**Scholarly Outreach and Engagement Reported by Successfully Tenured Faculty
at Michigan State University, 2002-2006**

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DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR DEPARTMENTS AND COLLEGES

Introduction

While the 2001 revision to the reappointment, promotion, and tenure policies and forms was an important institutional reform, its impact is only realized when tenure track faculty and administrators engage in ongoing discussion about how scholarly outreach and engagement is interpreted and valued in their disciplines, departments, and colleges. Based on this study's findings and the literature associated with on engagement and promotion/tenure, we recommend the following guide as a set of discussion points to be used with junior faculty, faculty mentors, promotion and tenure committee members, department chairs, and college promotion review committee members. Through dialogue, it is possible to create common understandings and clear approaches that create a supportive climate for engaged scholarship.

1. **Outreach and engagement activities are scholarly.**
   They are informed by theory and evidence-based practice and, in turn, they are the source of new knowledge and practice. The merit of scholarly outreach and engagement activities should be evaluated by clear standards of rigor and quality, just as other forms of scholarship are judged in the academy. What counts as scholarly outreach and engagement in your discipline, department, and college? What criteria do you use to judge its quality?

2. **The language associated with scholarly outreach and engagement varies by discipline.**
   The ways of describing scholarly outreach and engagement are wide-ranging, including translational research, service learning, public humanities, civic engagement, university-community partnerships, etc. How are outreach and engagement activities described in your discipline, department, or college? What words do you commonly use to refer to scholarly outreach and engagement activities?

3. **Faculty members collaborate with their community partners in a variety of ways.**
   Sometimes faculty scholarship may be described as highly engaged—with community partners collaborating at all stages of the scholarship—and other times faculty

scholarship may be responsive to their community but engaged in a more limited way. This range in the degree of engagement reflects elasticity in collaboration—with faculty members making appropriate choices given the community, the context, the research problem, etc. How do you describe the different degrees of community engagement faculty members in your discipline, department, and college are involved in?

4. **Scholarly outreach and engagement activities contribute to the public good of a variety of communities beyond the campus.**
Engaged faculty partner with different kinds of communities. For example, some communities are defined by geography (such as neighborhoods or cities), circumstance (such as surviving a disaster, belonging to the same school district), identity (such as gender, ethnicity/race), kin (such as families and family systems), affiliation (such as political party or interest group), faith (such as members of a specific religion), or profession (such as practicing professionals in a field, entrepreneurs, or specific types of businesses)—to name a few. What publics are natural partners for faculty in your discipline, department, or college to collaborate with?

5. **Faculty members collaborate with the public through different types of activities.**
Faculty may partner with communities through research (such as applied research or community-based research), teaching and learning (such as service-learning or noncredit instruction), service (such as technical assistance, expert testimony), or economic development activities (such as patents, licenses, or new business ventures). What are the common types of scholarly outreach and engagement activities in your discipline, department, and college?

6. **Scholarly outreach and engagement activities generate a range of scholarly and public products or artifacts.**
The evidence of engaged scholarship takes the form of peer-reviewed journal articles and conference presentations as well as other forms of scholarly work products (such as technical bulletins, evaluation reports, public performances, or workshops). What are acceptable forms of evidence of scholarly outreach and engagement in your unit?

7. **Faculty members are motivated to collaborate with the public on scholarly outreach and engagement activities for a number of reasons.**
Faculty members may be motivated to collaborate because it advances practice in their field, supports student learning and student development, or gives back to a community they have connections to—to name a few reasons. What are common reasons faculty are motivated to pursue engaged scholarship in your discipline, department, or college? How do these different motivations shape scholarly engagement?

8. **Scholarly outreach and engagement activities are integrally connected to faculty responsibilities.**
Engaged research, instruction, service, and commercialized activities may be viewed as part and parcel of faculty members' responsibilities and not as separate or added-on activities. In addition, there is often an interplay between engaged scholarship and a faculty member's other responsibilities. In your discipline, department, or college, how

might faculty integrate their engaged scholarship into the rest of their faculty responsibilities?

9. **Faculty participation in scholarly outreach and engagement activities changes over the career span.**
   Faculty members collaborate with communities in different ways at different stages of their career. How do individual preferences and departmental (or disciplinary) expectations for faculty involvement in scholarly outreach and engagement change over time in your discipline, department, and college?

10. **Faculty members improve their engaged scholarship through conversation, collaboration and reflection with other engaged scholars.**
    Faculty members learn from one another the techniques needed to collaborate effectively and respectfully with their public(s), the strategies for publishing engaged scholarship in peer-reviewed journals, and other community and academic skills needed to be successful engaged scholars. Where do faculty members in your department find other engaged scholars with whom to sharpen their engagement skills?

Comments

Faculty members who pursue scholarly outreach and engagement as part of their faculty responsibilities come to engagement from a variety of different personal motivations and disciplinary perspectives. Their success as engaged scholars relies on their capacity to navigate the (sometimes competing) institutional priorities, college and departmental mandates, and disciplinary obligations, in light of their individual strengths as scholars and collaborators with their respective communities or publics.

Ongoing dialogue in departments and colleges about successful strategies for engaged scholars to interpret and represent their scholarly outreach and engagement in the promotion and tenure process is one of the most important ways to advance engaged scholarship.

Resources

Doberneck, D. M., Glass, C. R., & Schweitzer, J. (2009, September). *Scholarly outreach and engagement reported by successfully tenured faculty at Michigan State University, 2002-2006: Institutional Report.* East Lansing: Michigan State University, National Center for the Study of University Engagement. Retrieved from: http://ncsue.msu.edu/publications/reappointment.aspx.

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