

# **Community Engagement Through Professional and Continuing Education: Challenges and Opportunities – Perspectives from Michigan State University**

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# About Michigan State University

## Rich History

- 1855 Pioneer Land Grant
- MSU Extension active in all counties of Michigan
- One of 62 AAU research universities
- \$502 Million in sponsored research (2011-12)

## Governance

- Constitutionally independent
- Elected Board of Trustees
- President and Provost

## Campus

- Located in East Lansing, three miles east of Michigan's capitol
- 5,200 acre campus, with an additional 17,500 acres statewide
- Among the largest single-campus residence hall system in the United States

# About Michigan State University (cont.)

## 17 Degree-granting Colleges

- Includes Human, Osteopathic, Veterinary Medicine Colleges, and an affiliated College of Law
- More than 200 programs of undergraduate, graduate, and professional study
- More than 275 study abroad programs on all continents and in more than 60 countries.

## 11,350 Scholars and Staff

- 4,950 faculty and academic appointees
- 6,400 support staff members (mostly represented by collective bargaining units)

## 48,906 Students

- 36,747 Undergraduate
- 10,247 Graduate and graduate professional
- 1,912 Non-degree

# Turning Point: Late 1980's, Early 1990's

**In the late 1980's and 1990's faculty and administrative leaders began several related activities focused on addressing a series questions:**

- What should MSU, as both a land-grant and AAU research intensive institution, be doing to enact both of these identities and honor the commitments that come with each?
- What are the University's responsibilities to work with and for the benefit of the public?
- How should those responsibilities be met and by which parts of the institution?
- What changes in organizational structure, culture, and practices are needed for the institution to align itself around these responsibilities?
- If we had it to do over again, what would we want MSU to look like in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

# Turning Point (cont.)

## **People at MSU were not alone in raising these questions**

- Path-making work by Ernest Boyer and Ernest Lynton
- Founding of Campus Compact and other organizations
- American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) Forums on Faculty Roles & Rewards
- Mary Walshok and others promote the prioritization of the construct of engagement over outreach
- Reports of the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities
- First national Outreach Scholarship Conference at Penn State
- By the end of the 1990's UPCEA (formerly UCEA) charters a Community of Practice on Outreach and Engagement in response to a member-driven petition

# Turning Point (cont.)

## Efforts at MSU

- Faculty-led, Provost Committee on University Outreach
  - Defined outreach [and engagement]
  - Recommended development of measures of quality, data collection, changes in rewards systems, etc.
- \$10.2 Million W.K.Kellogg Foundation lifelong education grant to support institutional realignment
- De-centralization of continuing education unit
- Creation of University Outreach [and Engagement] office within the Provost's office
- Creation of MSU Global, also within the Provost's office
- Continuing challenges and changes in MSU Extension

# Defining Outreach and Engagement

“Outreach [and engagement] is a form of **scholarship** that cuts across **teaching**, **research**, and **service**. It involves generating, transmitting, applying, and preserving knowledge **for the direct benefit of external audiences** in ways that are consistent with university and unit missions.”

# Outreach and Engagement Takes Many Forms

Engaged Research and Creative Activity	Engaged Teaching and Learning	Engaged Service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community-based research</li> <li>• Applied research</li> <li>• Contractual research</li> <li>• Demonstration projects</li> <li>• Needs and assets assessments</li> <li>• Program evaluations</li> <li>• Translation of scholarship through presentations, publications, and web sites</li> <li>• Exhibitions and performances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online and off-campus education</li> <li>• Continuing education</li> <li>• Occupational short course, certificate, and licensure programs</li> <li>• Contract instructional programs</li> <li>• Participatory curriculum development</li> <li>• Non-credit classes and programs</li> <li>• Conferences, seminars, and workshops</li> <li>• Educational enrichment programs for the public and alumni</li> <li>• Service-learning</li> <li>• Study abroad programs with engagement components</li> <li>• Pre-college programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical assistance</li> <li>• Consulting</li> <li>• Policy analysis</li> <li>• Expert testimony</li> <li>• Knowledge transfer</li> <li>• Commercialization of discoveries</li> <li>• Creation of new business ventures</li> <li>• Clinical services</li> <li>• Human and animal patient care</li> </ul>

# Defining Quality Outreach and Engagement

**Points of Distinction: A Guidebook for Planning and Evaluating Quality Outreach** (1996), addressed assessing engaged scholarship and also expanded the outreach construct to include what we would now call engagement. Winner of UCEA's Innovations Award (1998).

