

**Part Eight:  
Report Summary,  
Conclusions, and  
Recommendations**

**INTRODUCTION<sup>23</sup>**

College faculty members face clear choices about how to respond to ... calls for greater accountability. We can dismiss the calls, hoping that they will disappear. We can comply minimally....Or we can take the lead....

The first option...will not work the way that we might hope. The likely result will be increased clamor and, ultimately, as has happened in the elementary-secondary sector, intervention by well-intentioned public officials and policy makers. By choosing not to respond, we allow noneducators to set the terms of the debate....Faculty members would be better off engaging the...questions directly.

—Schilling and Schilling (1993: A40)

...the muckrakers of academe have attacked our universities bitterly, irresponsibly, and effectively....They have slighted our successes, magnified our faults, denigrated our commitment, and ignored our sacrifices....Angry and pained, shocked at the welcome these attacks earned from the public...we in the universities have cried foul, seeking solace in the belief that we have been misunderstood and misrepresented....When attacked, we have responded weakly, mostly by whining. We have offered few good answers, but lots of good excuses. We have denounced the intellect and integrity of our critics, but we have evaded the substance of their criticism. And, we have continued to need more and more money.

—University of Florida president, John Lombardi (1993)

**The Context**

In the life of any organization, there are always times when fundamental questions of organizational focus and direction are raised and answered. Based on the responses to these questions, almost all organizations will, from time to time, make major changes in how they conduct business, and proceed to bring about the changes in planful, deliberate ways.

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<sup>23</sup> Introduction written by Frank A. Fear

We live in a time when fundamental questions are being raised about virtually every organization—from government, to corporations, to education. Some writers have called for organizations to be "reinvented" (e.g., Osborne and Gaebler 1992). Others have argued that organizations need to become "learning systems" if they are to survive and thrive (Senge 1990).

Sometimes organizations do not see the need to make necessary change, fail to move quickly enough, or resist change even when their stakeholders call for change. In these circumstances, stakeholders often take matters into their own hands. And, when this happens, organizations can find change imposed externally, meaning that those inside the organization lose the ability to lead and direct change.

The committee believes that postsecondary education, especially public higher education, has entered an era of significant change. If we move appropriately and deliberately, the change process can be led by the academy. At issue is not whether major change will occur. At issue is when it will occur, and who will lead the change.

The committee hopes that the higher education community will engage proactively in an exciting change process. Certainly, university outreach is not the only variable in the change equation, but it is an important variable. The committee also believes that Michigan State University has already demonstrated leadership in university outreach nationally, and that it can continue to do so.

### About the Recommendations

The recommendations presented in our report are grounded in the belief that Michigan State University has a unique and special responsibility, as a public and land-grant institution, to the communities of this state, the nation, the world, and to the community of scholars. MSU, as a campus community of scholars is—above all else—dedicated to generating, transmitting, applying, and preserving knowledge. Outreach, as one of the many forms of scholarship which takes place on our campus, focuses on extending knowledge to audiences in ways that are consistent with university and unit missions.

The activities and programs undertaken under the rubric of outreach at MSU are conducted using a variety of approaches and processes. This variety represents the richness and diversity of scholarship that exists on our campus. In practice, this richness and diversity supports three mission-related themes. First, it represents one way that MSU fulfills the service responsibilities associated with its mission. Second, because outreach involves instruction and research, it provides a vehicle for the university to undertake these important obligations. And third, because outreach represents tangible evidence of the covenant between this institution and the people, it is important in its own right.

The recommendations are also grounded in the recognition that institutions of higher education must engage in the constant process of organizational renewal. All healthy and productive institutions are so engaged. Given the forward-looking agenda at MSU associated with R-cubed, and the efforts associated with the post-R-cubed environment in which the university now operates, MSU is well positioned MSU to be a national leader in public higher education. Outreach represents an important and vital part of MSU's agenda as a national leader.

The recommendations also represent strategic directions for our institution. They are conceptually grounded, based on guiding principles, and informed by input received by the committee from MSU colleagues, off-campus stakeholders, and the experiences of peer institutions. The recommendations are designed to be relevant (i.e., appropriate to the MSU context), timely, and feasible. When taken collectively, these strategic directions represent a portrait of what we believe MSU should (and must) be—an institution dedicated to making knowledge available to those who may benefit by its application.

