about this model program. The program has brought new knowledge in supporting the mission of building a nationwide system of support for new parents.

The Healthy Families Walworth County program was highlighted in the 1995 Child Abuse Prevention Fund Annual Report, 1997 UW-Extension Annual Report, 1997 Aurora Health Care Annual Report, and a 1997 issue of UW-Extension's newsletter *Exchange*. Healthy Families was a recipient of the Wisconsin Hospital Association Foundation's 1997 Global Vision Community Outreach Award. Policy changes have occurred at the state level with the creation of the 1997 Wisconsin Act 293 within the Department of Health and Family Services to provide additional funding for home visitation programs.

Local Family Focused Research

The 1990 Strategic Planning Process for Winnebago County identified "the breakdown of the family unit – need for child care, working couples, divorce, abuse and neglect of children" as the county's priority issue. Likewise in 1995 four of the top five issues/concerns facing Winnebago County were family related: 1) parenting; 2) violence/crime/child safety/abuse; 3) teen issues – pregnancy, alcohol, tobacco, etc.; and 4) meeting the needs of a rapidly diversifying county population.

In response to these issues and concerns, this faculty member focused programming efforts on building strong families/building supportive communities. As one of many players in Winnebago County addressing family issues, the unique role UW Extension played was in conducting local family focused research and reporting the data in a variety of venues. The following are research projects, prepared print materials, presentations, and media releases resulting from the project:

1. Teen Assessment Project (TAP) – Omro, 1991, 1994, 1998/Oshkosh 1993, 1996
2. Tapping into Parents survey (TIPs) – Omro 1993/Oshkosh 1996
3. Teen Parent Assessment – Oshkosh 1991
4. Dependent Care Needs Assessment – Oshkosh 1996

The value of this local family focused research has been measured at the local level by the extent of its use by schools, agencies and businesses, by individual, family and community response, and by changes in programs and services offered. The value of these research efforts has also been noted in terms of Extension colleagues who have used the report templates, newsletters, and presentations developed by this faculty member.

Using the data collected in the first Omro TAP survey, this faculty member piloted the Youth Futures program in Omro. As the community group worked through the Youth Futures process, studying the TAP data and community assets, the group identified alcohol consumption as the issue to address. This faculty member conducted the TIP survey to help the Youth Futures committee understand parental perspective on youth issues. As a result of the Youth Futures efforts, funding was secured for an on-going summer youth recreation program, a community center was established that provides programs for all and community events revised alcohol consumption policies. Within the school system, the prevention specialist/career counselor position in the Omro School District continued to be funded, Youth Futures was integrated into the middle and high school AODA programs and two additional TAP surveys were funded to provide longitudinal data.

The Oshkosh TAP and TIP surveys were initially conducted in response to an increasing rate of teen pregnancies – the community wanted to know more about local attitudes and values. Working with the 4-H/Youth Development Agent, this faculty member conducted the surveys, prepared reports and newsletters and presented findings to school, community and county groups. A TAP/TIPs impact assessment conducted by this faculty member found that data was used in grant development, curriculum development, school and community policy changes as well as by parents as they discussed the “Straight Talk...by Oshkosh Teens” newsletters.

The Dependent Care Needs Assessment was conducted in concert with the Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce, Oshkosh Foundation and Oshkosh United Way. Forty businesses with a total of 3,245 employees completed the survey. This faculty member prepared a summary report and nine individualized business reports. Findings were used by Child Care Resource to develop start-up grant projects for sick child care and drop-off child care programs. Businesses that participated in the survey have used the data to develop on-site childcare proposals and change employee benefit packages to allow for child-care needs. The findings also supported the development of a child care facility at the Workforce Development Center. In addition, this faculty member was asked to serve on the W-2 Steering Committee and Childcare Resource and Referral advisory panel.

Trends & Analysis Project

A number of external factors have contributed to the changing role of two department members in urban counties. This includes growth in population and industry, rapid urbanization, a changing economic base, change in the county executive’s administrative structure and the role of UW-Extension within county government. These faculty members have assumed the role of full time county director for their respective counties. These responsibilities do not negate the role of faculty member however.

The educational roles of “Learning Facilitator” and “Scholar/Researcher” are evident in the Trends and Analysis project developed by faculty members in Kenosha and Waukesha Counties. Trends and Analysis is a series of reports for elected officials, agency directors, community leaders and other decision-makers. The project is designed to provide a concrete example of the research, university resources, data and analysis that is Extension’s hallmark.