Authors argued that quality can and should be assessed across four dimensions:

- Significance
- Context
- Scholarship
- Impact

DIMENSION	COMPONENTS	SAMPLE QUESTIONS	EXAMPLES OF QUALITATIVE INDICATORS	EXAMPLES OF QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS
Significance	Importance of Issue/Opportunity to be Addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ How serious are the issues to the scholarly community, specific stakeholders, and the public?</li> <li>■ Is the target audience at particular risk or open to new opportunity?</li> <li>■ What social, economic, or human consequences could result from not addressing the issue?</li> <li>■ What competing opportunities would be set aside by addressing this issue?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Documentation of issues and opportunities based on concrete information; e.g., opportunity assessment, social economic indicators, stakeholder testimony, previous work.</li> <li>■ Leaders in the field or public figures addressing the issue, citing the need.</li> <li>■ The magnitude of the issue; i.e., size, trends, future directions.</li> <li>■ Description of competing opportunities set aside.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Indicators of demand/need.</li> <li>■ Number of citations; issue addressed in the literature.</li> <li>■ Financial and other resource contributions.</li> <li>■ Number of participants.</li> <li>■ Calculation of opportunity cost in terms of resources (i.e., people, projects, revenues).</li> </ul>
	Goals/Objectives of Consequence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Have all stakeholders agreed that the goals and objectives are valuable?</li> <li>■ If the goals are accomplished, will there be a significant consequence or impact?</li> <li>■ Will value be added?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Narrative discussing scope and potential impact.</li> <li>■ All stakeholders understand the goals and objectives as stated.</li> <li>■ Increased visibility in community or profession; new structures created; new skills developed and knowledge generated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Projections of scope and potential impact.</li> <li>■ Degree of opportunity to change the situation.</li> </ul>

# Defining Quality Outreach and Engagement (cont.)

DIMENSION	COMPONENTS	SAMPLE QUESTIONS	EXAMPLES OF QUALITATIVE INDICATORS	EXAMPLES OF QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS
Context	Consistency with University/Unit Values and Stakeholder Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To what extent is the project consistent with the university's/unit's mission?</li> <li>■ To what extent is the project a high priority among the external stakeholders?</li> <li>■ Does the plan recognize the relevance of ethical and professional standards for the initiative?</li> <li>■ Does the project demonstrate sensitivity to diverse audiences and interests?</li> <li>■ Is there an appropriate fit (consideration of the interests and well-being of all participants) between the target audiences and the goals and objectives?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Comparison with explicit mission statements and goals.</li> <li>■ Plans recognizing ethical issues and regulations/guidelines to assure compliance.</li> <li>■ Evidence of ability to work sensitively with external audiences and key groups.</li> <li>■ Interviews with those potentially affected by the project.</li> <li>■ Comparison with stakeholder reports, proposals, letters of inquiry.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Number of contacts and planning meetings of stakeholders.</li> <li>■ Resources/methods used to promote program.</li> <li>■ Profile of audience; i.e., demographic characteristics.</li> </ul>
	Appropriateness of Expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To what extent does the project fit with the individual's and the unit's available expertise and research?</li> <li>■ To what extent does the project utilize appropriate expertise among the stakeholders and/or external sources?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Evidence of scholarship related to project or prior work in the field.</li> <li>■ Narrative showing degree of fit between project needs and expertise deployed.</li> <li>■ Relevant offices and organizations involved in the project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Numbers and types of expertise involved; e.g., tenure-track faculty, academic staff, students, stakeholders, external consultants?</li> <li>■ Number of stakeholders in leadership roles.</li> <li>■ Related activities; e.g., years of experience, numbers of articles.</li> </ul>
	Degree of Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To what extent do all the stakeholders participate in planning, defining impacts, implementing, and assessing the project?</li> <li>■ To what extent is communication and interaction open and multi-directional?</li> <li>■ Does the nature of the collaboration lead to timely and effective decision-making?</li> <li>■ What contribution does the collaboration make to capacity building and sustainability?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Language and structure of partnership agreements.</li> <li>■ Identification, participation, and retention of all stakeholders.</li> <li>■ Communication logs and minutes of meetings.</li> <li>■ Progress report from stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Number of partners or collaborative arrangements.</li> <li>■ Number of intra-institutional linkages.</li> <li>■ Number of inter-institutional linkages.</li> <li>■ Number of planning meetings.</li> <li>■ Percentage of deadlines met.</li> </ul>
	Appropriateness of Methodological Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Is there an appropriate approach underlying the design; i.e., developmental, participatory?</li> <li>■ Does the project utilize an appropriate methodology?</li> <li>■ How does the project recognize and accommodate for the variety of learning styles, ways of decision-making and taking action, and education levels of the stakeholders?</li> <li>■ Does the project have a comprehensive and informative evaluation plan?</li> <li>■ Is there a plan to determine whether or not the project/collaboration will/should continue?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Evidence of scholarship on the application of the method to related issues.</li> <li>■ Evidence of adaptation during project implementation.</li> <li>■ Evidence that audience education level and learning style were considered.</li> <li>■ Process documentation by project director through journals, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Number of instances of innovations in delivery; e.g., student involvement, use of technology.</li> </ul>
	Sufficiency and Creative Use of Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Are available resources sufficient to the scope of the effort?</li> <li>■ To what extent are multiple sources and types of resources (i.e., human, financial, capital, volunteer, etc.) being utilized?</li> <li>■ Are the goals/objectives realistic considering the context and available resources?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Evidence of integration and creative use of multiple types and sources of resources.</li> <li>■ New funding sources identified and leveraged.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Amounts and types of the resources by source.</li> <li>■ Changes in extramural funding for outreach activities.</li> </ul>

