1-2007

Developing a Shared Meaning of Scholarship to Enable the Revision of Promotion Policy

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Keywords

Scholarship of teaching and learning, Shared meaning of scholarship

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to Enable the Revision of Promotion Policy

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Abstract

Groups communicate about scholarship on the tacit assumption that there is a mutual understanding of the term. Yet the process of policy development is often hampered as different meanings attached to the term become evident. This paper uses cultural-interpretive and interactionist conceptual frameworks to analyze a specific case of redefining the shared meaning of scholarship and codifying these meanings in promotion and tenure policy. Data was collected through interviews, observation and document analysis. The six significant groups involved in this policy revision invested the term scholarship with different meanings, including viewing it as problematic, as a creative process, as currency of exchange, as a status indicator, as a mission, and as a matter of ethics. Four major strategies were employed by participants in this study to bridge these different meanings: reviewing model policies, developing examples, articulating precise language, and having face-to-face meetings. Understanding how the groups used these strategies to steer the process in a productive direction will inform those who promote policy revision.

Introduction

Ernest Boyer's seminal work on expanding notions of scholarship set off twenty five years of thinking, writing, and acting on clarifying and codifying the meaning of scholarship. Groups as diverse as national funding councils, professional associations, and promotion review committees struggle with understanding the impact of a more inclusive definition of scholarship. As gatekeepers, these groups are instrumental in determining reward structures that encourage or discourage undertaking various forms of research. Codifying these reward structures through official statements and policies requires negotiating a mutual understanding of terms. This study contributes to elucidating how such groups develop and bridge these differences in meaning.

Cultural-interpretive and interactionist conceptual frameworks are used to analyze a specific case of redefining the shared meanings of scholarship and codifying these meanings in promotion and tenure policy. Sociologists in the interactionist perspective believe that people create the realities of their work context through developing shared meanings which are evident in the norms, values, and rules of the organization. These guidelines for action form a central core of the culture of the organization. Reference to organizational culture does not imply that there is consensus on every aspect of organizational life, but rather that coming to basic understandings is necessary in order for a large number of individuals to function as a group and to make progress toward its mission. Conversely, organizational culture can be a powerful force in preventing an institution from reaching its goals.

In large organizations such as universities and colleges, intermediate groups play a significant role in achieving the organization's mission. Academic departments,

governing bodies, and administrative units might all be seen to have their own cultural values, norms and rules. These intermediate cultures reflect differences in interpretation and meaning attached to the overriding organizational operation and purpose. Yet it is the nature of organizations that there are many day-to-day events that require these intermediate groups to find common ground.

Organizational culture involves two levels of shared meaning. Explicit meaning is evidenced in formal policy. Cultural examination also reveals implicit meaning with the potential to exert equally strong influence on the progress of the institution in working toward its mission.

Method

Organizational researchers who study work cultures adapt different methods of investigation. One such method is the observation and analysis of cultural artifacts as used by anthropologists. Yanow (2000a) has articulated a model using interpretive data analysis in examining policy development. It is this cultural-interpretive technique that is used in this study to investigate policy change in higher education. The cultural-interpretive method is focused on understanding the processes for establishing the shared meanings that allow individuals to work together toward a common mission. This collective learning focus is in line with the interactionist social construction of reality beliefs (Berger & Luckmann, 1967).

Yanow's approach "requires such site-specific methods as observation with varying degrees of participation…, including conversational interviews and supplemented, where appropriate, by document analysis" to produce the data necessary to investigate collective meaning-making required in policy development (Yanow, 2000a, p. 251). The goal is to capture the meanings used by individuals and groups in their work setting through thick description of the activities and through interviews that reveal how members make sense of their actions. Cultural-interpretive analysis is grounded in the belief that the tacit nature of the shared meanings required for the day-to-day organizational activities often mandate after-the-fact examination to make them visible. It is here where the researchers' interpretive skills, paired with participants' retrospective examination of events, reveal new understandings and insights.

Informed by Yanow's *Conducting Interpretive Policy Analysis* (2000b), I examine the impact of work culture on adopting promotion and tenure policies based on a shared meaning of scholarship, by identifying

- groups whose understandings and actions are relevant to policy change;
- the language, acts and objects through which these groups express their views of scholarship;
- differences in the meaning of scholarship and the affective, cognitive, and/or moral sources of these interpretations; and
- negotiations or reframings that bridge these differences.

Data and Analysis

The site for this study was Buffalo State, a Masters I college in an urban center of over 300,000. In the fall of 2004, 9,008 undergraduate and 2,064 graduate students were enrolled. Almost 1,800 of these students live on campus. In the same year there were

1,095 full-time and 499 part-time faculty. The college offers 131 undergraduate and 63 graduate programs (State of the College Buffalo State College Annual Report 2004-2005, 2005).

