

KNOWLEDGE EXTENSION

OUTREACH INVOLVEMENT

How many faculty are involved?

Substantial levels of involvement in knowledge extension across campus with over 67% of faculty reporting at least a moderate level of involvement and over 40% reporting a considerable or great level of involvement in knowledge extension.

One in four faculty report that their level of knowledge extension is greater than it was three years ago. Note, however, that there were substantial levels of knowledge extension going on three years ago (59% reported at least a moderate level of involvement). This suggests that faculty are becoming more involved rather becoming newly involved.

What is the nature of the involvement?

58% of the faculty report that they have been involved in three or more knowledge extension projects over the past three years.

In terms of activities that can be evaluated by the traditional canons of campus scholarship, the knowledge extension picture is somewhat different--less than one third of the faculty report applying for knowledge extension-type grants or submitting knowledge extension-type manuscripts for publication.

Summary

Knowledge extension is pervasive at MSU with 9 of 10 faculty saying that they have had at least slight involvement.

There is a substantial level of activity. The activity, as a whole, does not fall into the realm of scholarly activities that can easily be evaluated with existing methods and procedures. Either faculty need to be pushed to make their knowledge extension more scholarly in the traditional sense of the term or new methods of evaluation need to be developed.

OUTREACH INTENTIONS

How pervasive will knowledge extension become?

Knowledge extension will become even more pervasive in the years to come. 90% of all faculty intend to become involved in knowledge extension some time in the next three years. Over 40% of the faculty intend their involvement to be considerable or great.

Over 20% of the faculty anticipate engaging in more knowledge extension than they are currently involved in.

What will the knowledge extension look like?

In terms of spending time in knowledge extension activities, 53% of the faculty report that there is a considerable or great chance that they will spend time.

In terms of spending a substantial block of time in knowledge extension activities, 35.6% of the faculty report that there is a considerable or great chance that they will spend a substantial block of time.

In terms of seeking off-campus partners for knowledge extension, 37% of the faculty report that there is a considerable or great chance that they will seek partners.

Summary

While many faculty anticipate becoming involved in knowledge extension, they are much less likely to spend blocks of time or seek out off-campus partners. This suggests that there needs to be a dialogue about the nature of scholarly activities surrounding knowledge extension.

COMMUNITY CONTACTS/INCENTIVES

How many contacts?

80% of the faculty report having at least one contact each month--on average--with off-campus organizations, groups, and agencies.

45.8% of the faculty report that they average three or more contacts each month

44.7% of the faculty report that they have been asked to apply their knowledge/expertise by off-campus organizations, groups, or agencies.

What sort of incentives exist?

Approximately 33% of the faculty feel that off-campus organizations, groups, or agencies expect them to apply their knowledge and expertise.

Approximately 16% of the faculty report that they have opportunities to engage in paid consulting with off-campus organizations, groups, and agencies.

Summary

It appears that there are substantial levels of contact with off-campus organizations, groups, and agencies.

There are reasonable levels of expectation that faculty will apply their knowledge.

It is not clear that off-campus groups want to pay for the knowledge application.

It could be that the expectations and the lack of paid opportunities are a consequence of the land-grant nature of MSU. The public expects knowledge application as part of the land grant mission.

PERSONAL VALUES--KNOWLEDGE EXTENSION

What do faculty value?

Faculty are committed to knowledge extension--62.6% of the faculty report a considerable or great commitment to knowledge extension. Only 13.4% of the faculty report no or a slight commitment to knowledge extension.

48.5% of the faculty attach a considerable or great value to knowledge application.

55.8% of the faculty attach a considerable or great value to collaboration with off-campus organizations, groups, or agencies.

51% of the faculty attach a considerable or great value to an extensive time commitment to knowledge extension.

How have personal values changed?

43.1 % of the faculty report that they value knowledge extension more today than they did five years ago.

Only 6.1 % of the faculty report that they value knowledge extension less than they did five years ago.

Summary

MSU faculty have personal values that are consistent with knowledge extension.

Half of the faculty value the type of collaboration and time commitments necessary for successful knowledge application.

DEPARTMENTAL INCENTIVES

What are the basic beliefs?

39.4% of the faculty feel that it is of considerable or great importance at MSU to be known for knowledge extension.

49.6% of the faculty report that their chair/director is generally or very supportive of knowledge extension.

37.4% of the faculty report that their chair/director attaches more value to knowledge extension than s/he did five years ago.

45.5% of the faculty report that their Dean attaches more value to knowledge extension than s/he did five years ago.

What types of incentives exist?

Only 6.6% of the faculty feel that knowledge extension is very important to decisions relating to tenure/promotion to associate, promotion to full, and merit salary decisions.

Over 30% of the faculty report that knowledge extension has no importance whatsoever in key "reward" decision.

Over 60% of the faculty report that knowledge extension should be rewarded more.

Summary

While faculty report that the leadership attaches value to knowledge extension, there is no evidence that meaningful rewards are given for knowledge extension activities.