# Defining Quality Outreach and Engagement (cont.)

DIMENSION	COMPONENTS	SAMPLE QUESTIONS	EXAMPLES OF QUALITATIVE INDICATORS	EXAMPLES OF QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS
Scholarship	Knowledge Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To what extent is the project shaped by knowledge that is up-to-date, cross-disciplinary, and appropriate to the issue?</li> <li>■ Is knowledge in the community or among the stakeholders utilized?</li> <li>■ To what extent is there an awareness of competing methodologies, replicable models, expertise, and/or writing related to the project?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Annotated narrative showing what sources of knowledge are used; i.e., community assessments, previous works, and applied theory.</li> <li>■ Quality and fit of the citations, outside experts, or consultants.</li> <li>■ Assessment of experience and accomplishments of major project participants external to the university.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Number of cross-disciplinary resources utilized.</li> <li>■ Number of years in positions.</li> <li>■ Dates of citations.</li> <li>■ Number of experts cited, participating.</li> </ul>
	Knowledge Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ How well are the project and its objectives defined?</li> <li>■ Is the project design appropriate to the context and does it recognize the scope, complexity, and diversity?</li> <li>■ To what extent is there innovation in the application of knowledge and methodologies?</li> <li>■ Does the plan foresee a potential new application of knowledge gained for use in specific settings?</li> <li>■ Does the plan include provision for ongoing documentation of activities, evaluation, and possible midstream modification?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Professional feedback on the clarity of the project.</li> <li>■ Input from community, stakeholders, students, etc., attesting that the project plan is clear, appropriate, inclusive, and understandable.</li> <li>■ Reflective narrative, rationale for project, and documentation of the design process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Number of in-house communications related to the project; e.g., in-house documents, interim reports, newsletters, e-mail messages, chat rooms, bulletin boards.</li> <li>■ Number of citations from the literature circulated within the project.</li> </ul>
	Knowledge Generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Does the project plan pose a new model or hypothesis in addressing the issues?</li> <li>■ Was new knowledge generated; i.e., program hypotheses confirmed or revised, outcomes creatively interpreted, new questions for scholarship asked?</li> <li>■ Were unanticipated developments appropriately incorporated into the final interpretation of the results?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lessons learned documented.</li> <li>■ Assessment of scholarly merit by internal peer review process.</li> <li>■ External review of performance by stakeholders relative to innovation, satisfaction with approach and results.</li> <li>■ Project garnered awards, honors, citations relative to its scholarship.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Number of times project cited, recognized.</li> <li>■ Number of acceptances for publications, speaking engagements.</li> <li>■ Number of requests for consulting.</li> <li>■ Number of programs, curricula influenced by scholarly results.</li> <li>■ Publications in refereed journals.</li> <li>■ Professional speaking engagements.</li> </ul>
	Knowledge Utilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Are the stakeholders and potential interest groups involved in understanding and interpreting the knowledge generated?</li> <li>■ Is the knowledge generated by the project available for dissemination, utilization, and possible replication?</li> <li>■ In what ways is the knowledge being recorded, recognized, and rewarded?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Stakeholder feedback.</li> <li>■ Project generated a replicable, innovative model.</li> <li>■ Nature of groups or institutions applying knowledge generated.</li> <li>■ Case studies or examples of utilization.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Scope of involvement in interpretation and dissemination; e.g., numbers and types of participants.</li> <li>■ Number of different avenues chosen to communicate results.</li> </ul>

