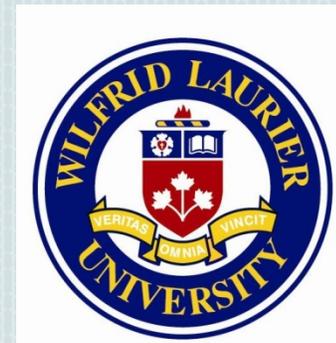


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**BROADENING THE BANDWIDTH ON IMPACT:  
TENURE AND PROMOTION AS A COMMUNITY-  
ENGAGED SCHOLAR**

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# ABOUT ME

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- × 10 years in HIV/AIDS and LGBT services in Toronto prior to PhD
- × interdisciplinary scholar (psychology, sociology, community psychology and public health sciences)
- × long history of involvement in CBR (dating back to 1992)
- × held past senior positions with the Toronto-based Wellesley Institute and with the Ontario HIV Treatment Network (both focussed on advancing CBR)

# WHAT I CURRENTLY DO

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- × Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Wilfrid Laurier University
- × Supported by a New Investigator Award (HIV/AIDS Population Health/Health Services) from CIHR
- × active, community-based research program: focussed on the broad impact of social exclusion on the health and well-being of gender and sexual minorities



**Equity**  
**Sexual Health**  
**& HIV** RESEARCH  
GROUP

## COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY: A PLACE TO CALL HOME

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- × a sub-discipline that emerged as a result of the overly individualistic nature of psychology
- × several programs in Canada
  - Laurier the only English-language program - 7.5 scholars and 30 active graduate students engaged in critical work
- × ‘Community psychology **studies the individuals' contexts within communities and the wider society**, and the relationships of the individual to communities and society. Community psychologists seek to understand the quality of life of individuals, communities, and society. **Their aim is to enhance quality of life through collaborative research and action.**’

# THE ANXIETY BEGINS

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- × some tension related to my hiring (first hire of a non-psychologist)
- × anxiety about colleagues misunderstanding of community psychology
- × a sub-discipline that some more mainstream psychologists see as ‘lacking scientific rigour...too activist-oriented’ ....
- × ‘I just think you fit better in the Faculty of Social Work?’

# THE TENURE REVIEW PROCESS AT LAURIER

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- × internal process at Laurier (Assistant to Associate promotion level)
- × Departmental Appointments & Promotion Committee (‘DAP’)
- × comprised of the Program Coordinators for each of the 5 areas in the Department of Psychology and the department’s chair

# THE DREAM PROMOTION COMMITTEE FOR CES

- × Sarena Seifer
- × Budd Hall
- × Meredith Minkler
- × Nina Wallerstein
- × Sarah Flicker
- × a developmental psychologist
- × a social psychologist
- × a community psychologist
- × a cognitive neuroscientist
- × a behavioural neuroscientist
- × the department chair
  - + **who also happens to be a behavioural neuroscientist**

# A BIT OF A GUESSING GAME?

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advice from colleagues?

- × **focus on your research grant record**
- × **include citation scores from papers**
- × **highlight your teaching scores**

## Criteria for Tenure and Promotion (Article 15.7)

### Faculty

“tenure shall be granted when there is consistent evidence of satisfactory academic performance, demonstrated professional growth, and the promise of future development. “[15.7.4]

## THE FOUR STEPS I FOUND MOST HELPFUL....

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- × Consult other CES colleagues
- × Use the tenure process as an opportunity to educate the DAP about the importance of CES
- × Link my work to strategic/academic plans
- × Link my work to ‘change’ outcomes’

# STEP 1: CONSULT OTHER CES COLLEAGUES

## Roles they can play:

- × provide guidance at each step
- × review your CV for highlights
- × help you ‘craft a narrative’ that is engaging and convincing
- × review what you write and provide constructive feedback
- × provide reference letters
- × keep ‘impostor syndrome’ at bay

## STEP 2: EDUCATE DAP OF THE IMPORTANCE OF CES

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× provide a definition of CES

“The scholarship of engagement means connecting the rich resources of the university to our most pressing social, civic and ethical problems, to our children, to our schools, to our teachers and to our cities. . . .”

—Ernest Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered:*

*Priorities of the Professoriate*

## STEP 3: LINK MY WORK TO LAURIER'S ACADEMIC/STRATEGIC PLAN

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strategic domains:

× health and well-being

Health and Well-Being: The study and implementation of ideas related to human and **community health** and health practices from biophysical, **social** and organizational **perspectives** are core to Laurier's health programs. Focus areas include best practices for optimization of human health, **disease amelioration relative to the environment**, administrative, delivery and clinical practice issues. A **multidisciplinary scope** of enquiry relative to both **community** and individual **health and well-being** issues underlies our academic approaches to their understanding.

