

Part Six:
**A Conceptual Frame
of Reference for
University Outreach**

What is university outreach? The committee always felt that, in posing this necessary question, it had a "tiger by the tail." The purpose of Chapter 10 is to try to "tame the tiger." Without question, committee members believed that if we could not establish the essential dimensions of university outreach, then it would be very difficult for us to advance lucid recommendations for improving it. Committee members also believed that it was necessary to understand outreach as a phenomenon that can be understood in terms of multiple dimensions and approaches.

In Chapter 11, we build on the definition by describing outreach as a multidimensional construct. Outreach is multiple realities wrapped in a single concept because universities are, by nature, diverse places.

In Chapter 12, we describe a university as a multicultural organizational entity. Then, we identify and describe multiple university outreach cultures (with special reference to MSU), each with a different culture and corresponding set of beliefs, values, norms, and "ways of doing business." As mentioned previously, we used the findings from this chapter to organize and conduct the focus group/roundtable interviews with MSU faculty and staff.

Chapter 10
WHAT IS UNIVERSITY OUTREACH?¹⁷

Bringing clarity to the concept of outreach is no easy task. Outreach is a new concept on our campus (only used since 1990), but many of the activities and programs associated with what is now called outreach (lifelong/continuing education and extension) have been undertaken for years at MSU. Until the late 1980s, much of what took place at MSU as lifelong/continuing education was undertaken by faculty and staff who worked at the Kellogg Center for Continuing Education. Another set of activities and programs—those associated with Cooperative Extension—was the responsibility of faculty and staff who held "Extension" appointments.

¹⁷ This chapter was written by Frank A. Fear with some text provided by committee members James Dye and Charles Thompson. A version of this chapter was presented by committee members Fear and Lorilee Sandmann at the annual meeting of the National Continuing Education Association, May 1993, in Nashville, TN.

Today's environment at MSU is one that emphasizes the integration of lifelong/continuing education and Extension under the organizing rubric of outreach. For example, the Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach is part of the Provost's Office—the academic arm of the University. The Cooperative Extension director reports to the Vice Provost (as well as to the Vice Provost and Dean, Agriculture and Natural Resources). And the Cooperative Extension Service now carries the logo *Michigan State University Extension*, signalling a linkage to the whole of the University.

Organizational restructuring aside, one of the important questions to be answered in this report involves whether outreach should be a cross-university function. If the answer is *yes*, important follow-up questions include: How? In what ways? If the answer is *no*, then the committee will question the wisdom of the recent organizational changes.

These are questions with which the committee grappled for months. The purpose of this chapter is to begin the process of communicating our answers. An important task to be undertaken in this chapter involves defining outreach. But because the committee's discussion will focus on the linkage between outreach and the mission of a university, the all-important first questions are: What is a university? Is outreach a fundamental part of what a university is and does?

The Notion of a University

Earlier, we referenced Lynton and Elman's (1987) description of a university as a knowledge enterprise. It is the committee's belief that the fundamental purpose of a university is to *generate, transmit, apply, and preserve* knowledge. Furthermore, we believe that the activities and processes associated with these four functions, when undertaken by the Academy (i.e., by academics), represent scholarship:

When scholars generate knowledge, they discover it.

When scholars transmit knowledge, they share it with others.

When scholars apply knowledge, they do so for the purpose of helping others better understand, if not address, circumstances and problems.

When scholars preserve knowledge, they seek to save what has been learned for future access.

As a knowledge enterprise, the unique niche for a university in the marketplace of higher education (vis-à-vis other institutions of higher education, such as liberal arts colleges) is its focus on generating, transmitting, applying, and preserving cutting-edge knowledge. All higher education is in the knowledge business, but universities have a special responsibility—to advance the frontiers of knowledge. Land-grant universities, the committee believes, have still another responsibility—expanding the knowledge frontiers with the public needs, especially the needs of the people of their state, squarely in focus.

It is impossible to use the word "knowledge" in the definition of a university without also using the word "learning." Those associated with universities are constantly learning, and others benefit from that learning in the form of the knowledge that is produced. In addition, many of the cutting-edge approaches to scholarship in education, health, and the social sciences, for example,

emphasize the need for those within the academy to collaborate with those outside the academy in the process of cogenerating knowledge (see Whyte 1991).

If a university is in the knowledge business in the ways just described, then what is it not expected to be and do? A university is NOT a number of things:

- ▶ A university is not a community college, because that is a postsecondary institution with a different mission. But universities should cooperate with community colleges to help them accomplish their mission.
- ▶ A university is not a trade school, but it must recognize the importance of technical skills to society, and insure that the training it offers is consistent with the latest developments in technology.
- ▶ A university is not a social service agency, but developments in medicine, education, the social sciences, and many other areas need to be transmitted to agency personnel so that they can use this knowledge in their efforts to address social problems.
- ▶ A university is not a research lab, but technology transfer and joint/collaborative research ventures are appropriate university activities.
- ▶ A university is not an elementary, secondary, or high school, but education is a legitimate and necessary function for all disciplines—not just for the discipline of Education. As educators of teachers, scholars must assist in their continuing education and help teachers at all levels teach effectively and with understanding.
- ▶ A university is not a governmental bureau, but in America there is a long history associated with the academy's assisting the work of government through the generation and, especially, the transmission and application of knowledge.

Is Outreach Fundamental to What a University Is and Does?

The committee response to this question is an emphatic *yes*. Making knowledge available and accessible for the direct benefit of others is a vital part of what a university does and is supposed to do. When a university "extends itself" to meet the knowledge needs of others, university outreach takes place.

At least five characteristics are associated with efforts made by a university to extend itself: extension in space, time, place, format, and approach. A university extends itself—

When it makes its knowledge resources accessible to those who do not live nearby (i.e., extension in space).

When educational opportunities are scheduled at times and places that are convenient for learners (i.e., extension in time and place).

When knowledge is made available to learners in formats that are appropriate for their learning needs and conditions (i.e., extension in format).

When faculty, staff, and students work with learners to help them generate, transmit, apply, or preserve knowledge (i.e., extension in approach).

If outreach is not fundamental to what a university is and does, then the knowledge associated with outreach will be second-rate and not worthy of connection to an institution of higher learning. That is why the committee believes that outreach must be considered a fundamental feature of a university's academic mission.

A Definition of University Outreach

Boyer's (1990) seminal work and the more recent contribution by Lynton (1992) are very important relative to the issues discussed in this report. Neither of these authors argues that, in seeking to expand the notion of scholarship, the goal is to change the purpose of a university. Quite the contrary, they propose broadening the notion of scholarship so that scholarship, in its more expanded form, better fits the full range of activities undertaken by academicians as they fulfill their university obligations.