# Defining Quality Outreach and Engagement (cont.)

DIMENSION	COMPONENTS	SAMPLE QUESTIONS	EXAMPLES OF QUALITATIVE INDICATORS	EXAMPLES OF QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS
Impact	Impact on Issues, Institutions, and Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To what extent were the project goals and objectives met?</li> <li>■ Did the products or deliverables meet the planning expectations?</li> <li>■ Were intended, unintended, and potential impacts documented and interpreted?</li> <li>■ Was that documentation rigorous, thorough, understandable, and defensible?</li> <li>■ Were stakeholders satisfied? Did they value the results and apply the knowledge?</li> <li>■ Is the project affecting public policy? Has it improved practice or advanced community knowledge?</li> <li>■ Do impacts have commercial, societal, or professional value?</li> <li>■ How effectively are the products or results reaching the intended interest groups?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Description of impacts (i.e., significance and scope of benefits) on the issue, stakeholders, and beneficiaries, to include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs fulfilled, issues addressed, population or group involved in process.</li> <li>Institutional processes changed.</li> <li>Replicable innovation developed.</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Documentation such as program evaluations, surveys, letters, testimonials, and media coverage.</li> <li>■ Testimony and validation from peer review.</li> <li>■ Referrals to others and expression of interest by new groups.</li> <li>■ Assessments on learning outcomes by individuals, students, and stakeholders.</li> <li>■ Benefits resulting from changes in practice: e.g., knowledge applied, processes or approaches more efficient, circumstances improved.</li> <li>■ Result of changes in institutional and/or public policy.</li> <li>■ Evidence that knowledge is used in subsequent research, projects, or public discussion.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Changes from benchmark or baseline measurements.</li> <li>■ Number of appropriate products generated for practitioners and public (e.g. technical reports, bulletins, books, monographs, chapters, articles, presentations, public performances, testimony, training manuals, software, computer programs, instructional videos, etc.).</li> <li>■ Number of products distributed.</li> <li>■ Number and percentage of beneficiaries reached.</li> <li>■ Number of contracts, patents, copyrights.</li> </ul>
	Sustainability and Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To what extent did the project build capacity for individuals, institutions, or social infrastructure; i.e., financial, technological, leadership, planning, technical, professional, collaborative, etc.?</li> <li>■ To what extent did the project develop mechanisms for sustainability?</li> <li>■ To what extent did the project leverage additional resources for any partners?</li> <li>■ To what extent were undesired dependencies eliminated?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Inventory of new or developed skills.</li> <li>■ Technology adopted and maintained.</li> <li>■ Surveys or reports of changed behaviors or attitudes.</li> <li>■ Activities and processes institutionalized.</li> <li>■ Networks activated.</li> <li>■ Cross-disciplinary linkages activated.</li> <li>■ Continued or alternative resources secured: e.g., funding, facilities, equipment, personnel.</li> <li>■ Planned degree of disengagement or continuing partnership achieved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Quantitative changes in skills, technologies, behaviors, activities, etc.</li> <li>■ Amount of resources generated to sustain the project.</li> <li>■ Amount of resources leveraged.</li> <li>■ List of facilities, equipment, personnel available.</li> <li>■ Number of sites and cross-site linkages established.</li> </ul>
	University-Community Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To what extent did the stakeholders come to understand and appreciate each others' values, intentions, concerns, and resource base?</li> <li>■ To what extent was mutual satisfaction derived from the project?</li> <li>■ To what extent did the project broaden access to the university?</li> <li>■ To what extent did the project broaden access to the community?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Co-authored reports and presentations.</li> <li>■ Opportunities for new collaborations established.</li> <li>■ Testimonials from partners.</li> <li>■ Community partner participation in grading students, evaluating faculty/staff efforts.</li> <li>■ Expansion of university/unit constituency.</li> <li>■ Role flexibility and changes that provide for greater university/community interaction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Number of new collaborations considered or established.</li> <li>■ Number of off-campus courses offered with syllabus modifications to accommodate nontraditional students.</li> <li>■ Evidence of increased demand placed on the unit or faculty for outreach.</li> </ul>
	Benefit to the University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ How does the project offer new opportunities for student learning and professional staff development?</li> <li>■ How does the project lead to innovations in curriculum?</li> <li>■ How does the project inform other dimensions of the university mission?</li> <li>■ How does the project increase cross-disciplinary collaborations within the university?</li> <li>■ How does the project increase collaboration with other institutions?</li> <li>■ How does the project assist the unit's or faculty member's progress in developing outreach potential and in using that potential to improve the institution's operations and visibility?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Changes in quality or scope of student experiences.</li> <li>■ Curricular changes (e.g. new syllabi, courses, curricular revisions).</li> <li>■ Teaching or research activities benefiting from outreach involvement, including cross-disciplinary research or program innovations.</li> <li>■ Enhanced unit reputation.</li> <li>■ Recognition in reward and accountability systems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Amount of increased student support.</li> <li>■ Number of employment offers to students.</li> <li>■ Number of new courses and programs approved.</li> <li>■ Number of new cross-disciplinary or inter-university collaborative efforts.</li> <li>■ Increased engagement of faculty or students in outreach.</li> <li>■ Amount of increased external or university support for outreach.</li> <li>■ Revenue generated.</li> </ul>

# Continuing Education at Michigan State University

## Characteristics:

- Responsibility of academic departments and colleges
  - Includes credit, noncredit, degrees, certificates, custom offerings
  - Regular faculty provide most instruction
  - Variability in continuing education operations
  - Revenues from noncredit programs go to the unit, with a very small percentage “tax” taken by the Provost’s office
- Sometimes occurs as part of community-engaged research or other forms of scholarly engagement
- Some noncredit offerings provided through MSU Extension
- Market and program development support available to the academic units for online and hybrid offerings through MSU Global
  - Also manage an online noncredit education registration system implemented for campus-wide use

# Data about Outreach and Engagement at MSU

## Data collected with MSU's Outreach and Engagement Measurement Instrument (OEMI) 2004-2011

- 2,942 distinct (non-duplicative) respondents have completed the survey
  - During this period the size of the faculty and academic staff has remained relatively stable (approximately 4,900 in 2011)
- 82.8% of respondents report that they have participated in some form of outreach and engagement
- The work reported by these respondents represents a collective investment by Michigan State University of \$137,242,656 in faculty and academic staff time devoted to addressing the concerns of the state, nation, and world through engaged scholarship (based on the actual salary value of time spent, as reported by respondents)
- Respondents have submitted 7,126 project reports