Data for this study were collected through interviews, observation and document analysis. The formal interview sample deliberately selected two administrators and two faculty members who were in positions that were instrumental to promoting the policy change: the provost, the chair of the College Senate Instruction and Research (I & R) Committee, the individual on that committee who drafted the policy, and a member of the Academic Council. Interviews were conducted by the author who is a faculty member and coordinator of the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) program on campus. Many informal discussions also contributed background information for this study.

Documents analyzed include transcripts of College Senate meetings, the faculty discussion board, e-mails, interoffice memos, the bulletin used by organizational administrators for official communication with all members of the campus community, several drafts and revisions of the policy, and letters.

Observations were conducted at meetings of the CASTL Advisory Committee, the I & R Committee, and College Senate.

The primary method used to interpret these data is category analysis. This method is suited to the purpose of this study because it identifies how diverse groups arrive at a shared meaning of scholarship. Such an enterprise requires a collective understanding of the definition and boundaries of the term scholarship. It is the role of policy to codify this agreed upon meaning to guide the actions of the organization. Arriving at a shared meaning of scholarship requires negotiating differences (why are some works designated as scholarship and others not?), as well as sameness (what characteristics do works potentially designated as scholarship need to exhibit in order to count?).

The term scholarship is used in both official policy and in the discourse about policy. This makes category analysis, which is concerned with both the common usage and formal categories, a suitable tool. The term scholarship is a common element in academic discourse. Members of a university or college communicate on the tacit assumption that there is a mutual understanding of the term. Yet, when they come to codifying these understandings in policy, differences in meanings of the term become evident. It is the role of the researcher to make explicit the meanings various groups invest in the term, and the cognitive, affective, and moral grounds used in these interpretations. Understanding these differences is central to arriving at the collective meaning necessary for policy reform. Ultimately the concern of this analysis is how these meanings are "reflected and shaped by policy and administrative practices" (Yanow, 2000b, p. 49).

Classification requires decision making about the relative importance of various characteristics over other characteristics of the thing being categorized. Identifying characteristics can then be used to determine boundaries for a single category, e.g., "scholarship", stressing characteristics that make all things within the group similar. However, these characteristics can also be used to distinguish parallel categories, e.g., "Applied Scholarship" or "Scholarship of Teaching". Category analysis examines which characteristics are the focus of various interpretations as well as which characteristics are ignored or obscured.

Relevant Groups

Six groups were identified as playing a significant role as change agents in this policy reform. The actions of these groups had the potential to facilitate or hinder policy reform. I decided to begin the analysis by identifying groups and then by looking for their understanding of scholarship. "The first two steps in interpretive policy analysis are to identify the artifacts that are significant carriers of meaning for the interpretive communities relative to a given policy issue, and to identify those communities relevant to the policy issue that create or interpret these artifacts and meanings. Conceptually, either of these can precede the other; each leads to the other" (Yanow, 2000b, p. 20).

Groups
Applied Research Policy
CASTL Advisory Committee
Attendees at Summer Retreat
Instruction & Research (I & R) Committee
Academic Council
College Senate

The evidence for selecting significant groups will follow a chronological time sequence in order to construct a logical picture of how these groups built on each other's work.

The first group of importance was a committee that wrote and had passed a statement on applied scholarship in 1997. The space limitations of this paper preclude an expanded discussion of their work but three relevant factors are worth noting. First, this group had already brought the idea of redefining scholarship into the public arena, five years previous to the work discussed in this paper. Second, this committee called on Boyer's work to inform itself and the wider college community. Third, there was a perception among the participants in this study that the college community was largely unaware of this previous policy change.

"We actually went through this process of rethinking scholarship twice. We did it once [in 1996]… and that was the first time we developed a statement on applied research and then the second one was a much broader and more inclusive statement. What prompted the first one [review of promotion and tenure policy] more than anything was Boyer's book on *Scholarship Reconsidered* and I do recall all members of the committee looking at that (and maybe the second committee did that too) but all were given copies of that book and used it in terms of trying to get a common basis for thinking and everything" (Anonymous, 2004, p. 1).

"Now one of the things I think that needs to be said is that we had, in fact, some years before, articulated an applied research policy. And the interesting part was that that policy had really not gotten a whole lot of attention" (Leist, 2004, p. 1-2).

"I hope it [the new statement on scholarship] doesn't get buried. I hope it gets used because the applied research thing went through how many years ago and it seems like people are just unaware of it" (MacLean, 2004, p. 7).

