

Part Five:
**Campus, Off-campus,
and Peer Institution
Perspectives on
University Outreach**

INTRODUCTION¹¹

Attention now turns to a consideration of stakeholder perspectives on university outreach. According to Freeman (1984), a stakeholder is any group (or individual) who is affected by, or who can affect, the future of the organization. Bryson (1988: 52) describes the importance of including stakeholders in the planning process:

Attention to stakeholder concerns is crucial because the key to success in public and nonprofit organizations is the satisfaction of stakeholders....

...stakeholder analysis will require the strategic planning team to identify the organization's stakeholders, their stake in the organization, their criteria for judging performance of the organization, how well the organization performs against those criteria...[and]how the stakeholders influence the organization....

The committee adopted an expanded version of Freeman's definition of stakeholder in that it believes that certain stakeholders, by the nature of their relationship to the organization, have the right to provide input during the planning process. In the case of this study, key stakeholders include the faculty and staff of Michigan State University and the publics whom MSU serves through its outreach efforts. Institutions of higher education that have made a major investment in university outreach represent a third stakeholder group.

The input received from faculty and staff (including those who work primarily or exclusively off-campus) is presented in Chapter 7. The committee drew upon the organizational culture literature to create a framework for understanding Michigan State University (see Chapter 12) as the basis for selecting interviewees. In Chapter 8, the guidance received from off-campus stakeholders is reported. Finally, the committee sought information from about 20 peer institutions regarding the strategic directions that they are pursuing regarding outreach. The results of that study are presented in Chapter 9.

¹¹ Introduction written by Frank A. Fear

Chapter 7

ON-CAMPUS PERSPECTIVES¹²

The committee sought input and guidance about outreach from members of the MSU campus community. The committee devoted most of spring term 1992 (March–June) to this effort.

The purpose of this chapter is to report the respondent selection process, describe the types of the input/guidance sought, and communicate the results of the inquiry process.

The Respondent Selection Process

Committee members nominated faculty and staff—persons whom they felt would offer insights about outreach. To ensure breadth of unit representation, the Committee's conceptualization of the outreach cultures at MSU (as described in Chapter 12) guided the selection process. The following criteria were used to generate and evaluate a preliminary list of interviewees: open-mindedness; good thinkers; care about MSU and its future; hold key faculty, staff, or administrative positions; are opinion leaders; are diverse in the spirit of MSU IDEA I and II; are historically more, as well as less, involved in outreach (mix desired); do exemplary work; represent tenured and untenured faculty members (mix desired); represent the community of outreach practitioners (major outreach responsibilities); and represent those who hold positions that interface with the public on a regular basis. Application of these criteria led to an initial list of nearly two hundred persons.

Concurrent with the generation and evaluation of names, the committee discussed how the selected persons should be grouped for interview purposes. It was agreed that we should conduct a number of group (i.e., "roundtable"-type) interviews with each interview being conducted with similar types of persons. Examples include deans who lead units with diverse outreach programs; Lifelong Education/University Outreach associate/assistant deans and coordinators; outreach practitioners; chairs and school directors representing units that have been historically less involved in outreach; institute and program directors; tenured faculty who have been historically more involved in outreach; administrators who hold (or have held) key positions in Lifelong Education/University Outreach; faculty members who are knowledgeable about the history of outreach at public institutions and current outreach efforts at MSU; and MSU administrators at the vice president (or equivalent levels).

The committee contacted the persons selected, and conducted committee-of-the-whole and split-committee interviews. Individual committee members also conducted face-to-face and group

¹² Chapter written by Frank A. Fear

interviews with some persons. In total, over one hundred persons participated in the roundtable and individual interviews. The list of participants is reported in Appendix A.

Types of Input Sought

Committee members sought input in three areas: the current status of outreach at MSU; the value of outreach for an institution, such as MSU, in the 21st century; and the potential and vision for outreach at MSU. After considerable discussion among committee members, 25 questions were created—spanning the three areas of interest:

Questions about the Status of Outreach

1. What is considered outreach in your college/unit?
2. Has this description changed over the years? If so, how? Why?
3. Is there a commonly held notion among your colleagues about what represents "good" and "not-as-good" outreach?
4. When you think of all of the activities undertaken in your college/unit, how would you describe the relative importance of the outreach function? How does this function compare in importance with other functions that are carried out?
5. Is outreach undertaken at a "cost" to resident teaching & research? Are the functions—resident teaching, research, and outreach—generally viewed as discrete or linked functions?
6. What major, structural factors promote and impede outreach?
7. Who typically does outreach?
8. Is outreach conducted in all or just some of the topics/areas associated with your college/unit's knowledge base?
9. For whom is outreach typically performed?
10. How are outreach activities/events typically organized and delivered?
11. Where does outreach typically take place?
12. Given your answers to the questions of who, what, for whom, how, and where, please share what you would consider to be an example of exceptionally good outreach.
13. Generally, what motivates or discourages staff in your college/unit to engage in outreach?
14. What benefits and costs (if any) accrue from engaging in outreach?
15. How is outreach evaluated?

16. In addition to collecting information from MSU faculty and staff, we are interested in soliciting input from off-campus persons—people who are considered by on-campus persons to be important outreach clients (or collaborators, partners, etc.). May we have the names, addresses, and phone numbers of two or three persons who fall into that category?¹³

Importance of Outreach for MSU in the 21st Century

1. In your estimation, what is the relative value of outreach for public universities in the 21st century?
2. What value criteria should drive MSU's outreach program? In other words, what should our outreach programs "stand for?"

Vision for MSU's Future Outreach Program

1. How should outreach be conceived in relationship to expected faculty roles? Who should do outreach? When? How? Where?
2. How should we evaluate the outreach function? For faculty/staff (individual level)? At the unit level?
3. What, outreach priorities should we declare, if any? Problems/issues? Approaches? Clientele? Locations (e.g., Michigan, U.S., the world)?
4. How should we organize cross-disciplinary resources for outreach purposes?
5. How should we strategically position our outreach program? In relation to other Michigan institutions of higher education? In relationship to MSU's national peer group?
6. Is it possible to discuss a strategic agenda for outreach during an era of constrained resources and calls for increased faculty productivity?
7. How is it possible to strengthen the outreach function? Through the academic governance system? By the way that MSU is structured—on- and off-campus?

Not all questions were asked during each interview. An attempt was made to fit questions to the specific backgrounds, interests, and expertise of those being interviewed.

Organizing the Interview Results

Written notes from each interview were prepared, and the notes—in the aggregate—were used to prepare a composite of the interview results. Those results were initially catalogued by the 10 strategic questions in our charge. But this categorization system did not fully capture what the committee felt were the important frames of reference represented by the interviewees. In the

¹³ This information was used to create a list of off-campus interviewees. See Chapter 8 for the results of these interviews.

opinion of the committee, the respondents' input can be best understood in terms of three frames of reference:

The strategic planning frame emphasizes the need for MSU to understand its "business," and for the administration to implement outreach strategies that will put MSU in the most advantageous position, given its market niche.

The external realities frame focuses on MSU's responsibilities as a public institution. According to this way of thinking, MSU must be sensitive to the problems and needs facing Michiganders and the world. Then, it must organize its resources in order to make optimal impact on improving peoples' lives.

The faculty scholarship frame centers attention on how faculty organize and undertake their programs of study. From this perspective outreach is, and should be, an integral part of what faculty members do. The challenge is to create attractive possibilities (i.e., opportunities) for faculty to participate in outreach programs.

The key features of each frame are elaborated in Table 2. The three frames will be used as the organizing scheme for reporting the on-campus input to the committee.

Table 2. Three frames for understanding and reporting the feedback from MSU internal stakeholders

<i>Frame</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Selected questions</i>
Strategic planning	Focus on institutional mission, understand markets & internal strengths, make strategic choices	What is a land-grant-AAU university? What is our mission? What are our markets? Who are the other knowledge producers? Outreach for whom? For what? Where? How?
External realities	Focus on problem-solving responsibilities of publicly funded institution; organize resources to make optimal impact on those problems.	What are the major societal problems? How can we anticipate tomorrow's problems? How can we make ourselves "user-friendly"? How can we make knowledge resources available equitably? How can we expand the number of faculty involved in outreach?
Faculty scholarship	Focus on understanding how faculty design and conduct their work; root outreach in a faculty concept of scholarship; make outreach attractive to faculty.	Who are the outreach exemplars? How should we evaluate outreach? How can we be nationally competitive in outreach? How can we nurture cross-disciplinary outreach work?

The Strategic Planning Frame

We heard many comments about the need for MSU to be mission-driven. This means that university administrators must have a keen sense of MSU's *raison d'être*, and then focus on the goal of ensuring that the institution meets its mission-related obligations. Several respondents emphasized to us that in order to be able to be mission-driven, administrators must clearly understand what it means to be a "university," and what it means to be a land-grant-AAU university. We also heard many advise us that outreach policy and decision making should be viewed holistically, i.e., from a universitywide perspective—where all of the university functions are viewed together, not separately and distinctly.

Members of the MSU community told us repeatedly that MSU must refrain from trying to "be all things to all people." We must make a concerted and ongoing effort to analyze our strengths and capacities. Then, as part of the priority-setting process, outreach decisions should emphasize the goal of offering high-quality outreach programs in those areas where the university has the capacity to "make a difference".

