Identifying Research Excellence in the Social Sciences, Humanities, and Fine Arts

The following criteria provide a comprehensive and flexible set of indicators of research excellence in the social science, humanities and fine arts, and are intended to provide a means of validating diverse forms of scholarship across the institution, while distinguishing research in light of purpose.

This rubric results from the deliberations of two informal working groups. The original group led to a draft report dated April, 2010. The recent group, updated and revised the original criteria.

The underlying assumption of committee members was that an exclusive focus on narrow citation and impact factor metrics, or on research dollars received, does not sufficiently represent across-the-board indicators. While the groups identified the following criteria as potential indicators of Research Distinction and Distinctiveness in the Social Science, Humanities and Creative Arts, the relative weight assigned to each would depend on the purpose and the kind of evaluation required (formative scholarly development, award adjudication, FEC evaluation, faculty self-assessment, comparative ranking, etc.).

The criteria are designed to recognize the many forms research activity might take, under the assumption that vital research communities require all of these activities, together with a recognition that most researchers would engage in only some at any given point in their career.

Importantly, while these criteria were developed with the SSHRC fields in mind, such a comprehensive account could be applicable across all academic areas. With this idea in mind, the criteria are being sent to all Chairs and Deans.
Criteria identified as indicative of *Research Distinction and Distinctiveness* in the Social Science, Humanities, and Creative Arts

- Publication and performance venues of repute (i.e., quality of peer reviewed journal articles and reputation of book publishers; conference proceedings with limited acceptance rates; status of theatre, concert or exhibition venues).
- Overall contributions to and influence on scholarly field (e.g., research community, artistic community, public policy, etc.).
- International and national reception, impact and recognition of work (using multiple indicators such as recognized contributions to vital debates in a field, impact in digital communication; creation of new research tools; creation of celebrated techniques and approaches in art or music, citation factors, critical reviews, reception of work, ‘bibliometric’ indicators, etc.).
- Consistent rate of creative contributions and publications.
- Receiving research awards of local, national and international repute.
- Peer reviewed grants received, and the nature of grants (e.g., amount, prestige, peer review, success rates, etc.).
- Invited keynote addresses, exhibitions and performances at recognized academic gatherings and named lectures.
- Adjudicated or recognized visiting fellowships.
- Appropriate recognition in relevant scholarly field as indicated by activities such as invitations to serve as: member of the jury for exhibitions; adjudicator of local, national and international adjudication of awards; and external examiner for graduate degrees. Such recognition may also be reflected by a capacity to draw excellent graduate students to the University of Alberta.
- Role as a public intellectual (e.g., commentary to media, peers, community organizations, consultancies, etc.).
- Engagement with and key contributions to a scholarly field (e.g., editorships, service on editorial boards, acting as referee and adjudicator, juries, positions held in major scholarly associations, etc.).
- Developing research partnerships, collaborative network building and evidence of research leadership in cross-Faculty and cross-University initiatives.