



SAINT LOUIS
UNIVERSITY

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SCHOOL FOR PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

Plan for Enhancing Research

The Context of Scholarship at SPS

While research can be applied for the direct benefit of key performance metrics, research at SPS must also be applied for the purpose of scholarship and scholarly pursuits. Although scholarship has not often been viewed as important for units serving adult populations, it does provide several benefits for SPS:

- SPS is part of a broader university community, a community that, for the most part, emphasizes scholarship as a core component of faculty status and the production of scholarship provides SPS with credibility among other academic units on campus.
- Scholarship can be leveraged as a marketing tool, providing recognition for faculty (among peers at the university, and in the same/similar fields across various academic institutions) and enhancing efforts to recruit students (especially in graduate programs).
- Scholarship can be leveraged to provide external funding in the form of grants and contracts.
- Scholarship can be leveraged for the purposes of developing and enhancing courses within academic programs.

Scholarship of Teaching involves gaining and disseminating knowledge through the process of teaching. Given that scholarship is about the process of developing new knowledge and insights, the process of teaching – as a dynamic process between faculty and students – is a form of scholarship.

Scholarship of Application involves scholarship that applies the knowledge gleaned from the discovery of others with an eye toward (1) solving practical problems and (2) discovering new knowledge, understanding, and insights. SPS has many faculty members who already engage in this type of scholarship, applying their expertise toward solving practical problems in a way that produces artifacts for dissemination (e.g., books, research articles, presentations).

Scholarship of Integration involves synthesizing information across different disciplines in a way that provides new or deeper insight on some problem or issue. SPS was conceptualized as a multidisciplinary school, with faculty members representing various disciplines offered within its academic degrees. Current faculty represent a wide array of disciplines, and the school offers an academic environment in which knowledge from different disciplines can be freely shared, discussed, and integrated.

Traditional academia focuses on what Boyer (1990) called the *Scholarship of Discovery*, most closely mirrored by those conducting basic research or research within a traditional research context. Although SPS recognizes the importance of this type of scholarship, a type of scholarship that was the earliest focus of research efforts in academia, this kind of scholarship often functions as the backdrop for the scholarship of teaching, integration, and application.

A Research & Scholarship Agenda

A more comprehensive view of research and scholarship creates the opportunity to set a research and scholarship agenda that will provide strategic benefit for SPS. Specifically, there are three broad strategic directions that should be the focus of such efforts:

1. Development of appropriate and accessible metrics, dashboards, and tools that can be leveraged to monitor and enhance school and program performance outcomes (such efforts must also involve the Center).
 - a. Identification of the important school performance metrics (Data Committee, Dean, Faculty Assembly)
 - b. Development of dashboard that permit the monitoring of performance across the metrics (Data Committee, Director of Strategic Research)
 - c. Utilization of key performance metrics as input into strategic evidence-based decisions (Dean, SPS Leadership Team, Program Directors, all other SPS faculty and staff)
2. Cultivation of an environment that promotes the scholarship of integration, application, and teaching, ensuring support, recognition, and rewards are aligned with such an environment.
 - a. Appoint a Director of Faculty Development and a Director of Strategic Research
 - b. Identify internal and external resources for funding scholarship
 - c. Identify faculty doing research in any of the recognized areas and provide relevant course reductions.
 - d. Increase the percentage of tenured and tenure-track faculty to 50%, which could include non-tenure-track faculty switching to tenure track if research productivity warrants it.

While these areas are quite broad, they can be operationalized as more specific goals to be accomplished over 1-, 2-, or 3-year periods.

References

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

Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River: Pearson.