Excellence, Quality, and Rigor in Peer Review of Community Engaged Scholarship Workshop

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University Outreach and Engagement
Michigan State University

Engagement Scholarship Consortium Conference
University Park, PA
September 29, 2015
1:20-3:20 pm
Today’s Learning Objectives

At the end of this workshop, you will

1. Understand peer review of community-engaged scholarship, especially how it differs from peer review of traditional scholarship.

2. Appreciate historical efforts to define excellence, quality, and rigor for community-engaged scholarship, including differences and similarities of the various criteria.

3. Learn an approach for providing critical and constructive reviewer comments.

4. Practice being a peer reviewer of community-engaged scholarship.

5. Be familiar with resources available to you to increase understanding and improve skills for peer review of community-engaged scholarship on your own campus.
Today’s Roadmap

• Introduction
  – What is peer review? When and why does peer review occur?

• How peer review of CES differs from traditional scholarship.
  – Community partner voice.
  – Student/learner voice.

• Historical overview of excellence, quality, and rigor and peer review in CES.

• Critical and constructive feedback.

• CES peer review learning activities.

• Resources for talking about peer review of CES on your campus.
Opening Questions

With a show of hands,

• How many of you have served as a peer reviewer
  – For a journal article?
  – For a grant proposal?
  – For a conference proposal?
  – For a community-engagement award?

• How many of you have received comments from a reviewer that were unhelpful—vague? scathing?

• How many of you are concerned about the capacity of committee members or mid-level administrators to review community-engaged scholarship thoroughly and fairly during reappointment, promotion, and tenure reviews?
Peer Review Defined

• According to Merriam-Webster, peer review is “a process by which a scholarly work (such as a paper or research proposal) is checked by a group of experts in the same field [i.e., peers] to make sure it meets the necessary standards before it is published or accepted.”

• Peer review is fundamental to the definition of scholarship. To be considered scholarly, an activity “is judged to be significant and meritorious (product, process, and/or results) by a panel of peers” Diamond (2002).
Examples of Peer Review

**Students**
- Research proposals, especially by graduate students.
- Student learning portfolios.
  - Undergraduate.
  - Graduate students.
- Scholarship applications.
- Awards.
  - Campus.
  - Community.

**Faculty/Staff**
- Research proposals.
- Grant proposals.
- Conference proposals.
- Journal articles.
- Faculty/staff dossiers, especially those for reappointment, promotion, and tenure.
- Awards/recognitions.
What Makes Peer Review of CES Different From Traditional Scholarship?

• Community-engaged scholarship includes scholarly activities related to research and/or teaching that involve full collaboration of students, community partners, and faculty as co-educators, co-learners, and co-generators of knowledge and that address questions of public concern” (Katz Jameson, Jaeger, Clayton, & Bringle, 2012, pg. 54).

• The process of collaboration with a community and the inclusion of community partner voice in the scholarly process is the main difference.

• This extends to collaboration with students/learners and student/learner voice, if they are involved.
Community Partner Voice in Peer Review of CES

Image from https://www.liverpoolmutualhomes.org/about-us/how-to-become-a-shareholder/
Peer Review of CES

“In Community-engaged Scholarship, the typical concerns of peer review—focused on rigorous methods, participant risks and benefits, and the significance of findings—are complemented by the equivalent and sometimes greater concerns for the quality of the engagement process, community-level ethical considerations, and benefits to the community.” (Gelman et al, 2013, pg. 2).
Key Issues in CES Peer Review

• Who are the **appropriate** “peers” in the peer review of CES?

• What **expertise** is relevant in CES?

• Who **selects** the peers?
What does it mean to “incorporate community partner and/or student/learner feedback” into the peer review process?

- **Minimal**
  - Providing input into peer review decisions

- **Maximal**
  - Decision-making authority in peer review decisions
Minimal Input into Peer Review

- Role of community members and student/learners is advisory
- Peer review decisions are made by others
- Examples:
  - Letter or email of support for a portfolio
  - Video testimony about the impact of a project
Maximal Input Into Peer Review

• Community partners and student/learners have decision-making authority

  - Example: Journal of Community Engaged Scholarship
  - “Board reviewers are supplemented by a diverse range of additional reviewers, including community partners and students, approved by the editor”

  - Example: CES4Health.info
  - “Products and accompanying applications that are submitted to CES4Health.info are first reviewed by a member of the editorial team to ensure it fits the types of products that we review. If it is determined to be a fit, it is assigned to one community and two academic reviewers who fulfill reviewer expectations and have relevant areas of expertise.”
Reflection Question

