Research Seminar: Dr. Andy Hoffman
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Title: Academia’s Emerging Crisis of Relevance and the Consequent Role of the Engaged Scholar
Friday, February 9, 2018 from 12:00-1:30 PM in the Business and Economics Building room 402

ABSTRACT
American universities are facing a crisis of relevance. While there are multiple reasons for this to be happening, one that deserves particular attention is the extent to which academic scholars do not see it as their role to engage in public and political discourse. However, increased engagement is unavoidable in an emerging educational context where the caliber of public discourse has become so degraded and social media is changing the nature of science and scientific discourse within society. Further, there is a demographic shift in play, where young scholars are seeking more impact from their work than their more senior colleagues. In this article, I begin the process of articulating what we know and what we don’t know about the evolving role of the engaged scholar by breaking the conversation into two parts. First, why should academic scholars engage in public and political discourse? Second, how can we structure a set of ground rules that could form what might be considered a handbook for public engagement? In the end, this paper is about a reexamination of how we practice our craft, to what purpose and to which audiences.

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