

# Scholarship and Peer Review as a Form of Professional Activity

School of Communications, Elon University

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**S**cholarship is one form of professional activity at Elon. The Elon Teacher-Scholar document states: “The Elon faculty embrace the idea that scholarship and teaching are inseparable because scholarship is the foundation of teaching.” In the School of Communications, we seek in our faculty a desire to search for the truth (discovery), have these findings examined for their importance and quality (peer review), communicate these findings (publication and presentation), and make an important impact in the broad intellectual community (significance).

**BREADTH OF SCHOLARSHIP:** Communications scholarship resides at the intersection of the humanities, the social sciences, the fine arts, and the practical application of the three. We have teacher-scholars who study in humanities areas such as history and ethical practice, who conduct social science research into communication processes and effects, and who engage in creative activity through documentary, screenwriting and other artistic expression. Scholars may work in multiple areas of discovery and creativity.

**METHODS OF SCHOLARSHIP:** We embrace both qualitative and quantitative methodologies as they relate to communications, and research on the pedagogy of teaching. We abide the five areas of scholarship as defined in the Elon Teacher-Scholar statement: discovering or uncovering new knowledge; generating new theories and techniques that guide discovery; integrating knowledge within or across disciplines; applying knowledge to solve problems; and developing pedagogical innovations that facilitate dissemination of knowledge.

**FORMS OF PRESENTATION:** The form of this scholarship may be equally diverse, ranging from traditional outlets such as books, monographs and scholarly journals to scholarship in the form of trade publications, documentaries, screenplays, films and new media. Scholars in the School of Communications should aim for a permanent and lasting form of presentation so that their ideas may reach students and scholars throughout the field and across boundaries of place and time. Conference presentations also are important in the expression and review of scholarship and may represent the first step in the production of a permanent and lasting addition to the field.

**PEER REVIEW:** Peer-reviewed scholarship is a subset of scholarship in general. Peer-reviewed scholarship is evaluated externally by academic or professional peers who are most qualified to examine the quality and importance of the completed work. Examples include academic peers for scholarly journals and presentations; professional peers for significant articles or productions accepted by the media for publication or broadcast; competitions for both academic and creative work; and professional organizations for significant invited publications or presentations based on the faculty member’s expertise. Most peer review occurs prior to the presentation or publication of the scholarship; however, peer review may occur afterward, as with annual awards by academic or professional organizations. As faculty members prepare their annual reports or their tenure or promotion files, they should be able to clearly document the manner and quality of the peer review.