Generating, transmitting, applying, and preserving knowledge is one way—the committee's preferred way—of describing the full range of scholarly activities undertaken by academicians in universities. An extremely important question in the context of this report is: When does generating, transmitting, applying, and preserving knowledge qualify as outreach?

The committee defines university outreach as:

Scholarship that involves generating, transmitting, applying, and preserving knowledge for the direct benefit of audiences in ways that are consistent with University and unit missions.

There are several important characteristics of this definition:

1. Outreach is rooted in scholarship.
2. Outreach scholarship can and does involve the full spectrum of the knowledge activities. Sometimes outreach involves generating knowledge (e.g., applied research). It also involves transmitting knowledge (e.g., continuing professional education), applying knowledge (e.g., technical assistance), and preserving knowledge (e.g., creating electronically accessible data bases).
3. Outreach is a major feature of what Lynton and Elman (1987) describe as the "extended university." Through outreach, the university "extends itself" (and its knowledge resources) to a variety of audiences. This extension includes such efforts as making it possible for undergraduate nursing students in distant locations to complete most of their degree program without having to commute to campus, offering graduate courses on campus during the evening hours to better accommodate the schedules of working adults, training county government staff about local economic development, and making it possible for African-American high school students to learn about their heritage through programs targeted at them by faculty and staff.

4. When knowledge—the very "currency" of the university—is made available for the direct benefit of these audiences, outreach takes place. For example, off-campus credit coursework is outreach. Undergraduate courses taught and offered for full-time, resident undergraduate students on campus during business hours on weekdays is not outreach.
5. Outreach is a university's mission-related obligation. It is conducted as part of the university, unit, and position-related responsibilities of faculty, staff, and students. Outreach undertaken separately from these obligations (e.g., outreach conducted under the auspices of a professional organization) is not university outreach.

Outreach as a Cross-Cutting Enterprise

In declaring that outreach should be considered part of a university's academic mission, the committee does not suggest that a university should change the longstanding way that it expresses its mission—from teaching, research, and service TO teaching, research, and outreach—because the committee does not consider outreach to be a separate function. On the contrary, the committee believes that outreach involves—and is not separate from—teaching, research, and service. For example:

Updating realtors on new land use laws as part of their professional certification is outreach-as-teaching.

Studying the economic impacts of a plant closing on a city is research-as-outreach.

Assisting a nonprofit arts organization prepare and implement a strategic plan is outreach-as-service.

Therefore, when describing outreach, the committee prefers to emphasize the cross-cutting function of outreach. In our judgment, outreach cuts across the teaching, research, and service functions of a university—as further described in Table 3.

The Relationship between Outreach and Service

One of the major obstacles associated with clarifying university outreach is that the words "service" and "outreach" are often used interchangeably. This way of thinking confuses, rather than clarifies. This point is made for two important reasons:

1. *A university serves society in everything that it does. Outreach serves society in a unique and special way.*

Those who view outreach as a synonym for service may not understand the difference between the outcome of outreach and its essence. The outcome of outreach is service to society. Yet, a university serves society in everything that it does—from educating undergraduates students to conducting cutting-edge basic research. Outreach is only one way that a university services society.

The essence of outreach, on the other hand, is that it is scholarship conducted in conjunction with the institution's effort to extend itself. Put very simply, the university extends itself by "going to the people" (where they are) rather than assuming that the people "will come to the university" (where it is).

2. *Many and different university activities are frequently classified as "service." There is a need to identify these various activities and, then, to distinguish between and among them.*

Over the years, the service category in universities has become a virtual "dumping ground" of many nonteaching and nonresearch activities. Unfortunately, outreach is often included in the service category and mixed with other activities including: service to the profession (e.g., editing a scholarly journal), service to the university or an academic unit (e.g., serving on a governance committee), and service as an individual citizen (e.g., serving meals in a homeless shelter).

So, in one sense, everything that the university does may be considered service to society. But, in other way—the way that it is commonly conceived on university campuses—service is a separate university function. When conceived in the latter way, connecting outreach with service has deleterious consequences. If we conclude that outreach is service, and we think of service as activities apart from the academic mission (as many do), then outreach becomes disconnected from the academic mission. This is just the opposite of what the committee recommends in this report.

Table 3. Outreach as a cross-cutting enterprise

| Basic Principles | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The university's mission is to generate, transmit, apply, and preserve knowledge. ▶ When a university extends itself by making its knowledge resources available and accessible to audiences, it is engaging in outreach. ▶ When a university makes available its knowledge resources for the direct benefit of other audiences, it is engaging in something other than outreach. ▶ Outreach is not separate from teaching, research, and service. Outreach cuts across the traditional university functions of teaching, research, and service. | | |
| | Generating, Transmitting, Applying, and Preserving Knowledge through... | | |
| | TEACHING | RESEARCH (example activities listed below) | SERVICE |
| OUTREACH | Course scheduled to accommodate the work schedules of adult learners | Feasibility study for state government | Applying scholarship as a community volunteer |
| | ----- Dividing line between what is/is not outreach.... ----- | | |
| NOT OUTREACH | Course taught 8-5, M-F for full-time resident students | Disciplinary study | Serving as treasurer of a professional organization |

Given this conclusion, the task of "unpacking the service category" represents a vital undertaking. If outreach is fundamental to a university's academic mission, then we must develop a common and meaningful way of understanding what it is and what it is not. Otherwise, we shall have not created the foundation needed to plan, measure, evaluate, and reward outreach (among other activities).

This committee is not the first group to express this concern or to recommend a strategy for unpacking the service category (see Elman and Smock 1985). A committee at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (1989) identified and described four types of service:

Public service—the practical application of knowledge accumulated through scholarly activity (defined as outreach in this report)

University service—activities (other than teaching and research) that contribute to the growth and development of the university as an entity

Professional service—contributions made toward the advancement of scholarly and professional organizations

Community service—civic and other contributions to society made by those associated with the university but not as part of their job- or course-related responsibilities

The Committee's Attempt to "Unpack the Service Category"

The committee began its efforts by posing three basic questions:

What is the audience? (Extended or nonextended audience?)

Is the knowledge that is to be extended directly related to a faculty, staff, or student's position responsibilities? (Yes or no?)

Is the knowledge that is to be extended directly linked to a faculty, staff, or student's position-related area(s) of expertise? (Yes or no?)

When these questions are answered, university outreach is conceived as knowledge made available and accessible to extended audiences. The knowledge to be extended pertains to the position-related responsibilities of faculty, staff, and students. In addition, because outreach involves scholarship associated with generating, transmitting, applying, and preserving knowledge, university outreach relies on faculty, staff, and student expertise.