Sound policy decisions are based upon solid, factual information. Many local issues involving policy decisions lack appropriate up-to-date local research. The Trends and Analysis project was designed to provide ongoing “chapters” on current trends or issues in the community. Written by university specialists, these 15 to 20 page reports feature in-depth analysis of issues and trends that impact each county’s individuals, families and businesses. Each chapter focuses on current research, local data and policy implications. Specific issues include homelessness, poverty, aging, teenage pregnancy, juvenile crime, horticulture, agriculture, growth management and welfare reform. It is designed to be visible, easily accessible and easily updated.

In 1999 an evaluation of the Trends and Analysis project was conducted by a UW-Parkside professor. The results indicated that 94 percent of those surveyed said the reports were easy to

understand, packed with good economic, demographic, environmental and family related information. Respondents had used the reports in strategic planning and as reference material for presentations, training sessions and grant applications. Over 50 percent of the respondents rated the reports as “very valuable” with the remaining giving a “valuable” rating. Perhaps the most important finding was that the reports helped decision-makers make policy. More than 75 percent of those surveyed said they had used the reports to make policy decisions.

A further impact of the project has been an invitation to teach selected chapters during county board meetings, to various standing committees of the county board and community organizations. The media has written feature articles on selected chapters creating exposure for the offices and follow up by the public. Numerous contacts and referrals have been made to the offices by community leaders requesting information for grant development, public hearings, environmental scans and reports. The Trends and Analysis Project has been highlighted as a resource for county departments in preparing their county strategic plan.

The faculty members have presented the Trends and Analysis project at an Extension National Program Leaders Meeting, a Wisconsin Board of Regent’s Meeting, a National Epsilon Sigma Phi Conference, and as a part of a Wisconsin video conference and live satellite program entitled “Marketing: It’s Everyone’s Responsibility.” The project has been featured in Urban Initiative Impact Reports which are shared with local policymakers, state and federal legislators and other state extension systems. The project is currently being replicated by Racine County UW-Extension.

The Trends and Analysis Project has demonstrated the depth of resources and research on critical county issues available through the local UW-Extension offices. The chapters have highlighted the valuable link to the university system and the diversity of programming occurring through the county offices. Most importantly it has served to position UW-Extension to be a valuable resource; working closely with county government, county departments and leaders of community agencies and organizations.

IMPLICATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The University of Wisconsin-Extension’s effort to embrace outreach and the expanded definition of scholarship as a valued part of faculty work resulted in the revision and adoption of faculty governance documents in 1997. The challenge of this new review process for the Department of Family Development faculty is the need to understand and clarify what constitutes high quality scholarship.

Understanding and defining scholarship is an evolutionary process. As faculty members increase their comprehension about the forms of scholarship and how to review portfolios, the collective understanding will improve.

Greater understanding would encourage faculty and staff to recognize the scholarship in the work that they do and help them see new scholarship efforts that could be incorporated into the work that they do in the future. The result would be enhanced/improved programming.

Promotion and tenure are earned on the basis of a faculty member's scholarly contributions and the promise of continuing contributions in the future. Faculty have a responsibility to communicate the contributions made to the profession. Redefining those scholarly contributions places greater responsibility on all faculty.

Opportunities are needed to stimulate thoughtful discussion for this new understanding about scholarship. Faculty Senate and academic departments could provide opportunities for discussion through open forums or web-based discussion groups. Additional white papers could be written on the topic of scholarship to stimulate discussion. Participants who have attended the national conferences on scholarship could be encouraged to share new knowledge with all faculty. Departments and professional associations could focus on incorporating the theory behind scholarship with concrete examples of faculty scholarship work. They could initiate new ways to network on the topic by sponsoring discussion groups, audioconferences, mentoring, and presentations at workshops.

New approaches for helping faculty members prepare for promotion and tenure, such as the faculty mentoring teams would be beneficial. Continued dialogue between the academic departments will improve the level and extent of applied scholarship throughout the University of Wisconsin-Extension. This could be joint presentations, papers or other resources that provide opportunities for us to share and learn about scholarly activities across departments.

Work continues to help faculty better understand scholarship. Currently the Faculty Senate has a committee working to develop a scholarship assessment mechanism.

CONCLUSION:

Every county Family Living program carries its own unique identified issues and needs to be addressed by faculty members in the Department of Family Development. Evidence of scholarship at work can be seen by the examples of work done in the variety of counties, both rural and urban. The evidence of creative, intellectual work has been shared. The work has been reviewed by peers who affirm its value and has been added to our intellectual history through communication. It is intended that those we work with, our peers, will value the creative work that is shared in this paper.

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