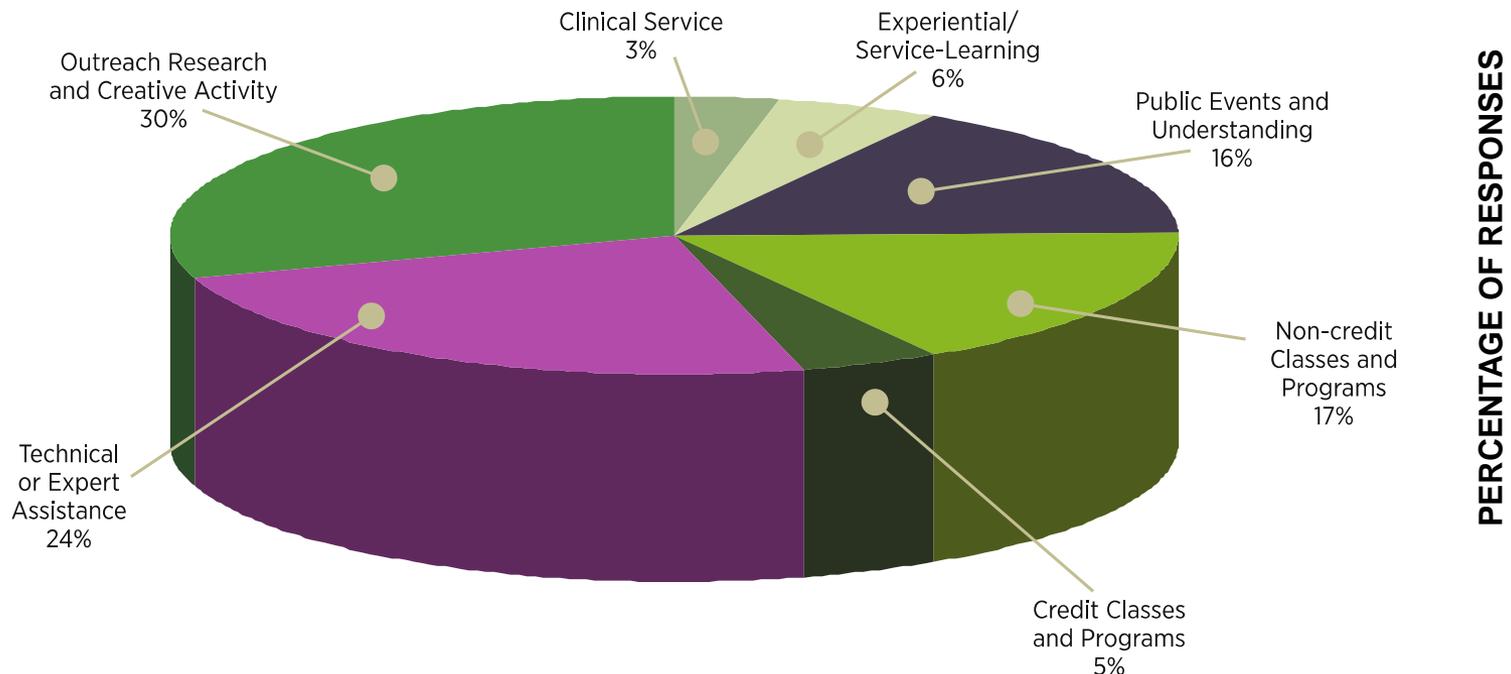
# Data about Outreach and Engagement at MSU (cont.)

## Data collected with the OEMI for calendar year 2011

- 816 Faculty and academic staff survey respondents
- \$12,962,951 investment by Michigan State University in faculty and academic staff time devoted to addressing the concerns of the state, nation, and world through engaged scholarship (based on the actual salary value of time spent, as reported by respondents)

