

Local Research Metrics – Instructions

February 2018

Overview

The President and Provost have directed all academic units on campus to develop measures of scholarship quality by the end of this academic year. These metrics will help communicate the strength of our individual departments to others, measure change over time, compare departments to external comparators, and understand how best to manage constrained resources.

There is a relatively short time frame to develop these metrics (CAS must submit local research metrics for all of its units by April 9), so it is understood that this is a first step to lay out a basic framework that will be open to refinements over time. We also note that this exercise is to measure overall department research activity and is not part of individual faculty member's merit and other personnel review processes. Further, these metrics cannot be used for individual personnel decisions unless they are added to the unit level promotion and tenure and merit raise policies through the shared governance process established by the collective bargaining agreement with United Academics.

To assist departments in constructing their local research metrics, we attach a Local Metrics Worksheet, which was developed in consultation with department heads and Academic Affairs. The rest of this document provides more details about how to use this worksheet to provide the needed information.

Definition of Terms

The attached Local Metrics Worksheet specifies four types of *output*:

- *Scholarly output* is peer reviewed or otherwise juried scholarly or creative work
- *Grants* are external and internal funded awards or contracts to support research
- *Impact* is evidence of influence on other scholars and society
- *Awards* are fellowships and other formal recognitions

Department Role and Information Requested

We have provided suggested measures for these types of outputs. If these measures are inadequate, departments should propose additional or alternative ones (see below).

You will want measures of both quantity and quality. One example is to use the quality of the venue as an indication of the quality of the scholarship. We request that departments determine different tiers of scholarship venues by quality scale.

Summarizing, we request your department provide:

- (1) Department choices for measures of the four types of output listed above. There can be more than one measure for some of the types of output, and you can use

or suggest alternatives to those indicated on the worksheet. Please only use measures that can be easily and consistently measured.

- (2) Department ranking of tiers of venue quality for the scholarly output (e.g., journals, book presses) and awards categories. For many departments, we think that 3-5 tiers would be most appropriate. The most elite tier might be the top 5-10 venues in the discipline.

There are a number of plausible variations that departments may follow in this exercise. For example, a department may specify a top tier of “general-interest” venues that publish all topics in the discipline. The next tier may be a grouping of the top venues for various prominent subfields in your discipline. Other departments may find it appropriate to categorize top venues solely by major subfields represented in the department (i.e., no general-interest venues). In other cases, a department may simply want to list the venues they think should be tracked; i.e., one grouping. We defer to your disciplinary judgment in this exercise and please feel free to discuss more with your divisional dean.

We recognize that this will be challenging for some departments, for example, where “subfields” are newly emerging and universally recognized prestigious venues have not yet been established, or for a variety of other local factors in your disciplines, but we ask you to develop tiers that acknowledge these factors.

While not needed, departments may wish to determine tiers of awards and fellowships by various factors (e.g., book-related awards versus others, national versus international, etc.)

Information We Can Provide to Assist Your Unit

Recognizing the limitations of the data collected by Academic Analytics, we can nevertheless use that database to find lists of venues (journals, book publishers, fellowships, etc.) that may help you in determining your tiers. These lists will necessarily be incomplete but can provide a good starting place.

This includes information about the breakdown of publication, award, and fellowship venues for AAU faculty in your discipline over the last 10 years. If you would like to specify a comparator group other than the AAU because the AAU is not the best comparator group, we can also get these data for an alternative set of comparators.

Please contact your divisional dean if you would like this sort of information for your department or if you have other questions.

We also encourage faculty members to establish Google Scholar profiles, as it allows the faculty member and their departments the ability to ensure that their portfolio of scholarship is publicly visible, discoverable, and accessible.

Process Timeline

- February 16: CAS delivers draft of the Local Metrics Worksheet to departments
- Friday, April 6: Departments return information requested to CAS
- Monday, April 9: CAS submits metrics data to the Office of the Provost and Academic Affairs after review.