JCEP REPORT ON EXTENSION SCHOLARSHIP
Della A. Baker
State Program Leader for Evaluation, Accountability, and Staff Development
Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service
JCEP Board Member, 2006-07 National ESP President

The Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP) is a partnership of professional Extension organizations with a focus of promoting communication, cooperation, and professionalism among all Extension educators. It seeks to strengthen Extension as a profession.

One of JCEP's goals is to promote a recognized system-wide standard of scholarship that is useful to all associations. Initial steps taken to accomplish this task were to research and review literature relative to Extension scholarship, present the research findings to Extension professionals during their national professional association meetings, and to use this opportunity to gain additional insight and perspective from Extension professionals for a final report. This report represents a compilation of these efforts.

In 2006-07, presentations were made of the literature reviews on the topic of scholarship during four Extension professional association meetings (National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals, Epsilon Sigma Phi, National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, National Association of Extension 4-H Agents). Discussion centered on the following questions:

1.   What is the definition of scholarship? Is Extension scholarship different than any other scholarship?

2. How should we measure the quality of Extension scholarship and how do we tell our colleagues about it?

3. How do we document impact? How can we document impact across all program areas?

4. What are the roles and responsibilities of campus and community partners?

Defining Extension Scholarship

Before it can be recognized by all associations, Extension scholarship must first be defined.   We found many definitions of scholarship. Oregon State University, however, uses a definition that best represents the myriad of definitions for Extension scholarship. OSU says that "scholarship and creative activity are understood to be intellectual work whose significance is communicated to and validated by peers. As specified in the Promotion and Tenure Guidelines, such work in its diverse forms is based on a high level of professional expertise; must give evidence of originality; must be documented and validated as through peer review or critique; and must be communicated in

appropriate ways so as to have impact on or significance for publics beyond the University, or for the discipline itself" (OSU Faculty Handbook, 2006).

In land-grant institutions especially, "research, teaching, and Extension activities are not scholarship in themselves. They become scholarship when they are communicated to and validated by peers and when they are communicated to publics beyond the university" (McGrath, 2006).

"When we [Extension] define our work in the same terms as other faculty across campus, we are seen as equal partners. This can be accomplished through scholarship. Extension helps to elevate the university's ability to engage with the community in a broader way" (Smith, 2004).

Extension scholarship, then, is engaged scholarship. It is not just about publishing or presenting. "It's about engagement and sharing with colleagues. It's about raising the bar and going beyond simply delivering a good program to local clientele" (Smith, 2004).

Measuring the Quality of Extension Scholarship

The engagement movement in higher education during the 1990s was stimulated, in part, by the publication *Returning to Our Roots: The Engaged Institution* by the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities (Kellogg Commission, 1998). The report brought to light the lack of engagement of higher education with problems relevant to communities. The Kellogg Commission reported that, "despite the resources and expertise available on our campuses, higher education is not well organized to apply them to problems of vital significance in a coherent way. Society has problems; our institutions of higher education have academic disciplines" (Kellogg Commission, 1998). In addition, "the need for public understanding and awareness of the value of university Extension and outreach is at an all-time high due to flattening Extension budgets and recent criticisms about higher education's commitment to public service" (Weerts, 2005).

Consequently a call was issued for universities and colleges to serve the public through university-community engagement. Institutional leaders have come to realize that, it is not enough to just do good work in the community (Smith, 2004). They began to discuss issues and challenges of becoming more relevant and more engaged with their communities. Conversations emerged about forms and functions of scholarship and the evaluation of such scholarship.

Functions of Scholarship

In *Scholarship Reconsidered,* Ernest L. Boyer (1990) suggested that the work of a scholar should be inclusive of many scholarship functions: discovery, integration, teaching, and application. The scholarship of discovery is research. It adds to the human knowledge base. The scholarship of integration gives meaning to knowledge and helps put it into perspective. It interprets and makes connections within and

between disciplines. The scholarship of teaching enables students to learn and participate more fully in society. Teaching transforms, transmits, and extends knowledge (Glassick et al., 1997). The scholarship of application enhances engagement. It makes knowledge useful. Oregon State University faculty expanded on Boyer's scholarship functions by describing five forms of scholarship, expanding "teaching" to include "learning and teaching" and adding "creative artistry" as the fifth type of scholarship" (Norman, 2001).

A major challenge is developing a method of evaluation or enforcement of standards that can be used by institutions to help insure quality and accountability for all forms of scholarship. Quality will be expected of engaged scholarship by both the institution and the public. Quality can be defined as meeting or exceeding the expectations of the institution's stakeholders (Fife & Janosik, 1999). "Scholarly engagement could distinguish Extension by improving the quality of our programs and increasing the probability that we will generate credible evidence of impact" (McGrath, 2006). There may be different expectations about levels of quality, however, from both the institution and its community partners.