The timeline continues to 2001 when a sub-committee of the CASTL Advisory Committee, acting on a request from the provost, reviewed policies from other campuses and drafted a memo requesting the provost's support for creating a campus culture to foster a broader definition of scholarship in the promotion and tenure policy.

The new provost saw the scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL) as a key to creating a distinctive identity for the campus. He also understood the importance of

policy change in nurturing alternative forms of scholarship. He credits the group that attended an American Association of Higher Education Summer Academy as crucial to developing a strategy to implement this policy change.

"The key thing was for … that small group to go to the Vermont conference. Because that's when we said we would go back and work this into the governance of the faculty and the institution to explicitly confirm SOTL as a legitimate direction for the college and bring it into the faculty governance and make it an acceptable route to follow for tenure and promotion and pecuniary reward and peer recognition" (Marotta, 2004, p. 6-7).

When this group returned from Vermont, they joined the CASTL Advisory Committee's efforts for change and also enlisted the College Senate Instruction and Research Committee.

The I & R Committee chair reflects on the reactions of her committee. "We discussed and they agreed with the need… for a statement of the requirements for SOTL to be imbedded in our policy manual and then we worked on articulating it" (Leist, 2004, p. 1). To accomplish this she appointed a sub-committee member to produce a draft statement. The I & R Committee devoted four meetings to shaping this draft based on the thinking of members of the committee and the reaction of various segments of the campus.

While the drafting of the policy was the prerogative of the I & R Committee, communications with a parallel administrative group, the Academic Council, were maintained throughout the process. The Academic Council is composed of deans and vice presidents. "The role of … the Academic Council is to dialogue, discuss, and certainly have a sense of, 'Let's generate a conversation about this but not have the final answers. Let those evolve from the campus dialogues'" (Anonymous, 2004, p. 4). The administrative liaison to the I & R Committee was also a member of the Academic Council. He and the chair of the I & R Committee facilitated a series of conceptual and language negotiations between these two groups which resulted in further revisions.

For five weeks the policy was circulated throughout the college community for review and discussion. Reactions were collected by the committee chair through e-mail, a discussion board, and face-to-face contact. The comments were reviewed by the I & R Committee in producing the final policy statement.

Views of Scholarship

Applied Research Policy Group - Scholarship as Problematic
This group of faculty and staff met in the fall of 1996 and early in 1997 to produce a recommendation on "Policy and Procedures for Applied Research". The proposal was passed by the College Senate on March 7, 1997, and endorsed by the college president shortly after.

In this document two interpretations of scholarship are evident. The first of these meanings, that scholarship can cause trouble for individuals, is evident in the policy's opening sentence. "The intent of this policy is to provide formal institutional recognition of applied research and to provide *protection* for faculty who are including applied research as part of their scholarly activity" [italics are my own] (*BSC Bulletin,* March 13, 1997, p. 2). Scholarship is understood to play a role in an individual's

recognition in the academic community, but it is also vested with the power to create difficulties for individuals.

This understanding of scholarship is based on the assumption that researchers can be pressured to undertake research in alignment with departmental or institutional norms, although they would prefer to undertake equally valid but significantly different forms of work. For example, a social policy researcher may want to interview a small sample of incarcerated adolescents about sexual abuse. Such work might be discouraged in a department or university that promotes policy analysis based on large scale survey research, or one that feels the outcomes of such work might threaten government contracts. In such instances, scholarship can be problematic if individuals are unjustly pressured into making certain decisions, or are punished for making choices too far out of accepted institutional norms.

The second meaning evidenced in these data is that one way to reduce the possibility of trouble is to obtain the approval of those in power at various stages of the process of scholarship. The policy includes very detailed prescriptions regarding the form this protection should take. "A process to approve projects in applied research and confirm the outcome of those projects is essential to the integration of this type of scholarship into the faculty reward and review system" (*BSC Bulletin*, March 13, 1997, p. 4). Pages four and six of the policy outline the required contents of such an agreement to be initiated by the individual and approved by the department chair and dean. This method of reducing the problematic potential of scholarship is an additional level of "approval" for "protection" beyond that already required by normal human subject review.

CASTL Advisory Committee-Scholarship as a Creative Process
During the four years preceding this policy initiative, the CASTL Advisory Committee engaged in many initiatives designed to promote SOTL on campus. In the fall of 2000 a request came from the provost, who had attended the AAHE Summer Academy, for this committee to begin the research necessary for reforming the promotion and tenure policy to provide parity for SOTL and discipline-based research. The December 10, 2000, CASTL meeting minutes record his request as for "criteria for evaluating SOTL."