What kinds of community partner feedback are possible for your community-engaged experience?
# Historical Overview of Excellence, Quality, and Rigor and Peer Review in CES

## Table: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP CRITERIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Expertise</th>
<th>Adequate Preparation</th>
<th>Goals &amp; Questions</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Reflective Critique</th>
<th>Ethics</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lynton (1995)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Depth of expertise &amp; preparation</td>
<td>Appropriateness of chosen goals and methods</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Impact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Originality &amp; Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glassick, Huber, &amp; Magrath (1997)</td>
<td>Context of theory, literature, Best Practice</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CES4 Health (2009)</td>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>Adequate preparation</td>
<td>Clear goals</td>
<td>Methodological rigor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflective critique</td>
<td>Ethical behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEPI/ Jordan (2007)</td>
<td>Adequate preparation in content area &amp; grounding in community</td>
<td>Adequate preparation in content area &amp; grounding in community</td>
<td>Clear academic &amp; community change goals</td>
<td>Methodological rigor and commitment to engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflective critique</td>
<td>Consistent ethical behavior</td>
<td>Leadership &amp; personal contribution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Making the Case for Professional Service, Lynton suggested these measures be applied to all faculty scholarship:

1. **Depth of the expertise and preparation**
2. **Appropriateness of chosen goals and methods**
3. **Effectiveness of communication**
4. **Quality of reflection**
5. **Impact**
6. **Originality and innovation**

Lynton, 1995, pg. 49
# Points of Distinction (1996, revised 2000)

## Significance
- Importance of issue/opportunity to be addressed
- Goals/objectives of consequence

## Context
- Consistency with university/unit values and stakeholder interests
- Appropriateness of expertise
- Degree of collaboration
- Appropriateness of methodological approach
- Sufficiency and creative use of resources

## Scholarship
- Knowledge resources
- Knowledge application
- Knowledge generation
- Knowledge utilization

## Impact
- Impact on issues, institutions, and individuals
- Sustainability and capacity building
- University-community relations
- Benefit to the university

Committee on Evaluating Quality Outreach (2000)
In Scholarship Assessed, Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff suggested these criteria be used for outreach and engagement:

1. Goals/Questions
2. Context of Theory, Literature, and Best Practice
3. Methods
4. Results
5. Communication/Dissemination
6. Reflective Critique
The Clearinghouse for the Scholarship of Engagement is designed to:

- Sponsor the National Review Board for the Scholarship of Engagement to provide external peer review and evaluation of faculty’s scholarship of engagement;

- Provide consultation, training, and technical assistance to campuses who are seeking to develop or strengthen systems in support of the scholarship of engagement;

- Conduct forums, programs, and regional conferences on topics related to the scholarship of engagement;

- Provide a faculty mentoring program with opportunities for less experienced faculty to learn from the outreach experiences of more seasoned outreach scholars.

All materials copyright © Clearinghouse & National Review Board for the Scholarship of Engagement. All rights reserved.
National Review Board for the Scholarship of Engagement

National Review Board
• provides external peer review and evaluation of faculty's scholarship of engagement

Evaluation Criteria
• Goals/Questions
• Context of theory, literature, or “best practice”
• Methods
• Results
• Communication/dissemination
• Reflective critique

http://www.scholarshipofengagement.org/about/about_us.html
Community-Engaged Scholarship for Health

CES4Health.info is a free online mechanism for peer-reviewing, publishing and disseminating products of health-related community-engaged scholarship that are in forms other than journal articles. For example, videos, manuals, curricula and products developed through service-learning, community based participatory research and other community-engaged work.

Through CES4Health.info, you can:
- Search for high quality tools and resources
- Submit products for peer review
- Apply to be a peer reviewer
- Contribute to the field of community-engaged scholarship and ultimately the health of communities

NEW PRODUCTS
- Ethical Conduct of Research with Human Participants
- The New Normal Living with Lymphedema after Breast... 
- Age-Friendly Marine Day Project Final Report
- Utilizing Media to Reduce the Burden of Cervical C...

HOT TOPICS
- Join Community-Campus Partnerships for Health!
- A New Set of Products Focus on Indigenous Health!
- View a webinar on CES4 info!
- Find a Mentor or Become a Reviewer!