This also means that we need to monitor external environments—in Michigan and throughout the world. In this context we frequently heard the label *markets* for MSU programs; that is, we must engage in ongoing analysis of the markets in which we can provide outreach resources, and then make "strategic" decisions so that we can deliver outreach resources in those areas where we have the greatest strengths, and in areas and ways that are consistent with MSU's mission.

The notion of avoiding being "all things to all people" also included the dimension of recognizing just what it is that a university should and should not provide through outreach. Strong emphasis was placed on the need to avoid being viewed as a "problem solver" or a "social service" institution. The university's role, on the other hand, should be that of a knowledge resource—to provide knowledge and to assist clients of our outreach programs in "putting that knowledge to work" in ways that improve their situations.

Our interviewees reminded us that MSU is not the only knowledge provider in Michigan. Other universities are very much engaged in outreach, and we need to understand what they are providing and to whom. In addition, there are many knowledge providers outside of academe (e.g., consulting firms). Again, knowledge of what is being provided, by whom, and to whom is necessary to establish appropriate outreach policy and programming at MSU.

Perhaps the most important recurring theme that we heard pertained to the recommendation that MSU outreach planning should be rooted in the answers to these questions: Outreach for whom? Outreach where? Outreach regarding what? Outreach with what outcomes? The questions emphasize the need for administrators—president, provost, vice provost for outreach, deans, and unit administrators—to make strategic decisions (actually, strategic choices) about outreach, but with the proviso that these choices should not be made apart from decisions pertaining to the resident instruction and research functions. In fact, better choices are those that recognize the linkages between and among these three knowledge-grounded functions.

An important activity suggested to us was for the Vice Provost's office to inventory and report outreach activities that are taking place at MSU. We were told that one of the great myths at MSU is that "there isn't much outreach going on here." Another myth is "most faculty don't do outreach." In the future, we were told, MSU must do a much better job of cataloging what is going on, highlighting exemplary outreach programs, and sharing that information on- and off-campus.

This last point—pertaining to the reporting of outreach work to off-campus audiences—represents another issue with which we were made familiar. Outreach work is generally consistent with, if not emblematic of, peoples' conception of work associated with a land-grant institution. Reporting our outreach work to external audiences has great value in that it demonstrates to others what MSU is doing "to make the world a better place to live." This area is most critical, our informants communicated to us, in an era dominated by calls for faculty productivity and accountability.

The respondents also commented about the need for the university to blend elements of centralization and decentralization into its outreach policy. At the central level, the university must establish an outreach philosophy (consistent with the university mission), create a broad set of outreach goals, consistently use an outreach vocabulary (to mitigate the current fuzziness), reform faculty reward and incentive systems, and promote and publicize outreach on- and off-campus. Central administration can also help colleges and units "avoid reinventing the wheel" by constantly sharing approaches and strategies that have worked at MSU. Colleges and units would also be assisted by greater coordination between the offices of the Vice Provost for University Outreach and the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies. Integrative models and approaches used at other universities (e.g., at the University of Wisconsin to integrate research/outreach activities targeted at the industrial sector) should be studied for possible adaptation at MSU. At the decentralized level, colleges and units should be given the freedom to do the type of outreach that "makes sense" for their cultures, as long as those efforts fall within the parameters established at the university level.

The topic of outreach funding was discussed by a number of the interviewees. The committee was encouraged to recommend funding strategies that will not benefit outreach at the expense of the resident instruction and research enterprises. Whereas the university needs to make a firm financial commitment to outreach (otherwise it will not be viewed as an equivalent function), we cannot and should not expect the general fund to assume 100 percent of the financial load. Along this line, the committee was encouraged to consider the relevance of charging overhead fees to certain outreach programs—dollars that would revert to a general outreach fund. The respondents suggested that we need to create a revenue stream, one which they believe does not currently exist at MSU, that will maintain the financial viability of outreach programming and, at the same time, mitigate the competition for general funds.

Although grant and contract dollars are being generated for outreach, some of the interviewees discussed the fact that there may be undue reliance on the W.K. Kellogg Foundation grant dollars available through the Vice Provost for University Outreach. To counter this potential dependency relationship, the model of the "scholarly entrepreneur" might be emphasized. In this model, the faculty member with outreach responsibilities operates a self-supporting program, and demonstrates market value by being able to attract financial resources to undertake priority, mission-relevant outreach programs.

The External Realities Frame

If people are engaged in a "life of learning," our interviewees informed us, then a university must be committed to providing them with accessible and relevant learning opportunities. Universities must also be able to adapt efficiently and effectively to changing, external realities.

Some of our respondents emphasized that universities are expected to be partners in helping to solve major social problems—to bring to bear knowledge resources. In this environment, the university outreach function will become more, rather than less, important in the future. Faculty will be expected to translate public needs into research programs—in disciplinary and, increasingly, multidisciplinary ways.

Some feel that pressures will build for MSU to be an active and bold participant in this social problem-solving enterprise. Consequently, we must be able to marshal our resources in new and creative ways. Partnerships will need to be built—across campus and with off-campus partners—to address the problems facing society. Frequently mentioned among these problems were local economy and jobs, youth-at-risk, threats to environmental quality, and the accessibility and quality of health services.

We were also told that, when MSU is experiencing financial retrenchment (usually the same time when there are increasing calls from the public for the delivery of outreach programs), outreach is typically at risk. We must decide, they said, just how central the outreach function is to the mission of MSU, and then respect that decision during periods of financial stress.

Several recommendations seemed to dominate the perspective that we describe as the external realities frame: (1) We must be very careful not to raise false expectations among our clientele about what the university is and is not prepared to deliver. We must carefully assess our capacities and strengths, and only promise what we can reasonably offer. (2) Reforming faculty reward and incentive systems that are believed to be "anti-outreach" must be a top administrative agenda. We were told that some faculty decline to participate because they "don't have an Extension appointment." These refusals, when viewed in the aggregate, can convey the message that outreach is the responsibility of Extension specialists only, and that certain parts of the university are "off limits" to the public. We were also told that, even when junior faculty find outreach work personally rewarding, they are frequently given to understand that these are activities for which they will not be rewarded at merit increase and promotion time. (3) Making outreach resources easily accessible to clients must be another top administrative goal. Along this line, we heard about the importance of making MSU "user-friendly." Alterations in our outreach structure, both on- and off-campus, should be driven by this user-friendly motto. Distance education technology, including two-way links and data compression systems, were frequently recommended distance education instruments.

This notion of "user-friendliness" was also discussed in two other ways. First, we were advised to avoid designing an outreach system that makes available knowledge resources to only those who can afford to pay for access to that knowledge. While our respondents generally acknowledged that some type of user-fee system has to accompany outreach at MSU, thought needs to be given to equity considerations. Second, the ongoing capacity for MSU outreach to be "close to the customer" may be realized, in part, by establishing university, college, and unit-level advisory committees. External stakeholders of our outreach programs should be assembled for the purpose of routinely giving advice to administrators and faculty about the status and direction of our programs.

Establishing advisory committees was viewed as one mechanism for enabling us to better anticipate the need for outreach programs. We were advised that MSU needs to do a better job of being proactive, rather than just being reactive, to external issues and problems. As one respondent said, "We are sometimes poor on timing. By the time we get there, the 'sizzle' has gone to 'fizzle'." Statewide needs assessments were also suggested to help the university respond before situations turn to crises.

We were also told that outreach should not be viewed simply as a one-way knowledge transfer process. An important outcome of outreach is client empowerment. This occurs when clients work with MSU faculty/staff to take greater control over their circumstances and environment. The learning that takes place with respect to "how to take control" is just as important as subject-matter learning, we were informed. Learning-as-empowerment may be viewed as part of the knowledge preservation function of a university's work.

Finally, some interviewees felt that we are not taking full advantage of existing networks for outreach. Our undergraduate and graduate students, as well as alumni, were mentioned as examples.

The Faculty Scholarship Frame

Time and time again, our informants emphasized the point that outreach must be rooted in scholarship. Unless this message is constantly communicated and, more importantly, believed by faculty, it is unlikely that increasing numbers of faculty will voluntarily participate in outreach efforts.

We were also told that there is a considerable amount of confusion among faculty about just what is outreach. In some units, applied research is considered outreach. In other units, continuing education is outreach. Given this situation, we were told that there is a great need to develop a common vocabulary about outreach—one that makes sense for the complexity and variety that characterizes MSU. Along this line, it was suggested to us that a better job be done of defining and communicating what it means to be a land-grant university. As one faculty respondent told us, "land-grant" has become, for some, "an attractive sounding mystery."

One of the issues addressed by multiple respondents was the need to encourage outreach, but not to simply encourage faculty "to do more outreach." We repeatedly heard that "doing more with less" has become a reality for faculty. The last thing they want to hear is that those who are not involved in outreach will be expected to do outreach, and that those who are involved in outreach will be expected to do more of it.

Furthermore, they suggested to us that "carving up of a faculty member" in function areas is perhaps the way that some administrators think about faculty work. But it is highly unlikely that faculty members think about, or approach, their work that way. Faculty are prone to think in programmatic terms—in terms of their overarching program, a program that includes different activities, sometimes on-campus teaching, sometimes basic research, sometimes applied research, and sometimes activities that administrators might classify as "outreach" (e.g., making a presentation to a middle school class).

