



September 28, 2023

Task Force on the Implementation of the Public Engagement Research Option

Eva Pomerantz, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, *Chair*

Anna Ball, College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences

Brenda Farnell, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Wenhao David Huang, College of Education

Sheldon Jacobson, Grainger College of Engineering

Mary Patricia McGuire, College of Fine and Applied Arts

Liliane Windsor, School of Social Work

Oscar Ybarra, Gies College of Business (*Spring Semester*)

Amy Santos, Office of the Provost, *ex officio*

Dear Colleagues,

The mission of the University of Illinois is to enhance the lives of the diverse people of Illinois, the nation, and the world through our leadership in discovery, learning, and economic development. Faculty public engagement is critical to the success of the University's mission. When such engagement takes the form of research conducted with public or private partners (e.g., local, state, national, or international communities or organizations), evaluation of impact may require alternative approaches. To address this issue in the promotion and tenure process, faculty members at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign can select the Public Engagement Research Option (PERO; see I.I.C.8 of [Provost Communication 9](#)).

The overarching goal of the Task Force on the Implementation of the Public Engagement Research Option is to develop and refine the implementation process outlined in Provost Communication #9. Specifically, I ask you to provide guidelines and recommendations designed to:

- 1) Delineate the composition, mission, primary tasks, and responsibilities of the PERO Advisory Committee. For example, in what ways can the advisory committee engage with units to assist them in evaluating publicly-engaged research activities of faculty members?
- 2) As necessary, develop recommendations for updating and/or modifying the PERO in Provost Communication #9 and the supplementary resources including the PERO Guide and MOU based on PERO cases the task force reviews. Specifically, the task force should consider and address applicable policies and procedures, which may include identifying and recommending policies and procedures from Provost Communication #9 that will necessitate adaptations when applying PERO, given specific situations and the various conditions for faculty members across campus choosing this option for their promotion and tenure.
- 3) Generate recommendations for additional changes and resources that can help improve the usability and accessibility of PERO.
- 4) Establish principles and standards of integrity to guide publicly engaged research.

You should work closely with each of the colleges on our campus to ensure that PERO continues to provide the needed flexibility and level of autonomy to colleges to define the expectations for different disciplinary standards for promotion and tenure. It will be important for you to meet with individual faculty members who are considering PERO for their promotion and tenure along with their unit executive officers, which will be critical for the task force to understand the ways PERO is implemented across campus and disciplines. Finally, I ask that you consult widely, when needed, with the appropriate stakeholders across campus, including tenure system faculty, campus leaders, and members of the Faculty Senate.

Professor Eva Pomerantz, Director of the Center for Social and Behavioral Sciences and Professor of Psychology in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, will serve as chair of this task force. Professor Amy Santos, Associate Provost for Faculty Development, will serve in an ex-officio role. I anticipate that the committee will meet throughout the 2023-2024 academic year and request that the task force provide a report of activities at the end of the academic year.

I look forward to your recommendations, and I thank you for your willingness to participate in this important effort.

Sincerely,



John Coleman
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost

c: Bill Bernhard, Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Interim Vice Provost and Associate
Chancellor for Budgeting and Resource Planning