

Department of Communication, Media & Design Arts

Disciplines of art & design

Professional Standards Document

Adopted: April 2019

Revised: July 13, 2022

I. Introduction

Within the disciplines of art & design, the means by which we develop and disseminate scholarship is in the form of creative works and presentations. Our work is dependent on the specific discipline in which the artist works or studies.

This Professional Standards Document is intended to speak to the creative works and public scholarship routinely performed and presented by faculty members appointed to teach in the disciplines of art & design, housed in the Department of Communication, Media & Design Arts. It is a complement and supplement to the Document of Professional Standards for the College of Professional Studies at Pacific Lutheran University. Furthermore, this document is intended to explain how and why such scholarship and research endeavors undertaken by faculty in art & design must be deemed fully equivalent to conventional research such as publication of peer reviewed journal articles, presentations at academic conferences, book chapters, books, and other traditional forms of scholarship. Clear and cogent explication of such validity of scholarship is necessary for purposes of understanding and fairly evaluating faculty performances, particularly in instances including, but not limited to, cases of promotion, tenure, and salary review.

II. Definitions

A. Studio Arts: The studio arts include, but are not limited to: Book Arts, Ceramics, Graphic Design, New Media, Painting, Photography, Printmaking, and Sculpture. The related discipline of Curatorial Practice is also included in the considerations of this document.

B. Creative works: “Creative works” include the study, practice, and implementation of work in the studio arts. Within these disciplines, the interpretation and pursuit of artistic production are considered ongoing research. Juried and invitational gallery and museum exhibitions, public art works, lectures, and presentations are valid venues of scholarship in the creative arts. In the studio arts, exhibitions, performances, and presentations are primary and must happen

first in order to get peer feedback and or review, and should be considered equivalent to a publication. In addition, within the Studio Arts the creative service provided to the campus by faculty members is deemed scholarship.

C. Public Scholarship: “Public Scholarship” is a growing movement in academe across the United States. Public Scholarship encourages academics to reach out to broader and more generalized communities, thereby directly engaging scholars in civic and public affairs. Faculty artists, in particular through the very nature of exhibition, are naturally engaged in public scholarship.

D. Scholarship of Discovery, Integration, Application, and Teaching: The examples provided above (i.e., the Studio Arts) in this addendum are models of what the PLU Faculty Handbook, drawing on the categories developed by Ernest Boyer, refers to as “Scholarship of Discovery, Integration, Application, and Teaching,” or using knowledge to “solve problems of consequence to human welfare.” As the artistic and scholarly products of the faculty artist, these examples also serve as what the Handbook describes as “evidence of that scholarship through publication, presentation and/or artistic production.” Members of the College of Professional Studies faculty are not only energetically and enthusiastically pursuing such scholarship, they are at the cutting edge in doing so.

III. Standards for Evaluation and Advancement

The professional associations representing the studio arts provide specific criteria for the professional evaluation of faculty artists. The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD) and the College Art Association (CAA) are two such associations with the broadest purview, and their professional standards are directly applicable to the work of PLU’s faculty artists.

A. National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD)

The NASAD Handbook (2007-2008) lists the following chief considerations for faculty evaluation:

- **Standards for Evaluation and Advancement**
Creative activity and achievement and exhibition must be regarded as being equivalent to scholarly efforts and publication in matters of appointment and advancement when the institution has goals and objectives for the preparation of professional artists and designers. (p. 50)

- **Recommendations to Faculty Evaluators**

Creative work in art/design should be accepted as equivalent to scholarly publication or research as a criterion for appointment and advancement in all institutions. (p. 51)

B. The College Art Association (CAA)

In its description of best practices for retaining faculty and evaluating candidates for tenure (<http://www.collegeart.org/guidelines/tenure2>), the CAA includes the following guidelines.

- **Documentation of work products** might include but not be limited to artworks, media works, design works, client-based consulting, commissions, retainers, consultancies, art or design articles, papers, books, book chapters, reports, inventions, discoveries, presentations, demonstrations, workshops, exhibits, grant applications, fellowships, residencies, situated art and/or design works, online work, curatorial work, etc. When documenting collaborative art and/or design works, and if applicable, materials should be consistent with institutional guidelines for presentation and include clarification and identification about the candidate's role in the collaborative efforts. Such clarification may take the form of letters submitted by collaborators to the applicant and/or unit administrator, defining each participant's contribution to a particular project.
- Documentation of dissemination might include but not be limited to exhibitions, collections, performances, commissions, publications, conference proceedings, presentations, symposia, broadcasts, marketplace data, academic and/or popular press accounts, etc.
- Documentation of quality, significance, scope, complexity, and/or impact might include but not be limited to awards, citations, client-based work, collections, commercial successes, commercial work, curatorial letters, data about viewers/users, funding/grant awards, human welfare data, impact studies, legislation, licensing, peer reviews, periodical references, press releases and/or media attention, policies, prizes, quality of life measures, regulations, etc. In some fields of art and design, paid professional practice—and in particular, client-based commissions

resulting in widely produced and/or viewed work—is considered an indicator of quality and significance.

- Documentation about selection processes (e.g., peer reviewed, juried, blind reviewed, editor reviewed, invited, nominated, commissioned, crowd-sourced, competitive, self-initiated, etc.), when available, might include measures of the quantitative selectivity (e.g., an acceptance rate of ten out of one hundred). It should be noted that the majority of dissemination opportunities in art and design are within venues wherein impact is determined by numerous, varied, and nuanced considerations. Accordingly, venues are not ranked in a manner consistent with or parallel to scholarly publications in certain academic disciplines where widely accepted and distinctly ranked orders of importance and impact might exist. (As an example, there is no accepted preeminent art/design award or gallery in the United States.) Pertinent factors for evaluating the impact of an art/design venue should align with the unit's and the institution's mission, be written into pertinent promotion and tenure documents, and might include but not be limited to: its role in shaping contemporary critical discourse and/or practice in the field; the opportunities for significant, critical peer review; a record of advancing a particular form of art and/or design production; the ability to attract to regional, national, and/or international public audiences; a reputation for innovation and originality in exploring new ideas and modes of production; a resonant and/or imaginative geographic or cultural context for the project; etc.
- **Documentation for the service review:** Information to be included might typically include but not be limited to documentation about service to the unit, institution, community, and/or profession at the local, regional, state, national, and/or international levels including meeting minutes demonstrating contributions, written products of service activities, data on outcomes of service activities, and/or letters from individuals or agencies benefitting from such service.