The March 22, 2001, minutes which contain the final report from this committee indicate that the committee reviewed current policy and policies from other institutions that had included SOTL for promotion and tenure. The minutes indicate that the group concluded that the present policy lacked "guidelines for evaluation". Current policy "leaving the determination of criteria for judging scholarship of teaching and learning up to departments… likely … produces a wide range of practices." There is evidence that this group is concerned about departmental restraints on individuals' research: "Some departments argue that individuals bring to the department a specific area of content expertise and the strength of the department hinges on faculty continuing their scholarship in the areas they represented when hired." Finally, these minutes indicate that this group struggled with constructing a definition of scholarship that included process as well as product: "When we collaborate with colleagues to work on peer assessment, could this be considered scholarly work? We know that peer review is a required component of scholarship, but is the process of review providing a service, or is it part of knowledge construction?"

The group combined their research and feedback from the CASTL Advisory Committee on their final report in a May 29, 2001 memo to the provost. The group states their purpose as "to provide opportunities to raise the status of teaching and learning by appreciating the contributions made by faculty who apply their research skills to improve classroom practice." They define SOTL as a "systematic investigation of pedagogy" which "deserves public recognition."

Creating a campus culture that provides this recognition is viewed as the responsibility of "the individual teacher, the department and the college institution itself." Yet the language of the memo clearly places the power and control for this change outside of the individual teacher who is to be "encouraged and supported" while departments "reward and promote" individuals' "research on teaching and learning." In turn, the academic departments are affected by the institutional ability to "reward teachers and departments for the development of effective teaching practices, and promote ways in which their knowledge of their discipline can be related to students." The final memo produced by this group seems based on the assumption that individual scholarship has the capacity to create knowledge which can influence practice. Yet it also deals with the power of departments and the institution to restrain or promote this creative process.

It is noteworthy that this memo does not, as the provost requested, discuss criteria for assessing SOTL. Rather, it focuses on creating a culture that supports SOTL at three nested levels of the institution: the individual teacher, the academic department, and the rest of the institution. It is possible that this reflects the committee's debate about focusing on scholarship as a process or product.

Attendees at American Association of Higher Education (AAHE) Summer Academy

The document analysis conducted on the reports from this group was not able to discern the meanings assigned to scholarship in general by this group. The report does state that this group identifies the inclusion of scholarship of teaching and learning in promotion and tenure guidelines as "promoting institutional change… thus, perpetually improving our nurturing and intellectually vital environment." The report indicates that this is a crucial step toward achieving the group's vision for the campus to become "a national leader in scholarship of teaching and learning" (2002, AAHE Summer Academy Team; Assignment Five, p. 2). These documents reflect some elements of regarding scholarship as a status indicator and also as contributing to the intellectual culture of the campus. However, lack of data from this group makes these interpretations tenuous.

Instruction & Research (I & R) Committee - Scholarship as Currency of Exchange

This team understands scholarship as a currency of exchange at many levels of the institution. The most consequential example is the junior faculty member whose employment depends on scholarly activity. Data from this committee reveal a very utilitarian purpose for codifying a shared definition.

"To give assurance to people who wanted to do this kind of research. Assurance that there was a policy grid to support this activity so that it would 'count' in their careers. Where before it was in policy, it depended, it might count, it might not, and it just depended on your department and your department chair" (Leist, 2004, p. 4).

The I & R Committee chair stated that her committee felt that a previous policy change to include applied scholarship for promotion and tenure had not "enculturated the campus because there wasn't enough ownership and knowledge of the policy. The current committee has aimed for a useable, fair document that people who are in the position of making personnel decisions and evaluations can refer to" (College Senate, November 8, 2002, meeting minutes).

One interviewee reflected the pragmatic notion of scholarship held by this group. "That it's on the books and it helps someone get credit for stuff that wouldn't have been given credit before. Like… if an assistant professor gets tenure and it makes the difference between having a job and not having a job" (MacLean, 2004, p. 4).

Although the major focus was on exchanging scholarship for employment, monetary exchange was also acknowledged. "With a research institution, if there is not a lot of grant money behind it, it is really oftentimes not respected as worthwhile scholarship" (MacLean, 2004 p. 1).

Academic Council - Scholarship as a Status Indicator and Mission
This team had two understandings of scholarship, first as a central mission of the institution and second as a status indicator.

One of the members of this team referred to the institution's strategic planning process, where the institutional mission was reviewed. While he felt that revising the promotion policy was warranted by "the recognition that the world of scholarship had changed" (Anonymous, 2004, p. 1), he also felt that the centrality of scholarship to the mission of the institution remained unchanged by the planning process. "Had we wanted to change more than we have in balancing teaching and scholarship, we probably would have defined the mission differently and structured the institution differently" (Anonymous, 2004, p. 1-2)

The second meaning attached to scholarship by this group is that of status indicator. This meaning is evident as an interviewee discusses an institution that revised its mission to place greater emphasis on research in order to improve its ranking. "It made a choice, research over teaching, and to go after that holy grail of higher education and the status that comes with it in the American pecking order of higher education" (Marotta, 2004, p. 1).