So it is not surprising that some of our respondents recommended that attention be given to the way that outreach is defined and then communicated to faculty. We were frequently told that one strategy should be avoided at all costs: defining outreach narrowly and imposing that way of thinking across the entire university. Rather, we were told to "package" outreach so that it will be attractive to faculty. How might this be accomplished? Our respondents proposed a number of strategies.

First, considerable attention must be given to helping faculty be successful at outreach. Many faculty have limited outreach backgrounds and experiences. Outreach faculty exemplars should be identified, and those exemplars should be invited to share their work and approaches with faculty in seminar settings.¹⁴

Second, there is much ambivalence among faculty about outreach. If outreach is only viewed as "good citizenship," it is not likely to ignite the imagination and fire of faculty. "Good citizenship" is something that many believe is done "after 5" on personal time, and not something that is done as part of their program of study. In order for outreach to be credible and legitimate work, faculty must see it as work that is rooted in scholarship. That type of outreach should be used as an example of "good faculty work" (not just "good outreach") during merit increase and promotion times.

Third, we should not expect faculty to cut themselves off from their disciplinary homes. Avenues and mechanisms have to be developed and nurtured that permit a win/win situation: one that makes it possible to engage in outreach work but not at the expense of disciplinary involvements. Faculty need to be encouraged, and then rewarded, for doing work that contributes to their maturation as professionals and, at the same time, enhances MSU's reputation as an institution that applies its knowledge resources toward the goal of improving quality-of-life.

Fourth, an effort should be made to reform the socialization process for graduate students. One mechanism includes involving more graduate students in outreach programs so that they will have outreach experience by the time they become faculty members. The concept of establishing "OAs" (outreach assistantships) to parallel TAs (teaching assistantships) and RAs (research assistantships) was suggested by more than one of our informants.

Fifth, an inescapable and unavoidable issue is the faculty reward system. We were told that it is important to encourage change in the ethos of the faculty reward systems. Major change takes time, though, and this type of change is likely to be most difficult to bring about. We were told that it is important to understand the "natural rhythms" of the faculty life cycle in different units and colleges. It may be possible to advance the outreach capacity through modifying, rather than changing, reward systems. The thorniest issue associated with the reward system—and our respondents brought this up several times—is the task of addressing the extent to which junior faculty can participate in outreach activities without jeopardizing their promotion to associate professor with tenure. Even if outreach is adequately rewarded for junior faculty, the concern still exists that those who are heavily engaged in outreach at MSU may run the risk of not being nationally competitive or mobile. To address this issue, it was suggested that the University target several colleges for multi-year, reward system "experiments."

Sixth, it is important to emphasize that outreach takes time. We must find more and new ways to make outreach a time-efficient enterprise for faculty. Working with clientele often means more than just transferring knowledge. Many faculty work closely, if not collaboratively, with clients in determining what and how the outreach act or process will take place. The time-intensity of outreach must somehow be reflected in the ways that outreach is counted and evaluated.

¹⁴ This feedback moved the committee to initiate an outreach exemplars study. The purpose was to identify and describe examples of outstanding outreach that are taking place at MSU. Committee staff conducted the study, and the results are reported in Appendix B.

Seventh, we need to avoid evaluating outreach as an "activity count." Systems must be developed to evaluate the quality and impact of outreach work. Our respondents talked with us about the fact that, just as there are examples of "good" and "bad" on-campus teaching and research, there are examples of "good" and "bad" outreach. There seemed to be general agreement that "bad" outreach is work not rooted in scholarship. Given this line of thinking, the notion of evaluating outreach through "frequency counts" had little appeal to our informants.

Eighth, it is believed that we generally do a good job at MSU of encouraging cross-disciplinary research. But, we do not tend to think this way with respect to the outreach function. The institutes and centers would seem to be ideal venues for assuming this responsibility.

And, finally, the barriers between and among units on campus tend to be low (compared to other institutions). Consequently, we need to do a better job of identifying natural networks of faculty members—persons who work together on problems of common interest—and then providing them with the incentives (project dollars and reward system incentives) necessary for encouraging their participation in outreach.

Concluding Observations

Our internal stakeholders provided the committee with a considerable amount of valuable input. They repeatedly told us that ours was a difficult task, largely because the questions posed in the charge have been facing MSU for years, even decades. Some respondents suggested that it is important to put into place a mechanism—perhaps an advisory committee to the Vice Provost for University Outreach—so that important outreach planning questions can be posed and answered continually.

We were also told that we should not fall victim to the bane of many "blue ribbon" committees. We were advised to propose actions that are absolutely critical and also "institutionally digestible." Too many times, we were warned, committees write tomes and propose hundreds of recommendations. Very little, if anything, seems to come out of these efforts, and frustration (on- and off-campus) follows.

It is along this line that we were advised to be selective in what we target as high priorities. Some respondents went so far as to suggest issues that, if resolved, could provide a foundation for further action. Example suggestions included:

1. Targeting priority outreach subject-matter
2. Modifying faculty reward systems to embrace the outreach function
3. Better organizing the university's knowledge resources to make optimal impact in its work
4. Securing adequate, stable, and continuing funding to maintain a successful outreach program.

Chapter 8

OFF-CAMPUS PERSPECTIVES¹⁵

An obvious and important stakeholder in university outreach is the off-campus learner who seeks access to a university's knowledge resources. The committee devoted a considerable amount of time to planning and conducting a series of interviews (referred to as "roundtable discussions") with groups of MSU's outreach clientele. The information gained from this experience was invaluable. It influenced the committee's perspective on outreach, and was drawn upon extensively when preparing the committee report.

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the roundtable approach and results.

Roundtable Discussions Held across Michigan

Seventeen roundtable discussions were held by the committee in nine Michigan locations: Battle Creek (2), Detroit (2), Flint (2), Gaylord (2), Grand Rapids (2), Lansing (3), Marquette (2), and one each in Bay City and Traverse City. In light of the diverse locations and the committee members' campus commitments, these were not conducted as full committee interviews; an average of four committee members participated in each interaction. Between five and twenty community representatives participated in each roundtable interaction. Participants were nominated by campus informants (see Chapter 7) and by regional Extension staff. Participants were familiar with MSU's outreach programs, and represented—in each roundtable—a mix of MSU's outreach constituency (e.g., health, education, agriculture). Only one discussion focused on a specific problem area—economic development needs in the Lansing area. (Please refer to Appendix C for the list of off-campus roundtable participants.)

The Roundtable "Script"

The roundtable discussions were designed to be relatively unstructured, free-flowing interactions. Each session was facilitated by a committee member, and the conversation was framed by information that was prepared in writing and distributed at the beginning of each session:

We are delighted that you have taken the time to help with the important task of advising our institutional leaders on the subject of OUTREACH AT MSU. The purpose of these roundtables is to engage in a dialogue—for you to share with us your thoughts about what is happening in your organizations, communities, and regions, and to advise us about how MSU can help; and for us to share with you our thinking about outreach.

¹⁵ Chapter written by Frank A. Fear

We have met with a number of persons on our campus, and will be meeting with a variety of people throughout the State of Michigan. We shall take into consideration all of this input as we prepare our report. Hopefully, our report will include the very best of your thinking and our thinking.

We encourage an open discussion today. Here is a framework for organizing our discussion:

- ▶ Talk with us about what is happening in your organizations, communities, and regions. Share with us your perceptions of the good things that are happening. Comment on those areas/issues that are challenging you.
- ▶ As you think about MSU as a resource for working with you, talk with us about your past experiences with MSU.
- ▶ As you think about your situation, what would you like to see from MSU in the future? As you think about MSU "delivering" knowledge resources, how do you define "to deliver"?
- ▶ We would like to share with you our preliminary thinking about outreach at MSU, and how we picture outreach at a 21st century institution of higher education. We invite you to react to our preliminary conception.
- ▶ Let's close our conversation by addressing any issues or questions, which we have not discussed, that are especially important to you.

As a way of thanking you, we shall mail you a preliminary draft of our final report. Only a select group of people—only the persons with whom the Committee has met—will receive copies of the preliminary draft. It is a draft "for your eyes only," and we ask that you not share it with others. Any comments about the draft will be much appreciated.

The Roundtable Experience

Overall, the roundtable interactions were very positive experiences for campus and community-based participants. In almost every interaction, committee members were thanked for seeking outside opinion, and for taking the time to drive or fly to meet with people in the field.

A constructive attitude was taken by almost every community participant. Many expressed an abiding commitment to MSU and a desire to see MSU be successful in its outreach work. Some had strong ties to the University (e.g., as alumni). Others expressed appreciation for MSU's longstanding dedication to outreach. In several discussions, it was expressed that—in some ways—MSU is the "university of Michigan." We were told that Michigan State seeks to connect with people in Michigan communities unlike any other public university in the state, and it has done so longer than any other institution.

In each and every roundtable interaction, field participants had no trouble identifying local issues and problems and how, in the past, Michigan State had helped them. But most of the discussion time was devoted to evaluating their past experiences with MSU, and recommending future directions that might help MSU improve its outreach program and approach to outreach. The input in these areas was communicated candidly, openly, and clearly. In many cases, it was communicated with emphasis—if not passion. It was obvious to committee members that our informants felt a significant stake in MSU and its outreach work. Many told us that they felt this

was an opportunity to express their opinions to a group that was asked by the administration to chart a new way of thinking, organizing, and undertaking outreach. Most wanted to take full advantage of this perceived opportunity.

