

Imagining America Regional Meeting

Oklahoma State University T & P Survey

February 19, 2009

- 1) What tenure/promotion changes are underway, and how do they address public scholarship? What stage of planning or implementation have they reached?

No ongoing efforts at the university-level are underway. Some departments have had informal discussions of public scholarship and its relation the RPT documents.

Regarding RPT policy, the History Department last year revised its governance document to include public history work as scholarship under certain circumstances. The new guidelines provide for a case-by-case evaluation by the faculty member involved, the departmental personnel committee, and the head to determine whether a specific public history project constitutes scholarship, and if so, what its traditional academic equivalent would be and, thus, how it should be rewarded. In History, this essentially entails equating public history works with articles or monographs. In my opinion, and I want to stress that I am only expressing my opinion, this is a promising start in addressing the need to evaluate and reward public scholarship. However, since it addresses the question only on a case-by-case basis, the recognition of public scholarship is not really systemic. Also, since it is viewed in terms of equivalents to traditional measures of scholarly productivity, it does not truly recognize the value and uniqueness of public scholarship in its own right.

- 2) Who are the key individuals and groups that are talking about or working on promotion policies for engaged faculty members? What institutional domains do they represent (for example, department, chair and program, college, central administration, governance)? What, if any, off-campus networks are involved (such as national associations, community partners, foundations)?

Faculty members in History and English. No upper administration involvement at this point.

- 3) What is the role of the department chair in changing tenure/promotion policies? Are you finding ways to support the chairs charged with hiring, mentoring, and evaluating public scholars?

T & P guidelines need to be changed in a bottom-up process. First faculty approve and then the policy moves up. Chairs can initiate the discussion, but not impose policy change.

- 4) What aspects of your campus efforts would you be willing to share at the Imagining America working meeting on February 19? How would this benefit other campuses?

We are only beginning faculty discussion at this point. It may be of interest for administrators to hear positive and negative faculty views on the process.