### **Presentation of the Report; Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

Immediately following the submission of the committee report to the Office of the Provost, committee chairperson Frank Fear began reorganizing and re-presenting the material for the purpose of facilitating understanding of the report and beginning the implementation process. Three products emerged from this effort, and each is presented here.

In Chapter 14, key points from the report are presented in the form of report highlights. Then, in the following two chapters, attention turns to specific components of the report. Committee conclusions are listed and presented in outline form in Chapter 15. The same presentation format is used in Chapter 16, and the content focus is the committee recommendations.

## **Chapter 14**

### **REPORT HIGHLIGHTS<sup>24</sup>**

#### **Prologue**

As is the case with any institutional effort of this type, an important question is: For whom is this report written? The question has special significance in this case because many groups, both inside and outside the university, have a stake in MSU outreach. The committee makes a special effort, however, to direct its comments to the academy—in particular, to Michigan State University faculty, staff, and students.

Consistent with this focus, the report emphasizes three fundamental messages:

1. Faculty, staff, and students across the university are engaged in a significant amount of important outreach, although they may not always call their activities "outreach."
2. Outreach, when viewed as a scholarly activity, represents an exciting and attractive opportunity for faculty.
3. Despite recent and significant progress associated with integrating outreach at the college and unit levels, much work remains to be done. This work cannot be done by administrators alone. Its accomplishment will depend upon broad-based leadership, especially from faculty at the unit level as they seek excellence in teaching, research, and service.

In addition to addressing outreach at a particular moment in the history of Michigan State University, it is important to stress that this report is not a call to do more with less. Nor is it a call to do more outreach at the expense of the other central functions of the university. Instead, the committee offers a way of thinking about outreach that is based in the faculty's commitment to the pursuit and communication of knowledge, which construes outreach as a mode of scholarship that can enrich and sustain the intellectual vitality of units throughout the campus, and which supports integration of the multiple dimensions of a scholar's life.

#### **A New Model for Outreach at Michigan State University**

Although a vibrant program of outreach is an MSU tradition, the term "outreach" is actually a recent addition to MSU's vocabulary. It was chosen in 1990 as an encompassing way for MSU

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<sup>24</sup> This chapter is a summary of the final report submitted by the committee to the Office of the Provost. This summary version was prepared by Frank A. Fear.

to describe how it extends its knowledge resources to society. Other terms, such as "lifelong education" and "extension," identify components of outreach at Michigan State.

This approach is a major part of a new university model for outreach that has taken shape and form at MSU over the last decade through a variety of linked initiatives. The Provost's Committee for University Outreach is one of these initiatives. The overall goal is to strengthen outreach by making it a more central and integrated dimension of the institution's overall mission.

For this to happen, an intellectual foundation for outreach—captured in a way of thinking about outreach and emphasizing its relevance for the university—must be created. That foundation must serve as the base for advancing recommendations for strengthening outreach at Michigan State.

## **A New Way of Thinking about Outreach at Michigan State University**

### **Outreach as a Form of Scholarship**

We believe that the essence of scholarship is the thoughtful creation, interpretation, communication, or use of knowledge that is based in the ideas and methods of recognized disciplines, professions, and interdisciplinary fields. What qualifies an activity as "scholarship" is that it is deeply informed by accumulating knowledge in some field, that the knowledge is skillfully interpreted and deployed, and that the activity is carried out with intelligent openness to new information, debate, and criticism.

In our thinking, outreach has the same potential for scholarship as the other major academic functions of the university. This requires the need for a way of thinking about outreach that positions it at the heart of what the university is and does. At Michigan State, the creative reconsideration of scholarship will require vigorous debate. That debate will include discussions about many issues, including how to evaluate the scholarly quality of outreach work, and how to separate outreach as scholarship from outreach that involves delivering knowledge in routine and repetitive ways.

### **Outreach as Scholarship for the Direct Benefit of External Audiences**

Outreach takes place when scholarship is exercised for the direct benefit of external audiences. It takes a variety of forms and is undertaken using a variety of approaches. At MSU, outreach sometimes takes the form of applied research and technical assistance to help clients, individually or collectively to better understand the nature of a problem they confront. It may involve demonstration projects that introduce clients to new techniques and practices. Frequently, it extends the campus instructional capacity through credit and noncredit courses to meet the needs of adult students. Or it may provide policy analysis to help shape and inform the public process. In much of the outreach it undertakes, MSU collaborates with end-users and other parties in a dynamic process of knowledge discovery and application. By participating in outreach, MSU faculty, staff, and students not only extend knowledge to those who might benefit from it, they often learn and grow professionally and personally from these experiences.