If committee members had preconceived notions about what the roundtable experience might be like, most probably expected to receive a variety of responses during these interchanges. In addition, many expected that the comments received from off-campus audiences would be significantly different from perspectives offered by on-campus interviewees. In some ways, the reality of the experience differed from these expectations.

It was surprising to committee members that persons from different sectors, who had different experiences with different parts of the University, made similar observations about their outreach experiences and offered similar suggestions about improving outreach at Michigan State. Indeed, the commonality of opinions was striking. Keep in mind that many of those participating in each roundtable did not know each other prior to the interview experience. We sought a mix of perspectives, and did not seek discussants who were from the same community, worked with the same agency, or worked in the same problem area. Yet, the responses were surprisingly consistent within and across roundtable interviews.

Many of the issues pertaining to the "internal operations of MSU" (as those operations pertain to outreach) were priority topics of discussion across roundtable interviews. Committee members did not solicit these responses *per se* but, as this topic of conversation emerged in later roundtables, they asked follow-up questions for the purpose of better understanding the nature and importance of these observations. We expected on-campus informants to address issues of "how MSU does business," but did not expect this subject to be a dominant discussion point around the state.

For these reasons, most committee members felt that the interactions were important, if not powerful, learning experiences. This position stands in stark contrast to the discussion within the committee early in the planning stages when some members asked their colleagues whether it would be worthwhile to undertake these field trips around Michigan.

Roundtable Themes

Five major themes will be considered here. These topics cross-cut the roundtable discussions, and pertain to:

- ▶ *Outreach philosophy*
- ▶ *Access to Michigan State University*
- ▶ *Outreach approaches*
- ▶ *Goals and structures for outreach*
- ▶ *Incentives and rewards for outreach*

Outreach Philosophy

Many informants felt that there is considerable unevenness on campus regarding the value of outreach. They believe that it is highly valued in some colleges and units, but not in others. Many were pleased to hear that there is a desire on campus to improve the standing of outreach. Others expressed frustration that it has taken so long to happen. They called for aggressive leadership on

the part of University administrators to maintain outreach as a high-priority item on MSU's agenda.

A number of persons commented that all organizations are finding the need to "reinvent" themselves in response to a rapidly changing world. It is in this regard that the University can and should be an example. But old ways of doing business can get in the way of moving the University ahead at a time when the importance of outreach may be at an all-time high. New policies, structures, and approaches may be necessary.

Access to Michigan State University

Every roundtable interaction included a discussion of the topic of access to MSU. Words such as "huge," "frustrating," "need to be more user-friendly" were commonly used. Consequently, many persons expressed great satisfaction with the outreach services offered by MSU once they discovered where to find them on campus. Others were not quite sure about the scope of what MSU had to offer, and under what circumstances it might be available to them.

There was a common call to do a better job of communicating, if not marketing, available outreach resources. What is available? How? Where? From whom? At what cost? These were some of the questions posed to us. Indeed, the ability of external constituencies to connect with campus resources efficiently and effectively was a major issue for our informants. The importance of the information clearinghouse function was brought up numerous times. Many called for the need to have at their disposal MSU "user guides." One person put the need in these terms: "Perhaps you need to modernize the road rather than to build a new road."

There were some differences of opinion about how to improve access to Michigan State, however. Would it be better to have a single access point, such as a 1-800 number, to gain access to Michigan State? Should there be multiple paths depending on the subject-matter of interest? And what about the function of MSU Extension? We were asked by some: Is this the "front door" to Michigan State? Or is it an access point for certain, but not all, knowledge resources?

More than once we were urged to recommend to the MSU administration that it do everything that it can to make MSU more user-friendly. This includes multiple types of access, access to faculty from across the campus, access to faculty resources in multiple ways, and access at a reasonable cost and within a reasonable amount of time. As one respondent put it: "It's more than making it possible for us to come to the University. You must come out and work with us."

A common call associated with connecting better with the field was the need to make classes and degree programs more accessible to working adults and professionals at times and at locations convenient for them. Many of our respondents were sensitive to the multiple demands facing faculty. The topic of modern technology and its importance to facilitating access was discussed during nearly every roundtable. One respondent phrased the mutual benefit of technology in this fashion: "Faculty won't need to drive three hours for a three-hour class, and students won't need to drive the same distance to take that class."

In some roundtables, Michigan State's capacity to deliver knowledge resources was compared to the capacity of other Michigan universities. There was concern, expressed by some MSU alumni during several roundtables, that some clientele are going elsewhere (especially to local or regional colleges and universities) to have their knowledge needs met. Part of that movement, if true, may be due to the perception that other institutions are more user-friendly and are providing more of a "personal touch." More than once, though, it was mentioned that the quality of MSU's

programs is perceived to be generally high, and that many persons in the market would rather take a course or earn a degree from MSU than complete a course or degree program from any other Michigan university except the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. This assessment was felt to represent an untapped market potential for Michigan State.

Outreach Approaches

The need to create partnerships with people, organizations, businesses, and agencies was expressed in every roundtable discussion. This, we were informed, is an important component in what our discussants felt should be the "new way of doing business." Universities will need to abandon an "ivory tower image," and adopt a philosophy of openness to the outside that includes effective listening, greater sensitivity to market needs, and the capacity to create co-equal, mutually beneficial partnerships with non-university entities. Some made reference to the need to adopt a "continuous quality management" approach to outreach. Others emphasized the need for environmental scanning so that MSU, as well as other universities, may be in touch constantly with Michigan needs.

There was a call to treat external professionals as colleagues. University faculty are not the sole knowledge source, we were informed. Several times were given examples of where University research is behind the work being done in business and industry. We were advised that faculty (and especially students) have much to gain from partnerships with external entities.

During several roundtables, informants brought up the need for universities to better "contextualize" knowledge, that is, to make knowledge available that applies directly to the people and problems locally—as people, organizations, and communities experience them. This certainly includes the application of knowledge, but also extends to the research function. Several respondents discussed examples of how MSU faculty, staff, and students have invited local entities to influence their research agendas, and sometimes to collaborate with them on research projects that pertain to their locale.

Several times we heard language pertaining to the "push" and "pull" of knowledge. We were advised to refrain from "pushing" knowledge from the University *on* localities but, rather, to "pull" topics for research *from* localities. It is in this regard that we heard that one of the problems with academe, at least from the perspective of several discussants, is that there may be too much of what they defined as "academic freedom." In their interpretation, this means too much faculty influence and insufficient external influence on the research agenda.

Two other frustrations were commonly expressed with how the University often conducts research and/or development projects. First, faculty are more likely to be available for shorter rather than longer involvements with clientele. Yet, the nature of problems experienced *in situ* sometimes requires longer-term involvement from campus. Second, we were informed that the response time from campus is often slow. On the one hand, persons who brought up this issue seemed to be aware of the multiple responsibilities facing faculty. On the other hand, they wished that faculty—as a rule—could be more responsive to needs when they are expressed from the field.

Goals and Structures for Outreach

What goals should be put forward for MSU outreach? How should MSU be organized to accomplish these goals? These questions were not addressed explicitly during the roundtable discussions, but many of the respondents' observations and comments can be classified under the rubric of outreach goals and structures.

Outreach goals

The need to offer courses and degree programs across Michigan—especially in subject-matter where MSU has unique (to Michigan) programs or in areas of the state that are now underserved by higher education—was discussed frequently. This perception might apply to literally every public university in Michigan irrespective of institutional mission and outreach experience. But many of the discussants seemed to be familiar with MSU's standing as an research institution of international reputation and standing. The words "cutting-edge topics" and "frontiers of knowledge" were shared with us more than once. Some said that MSU's university status and the quality of its faculty put the institution in a unique position to help people, organizations across sectors, and communities confront the problems facing society in the late 20th century. These problems pertain to urban decay, the breakdown of the social fabric, concern for environmental quality, the need for Michigan to be economically competitive in a global setting, and the desire to live a full, healthy life.

It was also suggested that MSU has, and should continue, to update working professionals on knowledge breakthroughs. This can be accomplished through continuing professional education workshops and seminars, as well as through advanced degree programs for professionals.

We were also informed that MSU needs to do a better job of clearly communicating about its institutional capacity for outreach. Be clear about what you are and are not prepared to deliver, we were advised. And, by all means, we were counseled to carry this message back to campus: "Don't promise what you can't deliver." We were cautioned that this can lead to unrealistic expectations and frustration in the field.

Outreach structures

Several observations about how MSU is organized for outreach were shared with the committee during the roundtable interactions. One of the most interesting observations pertained to the issue of outreach sustainability. Several discussants commented that some of MSU's outreach programs seem to be "person-dependent." In other words, the programs seem to be carried by one person or a few people. At issue was: What will happen to these programs when the people leave the employment of the University? Some concerns were expressed about the institutional commitment to this work and its survivability over time.

Others commented about the extent to which outreach work is funded as part of the University's base work. Several mentioned that much of the outreach work seems to be conducted through grant/contract activity and client fees. They questioned whether funding for outreach is viewed the same way on campus as, say, on-campus instruction for traditional (and traditionally aged) undergraduates.

Roundtable participants talked more about the efficient operation of existing structures than about the creation of new structures. There was a notable exception, however, with respect to the recommendation that MSU consider creating a degree-granting evening college and establishing a weekend college. Those who recommended the evening college did so with the belief that it would enhance access to MSU in the mid-Michigan area. The weekend college concept was advanced as a means to provide accelerated degree programs for working professionals.