How does outreach compare with other activities that are commonly labeled "service"? The responses are summarized in Table 4, and in the text that follows, with regard to five types of service: inreach, university service, service to profession/discipline, community (civic) service, and consulting (as outreach and not-as-outreach).

In advancing this typology, the committee does not minimize the importance of the various forms of service. Each is important, valuable, and even commendable. But none of them is outreach, and not all of them should be considered part of faculty, staff, or student's position-related responsibilities.

Table 4. Comparing outreach with different types of service. (Table designed to be read across and down.)

| Activities | Extended or NONextended audience? | Is knowledge directly related to University position responsibilities? | Is knowledge directly related to position area(s) of expertise? |
|---|---|--|---|
| Outreach | External (but not for disciplinary peers) | Yes | Yes |
| Inreach | Internal | Yes | Yes |
| University service | Internal | Yes | No |
| Professional/ disciplinary service | External (for disciplinary peers) | Depends | Yes |
| Community (civic) service | External | No | No |
| Consulting: AS outreach NOT as outreach | External External | Yes No | Yes Yes |

Inreach

In our definition of outreach, an outreach audience is external to the university. As such, outreach differs from *inreach*, i.e., activities associated with generating, transmitting, applying and/or preserving knowledge for the benefit of audiences internal to the university. An example of *inreach*: a faculty member in the Department of Human Environment and Design prepares a pamphlet on ergonomics for use by university administrators.

University service

Committee work is a common way of serving the university. In many situations, however, faculty and staff members serve on committees because of their position-related areas(s) of expertise (e.g., Provost's Committee on University Outreach). When this occurs, committee work is a type of *inreach*. University service, on the other hand, takes place when a faculty or staff member's position-related area of expertise does not pertain directly to the service being rendered to the university. An assistant professor in the Department of English who volunteers to chair that department's *Healthy-U Day* activities is rendering university service.

Service to profession or discipline

Another type of service, service to one's profession or discipline, is designed to benefit the membership of professional organizations and societies. The direct beneficiary is external to the university, i.e. the profession and the professional organization. When a professor in the Department of Management serves as the book review editor for a professional journal, she is engaging in service to the profession or discipline.

It is important to note, however, that professional organizations can (and often do) engage in outreach. For example, when a physician under the auspices of her professional society prepares a pamphlet on AIDS for use by high school students, that physician is engaging in outreach (the scholarly transmission of knowledge). This is outreach, but not university outreach as defined in this report.

Community (or civic) service

Faculty and staff routinely volunteer as private citizens in activities that are undertaken apart from their responsibilities as university employees. In some instances, these voluntary efforts are designed to enhance community quality-of-life.

When a volunteer's effort is directly related to their position-related area(s) of expertise, that effort is outreach (e.g., an accounting professor designs a financial management system for a nonprofit organization). But many faculty and staff members volunteer their time and talents in ways and areas that do not directly pertain to either their position-related responsibilities or their position-related area(s) of expertise. Take, for example, an associate professor of chemistry who serves as chairperson of the capital campaign for his church. This is an example of community service.

Consulting (as outreach and not-as-outreach)

Many faculty and staff members routinely make their position-related knowledge available to various external (to the university) "publics" (e.g., governments, corporations, foundations) in the form of consulting, which is sometimes (but not always) undertaken on a fee-for-service basis.

In one sense, all consulting activities can be considered outreach in that consulting represents the creation, transmission, application and/or preservation of knowledge for "extended" audiences. But, not all consulting activities satisfy the guidelines put forth in this report as university outreach. That is, consulting activities may not directly coincide with, or advance, university and/or unit-level mission(s). Some consulting activities may be undertaken for exclusively personal reasons (e.g., to earn income for the employee).

When consulting activities coincide with the university and unit missions (as those missions are widely understood and interpreted), then consulting is outreach. On the other hand, consulting not-as-outreach represents work that falls outside of the parameters of university and/or unit mission(s). This does not suggest that faculty work should be limited to consulting-as-outreach. It only suggests that consulting-as-outreach is what the university and/or unit views as work associated with its mission-related obligations.

Blurring of the Categories

The committee fully understands that some readers, after reading this chapter, will be disturbed by the way that we have defined and discussed outreach. They may feel that we have cast "our net too widely" with our definition of university outreach. For example, if outreach involves generating knowledge, then is not outreach actually research? Others might feel that the committee is proposing outreach as an organizing mechanism for Michigan State, i.e., everything revolves around outreach.

In presenting the material in this chapter, the committee has tried its best to clearly communicate the basic dimensions of its thinking about outreach. In the contemporary literature on higher education, there is much discussion about how the categories of teaching, research, and service have become conceived rigidly at some universities. This chapter describes the committee's choice to take a step back and reorient the discussion by beginning with a treatment of the functions of a university. That is why the committee prefers the language of generating, transmitting, applying, and preserving knowledge—instead of the traditional reference to teaching, research, and service—to describe and discuss university outreach.

In doing so, the committee fully understands that it is blurring the traditional categories. But those categories are being called into question. Do they help or hinder the work of the university? Perhaps Checkoway's (1990:224) words quoted earlier bear repeating:

Quality research, teaching and...[outreach]...are emerging as complementary activities in many professions and fields. The new vision is one in which excellence in one activity is increasingly inseparable from other activities in accordance with the best traditions and highest standards of the academic community.

Outreach and the Future of Michigan State University

University outreach, as described and discussed in this chapter, holds tremendous promise for Michigan State in at least two ways. First, MSU's history clearly reveals the struggles associated with linking the two major outreach arms of the university—continuing (later called lifelong) education and extension. Even the repeated efforts of a long-serving and powerful president (John Hannah) could not make it happen. As a result, MSU sometimes appeared to be less committed to the function of what we now call outreach than it was to outreach structures. Put another way, continuing education became Continuing Education (later Lifelong Education) and extension became Extension.

With the changes initiated by Acting Dean Lanier starting in the middle 1980s, and continued and expanded during the Votruba and Imig years of the late 1980s and early 1990s, it is finally possible to emphasize function rather than structure. This focus on function rather than structure means that outreach will likely revolve around two major types of activities and programs:

1. **Instructional outreach** (emphasis on transmitting, applying, and preserving knowledge)—with a focus on credit coursework, degree programs, nonformal education, and continuing professional education
2. **Problem-focused outreach** (emphasis on generating, applying, and preserving knowledge)—with a focus on bringing to bear the university's knowledge resources in conjunction

with problems being experienced by off-campus audiences (through such activities as technical assistance, community development, industry-university partnerships).

