

Department of Communication, Media & Design Arts
Discipline of communication
Professional Standards Document for the College of Professional Studies
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Introduction: The process of scholarship, as well as the successful pursuit and achievement of scholarly research, are of fundamental importance in evaluating the professional performance of faculty members at institutions of higher education. However, the **nature** of scholarship and research can and does vary considerably, dependent upon the academic disciplines in question. Such variation is natural, necessary and to be expected.

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 discipline of communication, 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 communication must be deemed fully equivalent to more 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.

Definitions: “Creative works” include film and other kinds of media (social media campaigns, branding guides, media art installations, etc). It can include journalism or other writing for popular or lay press. It can include public presentations. In communication, performance reaches not only the campus community, but beyond to the general public at large. For instance, the video documentaries and photo documentation produced by MediaLab clearly demonstrate the innovation, creativity, imagination, intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual avenues that enrich scholarship in the creative arts. In such instances, peers and critics can be considered evaluators of the creative works. Considering the three key elements of traditional scholarship in journals/papers/books—research, peer review, final product—the creative works produced by scholars in communication showcase similar rigor.

Public Scholarship: “Public Scholarship” is a growing movement in academe occurring at institutions small and large, public and private, 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. One important goal of public scholarship, among many, is to reduce the degree to which academics are viewed as detached occupants of the proverbial “Ivory Tower.” In a June 2006 *Chronicle of Higher Education* article titled “Taking Public Scholarship Seriously,” Syracuse University Chancellor Nancy Cantor and Steven D. Levine, president of the

California Institute of the Arts, wrote: “We must take public scholarship seriously and frame broader and more flexible definitions of scholarship, research, and creative work. We must think boldly about what we define as knowledge, what we regard as interesting, and whom we call ‘scholars.’ The future demands it.” Syracuse, the California Institute of the Arts, and Penn State are among the 70-plus institutional members of a national higher education consortium called Imagining America, which is pushing for public scholarship to become as recognized and valued as the more traditional types of research upon which tenure decisions historically have been based. Other schools involved in this effort include the University of Minnesota, Rutgers University, Stanford, the University of Maryland, all campuses of the University of Washington, as well as smaller institutions such as Beloit College, Emerson, Colgate, Macalester and many more.

Scholarship of Discovery, Integration, Application, and Teaching: The examples provided in this addendum are models of what the PLU Faculty Handbook refers to as “Scholarship of Discovery, Integration, Application, and Teaching” or using knowledge to “solve problems of consequence to human welfare.” The cases herein 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.

Professional Organizations: Following is a partial list of several professional mass communication organizations of which communication faculty are members, and which provide peer review and professional assessment guidelines for creative works and public scholarship projects like those described in this document.

ORGANIZATION	Standards for Evaluation and Advancement	Recommendations to Faculty Evaluators
Broadcast Education Association http://www.beaweb.org/	No methodology is excluded. Goals are to encourage all BEA members interested in research to join the division; to provide forums for discussion on issues in broadcast and electronic media research; and to provide leadership roles in shaping the future of broadcast and electronic media research.	The purpose shall be: the improvement of teaching broadcast research, the fostering of research in all aspects of broadcasting and electronic media, and the networking of faculty and professionals interested in researching broadcasting and electronic media.
Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) http://www.spj.org/	SPJ promotes the free flow of information vital to a well-informed citizenry through the daily work of its nearly 10,000 members; works to inspire and educate current and future journalists through professional development; and protects First Amendment guarantees of freedom of speech and press through its advocacy efforts.	Promotion of excellence in education programs and practical research.
Radio, Television News Directors Association (RTNDA) http://www.rtna.org/	RTNDF encourages educators to plan an active role in the growth of the journalism industry.	Embody and uphold the standards of ethical journalism and promote leadership in the newsroom. Including an open forum for the discussion of ethics, assistance with the development of leadership skills, support of First Amendment issues and the exchange of ideas and perspectives.