# Data about Outreach and Engagement at MSU (cont.)

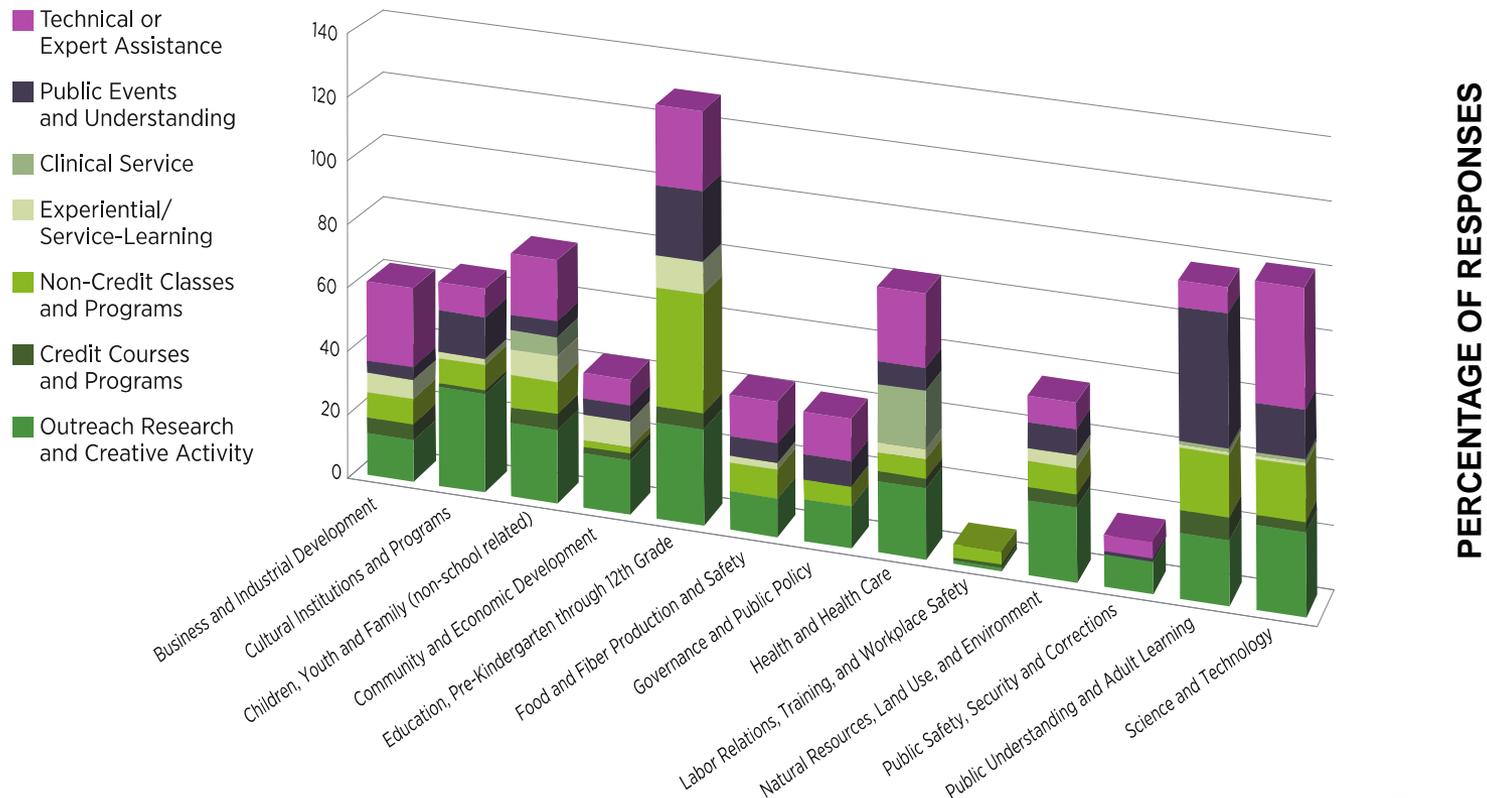
## Forms of Engagement Reported by MSU Faculty and Academic Staff in 2011



Note: The number of "responses" is greater than the number of "respondents." Respondents were given the opportunity to describe their engagement activities for up to two areas of social concern; each description was counted as a separate response.

# Data about Outreach and Engagement at MSU (cont.)

Forms of Outreach Cross-Tabulated with Societal Concerns for 2011



Note: The number of "responses" is greater than the number of "respondents." Respondents were given the opportunity to describe their engagement activities for up to two areas of social concern; each description was counted as a separate response.

