School of Public Service

School of Public Service Statement on Research
The creation of the SPS offers an opportunity to redefine the scope of research activities for faculty members, professional staff, graduate students and undergraduate students. The goal is to create a collaborative, cross-disciplinary research unit that will allow faculty to produce high-quality peer-reviewed research and public service research and support.

We recognize that there is no single model that faculty members will follow in pursuit of his or her professional goals. Faculty may choose to primarily engage in peer-reviewed research, public service research or some combination of both. We expect that faculty members’ discipline, subfield, career stage and professional interests will influence their specific research agenda.

In the context of the School of Public Service, we believe that high-quality peer-reviewed research and high-quality public service research are mutually reinforcing and, ultimately, intertwined. Many of our faculty already seamlessly incorporate both types of research into their professional lives, and we should expect that to amplify with the new School of Public Service.

Although we can distinguish between peer-reviewed and public service research, the lines between these are often blurred. Research projects, whether they are funded by public service agencies or by research institutions (e.g., NSF), have the potential to generate both peer-reviewed and public service research.

To produce high-quality public service that is sustainable over a faculty member’s career, we believe that the foundational building block of a productive research career is peer-reviewed research. When faculty members become recognizable experts, relevant public agencies will seek them out to help understand and solve pressing policy problems. Furthermore, by being experts in the field, these faculty members should also be able to compete for academic-based grants.

The impact of SPS will grow as we move toward a national and international focus and when there are engaged efforts among faculty in both peer-reviewed and public service research. With an ongoing focus on both peer-reviewed research and public service research, we believe that Boise State University’s School of Public Service will become a regional leader.

Definitions
We define peer-reviewed research as work evaluated by scholars in a blind-review process, prior to publication. The principal audience of this work consists of academics and policy experts (e.g., high ranking civil servants in federal, state and international agencies, as well as individuals in the NGO world). This type of published work typically involves peer-reviewed journal articles and books.

We define public service research as work that has an intended audience outside of academia. This work involves policy reports, advocacy work and expert testimony. The principal audience of this work includes civil servants, elected officials, citizens, non-profit organizations and other publicly engaged officials.

We define professional research as work done that advances an individual’s profession. This typically involves the publication of textbooks (aimed at students), books and book chapters that are not peer-reviewed.