Evaluating Scholarship

A set of core standards for evaluating all forms of scholarship has been offered by Glassick, Huber, and Maeroff (1997) which include clear realistic goals, adequate preparation, appropriate methodology, results, communication to colleagues and others beyond the campus, and reflective critique. The standards have the following characteristics:

- Set clear, realistic goals and measurable objectives.
- Keep abreast of the issues and determine appropriate and adequate resources for the project.
- Choose appropriate methodology for your project's goals. Read about the work of others in addressing the issue or problem of interest.
- Document results. Scholarship should be judged by its results. The project should be meeting its goals and contributing to the field or opening up other areas for further expansion.
- Communicate the results of your project with your peers and other practitioners.
- Engage in reflective critique. Think about your work and learn from the process. Ask what went wrong and right as a means of improving the scholarship.

The East/West Clearinghouse for the Scholarship of Engagement (2000) has adopted the standards offered by Glassick et al. (1997) and has established a national review process to judge scholarly portfolios submitted by faculty who are preparing for annual review, promotion, and tenure. The Clearinghouse (2000) supports universities that have achieved changes in their faculty reward system and will encourage other campuses that are contemplating such change.

Documenting Impact

"Extension professionals already conduct a wide variety of applied and action research that exemplifies the goal of engaged scholarship. Where Extension often fails is systematically applying scientific tools and procedures to document and share the impact of their programs" (Davis, Burggraf-Torppa, Archer, Thomas, 2007).

The Ohio State University conducted the Applied Research Initiative, using the premise that "Extension programming inherently includes substantial elements of scholarship. By making a few minor adjustments, Extension professionals could structure their programs within an applied research framework that would allow those programs to be rigorously evaluated, validated, and shared with peers" (Davis, et al., 2007).

Important outcomes of these programs were the awareness that Extension professionals who were new to the research process needed "mentors" to guide and support them through the various phases of the applied research process and the recognition that more encouragement at the organizational level is needed to move Extension professionals to become more involved in applied research activities. Another outcome was the need to identify program evaluation and data collection assistance" (Davis, et al., 2007).

The Michigan State University Committee on Evaluating Outreach developed a matrix that includes four dimensions of outreach quality that they believe are fundamental characteristics of any outreach project in higher education. These quality dimensions include the elements of significance, context, scholarship, and impact. The elements can be used as a starting point to evaluate the contributions of individuals or units using both quantitative and qualitative indicators for engagement scholarship. Sample questions for documenting impact are included in Table 1.

Table 1

Sample Questions from the Michigan State University Outreach Evaluation Criteria for Documenting Impact
_____
Assessment Questions
_____

To what extent were the project goals and objectives met?
Did the products or deliverables meet the planning expectations?
Were intended, unintended, and potential impacts documented and interpreted?
Were stakeholders satisfied? Was there mutual satisfaction from the project? Did they value the results and apply the knowledge?
Do impacts have commercial, societal, or professional value?
How effectively are the products or results reaching the intended audience?
To what extent did the project build capacity for individuals, institutions, or social infrastructure?

To what extent did the project develop mechanisms for sustainability?
How does the project lead to innovations in curriculum and inform other dimensions of the university mission?
How did the project increase cross-disciplinary collaborations within the university or with other institutions?
To what extent did the project leverage additional resources for any partners?

_____

Roles and Responsibilities of Campus and Community Partners

The approach to problem-solving and solutions must be relevant to both community partners and university scholars (Sandmann et al., 2000). Public value is created when our service benefits society as a whole (Kalambokidis, 2004). A scholarly approach to engagement allows us to identify public benefits of Extension programs for our clientele. This could stimulate them to act politically for us because they see a broader public interest in our work (McDowell, 2004).

There must be an alignment of mission, priorities, and expectations at multiple levels, which is often labor and time-intensive. Institutions must be clear and specific about faculty time commitments to engagement. Appropriate channels of community publications should provide evaluative commentary about the effectiveness or success of the outreach efforts. Faculty must also emphasize and present a clear theoretical rationale for their scholarly documentation. This rationale can become the basis for understanding the project's descriptions of decisions, collaborations, adaptations/adjustments, and intended/unanticipated outcomes (Driscoll & Lynton, 1999).

Challenges and Opportunities

After review of the literature and input from professionals during the Extension association conference sessions, we realized that there were many challenges ahead, particularly relating to change in the institutional culture. When faced with change, people experience uncertainty and anxiety and tend to resist change. Institutions report that campus-based faculty often resist calls for a more engaged approach to research and teaching and Extension field faculty resist the reciprocal call for a more scholarly approach to engagement (McGrath, 2006).