Many discussants took time to comment on what they believe to be MSU's responsibility in conjunction with a statewide outreach structure. In offering this, they recommended that Michigan State might play an important facilitative and networking function by establishing extensive partnerships with other universities in the form of interinstitutional consortia. One respondent used

the term "university centers" as a means to reference "one-stop shopping" at various locations across Michigan where residents, community leaders, and businesses can seek and receive assistance.

Some complained that Michigan universities often compete for students and other outreach clients. Collaboration is necessary so that the needs of Michigan residents may be met more easily and adequately. Through interinstitutional partnerships, the weaknesses of one institution might be countered by the strengths of another institution, several discussants offered. Others predicted that the cutbacks experienced by all institutions may have less of an impact at the local level on services offered by any one university if institutions work collaboratively. And opportunities not currently available might become a reality. For example, a respondent called for a common credit system across Michigan public universities to enhance course transferability.

Incentives and Rewards for Outreach

If any committee member expected the subject of faculty incentives and rewards to be a topic of conversation in roundtable after roundtable, none expressed that opinion to their colleagues before fieldwork began. Yet roundtable participants turned to this topic again and again, and hammered its importance. Several informants told committee members that incentives and rewards represent the key for making it possible to achieve the new vision for outreach.

For example, many commented that they supported the committee's definition of outreach, but felt that is not a realistic way of viewing outreach unless and until the faculty reward system is changed. Others said it was the answer to addressing other concerns and frustrations that they had experienced, such as involving faculty in longer-term outreach efforts, and resolving the perception of some in the field that certain programs, faculty, departments, and even colleges are "off limits" with respect to outreach.

Some discussants called for an entirely new approach, such as making outreach a condition of employment for faculty. Others saw it differently. The problem extends beyond increasing the number of faculty members involved in outreach, they offered. At one roundtable, a person observed that faculty members are not equally adept at participating effectively in outreach. Sometimes the problem is personality-related, she argued, as might apply in the case where a faculty member is not able to collaborate with off-campus partners. Another reason—prior field experience—was advanced at another roundtable. This might apply when a faculty member has limited practical experience in addressing a problem despite the fact that he or she possesses academic credentials in the field.

Obviously, the matter of faculty rewards and incentives is complex. It involves more than simply requiring faculty to engage in outreach. According to some roundtable participants, it might require universities to invest in training and professional development opportunities for faculty.

Conclusions

Committee members were impressed by the insights and perspectives offered during the roundtable interactions. These external stakeholders care about MSU and what it seeks to accomplish in outreach. That was apparent by the number of persons who took the time to participate in the roundtables, by the way that they engaged fully in the conversations, and the expectations—if not

hopes—that they hold collectively for the future. For sure, they are not disinterested bystanders in MSU's outreach planning effort. It appeared to committee members that our work had real meaning to many of the roundtable participants on a professional, if not personal, level.

If we reframe the thematic categories just discussed, in five or ten years perhaps our work will be judged as a success by external audiences if—

- ▶ Outreach is a valued activity across the MSU campus.
- ▶ Michigan State has expanded and improved access to the University's knowledge resources.
- ▶ MSU is highly responsive to learners' needs, and the institution has expanded its capacity to contextualize knowledge so that knowledge fits the locations in which learning is to take place.
- ▶ Michigan State's outreach efforts are driven largely by the nature of Michigan's needs, and are undertaken in cooperation with other public universities in the state.
- ▶ There is strong and abiding commitment to reward faculty for outreach excellence, including the willingness to invest in enhancing faculty capacity in outreach.

Chapter 9

PEER INSTITUTION PERSPECTIVES¹⁶

The committee sought input from Michigan State's peer institutions regarding current thinking and future directions for university outreach on the respective campuses. The study was conducted during the late spring and early summer of 1992.

The following topics are treated in this chapter: the institution selection process, the types of information sought, the form in which the information was gathered, the results of the inquiry, and overall assessments and conclusions.

The Institution Selection Process

Information was solicited from approximately 20 institutions. The list included land-grant institutions with dual membership in the Association of American Universities, Big Ten Conference institutions, and other institutions recognized for their innovative outreach programs (nominated by at least one committee member).

Type of Information Solicited

Letters were sent by the committee chairperson to key administrators of programs in extension, continuing education, and/or public service at each institution. They were asked for copies of strategic planning reports and other planning documents that included information on one or more of the following issues:

- ▶ Outreach in relationship to the institution's mission
- ▶ User access to the institution's knowledge resources
- ▶ Outreach planning
- ▶ Cross-disciplinary strategies in outreach
- ▶ Faculty incentives and rewards relative to outreach
- ▶ Unit incentives and accountability relative to outreach
- ▶ Evaluation of outreach
- ▶ Financial support for outreach
- ▶ Statewide networks for outreach
- ▶ University governance pertaining to outreach

¹⁶ The material presented in this chapter is based on a study conducted by Laurie Wink and John Fallon, staff assistants, Provost's Committee on University Outreach, Michigan State University. The chapter was written by Ms. Wink.

Institutional Highlights

Material was received from 17 of the 20 institutions contacted:

Arizona State University
University of California, Berkeley
Colorado State University
Cornell University
Indiana University
Iowa State University
University of Maryland, College Park
University of Michigan
University of Missouri, Columbia
University of Nebraska, Lincoln
North Carolina State University
The Pennsylvania State University
Utah State University
University of Virginia
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI)
West Virginia University
University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Because institutional policies are often more clearly communicated and understood through the use of institution-based language, quotes from the materials will be frequently used when reporting institutional highlights. A bibliography of the reports received is presented in Appendix D.

Arizona State University

In July 1990, the Board of Regents established the College of Extended Education (CEE) at Arizona State University. Its divisions include:

- ▶ American Language and Cultural Program
- ▶ Arizona Prevention Resource Center (substance abuse)
- ▶ Center for Lifelong Learning
- ▶ Distance Learning Technology
- ▶ Division of Conferences and Institutes
- ▶ Division of Instructional Programs
- ▶ Downtown Center Phoenix
- ▶ Independent Study by Correspondence
- ▶ Office of Administrative Services
- ▶ Office of Marketing and Communication
- ▶ Office of Planning and Development

The College of Extended Education (CEE)—

Provides access to services and resources of ASU to meet the information and instructional needs of a socially and culturally diverse public, many of whom do not have access to an ASU campus. In partnership with ASU's other colleges and the community, CEE accomplishes this mission through the provision of high-quality credit and non-credit courses, programs, and training for both traditional and non-traditional learners in a variety of locations using innovative methods, curricula, schedules and technology. In addition, CEE

supports the university's mission through projects which complement research efforts; through community leadership and service; and through support for economic development activities.

CEE has created partnerships with "more than 100 universities, community groups, businesses and state, local and federal entities to extend ASU into the community, to improve minority education and to examine public policy issues."

University of California, Berkeley

No reports were forwarded in response to our request. However, the Associate Dean of University Extension prepared a letter for the committee, which included this statement:

The notion of 'outreach' is not well defined and on our campus is not used except in the most generic way....Our chancellor has as one of his four major goals the strengthening of our ties to the community and to the many constituencies we serve. But I cannot point to any specific way in which this goal is being implemented.

We, in Extension, are in the process of a long-range planning effort which will incorporate more directly into our mission and activities much of what is known as outreach. We want to lead our university and its separate units into a more productive and effective public service and outreach function. These activities are increasingly important to the university as budget and political winds blow against us. We are developing plans and following up on opportunities as they arise.

According to a report in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (July 29, 1992), the University of California system has revised its faculty reward policies to give greater consideration to teaching and service. Standards for promotion to higher salaries within the rank of full professor also have been modified to include national or international distinction in teaching or research.

Colorado State University

In March 1992, the university issued *The University Strategic Plan: FYs 1992-93 through 1995-96*. The plan contains seven AIMS, which are "statements of the university's fundamental intentions and purposes." Among them is the fourth AIM:

- ▶ To provide outreach programs responsive to the Educational and developmental needs of all university constituencies

Seven major goals are listed under this AIM:

1. Communicate the university's mission, function, goals and activities to its internal and external publics.
2. Enable Colorado State to remain the state's lead educational institution in areas of state economic development, technical assistance and transfer, continuing education and human resource and community development.
3. Develop partnerships with school systems and other agencies so that individuals may better access higher education and be successful in their pursuits.

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4. Continue development of telecommunication and other technologies for the dissemination and enhancement of knowledge through existing and future outreach programs including education, service and assistance programs.
5. Identify and reward faculty, staff and student contributions to outreach and distance learning.
6. Promote educational innovation and mutually beneficial relationships by forging linkages with business, agriculture, industry, and other public agencies including higher education and social institutions.
7. Foster cooperative ventures with the other institutions of higher education in the Colorado State University system.

This excerpt, drawn from *Season Your Opportunities*, the 1992 fall bulletin, Division of Continuing Education, Colorado State, clearly communicates the outreach philosophy:

Vital connections. At Colorado State University this isn't just a phrase. It's a philosophy, a way of doing business. The people of Colorado State are in towns, throughout the state, making a positive difference on the education of children, the vitality of businesses and the health and welfare of families and neighbors. Vital connections—it's been the essence of our land-grant mission for more than 120 years. Colorado State's land-grant mission, to serve people and solve complex problems, extends beyond the boundaries of campus. University education, research and service are tied to downtowns and hometowns throughout the state, and the world.