Submit a Product Today!
CES4Health (2009)

**Goals**
free, online mechanism for peer-reviewing, publishing and disseminating products of health-related community-engaged scholarship that are in forms other than journal articles

**Review Criteria**
Based on Jordan Ed (2007) and Glassick, Maeroff, & Huber (1997)
- Clear goals
- Adequate preparation
- Methodological rigor
- Significance
- Effective presentation
- Reflective critique
- Ethical behavior

http://www.ces4health.info/
Community Engaged Scholarship Review, Promotion & Tenure Package

Acknowledgments: This package was developed by the Peer Review Workgroup of the Community-Engaged Scholarship for Health Collaborative and edited by Workgroup Chair Cathy Jordan (University of Minnesota). Contributors were, in alphabetical order, Sherril Gelmon (Portland State University), Yvonne Joosten (Vanderbilt University), Paul Jungnickel (Auburn University), Rebecca Leungers (University of Cincinnati), Carol Savrin (Case Western University), Doneka Scott (University of Minnesota), Sarena Seifer (Community-Campus Partnerships for Health), Sharon Shields (Vanderbilt University), and Kristine Wong (Community-Campus Partnerships for Health). For more information about the Collaborative, visit http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/healthcollab.html


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Request for Feedback: We are eager for your feedback on this package, including any experiences you may have had in using it. Please complete the online feedback form at https://catalysttools.washington.edu/webq/survey/sarena/16375 or email your feedback to fipse2@u.washington.edu
CCPH edited by Jordan (2007)

1. Clear academic and community change goals
2. Adequate preparation in content area and grounding in community
3. Methodological methods: Rigor and community engagement
4. Significant results: Impact on the field and community
5. Effective dissemination and presentation to academic and community audiences
6. Reflective critique
7. Leadership and personal contribution
8. Consistently ethical behavior
Providing Constructive and Critical Feedback
Evaluate based on standards

**JHEOE Research Article**: are quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method studies that *demonstrate the long-term impact of a university-community engagement project* on the community, students, faculty and staff, or the institution.

Research articles should:

- outline the overall concept of the study;
- provide a thorough literature review that is timely and relevant to the study;
- give a clear statement about what gap in the literature the current study is addressing;
- outline the methods used;
- provide robust sections that report the findings of the study and discuss their implications;
- include a section with the limitations of the study and areas for future research;
- provide conclusions that address
  - the gap in the literature that the study addressed;
  - best practices or lessons learned that the reader can apply to her/his context; and/or
  - how the conclusions inform decision makers.
Check your biases

- Treat all peers fairly, including those that disagree with you.
Rappaport’s Rules

1. You should attempt to re-express your target’s position so clearly, vividly, and fairly that your target says, “Thanks, I wish I had thought of putting it that way.”

2. You should list any points of agreement (especially if they are not matters of general or widespread agreement).

3. You should mention anything you learned from your target.

4. ONLY then are you permitted to say so much as a word of rebuttal or criticism.

Dennett (2013)
Provide a balance of positive and negative feedback

• Lead with what the author did well
  – This paper has a number of strengths, including…

• Then make specific comments about what would make the paper, presentation, etc. better
  – The following changes would make this paper even better…
Be specific in your praise or criticism

• What specifically did the writer do well?
• What specifically did the writer do not so well? And, what could they have done better?
• Refer to line numbers or page numbers
Focus on description, not judgment

• **This:** The discussion of how community partners participated in decisions about the project would benefit from further elaboration. For example, how were community partners involved in the identification of the topic of interest?

• **Not this:** The process for involving community partners in making decisions about the project was poorly described.
Critique the writing, not the writer

• **This:** The treatment of the literature on engaged scholarship was somewhat superficial.

• **Not this:** The author clearly is not familiar with the literature on engaged scholarship.
Focus on observations, rather than inferences

• Observations are what you can see; inferences are the assumptions and interpretations you draw from your observations.

• This: The section on critical reflections has few citations to the relevant literature.

• Not This: A lack of references to the relevant literature in the section on critical thinking suggests a tendency for this author to take an unscholarly approach to her work.
Strengthen positives, instead of focusing on negatives

• **This:** The specified roles community partners played in this partnership could be made clearer in this portfolio.

• **Not This:** This portfolio does not make clear what roles community partners played in this partnership.
Common Peer Reviewer Mistakes

- Vague, broad, general comments that do not provide adequate direction for the writer/applicant to address the problem in the future.

- Viscous, nasty, belittling comments that leave the writer/applicant feeling emotionally attacked and leave the reviewer feeling smart or smug.
CES Peer Review
Learning Activities

That wasn't what we decided!
Yes it was.
No! It wasn't!
I forgot something - be right back!

Yap Yap Yap Yip
Ha ha ha!
YAP!

Reynolds 2012
Example 1: POD Network Innovation Award

Professional and Organizational Development (POD) Network recognizes innovative teaching and learning ideas as well as those that enhance the general effectiveness of higher education faculty members.

