



The University of Vermont

To: David Rosowsky, Provost  
From: Nancy E. Mathews, Dean RSEN  
Re: Metrics for Scholarly Productivity and Impact  
DATE: April 30, 2015

The Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources has reviewed and updated metrics used to evaluate scholarly productivity, per your request. My associate dean, the faculty and I believe that they are consistent with the goals of the President's *Strategic Action Plan* and the *Academic Excellence Goals* for the University of Vermont.

Our review process was inclusive and designed to build on our existing metrics. During February and March, I appointed an ad hoc committee to review these metrics in the context of our shared goals of raising academic quality, visibility and ranking, in a transparent and verifiable manner. Following review, we shared and discussed these at two faculty meetings. The following list is the final product from our conversations. The list includes some alterations to the current RSEN research and scholarship metrics and these will be incorporated into our both our review, promotion and tenure (RPT) guidelines as well as our metrics for merit pay. These metrics will allow for a centralized, consistent, and transparent summary of the School's productivity and impact.

The metrics are as follows:

1. Peer-review publications:
  - a. Books
  - b. Journal articles
  - c. Book chapters
  - d. Proceedings
  - e. Technical reports
  - f. Invited critical reviews
  - g. Invited exhibitions/performances
  - h. Juried exhibitions/performances
2. External Funding
  - a. Grants awarded (include role, monetary value, and nature of grant)
  - b. Grants submitted
  - c. Current active grants
3. Presentations at professional meetings and symposia (note invited or contributed and whether or not the faculty member was the presenter)
4. Productivity of the graduate program
  - a. Number and type of degrees awarded
  - b. Number of advisees
  - c. Competitive national and international scholarships/fellowships
  - d. Placement of graduate students in the field
  - e. Number of graduate committees on which the faculty member serves

## 5. Awards

- a. Major awards, honors, prizes
- b. Fellowships awarded
- c. Membership in a national academy/society

While these metrics provide a comprehensive framework by which our faculty and our School may be assessed, relative to other schools and colleges, we have a significant challenge with respect to adequately evaluating interdisciplinary and community-based scholarship. Interdisciplinary scholarship in the realm of the environment is the norm rather than the exception. While the school and university do not appear to have had challenges in evaluating this in the past, we continue to remain vigilant due to the rapidly evolving frontiers of the intersections between the natural and social sciences. With our new faculty hires, situated at the intersection of health-environment, education-environment and law/policy-environment, we will continue to assess the appropriateness of our existing measures of scholarly work.

In addition, we see an increasing proportion of faculty using community-based research (participatory action research). Often the most relevant measure of both interdisciplinary and community based research is impact. Impact can be measured in ways that are quantifiable (impact factors of journals, number of citations, grant dollars, etc.), but in the field of environment and natural resources, real impact is much more difficult to quantify. Changes in perception, values, behaviors, and policy structures require longer periods of time (relative to tenure) to fully assess. It also necessitates the evaluation of an entire body of scholarly work, over a longer period of time, rather than work completed on an annual basis. We will continue to explore additional approaches fairly and fully evaluate these important components of the School's work.

I look forward to discussing these metrics with you and working to ensure that the School's goals for scholarly productivity, and its evaluation, align with those of the University.