The second promise pertains to one of the core themes of this chapter—integrating outreach into the academic mission of this University. Organizational restructuring will undoubtedly make it easier to achieve this goal, but organizational restructuring alone will not make it happen. To achieve this important goal, Michigan State will have to significantly modify the way that it "does business." This will require organizational change of significant magnitude. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the committee was drawn to the organizational change literature, especially the literature on organizational culture change (described in Chapter 12). This literature includes many concepts and strategies that can be used to accomplish the necessary change. It is the Committee's belief that integrating outreach across the university, and imbedding the philosophy that outreach is a cross-cutting enterprise, represent major change—albeit necessary change—for our University.

Chapter 11

ELABORATION OF THE DEFINITION OF UNIVERSITY OUTREACH¹⁸

Five Characteristics of University Outreach

Using the definition advanced in Chapter 10, there are five important characteristics of university outreach:

1. A university is in the "knowledge" business. Any university function must be fundamentally conceived in knowledge-based terms. Consequently, in our definition of outreach:

University outreach is associated with GENERATING, TRANSMITTING, APPLYING, and/or PRESERVING KNOWLEDGE.

2. A variety of efforts may be undertaken in the "name of outreach." Consequently, in our definition of university outreach:

Many different types of ACTIVITIES may be undertaken in conjunction with university outreach.

3. Outreach activities may be undertaken and conducted in a variety of ways. Consequently, in our definition of university outreach:

University outreach is conducted using a variety of PROCESSES.

4. Outreach activities and processes are designed for extended audiences. Consequently, in our definition of university outreach:

University outreach DIRECTLY BENEFITS EXTENDED audiences.

5. All universities are in the "knowledge business." But, each university and each university unit make decisions relative to the questions: Knowledge for what? Knowledge for whom? Knowledge how? These are mission-defining questions with respect to the outreach function. Consequently, in our definition of university outreach:

The CONDUCT of university outreach should be CONSISTENT with the MISSION of the UNIVERSITY and how that mission is INTERPRETED, EXPRESSED, AND APPLIED IN EACH UNIT.

¹⁸ Chapter written by Frank A. Fear

The Five Characteristics in Perspective

The First Characteristic of Outreach

Outreach as generating, transmitting, applying, and preserving knowledge

Understanding outreach in *knowledge* terms is the fundamental aspect of the committee's definition. All university activities are inextricably linked to knowledge generation, knowledge transmission, knowledge application, and knowledge preservation:

Knowledge generation pertains to creating knowledge.

Knowledge transmission pertains to sharing knowledge with those who may benefit from it (i.e., learners).

Knowledge application pertains to assisting learners in their quest to use knowledge to address issues, solve problems, and meet challenges and opportunities associated with individual and/or collective circumstances.

Knowledge preservation pertains to stewardship—to help learners, today and in the future, gain access to knowledge resources.

The Second Characteristic of Outreach

Outreach as a collection of activities

The second important characteristic of university outreach is that it takes place through a variety of activities, including: credit coursework, seminars, institutes, nonformal education programs, materials (e.g., bulletins, software), technical assistance, clinical service, consultation, electronically accessible data bases, satellite and fiber-optic technologies, and projects. One way of organizing these activities is to think of them in terms of instructional activities (instructional outreach) and project activities (problem-solving outreach).

Another, and perhaps more effective way, to understand outreach activities is to consider them in conjunction with the knowledge functions (see Table 5 and the text that follows).

Outreach activities associated with knowledge generation

In a university setting, the traditional way of thinking suggests that knowledge is generated through research. The expanded notion of scholarship, described earlier in this report, suggests that knowledge is generated through a variety of means (e.g., synthesizing the existing literature for the purpose of proposing a new framework or model) and not only through the research function as it has been traditionally conceived.

In saying this, the committee does not intend to diminish the importance of research. It cannot convey this thinking if, as has been argued earlier, the distinguishing feature of university scholarship is the cutting-edge nature of its work. But the committee does believe that it is necessary to expand the traditional way of thinking about what qualifies as research. Toward that end, the committee borrows from Clark's (1972) work. Clark suggests that there are five types of research:

Basic research focuses on theoretical problems arising in basic disciplines. The results are typically published in peer-reviewed books and journals for consumption by the community of scholars.

Basic objective research addresses problems that arise out of practice contexts. Results are published in learned and professional sourcebooks for use by scholars and practitioners.

Evaluation research focuses on questions of efficiency, effectiveness, and value associated with policies, programs, and projects. Research results are typically presented in materials prepared for the benefit of the research sponsor.

Applied research concentrates on an array of problems as they are experienced by those sponsoring the research. Research results are published for the sponsor's benefit.

Action research focuses on practical problems that have theoretical relevance. The goal is to generate highly useable knowledge and, at the same time, enhance the scholarly knowledge base. Action research is characterized by collaboration between scholars and audiences indigenous to the research-practice context.

The knowledge generated through research is then prepared for transmission to learners as written materials (e.g., books, articles, research reports, lecture notes, Extension bulletins, user manuals, and training guides), computer software, and as performances and exhibitions.

Table 5. Collection of activities associated with generating, transmitting, applying, and preserving knowledge. (Table designed to be read down only.)

| GENERATING | TRANSMITTING | APPLYING | PRESERVING |
|---|--|---|---|
| Through research: Basic Basic objective Evaluation Applied Action | Formal education Nonformal education (as outreach) Training | Projects Consulting Technical assistance Decision tools | Print & database collections as resources Artistic & cultural collections as resources Scientific & technological collections as resources Exhibitions Problem-solving capacity |
| Leading to: Written materials (e.g., books) Computer software Videos, recordings Performances | | | |

Outreach activities associated with knowledge transmission

Once knowledge has been organized and made ready for learner consumption, that knowledge is transmitted to learners through a variety of means and approaches. One of the most common methods of knowledge transmission is formal education. It includes coursework that is offered as part of an undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree-related curriculum; for professional continuing education; and for continuing education units [CEUs].

Degree-related formal instruction offered as part of the university's on-campus instruction function is not outreach. Degree-related formal instruction that is offered to off-campus enrollees, whether they are taking coursework for degree or nondegree purposes, is outreach. Units may also count outreach teaching as a fundamental part of faculty teaching loads. Also included as outreach are continuing professional education efforts and learning experiences offered for continuing education credit.

Another common form of knowledge transmission is nonformal education. Nonformal instruction is offered in a not-for-credit mode, and includes such activities as seminars, conferences, institutes, speeches, recitals, plays, exhibitions, and discussion groups.

Training is a third type of knowledge transmission, and it may be conducted formally or nonformally. Unlike education, which focuses on expanding learners' intellectual abilities and capabilities, training focuses on skill enhancement, i.e., transferring knowledge in the form of tools and techniques so that learners may more efficiently, reliably, and effectively apply knowledge for a specific purpose (e.g., meeting the knowledge standards required in the state licensing examination for applying pesticides in agricultural settings).