Cornell University

A folder describing Cornell University Extension and Outreach Programs included one-page descriptions of the following:

- ▶ The Cornell Cooperative Extension Service
- ▶ Cornell Industrial and Labor Relations Extension
- ▶ Center for the Environment
- ▶ Southern Tier Industrial Technology Extension Partnership
- ▶ Biotechnology Transfer Program
- ▶ New York Sea Grant Extension Program
- ▶ Community and Rural Development Institute
- ▶ Cornell Institute for Biology Teachers

Cornell also sent the *Report of the Commission on the Future of the Cornell Cooperative Extension System (March 1987)*. Former University of Michigan president Robben Fleming chaired the commission, which was asked to consider, among other things, the question of "a more broadly based and expanded extension outreach from Cornell University." The commission made nine recommendations, including one stating:

A means should be found for broader involvement of interested Cornell faculty in extension programs. The Office of the Provost should assume this responsibility, as is the case for research and teaching programs. It is likely that the stature of extension programs would be increased, that the outreach into other schools and colleges would be enhanced, and that cooperation among various schools and colleges would be encouraged....

The Office of Provost should, after consultation with the deans, create a federated extension center where extension-type programs of the schools and colleges would be affiliated and from which each program would benefit. Incentives should be established to encourage cooperation of the schools, colleges and Cooperative Extension associations. Such a center would be evaluated after five years to determine whether it is strengthening extension programming. Cornell should be prepared to find additional funds for the work of extension throughout the university if this recommendation is to be implemented effectively.

Indiana University

Indiana University (IU) has eight separate campuses, each responsible for its own outreach efforts. As quoted in the cover letter from our institutional contact: "Each campus determines its own outreach mission, level of financial support, faculty incentives and rewards, strategic planning, etc."

All literature sent from IU revolved around their Continuing Education efforts. Indiana University has a systemwide School of Continuing Studies, with a marketing and promotion office, which serves both the systemwide divisions and the individual campus divisions.

The School of Continuing Studies grants four degrees: Associate and Bachelor of General Studies, emphasizing flexibility and convenience for the non-traditional student; and Associate and Bachelor of Science in Labor Studies, which are designed to provide union members and others with the skills they need to work within labor organizations and labor-management relations.

Iowa State University

The April 1990 document, *Strategic Plan for Iowa State University* states, "Iowa State's outreach responsibilities are broad and require the involvement of the entire university." The plan includes five universitywide goals, the fourth of which is "to provide outstanding extension programs and other outreach efforts appropriate to the needs of the state and beyond...." These programs are characterized by (*note: these are abbreviated here*)—

- ▶ Integration of teaching, research and outreach efforts within and across disciplines
- ▶ Emphasis on agriculture, protection of natural resources, human needs, and community resource development and assistance in the development of economic opportunities
- ▶ Linkages with governmental agencies and units (national, state and local levels), with research programs elsewhere, and with the private sector to provide quality information
- ▶ Expanded off-campus offerings of credit courses and degree programs, with emphasis on serving adult and other nontraditional students
- ▶ Provision of noncredit courses and workshops to promote lifelong learning
- ▶ Developing communication technologies for more efficient and effective program delivery
- ▶ A working partnership with other educational institutions

The Strategic Plan report urges increased use of current and emerging communications technologies to deliver high-quality ISU programs. It calls for Iowa State to become more involved with

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other Iowa educational systems in increasing coordination with respect to programs, clientele and geographic areas. The report also urges Iowa State to "work closely with K-12 systems to enhance the quality of education in Iowa schools and to prepare students for higher education."

Following a 1989 study of ISU's extension program by an *ad hoc* committee, the position of vice provost for extension was established. According to the *ad hoc* committee's report, the four units of university extension are: the Cooperative Extension Service; the Center for Industrial Research and Service; Business and Engineering Extension; and the Office of Continuing Education.

The vice provost for extension is charged with working with college deans to integrate teaching, research and outreach efforts within and across the university disciplines by:

- ▶ Expanding use of faculty appointments jointly budgeted between extension and academic departments
- ▶ Encouraging faculty and staff who do not hold such appointments to participate in outreach activities
- ▶ Recognizing and rewarding extension contributions
- ▶ Staffing off-campus credit courses as part of normal teaching assignments of tenure-track faculty
- ▶ Including the cost of off-campus courses within the university's instructional budget

University of Maryland, College Park

The University of Maryland system consists of 11 institutions and four research and outreach units. Each of these is headed by a president, and each has some outreach responsibility.

The largest of the degree-offering institutions is the University of Maryland-University College. It is also the only institution that provides educational opportunities for Maryland's current workforce. Priorities at University College for the 1990s include: increase access for minorities; design and deliver new academic and professional development programs that respond to the needs of Maryland's workforce; establish and administer University of Maryland system centers at key locations throughout the state; and expand educational delivery to remote areas of Maryland.

The unit with the most responsibility for outreach programs in the Maryland system is the Cooperative Extension Service (CES), which is part of the Maryland Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources (MIANR). Most of the information sent to the committee pertained to the goals and objectives of MIANR. This information is outlined in a report entitled, *Initiative for Maryland Agriculture and Natural Resources in the 21st Century* (IMAGAN-21). This report was compiled with input from citizens, state agencies, and faculty of the University of Maryland system. The major issues are grouped into four strategic areas: agricultural productivity and profitability; natural resources; human capital; and diet, nutrition, and health.

University of Michigan

A response letter from the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs included the following:

Recently, the Public Service Data Base was established as a menu item on the Michigan Library Network (MIRLYN). The database includes 700 public service activities and programs in the areas of consulting, research, training, teaching, and medical care....

In addition, two centralized efforts are worthy of note. Those in faculty governance recently initiated the Faculty Public Service Award, given annually to a faculty member who has demonstrated excellence in service activities. Also, beginning next spring faculty will recognize exemplary service with an annual award to be given to a student for outstanding community service....

University of Missouri, Columbia

The University of Missouri-Columbia (MU) is currently undergoing a self-examination. As stated in the cover letter sent to the committee:

The issue that's being examined in this state is not only should this institution continue its outreach mission of providing a resource base which is accessible to the entire state, but it appears the real question is, would this university system remain a land-grant institution in total.

Historically, MU has viewed outreach activities as a primary mission of the university. In 1960, the Agricultural Extension Service and Division of Continuing Education were combined to form University Extension, a division created to facilitate "all activities of an extension nature." In 1992, the primary purpose of University Extension is "to serve Missouri by extending the research-based knowledge and problem-solving resources of the University of Missouri system to people throughout the state."

As stated in MU's *Blueprint for Change* (1986), the core values of University Extension are:

- ▶ Extension is close to the people.
- ▶ Extension is an integral part of the land-grant system and provides unbiased, research-based knowledge and access to the total knowledge base of the University of Missouri.
- ▶ Extension's product is the application of knowledge to solve problems.
- ▶ Extension's function is to help people learn how to solve their own problems.
- ▶ Extension's most important resources are people; highly motivated professionals and volunteers.
- ▶ Excellence, integration of disciplines, creativity, and responsiveness are central to Extension's role.
- ▶ Flexibility and adaptability are important organizational qualities for Extension.

In preparing a 1992-95 Plan of Work for University Extension, input from "upwards of 5,000 citizens" was used to identify seven issues. These seven issues form the basis of all Extension programming:

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- ▶ Agricultural profitability and viability
- ▶ Building family and individual strength
- ▶ Building human resources
- ▶ Business, community, and economic development
- ▶ Enhancing health and nutrition
- ▶ Environmental quality and stewardship
- ▶ Youth development

Other specific goals and objectives for MU in the 1990s include: promote interdisciplinary and collaborative research; make MU's resources more accessible to citizens throughout the state, including credit and non-credit courses; help private and public sectors improve economic development programs by promoting statewide awareness of and access to faculty and staff expertise; and develop and maintain relationships with external constituencies to obtain financial resources (support work of alumni, capital campaigns, etc.).

In regards to faculty incentives, MU has two annual awards for faculty who contribute significantly to Extension or Continuing Education. Each consists of an engraved plaque and a \$1000 prize. One is available to all faculty with five or more years at MU-C, and the second is available to faculty with no more than four years at MU-C. Selection of the recipient is made by a provost-appointed committee.

University of Nebraska, Lincoln

Quoting from the 1990 *Strategic Plan for UN-L*:

Outreach activities involve many kinds and combinations of instruction, research, and service. The university plans to respond to the changing needs of Nebraska in ways that utilize the expertise of its faculty, advancing technology, and the transfer of new knowledge.

Major outreach functions at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UN-L) are carried out by Cooperative Extension and the Division of Continuing Studies. The mission of the Cooperative Extension Division is "to help Nebraskans apply timely, research-based knowledge to their daily lives." Educational programs also exist in each of Nebraska's 93 counties. Priorities for Cooperative Extension include:

- ▶ Enabling agriculture and agribusiness industries to become more efficient, profitable, competitive, and sustainable
- ▶ Providing programs that develop human resources
- ▶ Expanding outreach programs in nutrition, health, food safety, and food handling
- ▶ Revitalizing rural communities through self-empowerment
- ▶ Expanding educational outreach programs to enhance the quality of water and the environment

The mission of the Division of Continuing Studies is "to extend the resources of the university to promote lifelong learning." In addition to offering classes to high school students and adult learners, the Division of Continuing Studies has had success in attracting the professional business

community to the university. The division acts as a liaison between the business community and the entire university by directing phone calls and other contacts to faculty who can assist inquirers. In cooperation with the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce, the division also prepared a phone book listing of all major research and service activities available at the university. Informing and promoting university outreach activities has been a very valuable tool at UN-L.