One possible explanation is that knowledge extension consists mostly of "activities" or "presentations" and hence should not be rewarded.

Another possible explanation is that the method of evaluating and rewarding scholarship needs substantial overhauling.

DISCIPLINARY INCENTIVES

Do disciplinary incentives exist?

Approximately 30% of faculty report that knowledge extension is career enhancing to a considerable or great extent.

Approximately 37% of the faculty report that knowledge extension has considerable or great historical prominence in their discipline or profession.

How can the disciplinary incentives be accessed?

Only 15.4% of the faculty report that there are a considerable or great number of peer-reviewed outlets for their knowledge extension scholarship. Over 50% of the faculty report that there are a none or few peer-reviewed outlets.

Only 13.7% of the faculty report that knowledge extension is considerably or extensively valued at peer institutions. Over 60% of the faculty report that there is no or a slight value attached to knowledge extension at peer institutions.

Summary

Many faculty lack peer-reviewed outlets for their knowledge extension scholarship.

Peer institutions do not attach value to knowledge extension. It is important to continue to collaborate with peer institutions around these issues. If peers value knowledge extension activities, this will enhance their value at MSU.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Department Chair/Director

Perceived to be the most supportive campus administrator across the basic research and campus teaching mission.

Substantially less supportive for the extension portion of the campus mission.

Dean

Perceived to be less supportive for basic research and campus teaching than the department chair but much more supportive than the Provost or President.

Perceived to value knowledge extension to the same degree as the department chair.

Provost

Provost is more supportive of basic research and on-campus teaching than she is of knowledge extension.

With respect to knowledge extension, Provost is perceived to be very supportive to the same degree as the Chair and the Dean.

President

President is perceived to be most supportive of on-campus teaching with similar levels of support for basic research and knowledge extension.

FACILITATOR/BARRIERS

Barriers

Over a third of the faculty report that financial resources, career goals, or department norms are significant barriers to knowledge extension.

Facilitators

Over a third of the faculty report that financial resources, career goals, the availability of collaborators, or familiarity with off-campus norms are significant facilitators of knowledge extension.

Summary

Most of the factors cut both ways--some faculty perceive them to be barriers while other faculty perceive them to be facilitators.

MULTIVARIATE EXPLANATION

Explaining Community Contacts/Incentives

Who MSU hires as faculty is more important than what the university does in determining involvement in knowledge extension.

Personal values are extremely important to all stages of knowledge extension. Of particular significance is the fact that personal values are the major determinant of community contacts.

Prior experience as a graduate student or being employed as a non-academic in a related field are all important determinants of establishing contact with the community.

In terms of contextual factors, there are four types of influences that have a bearing on the establishment of community contacts.

The presence of either facilitators/barriers enhances/inhibits faculty contacts with the community.

Departmental and Disciplinary Incentives have a similar impact on community involvement.

Those faculty with an MSUE appointment are more likely to establish community contacts, all other things being equal.

Explaining Involvement in Knowledge Extension

Most important determinant of outreach involvement is having contacts with the community. The greater one's involvement with the community, the more likely they are to become involved in outreach.

In terms of personal characteristics: Personal values are an important determinant of involvement. Experience in outreach as a graduate student also contributes to increased levels of involvement.

Contextual factors play a less significant role in the level of outreach involvement.

The presence of facilitators/barriers enhances/inhibits outreach involvement.

All other things being equal, those faculty with an MSUE appointment are more likely to become involved in outreach.

Explaining Future Outreach Intentions

The most important determinant of future intentions is the personal values of the faculty member. This effect is lessened somewhat by the faculty member's longevity; the older a faculty member is, the less likely they are to have future intentions to engage in outreach.

The second most important determinant of future intentions is the current level of outreach involvement; the more involved a faculty member is currently, the more involved they intend to be in the future.

The level of administrative support plays a small but significant role in the formation of future outreach intentions.

OVERALL POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- I. The values and the prior experiences of MSU faculty members are extremely important to the University's outreach agenda. Develop hiring procedures and policies that highlight the importance of these factors in the hiring decision.
- II. As presently constituted, the university context within which outreach takes place, is substantially less important than are the personal characteristics of the faculty.
 - A. One possible conclusion is that extrinsic incentives do not work.
 - B. A second conclusion is that, at present, there are so few incentives for faculty that it is not surprising that they have no impact. To develop incentives, it is important to consider the following:
 1. Develop traditional peer-reviewed outlets for knowledge extension scholarship.
 2. Develop evaluative methods for knowledge extension scholarship that does not fit into the traditional mold.
- III. Establishing community contacts is extremely important to subsequent involvement in university outreach. At the present time there are a substantial number of contacts in spite of the fact that such contacts are often ad hoc. In this regard there are two concerns:
 - A. Develop mechanisms to facilitate community contacts.
 - B. Develop mechanisms to insure that there is appropriate follow-up once contact has been established. Either the contact should be told that there is nothing the University can do for them or efforts will be made to respond to the issue.