Both formal and nonformal instruction are frequently made available in off-campus venues using face-to-face instruction or electronic communication technologies (e.g., satellite transmissions). In the latter case, the instructor and learner are physically separated.

Outreach activities associated with knowledge application

In knowledge application, learners are assisted in their attempt to use knowledge for beneficial purposes. Many activities qualify as knowledge application efforts. Most notable are projects—shorter- and longer-term field interventions. Consulting (as outreach) represents knowledge extension efforts that are conducted for the benefit of specific learner(s). Technical assistance involves extending knowledge for the purpose of solving a specific technical problem and/or assisting in the technology transfer process. Decision tools, which include computer systems with interactive capacity, are used by learners to enhance understanding/abilities in specific problem areas or areas of interest (e.g., selecting the most appropriate career option).

Outreach activities associated with knowledge preservation

In knowledge preservation, the university acts as a steward; it provides current and future learners with an opportunity to avail themselves of the knowledge legacy so fundamental to the human experience. Knowledge that has been generated and transmitted in the form of print is preserved through print and data base collections as resources (e.g., book and bibliographical collections). Knowledge that is a function of the creative and/or the general human experience is preserved in artistic and cultural collections as resources (e.g., art collections). Knowledge that reflects the attempts at human problem-solving or demonstrates our understanding of our biophysical surroundings are preserved in scientific and technological collections as resources (e.g., technology exhibits, natural history collections).

The very process of generating, transmitting, and applying knowledge is designed to enhance learners' ability to better understand their environment. Equipped with that understanding learners are in a better position to create desired futures. Consequently, another type of knowledge preservation—one that is rarely emphasized—pertains to improvements in learners' problem-solving capacity.

Finally, it must be pointed out that preserved knowledge is more than "stored" knowledge. It is symbiotically and dynamically linked to knowledge generation, transmission, and application.

Knowledge-based outreach activities as they are undertaken by faculty and staff

The problem with describing the knowledge-based functions one by one is that it gives the impression that each function, and its related activities, is unrelated to the other functions and their respective activities. Nothing could be further from the truth. Many staff members are involved in multiple functions and activities at different and various points in their careers. For example:

- ▶ A Cooperative Extension specialist in agronomy may generate knowledge and organize that knowledge in the form of an Extension bulletin. That specialist may then use the bulletin to transmit knowledge as an off-campus workshop.
- ▶ A staff member associated with Urban Affairs Programs may use knowledge generated by others as the basis for working with local leaders to apply and preserve knowledge about community economic development.
- ▶ A physics faculty member, who may have been involved extensively in research (knowledge generation) activities earlier in his/her career, may now teach physics courses as part of MSU's off-campus instructional program (knowledge transmission).

The dynamic and linked nature of the knowledge functions may be viewed in two ways. In Figure 2, the four functions are tied together in the form of a four-by-four matrix. The purpose is to show the link between each and every knowledge function. But this approach does not adequately convey the dynamic interrelationships that often exist among the knowledge functions as they are carried out by faculty and staff. Those interrelationships are represented in Figure 3. This display is designed to fuse the knowledge functions. First, emphasis is placed on the pivotal nature of the preservation function. All generation, transmission, and application activities are linked to the preservation function—either in the short- or long-term.

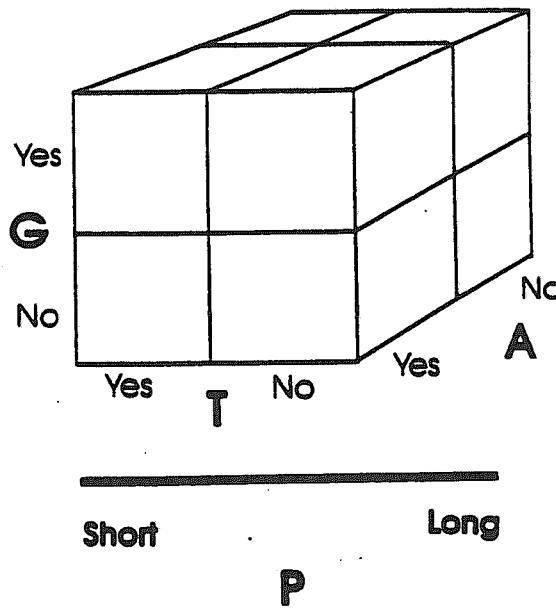
Second, the figure may be used to describe a faculty or staff member's knowledge-related activities as those activities pertain to a specific experience. For example, the agronomy specialist cited earlier generated and transmitted knowledge, but did not engage in the knowledge application function. Third, the figure may be used to describe the knowledge-based activities undertaken by a staff member at any particular point in their career. The physics professor in our prior example had earlier in her career specialized in knowledge generation. Now, later in her career, she is primarily involved in knowledge transmission (through off-campus teaching).

Figure 2. Linkages between and among the knowledge functions

| | Generation | Transmission | Application | Preservation |
|--------------|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Generation | --- | G/T | G/A | G/P |
| Transmission | | --- | T/A | T/P |
| Application | | | --- | A/P |
| Preservation | | | | --- |

Figure 3. The dynamic linkages among the knowledge functions (as the functions are performed by faculty, students, and staff)

Where:
**G = GENERATION; T = TRANSMISSION; A = APPLICATION; and
 P = PRESERVATION**



The Third Characteristic of Outreach

Outreach as a collection of processes

The third outreach characteristic focuses attention on the processes used in undertaking outreach. It is our belief that many processes are used in outreach, and each process represents a distinctive way of thinking about, and engaging in, outreach.

For analytic purposes, it is possible to categorize outreach processes. Despite the fact that each is presented as a separate and distinct process, many outreach experiences incorporate features from two or more processes. Each process—and four are described here—is presented for descriptive, and not normative, purposes. Each represents a legitimate approach to outreach. None should be viewed as "the best" or the "most preferred."

The four outreach processes are:

- Outreach as knowledge extended
- Outreach as mutual learning opportunity
- Outreach as appropriate-to-context
- Outreach as research-outreach synthesis

The process of outreach as knowledge extended

The defining feature of outreach as knowledge extended is that learners gain access to the university's knowledge base. Learners sometimes gain access by requesting it. On other occasions, knowledge is shared with the belief that others may benefit from it—whether they request it or not.

Outreach as "knowledge extended" is a university-focused approach. The transfer of knowledge is from those who possess it to those who need and/or request it. Faculty and staff members are considered "experts," persons who are expected to impart their knowledge by, and through, a variety of means. Examples of outreach activities include lectures, speeches, and media interviews. The transfer process is largely one-way communication. Those who possess knowledge actively transmit knowledge that learners receive passively.

