Developing and Valuing the Scholarship of Engagement
Oxford Brookes University, April 26, 2007

Carol L. Colbeck

Center for the Study of Higher Education
The Pennsylvania State University
400 Rackley Building
University Park, PA 16802
clc15@psu.edu
Agenda

- Public Scholarship / Scholarship of Engagement
- Development of Public Scholarship at Penn State
- Minor in Civic and Community Engagement (CIVCOM)
- Academics’ motivation to engage in Public scholarship
Public Scholarship is . . .

“scholarly activity generating new knowledge through academic reflection on issues of community engagement. It integrates research, teaching, and service. It does not assume that useful knowledge simply flows outward from the university to the larger community. It recognizes that new knowledge is created in its application in the field, and therefore benefits the teaching and research mission of the university”

(Yapa, 2006)
For Academics, Public Scholarship . . .

- . . . reframes academic work as an inseparable whole in which the teaching, research, and service components are teased apart only to see how each informs and enriches the others, and faculty members use the integrated whole of their work to address societal needs (Colbeck & Michael, 2006a)

- . . . is not a separate faculty role, so does not add further demands to an already overworked faculty. Instead, public scholarship is academic work, reframed as a unified whole, enabling faculty members to accomplish multiple scholarship goals simultaneously and thereby improving the overall efficiency and effectiveness of their academic work (Colbeck & Michael, 2006b)
For Students, Public Scholarship . . .

Nurtures democratic dispositions

- Ethic of civic participation
- Social Trust
- Openness to Different Perspectives
- Tolerance
Public Scholarship at Penn State

- Strong advocate in central administration
- Growing semi-formal interdisciplinary group of academics
- Small grants program incorporates public scholarship in new or existing courses
- Recognition / external funding for efforts
- Undergraduate and graduate student ambassadors
- Faculty senate approval for the minor in Civic and Community Engagement (CIVCOM)
With the CIVCOM Minor, students . . .

- Apply the theories and tools of their major discipline to issues of civic consequence

- Learn the inherent values that shape the ways in which students apply their education

- Consider the implications of public scholarship for social justice and civic engagement
Structure of CIVCOM minor

18 credits (9 credits in a major may be applied to the minor)

- Prescribed 3-credit conceptual foundations course
- Minimum 3 credits supervised public scholarship field work
- 3-6 credits in courses that concern public issues and democracy
- 3-6 credits of supporting coursework in spirit of the minor
- 3 credits of an approved capstone project requiring reflection on the integration and application of academic theory and practice in the civic community.
INTERCOLLEGE MINOR IN CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
FIELD EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES IN PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP
2003 American Indian Housing Initiative
on the
Northern Cheyenne Reservation, Montana
A healthy and energy efficient design including maximum day lighting, floor radiant heating, and evaporative cooling.

July 2005 Construction
Location: Lame Deer, Montana
Size: 4000 SF
Northern Cheyenne Reservation,
Chief Dull Knife College
2006 Work begins on Tricycle Path and Play Yard
Penn State and Reservation Students working together
Rethinking Urban Poverty: Philadelphia Field Project
Students on the Philadelphia Field Project becoming acquainted with children in their West Philadelphia neighborhood
Professor Yapa in his seminar on Urban Poverty with PSU students in West Philadelphia
Research Question

What motivates research university faculty to engage in public scholarship?
Motivation Systems Theory

Achievement = Motivation (Goals x Capability Beliefs x Context Beliefs x Emotions)

12 Penn State faculty engaged in public scholarship

- **Gender:** 6 men, 6 women
- **Rank:** 4 full, 4 associate, 2 assistant & 2 fixed-term
- **Location:** 10 University Park; 2 branch campus
- **Position:** 3 current or former administrators, 2 center directors, 1 member of faculty senate
- **Disciplines:** 8 applied; 4 pure
Prior Experiences

● As citizens
  - Family
    ● Role models & SES
  - Community groups:
    ● good and bad experiences

● As academics
  - Early career
    ● activism in the academy
  - Later career
    ● Time & interest to focus on community
    ● Challenge taken-for-granted notions of power
Professional Identity