 At one institution County Extension Agents were brought into academic homes, in part, to promote greater interaction between research, teaching, and field faculty and to promote greater outreach and engagement by campus-based faculty. There was limited evidence that the reorganization changed the behavior of campus-based faculty. Extension agents were frustrated by the apparently conflicting demands of academia for durable scholarly products and the expectations of their clientele for action and impact. They were frustrated by the lack of alignment between a performance appraisal process, which focused primarily on excellence in the performance of assigned duties,

and a promotion and tenure process, which focuses heavily on scholarly accomplishments (McGrath, 2006).

Within universities, promotion and tenure committees are usually charged with the task of judging scholarly work. "Each academic unit and discipline must develop its unique consensus about what constitutes creative intellectual work, who are considered peers, what are legitimate forms of validation, and what constitutes an appropriate level of rigor during the validation process" (McGrath, 2006).

"If we hope to institutionalize outreach or Extension scholarship as an integral part of our university culture of scholarship, we must initiate fundamental reforms in graduate education and we must meaningfully incorporate the craft and scholarship of Extension, outreach, and engagement in the graduate education curriculum and experience. The graduate education experience is the most important socializing experience for faculty, academic administration leaders, and field-based Extension educators associated with our universities. This experience is key in establishing perspectives on the university and its role in society, including what is appropriate, acceptable scholarship" (Alter, 2003).

The engagement movement calls on "publicly supported academics to direct a portion of their attention, resources, and expertise toward solving problems relevant to communities of place" (McGrath, 2006). Once perspectives change and new knowledge and skills are learned we can expect to see more examples of successful engagement scholarship. There are many examples of successful engagement scholarship. Here are a few that have been reported.

Examples of Extension Scholarship

Keith Smith, in his article, Scholarship: Shout About It (2004), offered the following examples of successful engaged scholarship.

- A team of Extension professionals came together and developed a project to improve food safety education. The information distributed has since become the national standard for the safe handling and preparation of foods.
- Sue Donaldson at the University of Nevada, who developed a wide-reaching curriculum for agricultural educators focused on growing plants and animals on small-acreage farms in areas of environmental sensitivity. In its beginning stage, the project trained 50 educators in eight western states, and since that time Sue has shared over 900 CD-ROMs of the program with educators in various locations throughout the country.
- Mike Boehm, an Ohio State University Extension and Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center faculty member, was assigned to the Biological Defense Research Directorate at the Naval Medical Research Center while serving on active duty. He and his team were responsible for the development and implementation of biological weapons (BW) detection, testing, and training effort for forward-deployed Navy units. By the end of his tour of duty, Boehm's

team had reached every Navy unit, ship or shore that had the potential for action in the Gulf to train them to use tests meant for routine air screening and other suspicious samples. Personnel on larger ships were also trained on DNA testing.

- The College of the Arts at OSU engages with the community through performances and visual arts exhibits, which provides valuable learning experiences for students, enhances the arts opportunities for citizens, and fosters thought, learning, and expression in the community. The College of Arts' involvement in teacher workshops and industrial partnerships (focused on design) affect selected communities and enhance the quality of their on-campus efforts. By combining the College of the Arts' commitment for community involvement and their knowledge of the arts with Extension's integration into local communities and awareness of local needs, the potential for affecting even more communities is broadly enhanced. 4-H arts programs can be enriched through the engagement of these kinds of opportunities. In addition, partnerships with the College of the Arts can assist communities in the development of sustainable strategic plans, which enhance the arts in these communities.

Two examples of Extension scholarship from Schauber (1998) of Oregon State follows:

- The field crops agent started a pesticide sprayer tune-up program in which she and two other agents visited farms to help growers calibrate and check the operation of their sprayers. They were able to make improvements on 86% of the sprayers, thus saving growers' money from not wasting pesticide and from better pest control. Using data they collected on the pesticides used and the number of acres each sprayer was used for, they documented the dollar impact of the program. They developed a slide show on the sprayer tune-up procedure and how to correct the problems commonly found on sprayers, which was presented to larger statewide audiences. While the methods of calibrating and improving the operation of pesticide sprayers weren't new, the teaching methods used to encourage a large number of growers to change their practices were new. The program was then communicated to peers and validated, when the agent gave presentations and posters at both state and national levels.
- The Family Community Leadership program has continued to grow over the past five years due to one agent's efforts. She created a new volunteer model to manage the growing demand. She collected program statistics and teaching evaluations. She also developed a survey to measure the impact of the program on the volunteers and collected data that provided strong evidence of impact in the community. She plans to share the program and its impacts with other faculty through conferences and peer-reviewed publications.