The process of outreach as mutual learning opportunity

All outreach activities are designed to be learning opportunities for knowledge recipients. However, outreach may also be viewed as a learning experience for those who extend knowledge. When viewed in this way, two learning audiences co-exist—those who receive knowledge and those who extend it.

As a learning opportunity for faculty and staff, outreach episodes are valued as important, if not unique, professional development opportunities. By reflecting on their outreach experiences, faculty and staff may learn valuable lessons about knowledge generation, transmission, application, and preservation as the process unfolds *in situ*. The lessons learned become part of the faculty and staff outreach knowledge base, to be drawn upon when making important knowledge-related decisions. For instance, a faculty member may include outreach examples in lecture material used in undergraduate and/or graduate courses on campus. Outreach experiences may also influence decisions about which problem to research or how a particular problem may be researched best.

The process of outreach as appropriate-to-context

Outreach efforts generally take into consideration the needs and circumstances of outreach audiences. When this outreach dimension is given emphasis and knowledge extenders base knowledge generation, transmission, application, and preservation decisions on careful and systematic analyses of knowledge users' needs, circumstances, and end-uses, then—as knowledge contextualizers—faculty and staff are engaging in outreach that is appropriate-to-context.

The intent is to make available timely and relevant knowledge that is highly applicable to the nature of the problem, the type of client, and the learners intended use. Accordingly, some sort of contextual analysis precedes every outreach episode. Sometimes these analyses are informally done (e.g., through a telephone conversation with the intended knowledge user) and, at other times, formal analyses may be undertaken (e.g., needs assessments, impact analyses).

Given the need to undertake episode-by-episode analysis of context, identical knowledge requests may be handled by the same faculty or staff member in very different ways. An encounter with an experienced knowledge user, one who has advanced training in the problem area and has experienced the problem before, may lead a faculty or staff member to impart knowledge by mailing a research report to the intended user. Faced with a first-time knowledge user—a person who has had neither training nor experience with the problem—a faculty or staff member may conclude that one or more field visits are in order.

Degree-of-fit is one of the most important concepts in the outreach as appropriate-to-context vocabulary. Knowledge is not simply extended; it is "fit" to the features and circumstances of specific contexts. Important "fit" decisions must be made: what is to be extended, how it is to be extended, when it is to be extended, and by whom it is to be extended. Knowledge contextualizers are constantly concerned about making decisions that are appropriate for the context. Associated with the need to make "appropriate" decisions is the recognition by university-based knowledge contextualizers that multiple knowledge sources are likely to exist, and that the university represents only one, and perhaps not the best source, of knowledge. Consequently, an important decision involves determining which knowledge source(s) (including indigenous sources) will be drawn upon during the outreach scenario.

The process of outreach as research–outreach synthesis

Each of the processes described is decreasingly faculty/staff-focused and university-based.

- ▶ In outreach as knowledge extended, emphasis is placed exclusively on the content of the knowledge to be extended. Faculty and staff members, as experts, are expected to be in the best position to decide what should and should not be extended. In effect, they are presumed to be "knowledge masters." In this approach, faculty and staff members do not accrue professional benefits from engaging in outreach, but they probably are rewarded intangibly by serving others.
- ▶ In outreach as mutual learning opportunity, outreach experiences are viewed as professional development opportunities. Faculty and staff members evaluate each outreach episode, and the meaningful experiences become part of their "knowledge base." These experiential reference points may be drawn upon when they engage in future knowledge-related activities—not just outreach efforts, but non-outreach teaching, research, and service activities as well.

- ▶ In the first two processes, off-campus learners—their backgrounds, circumstances, and situations—are not the focus of attention. But in outreach as appropriate-to-context, considerable interest is accorded the context within which knowledge is to be generated, transmitted, applied, and preserved. Successful outreach exhibits a high degree-of-fit between learner needs/circumstances and what, how, when, and by whom outreach is undertaken. Through assessments, scans, and other tools and techniques, faculty and staff members make "appropriate" outreach decisions. Despite the client-focused (rather than university-focused emphasis of the prior two processes), outreach as appropriate-to-context is still very much a university-controlled process.

Outreach as a research-outreach synthesis is the least university-focused and controlled of the outreach processes considered here. It is distinctly different from the other processes in at least three significant ways.

First, the process takes place through and by collaboration between faculty/staff members and off-campus learners. Each party brings unique and important resources to the collaboration. Faculty and staff bring scientific knowledge whereas off-campus persons bring knowledge about their situation. These resources are joined in a process that features decision making equality. Through this collaboration, the parties cogenerate knowledge and determine how it will be used.

Second, through their experience together, the collaborators learn about outreach—as substance (with focus on knowledge content) and as process (with focus on the way in which knowledge is generated, transmitted, applied, and preserved). For example, the learning may have a powerful effect on how the parties view each other (as faculty/staff and laypeople, respectively), and how each views the other's institutions. A key attribute is the attachment by the collaborators of meaning and value to outreach as a process and to its outcomes for involved individuals and institutions.

Third, "research" and "outreach" are viewed as interactive and iterative activities. The activities are best understood as episodes within a broader, more inclusive process. Because the parties take part in a mutually reinforcing learning experience, it is not possible to predict a priori what will be researched. Equally important, it is not always possible to identify clearly what is "research" and what is "outreach." Indeed, in research-outreach as synthesis, the distinction between research and outreach is unimportant; the production and application of knowledge is not limited to the laboratory, library, computing center, or faculty office, and is not the exclusive province of those who hold university positions.

Comparison of the four outreach processes

The four outreach processes are compared in Table 6 in terms of: philosophy (ontology, epistemology, and primary focus); approach (methodology, primary method, example activity); role (for the outreach and learner); and outcome (for the outreach and learner).

Table 6. Comparative analysis of four outreach processes. (Table to be read down and across.)