Innovation Award Criteria

• Originality
• Scope and Results
• Transferability
• Effectiveness
• Community Impact (added for today’s review example)
# Example 1: POD Award Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Stronger</th>
<th>Rating 1 is lowest 5 is highest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Originality</td>
<td>Adaptation</td>
<td>Uniquely New</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Scope and Results</td>
<td>One Session</td>
<td>Long Term</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual Project</td>
<td>Campus-wide Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goals Partially Met</td>
<td>Goals Successfully Met</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Transferability</td>
<td>To like institutions of higher education</td>
<td>To all institutions of higher education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Effectiveness</td>
<td>Expensive</td>
<td>Not Expensive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Community Impact</td>
<td>Limited Impact</td>
<td>Sustained Impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is your critical, constructive feedback on this awards proposal?
Example 2: ESC Conf Poster Submission

ESC Conference 15—Poster Review Criteria

1. Contributes to the body of knowledge on engaged scholarship

2. Is grounded in scholarship and/or best practice

3. Addresses at least one of the imperatives for the 2015 conference theme: "Engaged Scholarship: Advancing Rigor, Elevating Impact."

4. Indicates evidence of reciprocity and mutual benefit from the standpoint of all partners (faculty, staff, student, administrators, and/or community partners)

5. Is likely to attract a large audience

6. Does at least one of the following:
   - Reports the specific results of a community-engaged research study,
   - Describes a translational, educational, service-learning, or clinical program or evidence-based community-engaged program or practice
## Example 2: ESC Conference Poster Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Rating 1 is lowest 5 is highest</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Contributes to the body of knowledge on engaged scholarship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Is grounded in scholarship and/or best practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Addresses AT LEAST ONE conference theme</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Rigorous scholarship</td>
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<td>• Impact measurement</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Institution-wide involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reciprocal inspiration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Diversity efforts and impact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Indicates evidence of reciprocity and mutual benefit from the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>standpoint of all partners (faculty, staff, student, administrators,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>and/or community partners)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Is likely to attract a large audience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Does at least ONE of the following</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reports the specific results of a community-engaged research study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Describes a translational, educational, service-learning, or clinical</td>
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<tr>
<td>program or evidence-based community-engaged program or</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>practice</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

What is your critical, constructive feedback on this award proposal?
### Example 3: CES Seed Grant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Screening Criteria</th>
<th>Rating 1 is lowest 5 is highest</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Interdisciplinary: Is the proposal multidisciplinary and integrative representing diverse and meaningful relationships across departments and disciplines?</td>
<td>If no, Stop!</td>
<td>If yes, Go on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Community: Does the proposal link MSU with Michigan communities (broadly defined as a group of people who interact and share certain things, i.e., identity, common interest, professional roles, resources, risks, responsibilities)?</td>
<td>If no, Stop!</td>
<td>If yes, Go on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Community Impact: Is the proposed project useful to the community and does it have the potential to have significant impact on the community?</td>
<td>If no, Stop!</td>
<td>If yes, Go on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Potential Success: Does the project demonstrate potential to be successful as indicated by appropriate methods and analytical approach, letters of support, investigator expertise, etc.?</td>
<td>If no, Stop!</td>
<td>If yes, Go on.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Example 3: CES Seed Grant Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Criteria</th>
<th>Rating 1 is lowest 5 is highest</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Significance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Approach</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Investigative Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Likelihood of Extramural Funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Budget</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

What is your critical, constructive feedback on this award proposal?
Peer Review Activity Debrief

1. What was your group’s experience as peer reviewers?

2. Were there differences in opinion in your group? If so, how did you resolve them?

3. What was your experience writing critical and constructive feedback? Was it easier/harder than you expected?

4. Other questions, observations?
IDEAS AND RESOURCES FOR YOUR CAMPUS

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IDEAS AND RESOURCES FOR YOUR CAMPUS

IDEAS FOR ACTION

Department/School/College Level
- Convene departmental dialogues about excellence, quality, and rigor
- Mentor junior colleagues about excellence in conducting community-engaged scholarship
- Serve as a reviewer on departmental or college reappointment, promotion and tenure committees
- Serve as a reviewer on departmental, school, or college level awards for community-engaged scholarship

Institution Level
- Serve on institution-wide reappointment, promotion, and tenure committees
- Organize professional development for reappointment, promotion and tenure committee members
- Organize professional development for department chairs, school directors, college deans
- Serve on institution-wide award communities for community-engaged scholarship
- Nominate outstanding scholars for national awards for community-engaged scholarship
References


Tips for giving constructive criticism on academic writing. Retrieved on March 12, 2015 from https://academicism.wordpress.com/2013/12/03/tips-for-giving-constructive-criticism-on-academic-writing/.
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