

**Peer-Reviewed Scholarship at Elon University
and in the
Department of Nursing**

Elon nurtures a rich intellectual community characterized by active student engagement with a faculty dedicated to excellent teaching and scholarly accomplishment.¹ The Elon faculty embrace the idea that scholarship and teaching are inseparable, for scholarship is the foundation of teaching.² The faculty of Elon also embrace the idea that scholarship is essential to an intellectually vibrant and enriching community, and so it represents the most fundamental form of professional activity.²

Professional activity is an essential criterion by which all faculty performance is judged, along with the criteria of teaching, which is given top priority, and contributions to the life of the university (service).³ Defined broadly, professional activity results in a range of valued work involving the serious practice of disciplinary expertise², including academic presentations, exhibitions, creative performances, leadership positions in professional organizations, consulting, and mentored student research.³

Peer-reviewed scholarship is a crucial subset of professional activity and, with evidence of activity at a high level, a necessary but not sufficient condition for promotion and tenure.³ Scholarship is the creative process of inquiry and exploration that adds to the knowledge or appreciation of disciplinary or interdisciplinary understanding,² and is not limited to traditional basic research, also sometimes referred to as “the scholarship of discovery.” Elon faculty embrace the full range of scholarly activity reflected in the Boyer Model (Ernest L. Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*, 1990) as valued by and valuable to Elon’s intellectual community and traditions.

Across all disciplines, recognized peer-reviewed scholarship shares some common features:

- It results in a product, presentation, exhibition, or performance that expands knowledge, skills, or understanding that can be shared with others;
- It extends beyond the limits of the institution;
- It develops and/or expands the expertise of the faculty member and lifts the faculty member's standing within the institution and in his/her greater community (scholars, artists, researchers, professional practitioners); and
- The work is reviewed by those outside the institution who have appropriate expertise.²

However, distinct differences exist in the types of peer-reviewed scholarly activities, what characterizes high quality, and the tangible results of peer-reviewed scholarship that are valued both within and between disciplines.² Though faculty who prepare their annual reports or tenure/promotion files carry the primary burden of clearly articulating the significance and quality of their scholarship, departments must – for both the effective development and review of their faculty – clearly distinguish and characterize high quality peer-reviewed scholarship in their specific disciplines.

Therefore, in what follows, the Department of Nursing characterizes peer-reviewed scholarship for its discipline(s), distinguishing it from more general forms of professional activity and also distinguishing what is generally considered high quality scholarly activity.

Peer-Reviewed Scholarship in Nursing

Peer-reviewed scholarship is valued as the highest level of scholarship. Peer-reviewed scholarship is academic or professionally relevant work related to disciplinary expertise that undergoes an evaluation process by academic peers, editors, or other qualified disciplinary professionals within an outcome of being judged worthy of entering the discourse of the discipline.

In nursing, we value equally, and therefore apply evaluation equally to:

- Community based scholarship
- Interprofessional work
- Research collaborations with departmental, institutional, or external colleagues
- Research collaborations with students
- Scholarship of teaching and learning
- Traditional work in a disciplinary area

Peer reviewed scholarship in Nursing, as defined above, may take a number of forms, including:

- Articles in professional clinical, education, or research journals
- Books and textbooks
- Book chapters and monographs
- Published abstracts
- External grants
- Presentations at professional conferences

Characterizing “High Quality” in Peer-Reviewed Scholarship in Nursing

The level of quality of peer-reviewed scholarship is measured by the impact of the work, using a variety of measures, as appropriate to the type of work. Measures of impact may include:

- *Engagement*: Refers to the relevance of the work in terms of our valued teacher-scholar model, such as work resulting from mentoring or collaborating with students.
- *Permanence*: Refers to the durability of the work in the public domain (e.g., hardcopy/in press/online publications, paper included in proceedings, presentation archived).
- *Reach & Selectivity*: Refers to the size and/or composition of the audience (e.g., nationally-presented versus locally-presented work) and the degree of the review process (e.g., invited address, peer-reviewed abstract, peer-reviewed paper).
- *Substance & Significance*: Refers to the importance and scope of the work in terms of cohesion with one’s professional identity and plans, as well as comprehensiveness of the

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work, use by others, and/or accolades resulting from the work from the professional domain.

Individual faculty members are encouraged to articulate the quality of their own scholarly work in the annual review and promotion and tenure processes. This includes the ways their work meets standards of quality appropriate to their research agendas, goals, development, etc.

The Department also encourages members to be engaged in professional activities that require scholarship but may not be subjected to peer review as defined above. This may include:

- Advancement of education: doctoral degrees for master's prepared faculty, post-doctoral fellowships, specialty certifications
- Authorship of print, electronic or multimedia instructional material to outside audiences.
- Grant reviewer
- Internal grants
- Peer reviewer for a journal or conference
- Professionally relevant public talks or writing
- Serving on an editorial board
- Serving as an invited expert panelist or discussant