College Senate - Scholarship as Ethical Action
The College Senate had public discussions of the policy on two occasions. Senators were sent the draft policy statement several weeks ahead of the first meeting in order to prepare questions. This first public discussion centered on the clarification of issues regarding remuneration for scholarly activities and determining objectivity in peer review. The minutes of the first meeting document senators' questions as

- "Is getting paid for consulting to be counted as scholarship?"
- "What if you have a published peer-reviewed product and get paid, is that OK?"
- "Who makes the judgment about whether or not scholarship makes a substantive contribution to knowledge or culture?" (College Senate, November 9, 2002, meeting minutes, p. 4-5).

The discussion initiated by these questions focused this team on viewing scholarship as activity which needs to adhere to professional standards, or ethical boundaries. The

group's focus on the relationship of the person conducting the research to those who fund the work and those who determine its quality, is consistent with a concern for compliance with agreed upon principles of correct conduct, or ethical standards.

The second meeting, on December 14, 2002, included the vote on the policy. Discussions before a vote are limited because senators are provided opportunities over several weeks to react to the draft through the discussion board, e-mail, and conversations with members of the I & R Committee. They are expected to have clarified any concerns before the day of the vote; therefore, there was very little discussion at this meeting. The few comments recorded in the minutes focus on the provision of examples of scholarship included in the policy. Examples were described by various senators as "not clear, well written, helpful," and possibly leading to "problems of inclusion and exclusion" (College Senate December 13, 2002, meeting minutes, p. 5-6). The concerns expressed about examples did not affect the vote in favor of recommending this policy change to the president.

Sources of Differences in Meaning

After identifying the groups relevant in policy change and using category analysis to examine their understanding of scholarship, the next step is to illuminate the sources of these differences. To do this, I return to an interactionist framework, specifically Erving Goffman's dramaturgical analysis (Goffman, 1959).

Goffman suggests that our day-to-day interactions are based on adopting social roles. Each of us has many roles –parent, chemist, professor, wife, etc. –and each role demands different behaviors from us. These behaviors are supported by a "front" that "regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance" (Goffman, 1959, p. 32). The social front includes many elements such as settings, appearance, vocabulary, body language, etc., that support our change from one role to another. The settings where we enact our roles – classrooms, homes, laboratories, bedrooms, churches, etc. – also contain a back area or "backstage".

The backstage is where we prepare for our front stage actions. But it is also where actors relax, drop their fronts, and step out of character. Goffman sees this as the area where "suppressed facts make an appearance" (Goffman, 1959, p. 114), where team members are able to interact with one another in ways that would not be acceptable in front stage. Think of the restaurant server moving from the restaurant into the kitchen, or the lawyer moving from the courtroom to her office. In social life, a single setting can at times be front stage and at others backstage. An academic department office is a front stage when a potential student visits, but it can be a backstage when preparing a budget. Likewise, the same individuals can at times be part of our team and at other times be the "audience" for whom we play our role.

The dramaturgical framework is relevant to three levels of organizational analysis: the individual, the team, and the "full set of participants and interactions as a whole" (Goffman, 1959, p. 85). These "interactions as a whole" are evident in thinking about how organizations such as churches, businesses, or universities, adopt various roles or develop images for different publics. The recruiting brochure, the annual report, and the student newspaper all present different sides of the organization, selected to

appeal to a specific audience. Goffman suggests that, in organizations, the teams that form the components of this "whole" "may well be the best units to take as the fundamental point of reference" (Goffman, 1959, p. 86).

In applying Goffman's framework to higher education, it is useful to think of three "stages" as the levels of analysis. In addition to the front stage, or public roles of the college or university, and the backstage of the internal work of groups to prepare for and enact those roles, there is also a "dressing room" or academic office. In the theater, a dressing room is an actor's most private space for adopting a role. Other vital members of backstage, such as make-up and costume, may at times enter the private dressing room, creating some merging of the two. Yet, it is in the dressing room that the individual brings together the demands of front and backstage to successfully play the role. In a college or university, the office is an academic's most private space where he or she makes decisions about day-to-day actions in preparation for interactions in the backstage work of committees and classrooms which in turn are shaped by the front stage directives.