- “Synthesis” between teaching, research and outreach roles and between academic, practitioner, and administrator positions
  - “I am very Interdisciplinary”
  - “I teach all the time, I do science all the time, and… I would not do those things… if I didn’t think it was going to do something good for the community”
Multiple Goals

- **Social relationship** goals – serve to maintain or promote other people or groups
  - “make the world a better place
- **Cognitive** goals – serve one’s need to know
  - Developing public scholarship as “a new epistemology, a different way of thinking”
- **Self-assertive relationship** goals – serve to maintain or promote the self
  - Tenure, promotion, or a new position
- Specific **task** goals for public scholarship teaching and/or research projects
Capability Beliefs

- **Strengths**
  - Communication skills
  - Making connections
  - Relevant experiences
  - Passion

- **Weaknesses (are also strengths)**
  - Too busy
  - Take too much time with students
  - Unable to say “no”
  - Want more experience
Context Beliefs

● Department
  - Positive (4): “ethos of this department”
  - Neutral or mixed (6): “benign neglect”
  - Negative (2): “strong disincentives”

● Discipline
  - Positive (5) or signs of positive changes (2):
    examples of top scholars at national conferences
  - Mixed (1): PS papers rejected by journal
  - Negative (1): “too many never exposed to PS”

● Institution
  - Positive (5): awards and Uniscope
  - Mixed (5): emphasis on traditional, funded research
Emotions

- **Satisfaction/joy** (12)
  - “It’s fun!”
- **Curiosity/interest** (8)
  - Felt that public scholarship invigorated their research and/or teaching
- **Wariness** (1)
  - Felt should delay more public scholarship until tenured
- **Discouragement/ resentment** (2)
  - No perceived support from context
Integration

- **Part of professional identity (3)**
  - “I am quite serious about this integrated life and I don’t see it as an add-on”
  - “Public scholarship is very central in defining who I am and even if that word didn’t exist, I would do it”

- **Recognized synergies as they talked about their own public scholarship (5)**
  - “It was really…a loop of learning something new, helping my students to learn that, learning from them, going out to the community and trying to do something with that and then bringing that back to my scholarship”

- **Service learning (2)**
  - “being able to do real projects, gives us the opportunity to have students grow”

- **Community-based research (2)**
  - “public scholarship is based on interaction with the public and so is my research”
Pervasiveness

- Pervades all (or most) academic work (8)
  - “I have this understanding of a different epistemology, of a different way of thinking and doing and so I want to do research, I want to teach--but this understanding of knowledge as a problem and creating an alternative knowledge that... would serve the public interest, that to me is a full-time job”
  - “I am sure there is something I do where it isn’t, at the micro kind of level, but I think [public scholarship] is a theme that runs through my work”

- Is one aspect of academic work (4)
  - “I only have one course that is small enough to have it”
Motivation Maps

- How individual characteristics, goals, capability beliefs, context beliefs, and emotions led to their current engagement in public scholarship

- Educated guesses about future career choices
# Personal Agency Belief Patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTEXT BELIEFS</th>
<th>CAPABILITY BELIEFS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Robust 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral or mixed</td>
<td>Tenacious 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Antagonistic 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Implications for Practice

- Interaction of selection and socialization effects
  - Department, disciplinary, and university contexts can encourage fresh engagement in public scholarship among faculty of all ranks
  - Department, disciplinary, and university contexts can discourage some who are predisposed to engage in public scholarship

- Department and university support may intensify faculty commitment to their workplace
  - There’s explicit statements coming from department head about ‘this department values the equal treatment and evaluation of research, teaching, service’…To be honest with you, that’s why I’m still here”

- Public scholarship can enhance faculty productivity:
  - “When people go, ‘well that’s just too much work,’ I don’t set it as work. I see it as . . . something that has made my life so much easier.”

- Public scholarship should be part of graduate education
  - “We need to do something in…our approach to graduate education that brings [public scholarship], how to do it, front and center in a meaningful and a substantive way”
References

