

Assessing Research at ISAW

As an institution founded above all to support research in the ancient world, ISAW places great weight on research in its evaluation of faculty performance, both for promotion and tenure and in annual reviews. Over the past generation, the types of research relevant to antiquity have changed and enlarged substantially, the means of communicating research have been revolutionized, and the role of collaboration has grown noticeably, far more than in many humanistic disciplines. Moreover, ISAW's lively exhibitions and digital programs both embody some of these developments and offer faculty and students rich opportunities for diverse research engagements. For all of these reasons, the ISAW faculty offer the following guidelines for the evaluation of research.

1. Research should be judged primarily by criteria that are independent of the form in which it is communicated. Exhibitions, synthetic books, archaeological reports, databases, digital publications in various formats, primary editions of texts, technical articles, and interpretive works for a larger public are all forms in which research is communicated to a variety of audiences, and ISAW faculty are already involved in all of these forms. We do not privilege the form in assessing research productivity.
2. At the same time, it is evident that the importance of different characteristics of research publications will sometimes vary by medium. We seek originality, breadth, and depth, but the ability to formulate information and ideas clearly for a variety of audiences is also important. In designing an exhibition, for example, public interpretation tends to take priority over other needs, although there may be great originality in such an interpretation.
3. It is essential that scholarly work be published, that is, not simply be privately held or circulated. But publication today takes many forms. We do not privilege one form over another, but it is difficult or impossible to assess adequately scholarship that does not take a durable form. For this reason, we urge the desirability not merely of having catalogues of exhibitions, but also of documenting the actual installations visually. Digital publications, to be truly published, need to have digital permanence, to remain available across generations of changes in hardware and software. ISAW's own digital publications program is designed with such archival stability in mind. In assessing scholarship of ISAW faculty, we will take adequacy of provision for permanent availability into account as a criterion.
4. Scholarly publication lives symbiotically with assessment. Traditionally this has taken the form of prior peer review, and such review continues to have a vital role in many types of publication. But digital technology is increasingly making post-publication review an important part of the scholarly landscape, beyond the book reviews that have always been part of the means of assessing scholarly books. Such post-publication review may include provision for online posting of reactions or corrections, which may lead to revised digital forms of publications. We will take into account post-publication

responses of all types in evaluating scholarship, not only the use of pre-publication peer review.

5. Scholarly work often benefits from collaboration, and this is particularly true at ISAW, where our desire to foster work across traditional disciplinary boundaries makes collaborative work both a valuable experience and sometimes also a necessity. Requirements of national antiquities authorities also often require joint authorship with a national of the host country. Systems of assessment in the humanities have often found it difficult to take account of shared authorship, unlike in the natural sciences, where such collaboration is routine and has long been built into patterns of assessment. Faculty should try as far as possible to document the nature of their contributions to jointly-authored work and have that documentation be a part of their files.

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