OUTREACH AS:

| Variable | Knowledge extended | Mutual learning experience | Appropriate to context | Research/outreach synthesis |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------|
| Ontology* | Realist (strong) | Realist | Relativist | Relativist (strong) |
| Epistemology* | Dualist-objectivist (strong) | Dualist-objectivist | Monistic-subjectivist | Monistic-subjectivist (strong) |
| Methodology* | Interventionist (strong) | Interventionist | Hermeneutic | Hermeneutic (strong) |
| Focus | University-focused | University-focused | Field-focused | Field-focused (strong) |
| Primary method | Transfer | Reflection associated with the outreach | Environmental scan precedes problem-solving effort | Collaboration |
| Example outreach activity | Lecture/speech | Any outreach activity | Needs assessment | Joint project decision making |
| Outreachers' role | Expert | Expert and learner | Fit knowledge to context | Partner/collaborator |
| Learner's role | Recipient | Recipient | User | Partner/collaborator |
| Learner's intended outcome | Receive knowledge | Receive knowledge | Solve problems | Solve problems |
| Outreachers' intended outcome | Impart knowledge | Impart knowledge and gain professionally | Seek contextualized knowledge | Cogenerate knowledge |

* Definitions (quoted and paraphrased from Guba and Lincoln (1989: 83,84): **Ontology** deals with issues of existence. A key question is: What is the nature of reality? A *realist* ontology asserts that there exists a single reality that is independent of any observer's interest in it, and which operates according to immutable natural laws, many of which take cause-effect form. A *relativist* ontology asserts that there are multiple, socially constructed realities that are ungoverned by any natural laws, causal or otherwise. **Epistemology** deals with the origin, nature, and limits of human knowledge. A key question is: How can we be sure that we know what we know? A *dualist-objectivist* epistemology asserts that it is possible for an observer to exteriorize the phenomenon under study, remaining detached in the process, and excluding any value considerations during the study process. A *monistic-subjectivist* epistemology asserts that an enquirer and inquired-into are interlocked in such a way that the study findings are the literal creation of the inquiry process. **Methodology** deals with rules and systems for conducting inquiry. A key question is: How do we go about discovering knowledge? An *interventionist* methodology strips context of its contaminating influences so that the inquiry can converge on truth. A *hermeneutic* methodology involves a continuing dialectic of iteration, analysis, critique, reiteration, reanalysis, etc., so that reality becomes the joint construction of the parties participating in the inquiry.

The Fourth Characteristic of Outreach

Outreach for the direct benefit of audiences external to the university

Knowledge is generated, transmitted, applied, and/or preserved for the direct benefit of people—individuals, groups, organizations, and society. One of the fundamental aspects of outreach is that those who benefit are external (and not internal) to the university.

Example benefits associated with outreach activities and processes include:

1. Solving or ameliorating problems
2. Developing goals, procedures, and policies
3. Improving individual and collective efficiency or effectiveness
4. Enhancing individual and collective quality-of-life

The Fifth Characteristic of Outreach

Outreach that coincides with university and unit missions

Generating, transmitting, applying, and/or preserving knowledge for external audiences is necessary, but not sufficient, for an activity to be classified as outreach. To be classified as outreach, the effort must mesh with university and unit missions. Those missions which, by definition, interlock must clearly articulate a set of values fundamental to the knowledge-based questions of: Knowledge for what? Knowledge for whom? Knowledge how? Answers to these questions may then be used to determine appropriate outreach strategies (Checkoway, 1990). Among the important questions for which strategies need to be put in place include:

Who should perform outreach?

How should outreach be evaluated?

This aspect of outreach means that the university-level mission must address the outreach function specifically. It also means that unit-level missions must link with the university's mission. In saying this, the Committee recognizes that university and unit missions evolve and change over time.

Chapter 12

UNIVERSITY ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES: IMPLICATIONS FOR UNIVERSITY OUTREACH¹⁹

The committee was charged with recommending strategic directions for outreach—not for universities in general, but for university outreach at Michigan State. Consequently, the committee concluded that to be able to successfully achieve its mandate, it must be able to understand our large and complex institution from the perspective of outreach.

It was obvious to the committee that different people at MSU are likely to have different opinions about an issue or situation facing MSU, such as the function of intercollegiate athletics. The personal experience of committee members strongly suggested that this principle might also apply to university outreach. Consequently, committee members reasoned that multiple ways of thinking about outreach might exist at Michigan State. If true, each way (or pattern) of thinking would be different from the next in terms of how people respectively define, value, and participate in outreach. Differences would also likely exist in types of outreach clientele; how, why, and when outreach efforts are conducted; how and when outreach is evaluated; and when an event, activity, program is defined as "good," "successful," or "effective" outreach.

Committee members began talking about MSU in terms of a "multiple culture" outreach environment. In other words, the committee saw Michigan State not as a cultural monolith, but as a place characterized by multiple cultures that co-exist within a single, large-scale environment.

For help in shaping its thinking, the committee turned to the organizational culture literature especially the literature on academic culture (e.g., Birnbaum, 1991; Berquist, 1992). The work of MSU professor Anne Austin was particularly useful. Professor Austin defines culture as:

...the collective, mutually shaping pattern of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions that guide the behavior of individuals and groups. Culture becomes the interpretive framework for understanding and appreciating events and actions (Austin 1990: 61).

Austin argues that academic culture affects the thinking and actions of faculty in such areas as their interaction with students, the conceptualization and organization of their work, and the nature, scope, and level of their participation in institutional decision making.

Professor Austin discusses four cultures of the academy:

1. *The Culture of the Academic Profession*

Core values of the academic profession include the primacy of pursuing, discovering, producing, and disseminating knowledge and understanding; seeking autonomy and academic freedom; upholding the commitment to intellectual honesty and fairness; interacting collegially; and serving society with knowledge and understanding.

¹⁹ Chapter written by Frank A. Fear

2. *The Culture of the Disciplines*
The disciplines are the primary units of membership and identification within the academic profession. The disciplines are value-laden in that they influence faculty beliefs and behaviors.
3. *The Culture of the Academy as an Organization*
Commitment to the values of intellectual development and collegiality with autonomy are central to the culture of the academy.
4. *The Cultures of Institutional Types*
The unique culture of each college and university is created by the interactions of key cultural elements. For example, institutional mission influences the faculty recruitment process, the socialization of new faculty, and faculty performance standards.

Outreach Cultures at Michigan State University

After much discussion, the committee identified and described eight cultures relative to outreach at MSU:

- The outreach culture of individuals (as individual belief systems)
- The outreach culture of the disciplines
- The outreach culture of problem-focused, multidisciplinary units
- The outreach culture of the professions
- The outreach culture of knowledge extension units
- The outreach culture of service units
- The outreach culture of the major administrative units
- The outreach culture of top-level university administration

Outreach as an individual belief system

Despite our attempt to organize the university into "cultural oases," we do not suggest that each type of culture only includes like-minded persons, all of whom hold the same values and who operate according to the same behavioral norms. It is important to emphasize that each faculty and staff member is unique. In fact, individually held conceptions and/or behaviors relative to outreach may or may not mesh well with the prevailing outreach culture(s) in the faculty or staff member's unit(s) of affiliation. The ability to create and sustain a unit-level outreach mission is likely to be related to the extent to which unit members share similar outreach sentiments and engage in similar outreach behaviors. Otherwise, culture "clashes" are likely to occur, and competing outreach "sub-cultures" may emerge.