North Carolina State University

During the 1991-92 academic year, the Divisions of University Extension and Research Administration were merged to form the Office for Research, Outreach and Extension (OROE). By linking the two divisions, North Carolina State University (NCSU) hopes to strengthen the connections among research, outreach, and extension activities.

The following is a quote from OROE's Annual Plan for 1992:

The mission of the Office for Research, Outreach and Extension at NCSU is to provide leadership and support for research, outreach and extension programs for the entire University; to promote the transfer of research and new knowledge into productive technologies and a better quality of life; to help link the faculty and the new knowledge and technologies they produce with the people of the State, the Nation and the World...and to stimulate interest in multidisciplinary research, outreach and extension areas, especially those that respond to the public needs.

Organizational changes and challenges will be significant at NCSU, the Committee was informed, during the time that the institution seeks to "better position the University to meet its land-grant mission, thereby enhancing its reputation and service to the people of North Carolina." It is also noted that the goals of OROE will not be met "unless NCSU is willing to make a commitment and establish an infrastructure to support and expand outreach activities, and to provide an even more effective infrastructure in support of research." Some specific program goals and objectives include:

- ▶ Continue to promote faculty interest in transfer of knowledge and technology.
- ▶ Develop a policy for returning royalty income from the University's share to the inventor's academic unit.
- ▶ Publicize inventions and build new contacts with business.
- ▶ Invite advice from constituencies in setting OROE priorities by bringing University and non-University people together to form ad hoc advisory groups on relevant issues.
- ▶ Create a clearinghouse of information pertaining to NCSU's research and faculty expertise as a means to inform the public.
- ▶ Establish a centralized OROE information referral system linked to every college and school.
- ▶ Expand credit and noncredit offerings and related support services through lifelong education programs in response to changing demographics.

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- ▶ Upgrade and expand the use of telecommunication technologies and equipment to facilitate and enhance outreach services.
- ▶ Expand and strengthen partnerships with education, local and state government, business and industry, and regional and international agencies.
- ▶ Strengthen the base support for outreach and extension activities. (NCSU advocates that every college and school have a full-time outreach and extension administrator reporting to the dean. Also, NCSU suggests establishing a funding source to support temporary faculty assignments for special interdisciplinary programs.)
- ▶ Provide a central computer system which links college research offices with the sponsored programs office.

With regard to faculty incentives, NCSU will attempt to "emphasize the importance of outreach and public service by rewarding faculty for engaging in extension programs that impact on societal problems or meet the needs of special groups." Sample ideas include: developing a "model" performance evaluation criteria comparable in rigor to teaching and research procedures; establishing mechanisms for reviewing extension and public service publications that do not have a form readily suitable for submission to a scholarly journal; and convening a focus group of program chairs to meet on a regular basis to address evaluation methods and communications and to evaluate procedures.

The Pennsylvania State University

Penn State recently formed a Council on University Outreach to "increase the value of outreach within the culture of the University and to ensure the increased communication and coordination among the (3) major outreach units (Cooperative Extension, Economic Development System, and Continuing Education)."

The council defines outreach as "The delivery of education beyond the traditional, degree-seeking audience in the classroom on the campus, extending the resources of the University to the community, state, nation, and world."

The council also explains that a universitywide systematic commitment to outreach is essential if Penn State is to have a significant impact on the problems and issues caused by rapid changes in society. By coordinating its outreach efforts more effectively, Penn State hopes to accomplish the following:

- ▶ Enhance the outreach message delivered to the public by reducing the confusion often generated by different arms of Penn State offering similar outreach programs.
- ▶ Strengthen Penn State's ability to serve varied and diverse audiences throughout the state, nation, and world.
- ▶ Allow pooling of expertise, enabling outreach activities to build on the strengths of several units and further enhance the broader dissemination of research.
- ▶ Enable Penn State to provide a single, comprehensive, ongoing compilation of all University outreach activities.

- ▶ Provide a unified, focused approach to state and federal agencies and funding sources interested in and committed to higher education's outreach function.

The major outreach units at PSU include:

Cooperative Extension (CES)

With offices in each county, Cooperative Extension is developed as a vital outreach effort to "take the university to the people." CES promotes the cooperation between the public and private sectors to support local and regional economic development activities.

Economic Development System

Penn State offers a number of programs to assist industry, including: Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program (PENNTAP) (one of the nation's first university-based technology transfer programs); Ben Franklin Technology Center (a technology development program); Industrial Research Office (serves as a liaison between industry and Penn State research); and Intellectual Property Office (promotes the commercial development of inventions evolving from Penn State's \$300 million research enterprise).

Continuing Education

Continuing Education attempts to take the courses, programs, and other educational services offered by the University and make them available to companies and individuals. Resources of the University are used to customize and individualize courses or programs to meet the needs of business and industry on or off site. Emphasis is on meeting the educational and development needs of adults via credit and noncredit offerings.

Utah State University

Following is an excerpt from *Philosophy and Mission of Utah State University, Part VI. Goals for University Service/Extension* (1984):

The three basic functions of any major university are the discovery, transmittal, and application of knowledge on behalf of students and society. The functions are interrelated and they are accomplished through the activities of teaching, research, and extension – each of which represents service to society. In this sense "public service" is an outcome or end result of all our effort and not some separately identifiable set of activities as commonly presumed....

In summary, the interrelated functions of discovery, application and transmittal generate four major outcomes for society: the advancement of knowledge; problem analysis; educated people; and cultural and clinical services.

Public service, as used here, embraces the four types of outcomes, because all of our work is done on behalf of society.

Also forwarded from Utah State was a section of the *Strategic Plan for University Extension/Cooperative Extension and Life Span Learning Programs* (June 15, 1989). Regarding the mission and role of Life Span Learning Programs (LSLP), the report states:

There is agreement among colleges, departments and Life Span Learning personnel that one of the three mandated missions of the land-grant university is to support the 'extension of education and training and the dissemination of knowledge' among the constituents. Life Span Learning Programs clearly are central to the fulfillment of this mission, for they

provide an administrative and support infrastructure to deliver needed services to residents, especially those living outside the metropolitan and university centers.

University of Virginia

Forwarded to the committee was a December 1991 draft copy of the *Plan for the Year 2000* which included the following statement in a section entitled, "A Vision for the University":

At the heart of the University's mission are the discovery, preservation, dissemination and application of knowledge and the fostering of creative endeavor, all with the purpose of increasing society's understanding of the dynamic physical, social, economic, political, and philosophical forces of our changing world, and the interplay among them. The University must continue to strive for eminence as a center for higher learning—as a balanced enterprise involving education, research and service....Achieving eminence requires a renewed commitment to the highest standards of rigorous scholarship and challenging teaching. It requires a superb faculty committed to a professional life that joins and balances research, teaching and service....

In the same report, a section on the "Application of Knowledge" states that the university supports service that is consistent with its mission and that recognizes the needs of society. Among the forms of university service recognized are:

- ▶ Provision of comprehensive health care
- ▶ Consultative services for government, industry, and education
- ▶ Continuing education for government, business, and professions
- ▶ Library, data, research and evaluative services
- ▶ Engineering and technology development
- ▶ Licensing and certification services
- ▶ Applied research to improve education, government, health, and the environment
- ▶ Cultural and intellectual enrichment
- ▶ Fine arts events and activities

The report details strategies for developing more effective mechanisms to apply knowledge generated inside the institution to the world outside:

- ▶ Integrate service into instructional programs (e.g., through public service projects, academic internships, field study opportunities).
- ▶ Recognize and reward service.
- ▶ Offer learning resources of the university throughout the Commonwealth.
- ▶ Assist education throughout the Commonwealth.
- ▶ Assist state and local governance throughout the Commonwealth.
- ▶ Enhance health care throughout the Commonwealth.
- ▶ Promote conferences on policy issues involving both scholarship and service.
- ▶ Link the university with other institutions and communities through electronic communication and computer networks.

- ▶ Cultivate collaborative ventures.
- ▶ Integrate research and service.
- ▶ Involve the university in the local community.
- ▶ Expand summer and other special course offerings.

Material (credit and noncredit course offerings, workshops, etc.) was forwarded by the Dean of the Division of Continuing Education, the university's academic outreach unit which annually registers more than 40,000 people in programs offered by the division.

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI)

Virginia Tech engaged in a self-study process during 1986-88 that found the university's public service dimension was not equitably evaluated and rewarded. A major conclusion of the self-study was that the university should establish a more balanced relationship among its three missions (teaching, research, and service).

A Committee on Evaluation of Faculty Efforts in Extension and Public Service was created in March 1988 by VPI Interim Executive Vice President and Provost John Perry to determine processes for equitably evaluating and rewarding faculty service activities. Two themes emerged from the committee's work:

1. The need for more emphasis on external evaluation of service activities.
2. The need for more emphasis on measuring the impact of service activities.