This model is useful in understanding the different meanings of scholarship evident in this study. The notion of scholarship is central to higher education and permeates the institution. However, the meaning that is adopted can be related to the various "teams" and the "stages" in which it is used. In this study, the organization is the unit of analysis; therefore, the front stage parallels the universe of settings where the college is presented to its various publics, e.g., parents, funding sources, the local community. Within the organization are various individuals and teams acting in the backstage where these representations are composed. The study also considers the impact of definitions of scholarship on individual faculties' dressing rooms, their most private spaces where they reconcile the demands of their front and backstage performances.

The dramaturgical perspective is used here to examine the differing meanings vested in scholarship by the six significant groups or teams involved in policy change. In this section, I examine how the front stages of these various groups, and the determinant for team membership, are sources of the different understandings. Each group has a front specific to that team, e.g., CASTL Advisory Committee, Academic Council. However, members of the team are also engaged in many other roles and fronts within the organization. It is my contention that the influence of these "other" roles contributes to a team's understanding of scholarship.

In addition, membership on some teams is voluntary while on some it is required. Futhermore, individuals may volunteer themselves to go through an election process which, if successful, requires membership on a team. The influence of these membership patterns will also be considered. Membership in the six groups can be placed on a continuum as illustrated in Figure One.

Group/team	Basis for Membership
Academic Council	Required as part of holding other roles
College Senate	Nominated with opportunity to decline, and elected
I & R Sub-Committee	Members of Senate who volunteer and others
Attendees at Summer Retreat	Volunteer
Applied Research	Volunteer
CASTL	Volunteer

Figure One: Determinants of Team Membership

Membership in the Academic Council is determined by the position held in the organization; it is composed of administrators such as the provost, vice presidents, and deans. These job titles involve the interface of the college with the wider community through activities such as recruiting students, raising funds, and presenting annual reports. Of the six groups, the Academic Council is most centrally concerned with the presentation of the whole organization. This focus provides motivation for defining scholarship in terms of its status potential and in terms of its significance to the organizational mission. For this group the front stage is the image of the college held by other institutions and the public. Thus, their image of scholarship reflects this position.

By contrast, the CASTL Advisory Committee and the group that wrote the applied research policy are voluntary groups, united by a shared task or vision. The CASTL Advisory Committee represents a wide range of seniority levels, disciplinary affiliations, and campus responsibilities. Committee members are invited to serve; the length of their term is negotiable. About half of the members joined the group at its inception four years before the policy change. These teams vest scholarship with a much more personal meaning. They concern themselves with establishing an organizational culture that will open up the creative potential of scholarship for individuals and reduce the potential for reproach/deprecation from more powerful members of the community for exercising personal discretion in scholarship. In dramaturgical terms these teams focus on the dressing rooms or the impact of the demands of back areas of department culture, on the front areas of institutional policy, and on the performance of individual faculty members.

College senators are faculty, students, and staff, who are elected to engage in the establishment and review of institutional policies and practices. The history of this group indicates that its very existence is the result of a concern with equity and fairness of representation. Before its establishment in 1971 there were three governing bodies representing students, faculty, and administrators. "However, this form of governance [was] ….prone to foster divisiveness since it encouraged the practice of presenting issues and proposals [to the college president] most likely to be sympathetic on a given issue" (Senate web site, http://www.buffalostate.edu.orgs/senate/history.html).

The Senate also plays a role in promoting integrity in the public image or front stage presented by the institution. "The College Senate is intended to serve as ….2. The agent of the college community which holds the administration, through the office of the president, accountable for actions taken and decisions made; 3. An advocate for that system of governance which has been agreed to by various constituencies of the College and approved in the College By-Laws by the voting faculty, the President, the College Council, the Chancellor, and the SUNY Board of Trustees" (Senate web site, http://www.buffalostate.edu.orgs/senate/status.html).

The current senate was founded on the assumption that there should be a certain level of transparency in the negotiation of the norms and policies that guide the institution. However, individual senators' responsibilities indicate that they are to stay in contact with the private dressing room too. Their official roles and responsibilities include to

"solicit the views and opinions of constituents on issues which are before the Senate….[and] be prepared to raise any item of concern to one or more of their constituents on the floor of the Senate" (Senate web site, http://www.buffalostate.edu.orgs/senate/senators_roles.html). Using the dramaturgical framework, this team's focus on the concern that individual actions comply with professional standards, indicates a position between the individual or dressing room and the front stage focus of the academic council.