# Data about Outreach and Engagement at MSU (cont.)

## Additional data from other sources

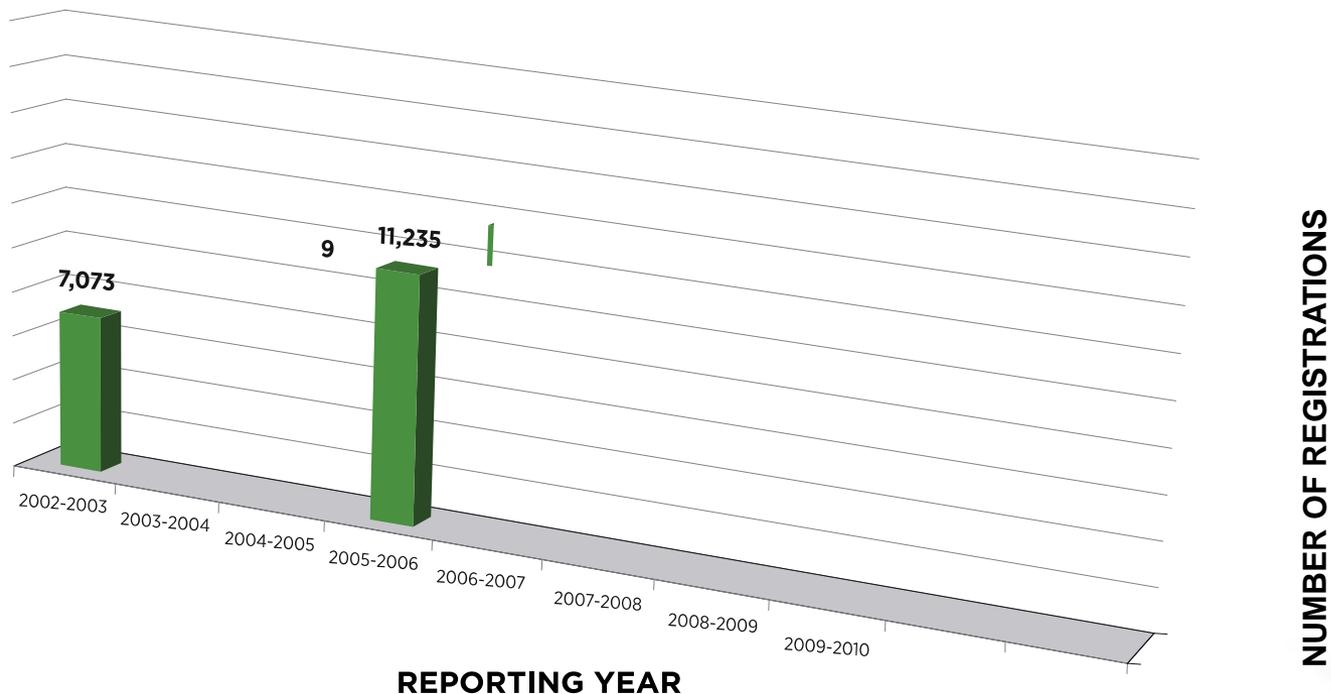
- Academic and professional degree and certificate programs extended to off-campus learners online via MSU Global, with more than 15,000 enrollments annually in more than 60 degree and certificate programs (combination of fully online and hybrid)
- 1,400 faculty and staff members engaged in international research and teaching
- 280 partnerships with international institutions
- 200 programs for pre-k children through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, with additional offerings in educational software and online applications



# Data about Outreach and Engagement at MSU (cont.)

## Additional data from other sources

### Number of Student Registrations for Service-Learning Received and Accommodated (2002-2012)



# Thinking about Engagement Rather than Outreach: Tensions for Continuing Education

## Language matters

- As continuing educators, do we work with markets, students or communities?
  - Each word may be true, but reflects a different and partial way of making sense of those with whom we partner and to whom we offer programs
    - Words are embedded within different frameworks of assumptions that subtly shape understanding with regard to, among other things, the passivity of others and expectation of “acting upon them,” rather than “with them”
  - Also, each is rhetorically effective to others differentially
    - Will we be understood in the way that we meant?
    - Will what we say be persuasive?

# Thinking about Engagement Rather than Outreach: Tensions for Continuing Education (cont.)

## Politics matters

- Emerging tension within the engagement movement: Are some societal issues potentially addressed through community engagement, less desirable than others?
  - Thinking of the people who advocate for community engagement collectively as a movement, while useful when differentiating them from critics and traditionalists, obscures differences among them
  - Some advocates express concern that focusing on economic development draws universities and scholars into partnerships with private and powerful groups, and away from public and sometimes disempowered groups, effectively co-opting the movement

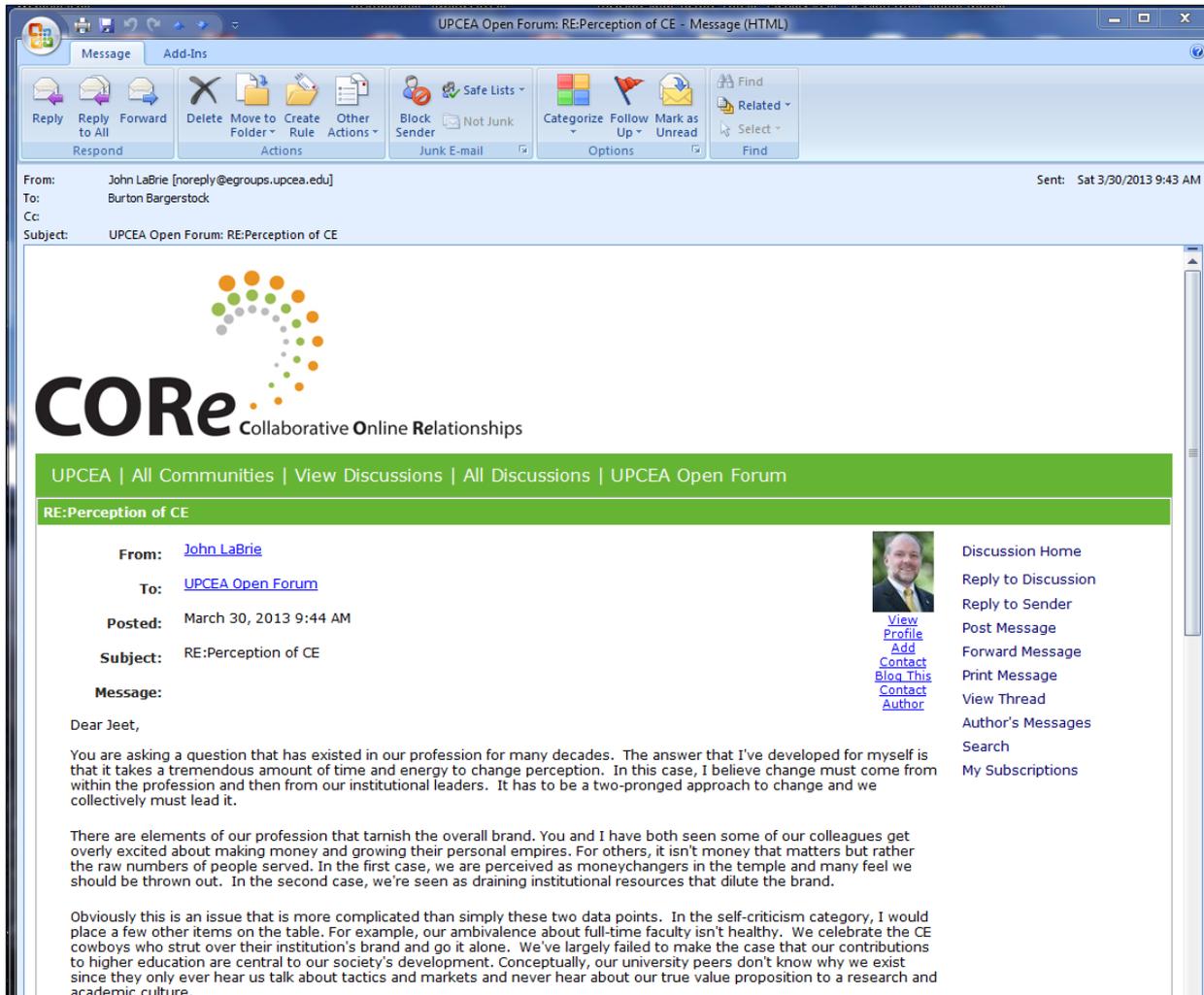
# Thinking about Engagement Rather than Outreach: Tensions for Continuing Education (cont.)