In its report, "Evaluation of Faculty Effort in Extension and Service," the committee reaffirmed the belief that "service is critical to the mission of a land-grant institution and must be integrated into the valuing systems held by faculty and administrators."

Based on a review of the literature on university service, the committee recognized a need to broaden the general understanding of service activities throughout Virginia Tech, and identified and defined four types of service:

Public service — the practical application of knowledge accumulated at the university through research and other scholarly activities to problems confronting individual citizens, citizen groups and public and private organizations. Public service consists of identifying, assessing and managing problems, and developing and transferring useful information to clients (including local, state, regional, national and international individuals and groups).

University service — any activity, other than teaching and research, which facilitates growth and development of the university as an entity. University service includes the study of departmental, collegiate or university needs, the development of procedures for meeting those needs, and the implementation of those procedures; it includes governance, planning and management, fund raising, faculty and staff personnel activities, and advisory service to student and staff groups.

Professional service — contributions to the advancement of scholarly and professional organizations. Professional service includes holding offices, developing programs, editing journals, debating professional issues and assisting colleagues.

Community service — personal contribution of effort to community, civic and religious organizations. Community service is not normally considered for salary, tenure/continuing appointment and promotion deliberations. Service to the community that utilizes professional and leadership skills associated with the individual's discipline or the university's interest is considered public or university service.

The committee recommended that each administrative unit develop guidelines for appropriate service activities and ways to document the impact of service. The report Appendix G suggested processes that units could use to document the impact of service using both quantitative and qualitative measures of the service types.

At the committee's request, Virginia Tech's Office of Institutional Research and Planning Analysis conducted a survey to determine how other institutions weigh faculty performance in service activities in promotion, tenure and salary decisions; and how they measure effectiveness of service activities. The survey was sent to chief academic officers at 84 major state universities and colleges, and 61 usable responses were received (a 73 percent response rate). Survey results were summarized in three sections:

1. Cooperative Extension faculty

Among extension service activities listed, those using academic and scholarly skills were weighed highest; the provision of information to the general public was rated lowest in promotion, tenure and salary decisions.

Most universities expect extension faculty to meet the same standards as other faculty.

2. Service activities

Service activities (public, community, university, and professional) were rated of lower importance, particularly those in the community.

Peer evaluation was the measure of effectiveness most frequently mentioned for service activities.

3. Changes to current practice

Respondents believed the perception of extension and service activities as lower status could be changed by linking assigned activities to performance measures.

(NOTE: Appendix E of Virginia Tech's report summarizes supplementary material from 22 universities describing guidelines for faculty personnel decisions. Of particular interest are detailed statements about public service from four universities: Vermont, Cal.-Davis, Ohio State, and Wyoming).

Virginia Tech recently established a new position of Vice Provost for University Outreach and International Programs. Consideration is being given to including off-campus credit programs under this position. Historically, most outreach activities at Virginia Tech have been administered by Cooperative Extension and the university's Center for Continuing Education.

A strategic plan for the Center for Continuing Education, *Enhancing People and Organizational Productivity throughout the Commonwealth*, states that its mission is to develop and disseminate educational consultation and training programs and selected technological information to adult constituents outside of traditional credit or Cooperative Extension formats. Programs are grounded in a set of values emphasizing that, to the maximum extent possible, all representatives of the Center for Continuing Education shall—

- ▶ Actively listen to and learn from all stakeholders.
- ▶ Be accessible to all stakeholders.
- ▶ Ask for feedback and involvement of all clients.
- ▶ Respond effectively and creatively to needs/opportunities and be proactive in seeking these.
- ▶ Act cooperatively and in a coordinated way.
- ▶ Deliver quality products...both in-house and to stakeholders.
- ▶ Insure that quality shall prevail over short-term financial considerations.
- ▶ Provide timely answers and information to all involved stakeholders.
- ▶ Define performance criteria and share results with all involved stakeholders.
- ▶ Follow through on commitments to clients both inside and outside the University.
- ▶ Observe the highest moral and ethical standards.
- ▶ Regularly confront self-established standards in open discussion with staff and clients.

Concerns regarding the present status of Continuing Education at Virginia Tech include: (1) the university community is not aware of the overall accomplishments in the continuing education area; (2) many faculty do not perceive sufficient reward for participation in continuing education programs and outreach activities; (3) all members of the University community need to be encouraged to use the services of the Center for their outreach efforts; and (4) there is no central University coordination of all off-campus centers integrating University programs and priorities.

Two strategic areas for future planning include:

Linkages through Partnerships. Building mutually beneficial relationships with state and local government agencies, business enterprises, and professional/trade associations.

Development of an International Program Component. Providing assistance to the Virginia business community in developing and expanding international trade.

West Virginia University

A steering group reviewed the university's service activities and identified four areas for special attention:

University Outreach at Michigan State University

1. **A Service Agenda for West Virginia** — a steering committee will coordinate a comprehensive analysis of current service activities and will propose areas for enhancement or development.
2. **Service-Learning for Students** — a team of students, faculty, staff and community representatives is coordinating and expanding student service activities and helping to relate them to the entire learning experience.
3. **Communication** — a Board of Trustees task force has been formed to improve two-way communications with the citizens of the state.
4. **Reward Systems and Personnel Policies** — a committee chaired by the Interim Provost will review policies and practices to determine if changes are needed to encourage recognition and rewards for service.

The Project on Service and University Activities was formed to implement efforts in these four areas. A document describing the project offers the following definition of service:

In its broadest sense, the mission of West Virginia University may be described as service with emphasis on the citizens of West Virginia....In a narrower sense, the term "service" refers specifically to the outreach aspect of the mission. Service activities in this narrower context are the application of the benefits and products of teaching and research to address the needs of society and the profession. These activities include direct service to the people of West Virginia, service to one's profession and service within the university. Even though service to the profession and university service are important and support the overall university mission, it is the application of university expertise and resources to the state which is the particular focus of this service initiative.

Several examples are given of how the university serves the state through continuing education activities, off-campus credit courses, through research that considers the needs of the state, and through service-learning projects for students. Then, the following statement is made:

Finally a comment on what is not considered to be university service. Many, if not most, of the faculty, staff and students of West Virginia University engage in a variety of public service activities not specifically related to their field of expertise or done as a professional activity: civic clubs, school organizations, and citizen action groups, are a few examples. Those public interest acts of service which one performs as a member of the community at large, while highly commendable, are not to be confused with the service activities which are part of one's professional responsibilities.

University of Wisconsin, Madison

A cover letter from the Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Extension (UWEX) states that all of the outreach function in the 26-campus UW system (13 four-year and 13 two-year institutions) is referred to as extension. A document forwarded to the committee presents the UWEX mission:

In addition to the UW System mission, the select mission of the University of Wisconsin-Extension is to provide, jointly with the UW institutions and the Wisconsin counties, an extension program designed to apply University research, knowledge, and resources to meet the educational needs of Wisconsin people, wherever they live and work.

UWEX is made up of three divisions:

1. Continuing Education Extension (CEE)

CEE faculty based on each campus offer continuing education opportunities for the professions, business and industry and the general public; Small Business Development Center (SBDC) counselors help individuals start and expand businesses.

2. Cooperative Extension (CES)

Extension faculty on seven UWS campuses and in each county respond to needs of communities, families, farmers, agribusinesses and youth.

3. Extension Communications

Provides educational, informational, and cultural programming throughout the state via public radio and television networks, and delivers extension programs via educational teleconference networks.

Strategic planning documents and vision statements for the first two divisions were sent to the committee, as well as a description of the systemwide extension council that serves as a common institutional bond for faculty and academic staff involved in the extension function on the campuses and in the counties.

A report, *The Wisconsin Idea: Extension Programs in the UW System, 1991*, offers the following:

Quite simply, Extension is the people of Wisconsin and their University working together to apply University knowledge and resources to the current needs of their families, professions, businesses, and communities. It's practical, issue-focused, problem-solving education to help local citizens and leaders improve the state's economy, protect its environment, enhance the viability of its communities, and enrich the quality of their lives and work through continuing education.

Conclusions

As the report highlights indicate, each of the peer institutions is providing public access to university knowledge resources through efforts variously described as "service", "extension," or "outreach". These efforts typically include:

- ▶ Off-campus credit courses and degree programs
- ▶ Noncredit courses, workshops and conferences
- ▶ Technical assistance initiatives
- ▶ Information delivery via communications technologies.

A number of institutions seem to share a philosophy that is grounded in:

- ▶ **Research-based knowledge.** Outreach is activity that extends the university's knowledge resources.
- ▶ **Problem-solving.** The purpose of outreach is to help people learn how to solve their own problems.
- ▶ **Integration.** Service/outreach/extension needs to be connected with teaching and research activities within and across disciplines.

- ▶ **Faculty incentives.** Faculty who engage in outreach activities should be recognized and rewarded.
- ▶ **Partnerships.** Outreach collaboration, rather than competition with other educational institutions, governmental agencies, and the private sector, is emphasized.

In addition, several institutions emphasize a set of core values, such as accessibility, timeliness, efficiency, quality, and two-way communication. It is clear that these major public universities—whether or not they are land-grant institutions—embrace the mission of public service, attempt to listen to and learn from their stakeholders, and are committed to finding ways to put knowledge to work on behalf of society with particular emphasis on serving the needs of citizens in their respective state.