

March 1, 2011

Dear UNCG community,

In recent conversations with faculty and administrative leaders, the Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED) was asked to develop materials in support of campus deliberations regarding the positioning of community engagement and community-engaged scholarship in the promotion and tenure guidelines currently being re-examined and refined. Although each discipline, department, School and College will articulate the meaning and significance of community engagement and community-engaged scholarship based on its individual paradigms, policies, and practices, these efforts can be supported by a literature base of core principles and definitions.

The purpose of the attached document is to inform this work by providing some suggested language that integrates UNCG conversations and policy with scholarly literature to address how community engagement may be achieved through the scholarly activities of research, creative activity, teaching, and service – and, **how it may be defined within unit- and department-level promotion and tenure evaluation guidelines**. In particular, **we address the question of what is community engagement, and how high quality community-engaged research, creative activity, teaching, and service are distinct from *community service* (also referred to as *outreach*)**. We hope the attached definitions provide a reference point for faculty determinations of how community-engaged faculty work can be conceptualized, evaluated, and rewarded.

In an effort to be precise and to honor the university's commitment to differentiate between *scholarship* from *research* activities, (i.e., “The promotion and tenure guidelines of the University rest on a definition of scholarship that can be applied to all aspects of University work...” (Section I.A)), **we intentionally do not use the term *community-engaged scholarship* as a synonym of *community-engaged research/creative activity***. Instead, we provide a definition of community-engaged scholarship that addresses all forms of academic work (research/creative activity, teaching, service). This definition adheres to key principles of community engagement (mutually reciprocal partnerships and public purpose) and scholarship (work that demonstrates a high level of discipline-related proficiency, is creative or original, is amendable to documentation, may be peer or constituent-reviewed, and has significant impact (University-wide Promotion and Tenure Guidelines, Sections I.A and II.C.4)). To be clear, work that is done in a *scholarly* way (i.e., poses questions and systematically investigates practices and/or outcomes) does not necessarily comprise *scholarship* (i.e., is presented publically for peer-review)(Hutchings and Schulman, 1999). In sum, scholarship involves learning through well-grounded faculty work and sharing that learning (in any of a variety of forms) so that others can critique and build on it. Community-engaged scholarship, whether in the form of research, creative activity, teaching, directed professional service, or service, adheres to these criteria. Therefore, community-engaged research/creative activity, community-engaged teaching, and community-engaged service may be enacted in a scholarly way, but may not comprise scholarship unless a product (which may include many forms as outlined in the UNCG university-wide promotion and tenure guidelines) is created and made available for peer-review. [Note: Directed professional service may also practice principles of community-engagement, but the UNCG University-wide Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure, currently, neither define nor refer to community-engaged directed professional activity. This may be addressed at a future date.]

The University has a long history with and values many forms of community involvement across local, regional, state, national, and global levels. Indeed, “service” has been UNCG’s motto since 1894. Community involvement, and particularly community engagement, is expected of UNCG faculty, staff, and students as outlined in the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan, the University-wide Promotion and Tenure Evaluation Guidelines, the UNCG Mission and Values Statement, and the General Education Curriculum Learning Goals. The 4.3

Strategic Planning Implementation Report for Community Engaged Scholarship details explicit plans to support faculty, students, staff, and community partners in community-engaged activities. In 2008, UNCG received the Community Engagement elective designation from the Carnegie Foundation in recognition of its curricular engagement, as well as outreach and partnerships. In his first visit to UNCG as the UNC President, Dr. Ross commended UNCG for recognizing faculty members' work with the greater community as it corresponds with goals set forth by UNC Tomorrow. Distinctions between community engagement and community service, as well as between community-engaged research/creative activity and teaching and other forms of research and teaching are important to consider in our campus conversations—particularly with regards to drafting language in departmental promotion and tenure evaluation guidelines—because the relationships, processes, timelines, products, and outcomes may vary greatly across these forms of community involvement.

This document was written by Drs. Emily Janke (Special Assistant for Community Engagement, ORED) and Patti Clayton (Visiting Scholar, ORED), with assistance from Dr. Patrick Lee Lucas (2010-2011 Service-Learning Faculty Fellow, OLSL, and Associate Professor, Interior Architecture), and Vice Chancellor Terri Shelton; it draws carefully on a range of local and national conversations regarding the meaning of community engagement, scholarship, and community-engaged scholarship. The terms and definitions presented here represent a distillation of conversations, documents, policies, and reports, including those referred to in the paragraph above, the 14 meetings held during the *2010 Building the University's Capacity for Community Engagement Speaker Series* (co-sponsored by the Provost's Office, OLSL, ORED, Faculty Senate, UTLC) which involved nearly 300 faculty, staff, administrators, students, and community partners, as well as meetings with faculty members and representatives of various units, offices, institutes, networks, advisory boards, and centers.

This document is *not* intended to replace deliberate and collaborative conversation among faculty colleagues. We strongly encourage each unit to craft language that honors the core principles of community engagement, while using terms and examples that best embody the disciplines represented. Additional resources on how to define and evaluate community engagement and different forms of community-engaged scholarship within a variety of disciplines are available at: <http://olsl.uncg.edu/cbr/promotionandtenure/>. If you or your department would like additional information or resources, we encourage you to contact Emily Janke (emjanke@uncg.edu) or Patrick Lee Lucas (plucas@uncg.edu), who have been asked to provide such support.

We expect to make additions to this document in the future, particularly as faculty members write and approve their units' promotion and tenure review criteria and guidelines. To facilitate communication across the UNCG community, we will continue to collaborate with offices and units to provide resources, as well as to add current examples of how community engagement is articulated within various units. Updates will be posted online at <http://communityengagement.uncg.edu>. We hope you will share the results of your discussions with us by e-mail (communityengagement@uncg.edu) for others to see and refer to in their own work.

Sincerely,

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