



Promotion and Tenure: Application of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, and Scholarship of Engagement Criteria to Health Professions Education

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper strives to provide clarity to two of the newer categories of scholarship as defined by Boyer and Shulman: 1) scholarship of teaching and learning, and 2) scholarship of engagement. Additionally, the paper will discuss the application of scholarship to promotion and tenure in health professional education. Lastly, potential barriers and challenges will be discussed with the introduction of possible models to assist faculty in career promotion efforts.

Method: A literature review was performed to retrieve articles and publicly accessible data related to faculty promotion and tenure in health professional education. The articles chosen focused on the scholarship of teaching and learning, and the scholarship of engagement.

Results: The results show a paucity of research focused on scholarship attainment within health professional education. Further, there are discrepancies among health professions and between academic institutions on scholarship criteria.

Discussion: More research on the application of the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of integration, and the scholarship of application is needed in health professions education to further guide faculty and administrators. Investigation into the discrepancy in rank within tenured faculty in education is an area that would bring insight into current challenges and barriers, allowing educational researchers the ability to research and develop effective strategies.

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Keywords: Promotion; Tenure; Scholarship; Faculty development; Health profession

1. Introduction

In most health professions, the scope of practice has drastically changed over the past decade; however, the amount of change related to faculty promotion and

evaluation has yet to fully meet similar efforts in K-12 education systems. Because of the diversity of health professional educational institutions, there is subsequent diversity in the faculty ranks and criteria for promotion and tenure. The journey of all faculty includes promotion to higher ranks and the possibility of tenure which is important to many faculty and demonstrated through the expression of academic freedom.¹

Within promotion and tenure guidelines, there are three basic criteria that faculty must meet or exceed:

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teaching, service, and scholarship. Out of all the measures used in promotion and tenure criteria, the value and diversity within scholarship has been the hardest to evaluate. The criteria of scholarship has changed over the past twenty years through Boyer's works, but little has been explored on how these changes affect today's health professional faculty. The impact of Boyer's new paradigm on scholarship can be seen across many professions and has provided a better understanding and recognition for different forms of scholarly works in academia. Some faculty members feel that scholarship of teaching and learning, and scholarship of engagement is an abstract criterion when evaluating faculty for promotion, especially clinical faculty.²

Before we can enter into a discussion of the application of scholarship to promotion and tenure guidelines, we must first define scholarship and limit our scope to current needs in health professions education. Many of the definitions refer to types of scholarship while others are defined by institutional policy. From an academic perspective, both historical and traditional scholarship is specifically defined as the work of the professoriate, which encompasses several aspects of overlapping functions of the faculty.³

In 1990, scholarship was defined using four domains: discovery, integration, application and teaching.³ A few years later, Boyer expanded the definition of scholarship to include engagement and highlighted the institution's role in the community to work towards solving the nation's problems.⁴ Each category includes the creation, discovery, advancement, and transformation of knowledge along with measured outcomes through peer review.⁵

In the early 2000s, Shulman introduced the concept of scholarship of teaching and learning, which is more widely used over Boyer's term of scholarship of teaching and represents the new term for scholarship of teaching used today.⁶ In health professions education institutions, the three tenants of scholarship are most often expressed in the mission statement as shown in medical schools, pharmacy schools, and optometry schools.^{7–9}

This paper strives to provide clarity to two of the newer categories of scholarship as defined by Boyer and Shulman: 1) scholarship of teaching and learning, and 2) scholarship of engagement. Additionally, the paper will discuss the application of scholarship to promotion and tenure in health professional education. Lastly, potential barriers and challenges will be discussed with the introduction of possible models to assist faculty in career promotion efforts.

2. Methods

Pubmed along with profession specific searches were conducted in 2016 to retrieve articles and publicly accessible data related to faculty promotion and tenure in health professional education. While no specific keywords were utilized due to the small number of articles, articles that referred to the scholarship of teaching and learning, and the scholarship of engagement were primarily chosen. Journal articles and data sources were retrieved from diverse fields of professions including optometry, pharmacy, nursing, and medicine. Included articles described the past, present or projected state of faculty promotion and tenure in health professional education. Key themes were recorded and discussed.

3. Results

3.1. Scholarship of teaching and learning

In 1990, a dynamic endeavor of careful pedagogical procedures where faculty scholars transmit and extend knowledge by “keeping the flame of scholarship alive” was defined as the scholarship of teaching.³ Scholarship of teaching and learning includes not only all of the concepts within Boyer's scholarship of teaching, but it also invites the student and faculty learner into the conversation of teaching. Scholarship of teaching and learning expands the teaching community to include educational research, policy research, and those outside the educational institution who are involved in research and exchange for the betterment of society.¹⁰

Scholarship of teaching encompasses educating future scholars, transmitting knowledge, developing active learning techniques, and developing critical thinking skills mechanisms.^{4,11} Teaching through student engagement and student learning is a fundamental expectation of all faculty members across higher education.¹¹ When teaching encompasses classroom assessment and evidence gathering, current ideas about teaching, and peer collaboration and review, then teaching should be defined as scholarship as it demonstrates dissemination of information in scholarly venues.¹²

To attain scholarship of teaching and learning, all faculty members should possess a base (content expertise, clinical skills, research techniques) and a meta (psychometrics, conflict management, communication styles, instructional design, instructional delivery, financial development, policy analysis, and graphic design) professional skill set.¹³ Academic health

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