

The Public & the Federation's Role

Building Scholar-Activist Competence Amid Uncertainty



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Questions to Consider:

1. How would you define 'scholar-activism'?
2. What is your initial response to the term?
3. What constitutes 'scholar-activism'?

Scholar-Activism

A conceptual Framework (Ramasubramanian & Sousa, 2021)

- Community-driven
- Social justice-oriented
- Action-oriented
- Grounded in the co-creation of knowledge
- Interdisciplinary
- Requires long-term involvement
- Challenges the status quo
- Driven by intrinsic motivation
- Blurs the boundaries of scholarship

”the scholar activist becomes another kind of knower”

Practices

What does scholar-activism look like?

- Direct engagement with practical problems and efforts to improve the world
- Putting new issues on the research agenda as well as the public agenda
- Speaking truth to power and speaking truth directing to the people
- Confronting and making difficult choices
- Acting with accountability to the publics you study, and reciprocating

Questions to Consider:

1. How would you define 'public scholarship'?
2. What constitutes 'public scholarship'?
3. Are there certain forms of public scholarship that you engage in?
 - 3.a. What has been your experience?

Public Scholarship

How can we define it?

- ...is the practice of sharing academic research and knowledge with a wider audience outside the institution of academia.
- ...any 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.
- Public scholarship recognizes that new knowledge is created in its application in the field, and therefore benefits the teaching and research mission of the university.

Other names for Public Scholarship

- science communication
- scicomm
- research communication
- civic engagement
- public outreach
- thought leadership
- public scholarly and creative work
- civically engaged scholarship
- participatory research
- public information networks
- civic literacy
- outreach scholarship

Value of Public Scholarship

- **Promoting Dialogue and Collaboration**
 - ...bridges academia and the broader community
- **Addressing Societal Needs through Applied Research**
 - ...generates actionable new knowledge to address pressing social challenges, bridging theory and practice for tangible societal benefits.
- **Enhancing the Visibility and Impact of Research**
 - ...transforms research dissemination, making findings accessible and relevant to non-academic communities and broadening impact.
- **Encouraging Quality Public Discourse**
 - ...fosters an environment for the respectful sharing of diverse ideas, enhancing public discourse and knowledge co-creation.

Benefits of Public Scholarship to Institutions

- By prioritizing public scholarship programs, institutions can:
 - **Promote Civic Engagement:** Encourage students and faculty to contribute to their communities through volunteer work, advocacy, or public service initiatives.
 - **Enhance Societal Impact:** Translate academic research into actionable solutions for real-world problems, benefiting a wider audience.
 - **Foster Inclusive Dialogue:** Bridge gaps between academia and the public, facilitating mutual understanding and respect through open discussions and knowledge sharing.

Navigating the Challenges

Ethical and Practical Considerations

- **Managing Criticism and Controversy**

- Public scholarship opens the door to both widespread praise and rigorous scrutiny for many academics.

- **Ensuring Equity and Inclusion in Scholarship Practices**

- Incorporating diverse voices and knowledge systems ensures public scholarship reflects a broad range of experiences and expertise, resulting in richer research outcomes and community engagement.

- **Maintaining Ethical Standards in Knowledge Dissemination**

- Scholars must navigate the risks of misrepresentation or oversimplification for general audiences.

Dissemination Methods

Outline of Categories

- **Mass Media** (e.g., tv, radio, social media, press releases, magazines, webpages, policy briefs)
- **Local Methods** (e.g., community events, seminars, health fairs, flyers, brochures)
- **Academic Approaches** (e.g., journals, conferences, institutional newsletters)
- **Virtual Meetings** (e.g., webinars, teleconferences, expert panels)
- **Videos** (e.g., community-involved films, documentaries, short films)
- **Data visualization** (e.g., graphs, charts, infographics)
- **Educational outreach** (e.g., curriculum development, workshops, presentations)
- Dissemination Toolkits

Written/Print-Based

- Op-eds and guest columns
- Policy briefs or white papers
- Practitioner guides or community toolkits
- Accessible Public-focused blogs or newsletters
- Book reviews or essays for general audiences
- Popular press articles or essays (e.g., The Conversation)
- Publicly accessible Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (SoTL) write-ups

Audio/Visual Media

- Podcasts (solo or interview style)
- Recorded mini-lectures or explainer videos
- YouTube or TikTok channels for scholarly content
- Visual abstracts or research infographics
- Webinars or digital symposia
- Educational video series

Digital/Open Access Scholarship

- Open educational resources (OERs)
- Digital archives or story maps
- Online learning modules or Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)
- Interactive data visualizations or dashboards
- Wikipedia editing and knowledge equity projects

Community/Experiential Engagement

- Community-based exhibitions or installations
- Public workshops, lectures, or pop-up teach-ins
- Collaborations with schools, museums, or nonprofits
- Local radio or TV interviews
- Citizen science or participatory research projects
- Public storytelling or art-based research events

Advocacy & Public Discourse

- Testimony or briefings for policy makers
- Social media advocacy or public communication campaigns
- Letters to editors, public responses, or thought leadership posts
- Contributions to professional organization blogs or newsletters

Questions to Consider:

1. What individual responsibility do we each have as scholars?
2. What role should the federation hold?
3. How do we support one another and build competence/compacity to enact change?

Mission & Vision

Mission: The mission of NAFAPA is to advance scientific inquiry and the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge in Adapted Physical Activity.

Vision: An Adapted Physical Activity field that ensures equitable opportunities for meaningful participation in physical activity, sport, and exercise for individuals experiencing disability across the lifespan.



Thank you.



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