## Politics matters (cont.)

- Emerging tension within the engagement movement: Are some societal issues potentially addressed through community engagement, less desirable than others?
  - Still, if a university's surrounding region is experiencing severe economic conditions, how can it and its scholars ignore working with all possible partners to improve those conditions?



# Alignment: Language, Mission, Society



UPCEA Open Forum: RE:Perception of CE - Message (HTML)

Message Add-Ins

Reply Reply Forward Delete Move to Create Other Block Safe Lists Categorize Follow Mark as Reply to All to All Forward Delete Move to Create Other Actions Junk Sender Not Junk Junk E-mail Options Find Related Select Find

From: John LaBrie [noreply@egroups.upcea.edu] Sent: Sat 3/30/2013 9:43 AM  
To: Burton Bargerstock  
Cc:  
Subject: UPCEA Open Forum: RE:Perception of CE

**CORe** Collaborative Online Relationships

UPCEA | All Communities | View Discussions | All Discussions | UPCEA Open Forum

RE:Perception of CE

**From:** [John LaBrie](#)  
**To:** [UPCEA Open Forum](#)  
**Posted:** March 30, 2013 9:44 AM  
**Subject:** RE:Perception of CE

**Message:**

Dear Jeet,

You are asking a question that has existed in our profession for many decades. The answer that I've developed for myself is that it takes a tremendous amount of time and energy to change perception. In this case, I believe change must come from within the profession and then from our institutional leaders. It has to be a two-pronged approach to change and we collectively must lead it.

There are elements of our profession that tarnish the overall brand. You and I have both seen some of our colleagues get overly excited about making money and growing their personal empires. For others, it isn't money that matters but rather the raw numbers of people served. In the first case, we are perceived as moneychangers in the temple and many feel we should be thrown out. In the second case, we're seen as draining institutional resources that dilute the brand.

Obviously this is an issue that is more complicated than simply these two data points. In the self-criticism category, I would place a few other items on the table. For example, our ambivalence about full-time faculty isn't healthy. We celebrate the CE cowboys who strut over their institution's brand and go it alone. We've largely failed to make the case that our contributions to higher education are central to our society's development. Conceptually, our university peers don't know why we exist since they only ever hear us talk about tactics and markets and never hear about our true value proposition to a research and academic culture.

Discussion Home  
Reply to Discussion  
Reply to Sender  
Post Message  
Forward Message  
Print Message  
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"We've largely failed to make the case that **our contributions to higher education are central to our society's development**. Conceptually, our university peers don't know why we exist since they only ever hear us talk about tactics and markets and never hear about **our true value proposition to a research and academic culture.**"

"Because we are largely a teaching profession, we are seen as "lesser" by our research colleagues. Our type of scholarship can and should be seen as a form of "tech transfer" and "knowledge transfer" that our colleagues in the hard sciences know so well. Our work is often hard to categorize. We work with credit and non-credit. We work with the young and the old. We work with soft credentials such as badges. We work with hard credentials such as masters degrees. What unifies all of this is **our ability to translate academic research and conceptual knowledge into an applied form that disseminates and makes valuable our institution's core functions.**"

(Bold formatting added for emphasis.)

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