## STEP 3: LINK MY WORK TO LAURIER'S ACADEMIC/STRATEGIC PLAN

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strategic domains:

- × social and cultural analysis

Social and cultural analysis relates to the examination of material production, **social institutions**, media and popular texts, artistic works, science and technology, governance, **patterns of equality and inequality**, and everyday actions, beliefs, and **values** in relation to a people, **a community**, a particular time period, or humanity in general.

## STEP 3: LINK MY WORK TO LAURIER'S ACADEMIC/STRATEGIC PLAN

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principles:

- × civic engagement
- × justice

- × “Civic engagement: Civic engagement is individual and collective action intended to identify and address issues of public concern. **Civic engagement requires a reciprocal process** between the community and university. **Our faculty tackle problems of public concern in their scholarly research....”**

## STEP 4: WHEREVER POSSIBLE, LINK WORK TO 'CHANGE' OUTCOMES

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- × to real world change (capacity-building, new programming, data that supports funding applications, etc)
- × **policy change**
- × development of a new generation of researchers able to work 'in and out' of the academy

# A STRATEGIC APPROACH...

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- × In my case, acknowledging and respecting the criteria traditionally used to grant tenure...
- × Balancing that with...
- × new metrics that are more applicable to our work as community engaged scholars.

# THE APPLICATION – COVER LETTER

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## **4 objectives:**

1. establish myself as a community-engaged scholar
2. define what that means/position it in relation to university's strategic/academic plan
3. strategically point out the limitations of the current means of assessing tenure
4. adhere to those criteria, but provide other evidence of impact as a community engaged scholar

# THE APPLICATION: RESEARCH SUMMARY

Research Philosophy: My research philosophy is governed by my position as a critical social scientist; it attends to three central questions:

1. How do oppressive and exclusionary practices impact individual well-being and overall quality of life for marginalized communities?
2. How do we build the most effective research collaborations with community groups and members to ensure that their issues and concerns are attended to?
3. **How do we as community engaged scholars work with our community partners to ensure that our findings are used by decision-makers to create change?**

# THE APPLICATION – TEACHING SUMMARY

- × teaching responsibilities and contributions
- × new courses developed
- × teaching effectiveness (scores)

CES emphasis, however, on:

- × **contributing to the development of a new generation of scholars capable of working ‘in and out’ of the academy and contributing solutions to real world problems**

# THE APPLICATION – TEACHING SUMMARY

More CES emphasis:

Highlight student accomplishments as they are a reflection of your training environment

- × **scholarships**
- × **publications**
- × **assisting community groups with grants, program evaluation, etc.**

# THE APPLICATION: RESEARCH SUMMARY

- × peer-reviewed publications
- × number of times cited
- × number of grants
- × total dollars from grants

CES emphasis, however, on:

- × **partnerships/networks developed**
- × **community capacity-building**
- × **student capacity-building**

# THE APPLICATION: RESEARCH SUMMARY

## ‘Broadening the Bandwidth on Impact: A Knowledge to Action Framework’

According to Boyer (1990),

“In community-engaged scholarship: “impact” encompasses the outcomes of faculty members’ efforts to foster and sustain change in communities and in the academy. Impact occurs through the relationships faculty members develop and sustain with communities and the products that they develop together. Measures of impact in the *community* can include **changes in health policy**, improved community health outcomes, improved community capacity and leadership, and increased funding to the community for health-related projects.”

# THE APPLICATION: SERVICE SUMMARY

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- × internal committees
- × administrative work etc.

CES emphasis, however, on:

- × my work with Laurier's Centre for Community research, Learning and Action
- × CIHR's National Steering Committee for the HIV CBR funding program
- × CBR mentoring work through ACHIEVE, REACH, RHO

# RECOMMENDATION FOR LAURIER

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- × align promotion and tenure processes with your strategic/academic plans
- × i.e., with what you are actually trying to achieve as a university
- × you are otherwise – in the hiring of faculty.....
- × buying turnips to make tomato soup

## SLIDE: TAKE HOME MESSAGES

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- × Believe in yourself! confront impostor syndrome
  - + what we do is a crucial piece of the puzzle of making this world a better place to live in
- × consult key academic documents
  - + find out what your university is 'trying to achieve' through its strategic/academic plan and situate yourself within that agenda
- × find 'moments' and opportunities prior to the tenure review process to educate your colleagues about the importance of CES
- × If you have not had a chance to do that, use the process of applying for tenure as a vehicle for promoting CES and yourself as a proud community engaged scholar

# THANK YOU!

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