The I & R Subcommittee is composed of senators, elected representative who are not senators, and co-opted members, who volunteer or agree to nomination for this group because of a specific interest in instruction and research. The charge of this committee is to "concern itself with those aspects of policy which relate to the improvement of instruction and the development of services and resources necessary to carry out or enhance this function, including circulation and replacement of instructional and scholarly materials and the utilization of related equipment and facilities; the stimulation and support of research and other scholarly, creative or otherwise academically viable efforts, both institutional and personal…" (Senate web site, http://www.buffalostate.edu/orgs/senate/instruction.html). The language in this official statement sets an instrumental tone to the work of this committee. Members are to be concerned with development, replacement, utilization and stimulation. Thus the interests and work of this team are relegated primarily to backstage. The phrase "both institutional and personal" charges this group to remain mindful of the dressing room while carrying out their work. In addition, the fact that they are a sub-committee of the larger College Senate implies involvement in the institutional front area. The pragmatic nature of the work of this committee fits with an understanding of scholarship as a currency of exchange. If the institution wants scholarly output, it needs to provide resources, materials, equipment, facilities, stimulation and support.

Bridging Differences

Although instrumental to setting the stage for revising the official statement on scholarship, two of these six groups, the Applied Research and the AAHE Summer Academy group were disbanded before the policy revision process began. Among the four groups actively engaged in the revision, scholarship was viewed as a creative process, a currency of exchange, a status indicator, a mission, and as a matter of ethics. Policy development involved finding ways to bridge these multiple meanings. Interviewees were asked to reflect on the strategies that were significant in creating the collaborative understanding of scholarship. Transcripts of these interviews analyzed in the cultural-interpretive framework reveal four instrumental strategies: gathering policies from other institutions, providing examples of scholarship, articulating precise language, and conducting face-to-face meetings.

Model Policies from Other Institutions: Scholarship as Mission and Status Indicator
The first strategy used to promote shared meaning was the gathering of model policies from other institutions that had revised promotion policy to include expanded definitions of scholarship. This strategy was used by both the CASTL Advisory Committee in their early response to the provost's request for the development of

criteria for assessing scholarship, and also by the I & R Committee when they began crafting the first draft of the policy.

The CASTL sub-committee that reviewed policies from other institutions summarized their findings for other members of the committee. Interestingly, they chose to back up their presentation by distributing the actual policies reviewed. "This group considered the criteria used at several other institutions. Selected materials from [named institutions] were sent to all committee members for consideration at the 3-22 meeting. At that meeting Dr. _____ summarized these materials..." (CASTL, March 22, 2001, meeting minutes). Policies were "selected" for distribution to illustrate how other institutions had successfully integrated expanded definitions of scholarship into their mission.

The author of the first draft of the policy believes that reviewing policies that were successfully enacted at other colleges and universities reassured I & R Committee members that this was a widespread and respected change to undertake. When asked about strategies that facilitated the process he replied, "…having an array of examples... I think that really helped things get off to a good start" (MacLean, 2004, p. 6-7). The "good start" involved building an early bridge between a view of scholarship as a potential status indicator and as an integral part of mission with other understandings of scholarship.

Developing examples: Ethical Boundaries and Currency of Exchange
A second strategy used to promote shared meaning was the development of descriptions of sample products of various forms of scholarship.

The I & R Committee chair views the unorthodox decision to include these examples of products of the scholarship of teaching in the policy as crucial to bridging meanings. "There were in fact people in the senate the day this was discussed who said, 'I don't know what this is. I'm not against it. I just don't know what it is.' We had our examples, which we were able to point to on the spot. …And then we got very positive feedback. Remember, they said, 'Thank you so much for putting examples in, because now we see what you're talking about'" (Leist, 2004, p. 5).

There is some evidence of the power of these examples to promote a common definition of the boundaries of scholarship. Yanow maintains that determining categorical boundaries, what counts and what doesn't, is crucial to developing the shared meanings reflected in organizational policy. The November 8, 2002, minutes of the College Senate include a report from the chair of the I & R Committee on the response of that group to the written and verbal feedback received from the community to the draft policy. In this report, she describes how examples were negotiated to bridge various meaning of scholarship. "There was a 'great deal of negative response' to the inclusion of [a] consulting [report] as an example of [a product of] applied scholarship. This has traditionally been counted as service which is 'remunerated outside the institution'. We removed the example having to do with consulting, feeling that it was the sentiment that consulting was another kind of activity."

Articulating Terms: Ethical Boundaries and Currency of Exchange
A third means of bridging various understandings of scholarship was extensive negotiation of language used in the policy. Creating a shared meaning of specific terms such as "substantive contribution" and "peer-review" was an important step. Many of

the examples provided by interviewees focus on the importance of the articulation of terms in soliciting the support of academic departments. This is understandable in an organization where departments are first-line gatekeepers in making judgments about the "exchange" of scholarship for promotion. Interviews reveal two ways in which the negotiation of language was used to appeal to those who viewed scholarship as a currency of exchange. First, language in the policy had to have "teeth" to enable departments to maintain their standards. "Trying to come up with a definition of scholarship that is going to apply across all disciplines and that everyone across all disciplines is going to really get behind and support is a thing that can be a major barrier. Because if you make the definition too broad then almost anything qualifies and then it has no teeth and then that hurts the departments" (MacLean, 2004, p. 3).