Outreach Cultures at the Unit Level

There are at least five different types of units at Michigan State that are relevant for understanding MSU as a multicultural environment with respect to university outreach: the disciplinary unit, the problem-focused multidisciplinary unit, the professional unit, the knowledge extension unit, and the service unit. Some of the major differences between and among the units are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7. Five unit-level outreach cultures. (Table designed to be read down and across.)

| UNIT-LEVEL CULTURE | | | | | |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Variable | Disciplinary | Problem-focused Multi-disciplinary | Professional | Knowledge Extension | Service |
| Major research types | Basic Applied (including multi-disciplinary work) | Basic Applied Action | Basic Basic-Obj. Evaluation Action | Applied Evaluation Action | Applied Evaluation |
| Major knowledge functions | Generation Preservation | Transmission Application | Generation Transmission Application | Transmission Application Preservation | Transmission Application Preservation |
| Typical organizational settings | Department | Institute/ Center | School | Campus-field office links; some staff with 100% outreach appointments | Most staff with 100% outreach appointments |
| Dominant outreach culture | Discover knowledge | Responsive to societal needs and problems | Practitioner and client-focused | Proactive—"share knowledge" | Customer-focused |

The outreach culture of the disciplines

As one of the most potent organizing mechanisms in a university setting, the disciplines are frequently viewed as the "basic building blocks" associated with the knowledge generation and preservation functions. Typically organized in departments (e.g., Department of History), basic research is highly prized in disciplinary units. Basic and applied multidisciplinary work is also undertaken frequently. In these cases, disciplinarians from multiple disciplines gather to define and research a problem—each bringing with them the concepts, perspectives, and approaches of their respective "home" discipline.

Outreach in disciplinary departments is likely to be structured by existing knowledge systems and the quest to discover knowledge—sometimes for its own sake, and not necessarily for its immediate application to societal problems.

The outreach culture of problem-focused, multidisciplinary units

In addition to disciplinary units, universities include units that are concerned fundamentally with societal problems and far less with issues confronting a specific discipline. These are problem-focused, multidisciplinary units. Although sometimes organized in departments, these units are

just as likely to exist in the form of institutes and centers (e.g., Institute of Environmental Toxicology). However organized, the titles of these units almost always make explicit reference to the societal issue(s) or problem area(s) that are the focus of attention (e.g., School of Labor and Industrial Relations).

Faculty and staff who affiliate with problem-focused, multidisciplinary units are frequently drawn from a variety of disciplines, and some may consider themselves to be pandisciplinary in temperament, philosophy, and practice. Groups of faculty may also work in multi- and interdisciplinary teams on "real world" problems. Applied and action research are just as likely to appear on the research agenda as is basic research. The knowledge transmission and application functions may be given emphasis.

In problem-focused, multidisciplinary units, the utility function of knowledge is paramount. Consequently, outreach programs are likely to be responsive to real world issues and problems.

The outreach culture of the professions

Universities serve as the education and training ground for many professions (e.g., nursing). Clearly defined curricula and socialization processes are the hallmark of university programs in the professions. Faculty in these units are likely to engage in basic, basic-objective, evaluation, and action research. In most instances, university programs are accredited by national professional organizations, and graduates either must be certified or licensed in order to exercise their practice. Each profession also has at least one client group—persons who receive the benefits of their professional expertise. Knowledge generation, transmission, and application functions are important.

In professional units, outreach is linked to the knowledge needs of practitioners and their clients.

The outreach culture in knowledge extension units

The fourth type of outreach culture occurs in units where outreach is a primary (perhaps exclusive) function. These units are likely to have "field offices" that are networked with faculty on the main campus. Examples of this type of outreach unit are MSU Extension and the Community and Economic Development Program of Urban Affairs Programs.

Staff members include faculty members with outreach appointments and/or outreach practitioners with 100 percent outreach appointments. They pride themselves in being "close to the people," and spend a considerable amount of time interacting with clients—trying to understand their needs, circumstances, and problems. Applied, evaluation, and action research are likely to be the modal research types in these units, and application is usually seen as the most important knowledge function. For faculty and staff in these units, outreach is not just an activity, it is likely to be considered their profession.

Because outreach is the primary (perhaps exclusive) function, a proactive outreach culture—one that encourages faculty and staff to "share their knowledge" with those outside the university—is likely to dominate.

The outreach culture in service units

Many university units provide valuable services to external audiences. The Service-Learning Center, for example, operates as a "brokerage house" to create relationships between students who seek outreach experiences (e.g., internships as part of degree requirements) and agencies that need their services (e.g., as volunteer workers).

Service units are typically part of larger, nonacademic administrative units (e.g., MSU Libraries). Many of the personnel are staff members, and relatively few carry out resident instruction and research activities. Consequently, most do not hold faculty rank. These personnel frequently create and sustain linkages with faculty members in one or more units across campus. These linkages are vital, because they represent an important avenue for the knowledge resources that are made available to external audiences. Applied (e.g., needs assessments) and evaluation (e.g., service quality) research are likely to dominate. Some, perhaps most, of this research will be conducted by persons external to the unit. The transmission, application, and preservation functions are most valued.

Where service is the major function of a unit, a customer-focused outreach culture is probably in evidence.

Outreach Cultures above the Unit Level

There are at least two, important cultures above the unit level at MSU: the major administrative unit (e.g., college) and the central administration.

The outreach culture of major administrative units

At Michigan State University, units are organized in MAUs (major administrative units). Each MAU—a college, for example—includes a collection of substantively related units, typically in the form of departments, institutes and/or centers, as is the case in MSU's College of Engineering.

With respect to outreach, however, MAUs are likely to vary considerably with respect to outreach pattern. Some MAUs—typically those associated with the professions—may exhibit outreach cultures that are similar or nearly similar in pattern. But many colleges are likely to display a variety of outreach patterns. It is not unusual for a single MAU to include two, three, or perhaps all of the outreach cultures that we have discussed. Take, for instance, the College of Social Science. This is a college with multiple outreach cultures: disciplinary (e.g., Department of Psychology); problem-oriented, multidisciplinary (e.g., Institute for Public Policy and Social Research); and professional (e.g., School of Social Work).

The outreach culture of top-level administration

Much emphasis is placed in the literature on the critical nature of the leadership exercised by top-level university administration (e.g., Keller, 1983). This level includes the offices of president, provost, and vice presidents. These administrators "set the tone" for the institution. The university's mission and reward system will be administered (if not created) under their leadership, and major financial allocations will be made. Each of these actions and activities is grounded in values, choices, and preferred outcomes.

Consensus may exist among top-level administrators regarding the definition of outreach, its absolute value/priority, and its relative value/priority vis-à-vis other university functions. Or different administrators may hold different values, beliefs, and attitudes about the outreach function. A strategic outreach plan will be designed and implemented more easily when there is general consensus among these major office holders regarding major outreach issues and how those issues may be best approached.