Summary

"As more colleges in our universities expand their engagement efforts, they need to see Extension as a partner. They can learn from us and we can learn from them" (Smith, 2004). Their perspective can enrich what we do. By partnering across campus, we can meet local community needs more effectively, maximize our impact in communities, and

expand our scholarship opportunities. "The richness of programming and depth of thought expands when disciplines come together. All parties learn and grow from the experience" (Smith, 2004). These are fundamental aspects of scholarship.

The participants in the various Extension professional association sessions gave many suggestions on how we should tell our colleagues about measuring and evaluating scholarship. First, the topic should be kept visible to those attending national Extension conferences. Second, JCEP should list the information on its website and encourage Extension professionals to visit the site. Third, JCEP should share the information through many electronic forms of communication, including newsletters and conferencing. In addition, JCEP should share examples of scholarship so that it can be recognized.

Keith Smith (2004) offers the following challenges to Extension professionals as they prepare for engagement:

- Embrace evaluation more fully to show the impact of your work
- Share your work with colleagues through presentations and papers
- Partner with others across campus to share the Extension method of engagement and to learn from others
- Shout about engagement

"Few if any issues are more important to the future of Extension than the issue of scholarship. It is essential that Extension educators strengthen their scholarship and scholarly practice if Extension is to continue as a viable provider of research-based, non-formal education in the twenty-first century" (Alter, 2003).

References

Alter, T. (2003). Where is Extension scholarship falling short, and what can we do about it? Journal of Extension [On-line]. 41(6). Available at: http://www.joe.org/joe/2003december/comm2.shtml

Boyer, E. L. (1990). Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professorate. Princeton, NJ: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Davis, G. A., Burggraf-Torppa , C., Archer, T. M., & Thomas, J. R. (2007). Applied Research Initiative: Training in the Scholarship of Engagement. Journal of Extension [On-line]. 45(2) Article 2FEA2. Available at: http://www.joe.org/joe/2007April/a2.shtml

Driscoll, A., & Lynton, E. A. (1999). Making ourtreach visible: A guide to documenting professional service and outreach. Washington, DC: American Association for Higher Education.

East/West Clearinghouses & National Review Board for the Scholarship of Engagement. (2000). Scholarship of engagement [Brochure]. Sandmann, L. R., & Driscoll, A.

Fife, J. D., & Janosik, S. M. (1999). Defining and ensuring quality in Virginia higher education. Virginia Issues and Answers, 6(1), 22-27.

Glassick, C. E., Huber, M. T., & Maeroff, G. I. (1997). Scholarship assessed: Evaluation of the professoriate. San Franciso: Jossey-Bass.

Kalambokidis, L. (2004). Identifying the public value in Extension programs. Journal of Extension [On-line]. 42(2). Available at: http://www.joe.org/joe/2004april/a1.shtml

Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Institutions. (1999). Returning to our roots: The engaged institution. Washington, DC: National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges [On-line]. Available at: http://www.nasulgc.org/publications/Kellogg/engage.pdf

McDowell, G. R. (2004). Is Extension an idea whose time has come--and gone? Journal of Extension [On-line]. 42(6). Available at: http://www.joe.org/joe/2004december/comm1.shtml

McGrath, D. M. (2006), The Scholarship of application. Journal of Extension [On-line], 44(2) Article 2FEA8. Available at: http://www.joe.org/joe/2006april/a8.shtml

Michigan State University. (1996). Points of distinction: A guidebook for planning & evaluating quality outreach. [On-line]. Available at: http://www.msu.edu/outreach/

Norman, C. L. (2001). The Challenge of Extension Scholarship. Journal of Extension [On-line]. 39(1). Available at: http://www.joe.org/joe/2006april/a8.shtml

Oregon State University Faculty Handbook (2005). Guidelines for promotion and tenure. Available at: http://oregonstate.edu/facultystaff/handbook/promoten/promoten.html

Sandmann, L. R. Foster-Fishman, P.G., Lloyd, J., Rauhe, W. & Rosaen, C. (2000). Managing critical tensions: How to strengthen the scholarship component of outreach. Change, 32(1), 44-52.

Schauber, A. (1998). Defining scholarship for county Extension Agents. Journal of Extension [On-line], 36(4). Available at: http://www.joe.org/joe/1998august/iw1.html

Smith, K. L. (2004). Scholarship: Shout About It. Journal of Extension [On-line]. Available at: http://www.joe.org/joe/2004august/comm1.shtml

Weerts, D. (2005). "Validating institutional commitment to outreach at land-grant universities: listening to the voices of community partners. <u>Journal of Extension,</u> [On-line]. 43,(5). Available at: http://www.joe.org/joe/2005october/a3.shtml