Second, the language chosen had to preserve the prerogative of the departments to make the exchange of scholarship for promotion within the contexts of their disciplinary differences. "[The committee] began modifying the language … so that departments would have a real role in the mix of all of this, and it would not be this *fait accompli*. I don't remember the language…that made everyone happy. There was a recognition that each department had its culture and its primary interests, and the language was put together as such that that was satisfied along with the SOTL. The chairs no longer felt threatened" (Marotta, 2004, p. 11).

The November 8, 2002, minutes of the College Senate record an extensive example of the articulation of terms used to establish ethical boundaries. Here the provost is in dialogue with several senators questioning the integrity of receiving remuneration for scholarly activities. "The artifact is scholarship. The scholarship of teaching along the lines that Ernest Boyer outlines is that it is legitimate scholarship as we traditionally understand scholarship. It means, for example, in my own discipline, history, if I wrote an essay/article in a pedagogical journal that had to do with the teaching of history, my colleagues might well object and not consider that work for tenure or anything else on the grounds that it is about the scholarship of teaching history but not about history. They would be right in doing that if they did not embrace the definition of the scholarship of teaching. It is an area of inquiry we are allowing ourselves to go into. That we have remuneration is beside the point. If someone writes a scholarship article or writes a book or does brilliant creative work and gets paid for it, all the better."

Face-to-Face Meetings: Scholarship as Creative Process
The fourth major strategy for bridging understandings of scholarship was meeting with groups and individuals to discuss concerns. The interviews conducted for this paper highlighted much of the behind the scenes lobbying that occurred to arrive at a collective understanding of scholarship. The provost, the I & R Committee chair, and the CASTL coordinator had meetings with a range of key players including the college president, college senators, and academic departments.

The provost remarks, "All departments had to feel comfortable with it, so I met with several chairs and several departments" (Marotta, 2004, p. 11). He used this approach with a number of significant individuals too. "He [the chair of the Faculty Senate] was originally a little skeptical, because he thought that SOTL was a euphemism for not doing any scholarship. And that was a widespread suspicion, misconception of what it was. So I spent a lot of time with him, talking and explaining and letting him know that wasn't my view at all. This was not some fake out operation. It wasn't watering things down" (Marotta, 2004, p. 9).

"I think that it's true that, in the face of the organization and in the face of the policy we have now, the more public discussion about the importance of scholarship, what scholarship means now and how it proportionally enters into the three areas of professorial function, I do think is an important thing" (Leist, 2004, p. 5).

Conclusion

This study illustrates how disparate groups at Buffalo State College bridged differences to develop a shared meaning of scholarship that enabled the revision of the promotion and tenure policy. After all groups involved agreed upon the language in the policy, it was circulated throughout the college community for review and discussion. Faculty and staff reacted through e-mail, a discussion board, and face-to-face contact with members of the Faculty Senate. These comments were reviewed by the I & R Committee in producing the 11-25-2002 final policy statement. The College Senate voted at its December meeting to approve, forward, and recommend to the college president the "Supplemental DOPS [directory of policy statements] Policy on Scholarship" (College Senate, December 13, 2002, meeting minutes). In February 2003, President Muriel Howard, authorized the immediate implementation of the policy (Buffalo State College Bulletin, 2-27-2003). (see http://bscintra.buffalostate.edu/bulletin/archives/02_03/february27_03.html for a copy of the policy)

At Buffalo State College, promotion and tenure review begins at the academic department level: successful cases are forwarded to the Dean. Thus, enactment requires a clear understanding of the policy within many levels of administration. Over the academic year, following the president's endorsement of the policy, members of the CASTL Advisory Committee worked with departments to facilitate the interpretations of the statement on scholarship, within disciplinary contexts.

In the three years since Buffalo State College has adopted a broader statement of scholarship many faculty have merged applied scholarship or the scholarship of teaching and learning with their discipline based scholarship. Some of these faculty have also been considered for career advancement. The negotiated understandings of scholarship codified in policy facilitates the assessment of the quality of scholarship included in promotion dossiers.

The quantification of how many promotion cases have benefited from this policy is difficult. However, what is clear is that many of the faculty involved in these successful cases engaged in diverse forms of scholarship, and that committees considering these cases had helpful guidelines for assessing this scholarship as a result of this policy revision.

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