### **Outreach as a Means for the University to "Reach Out" to Society**

The university extends itself ("reaches out") through outreach to external audiences in one or more of these dimensions: distance, time, clientele, format, and approach. It extends itself in distance when it makes its knowledge resources accessible to those who do not live nearby; in time and place when knowledge resources are made available at convenient times and locations; and in format and approach when knowledge is made available in ways that are appropriate for those who seek it.

### **Outreach as a Cross-Cutting Function (*cutting across teaching, research, and service*)**

In the tripartite division of teaching, research, and service, outreach has been traditionally identified with "service." We suggest that outreach is better conceived as a cross-cutting function. In this way of thinking about outreach, there are forms of outreach teaching, research, and service, just as there are forms of non-outreach teaching, research, and service. Off-campus credit coursework is an example of outreach teaching. On-campus coursework offered for undergraduate students on Mondays–Fridays from 8 a.m.–5 p.m. represents non-outreach teaching.

Collaborative, problem-solving research with external clientele is an example of outreach research, in contrast to disciplinary research, which is often non-outreach research. And medical and therapeutic services provided through a clinical service plan offers an example of outreach service. Service on university committees represents non-outreach service. Obviously, some activities span categories and there are certainly linkages between non-outreach and outreach work. Both types of linkages—between non-outreach and outreach activities, and between and among teaching, research, and service activities—are often required as Michigan State undertakes its activities.

### ***Outreach and service***

Serving on a government commission, for example, is outreach service because the activity calls on the scholar's expertise and the subject-matter pertains to the programs and mission of the university unit(s) in which the scholar is appointed. On the other hand, a chemist who serves on the fundraising committee of a local nonprofit organization—a role that is apart from the scholarly expertise and programs of the chemist's university unit—is engaging in non-outreach service.

### ***Outreach and consulting***

Faculty and staff members routinely make knowledge available to the public, private, and nonprofit sectors in the form of consulting. This work is sometimes, but not always, undertaken on a fee-for-service basis. Outreach consulting takes place in conjunction with a unit's programs and in ways that advance a unit's mission. Consequently, it is our view that there is consulting-as-outreach and consulting-not-as-outreach. Whether a client pays a fee does not determine whether a consulting activity is outreach.

### **Outreach as a Major Feature of University and Unit Missions**

As a land-grant university, Michigan State University has an historically recognized, as well as legislatively mandated, responsibility to extend its knowledge resources to the people of the state and the nation. Tradition, pragmatism, and university policy have made the reach of this responsibility global. MSU's outreach responsibilities and capacities are unique in the state. Accordingly, outreach should be considered a major function of the university, not a minor or ancillary function to be honored in rhetoric but minimized in practice.

And, as a form of scholarship and a major function of the university, outreach should be integral to the intellectual life of the entire university, not isolated and marginalized in special units. At different levels and in ways appropriate to their discipline or profession, all academic units at Michigan State—though not necessarily each faculty member—should engage in outreach.

### **A New Definition of Outreach for Michigan State University**

The essence of our thinking about outreach is contained in the following definition:

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

## **The Relevance of Outreach for Michigan State University**

### **Outreach Brings Vitality to Non-outreach Research and Teaching**

Outreach affords faculty, staff, and students windows on current reality, and the perspectives gained through these windows inform a scholar's understanding of the contemporary meaning, value, and use of their disciplinary or professional knowledge. Outreach also raises fascinating and important questions. As a result, on-campus research and teaching become more vital, more alive, and the intellectual life of the whole university is more stimulating.

### **Outreach Enhances Institutional Identity**

As both a land-grant and a research university, Michigan State has long represented a distinctive combination of teaching, research, and public service. Our definition of outreach changes the way these functions have traditionally been conceptualized and labeled. But in so doing, it highlights rather than diminishes the uniqueness of the university's identity among the state universities of Michigan. Even when outreach is restricted to solving problems with existing knowledge, it often inspires new research, thereby enriching and guiding the scholarly work of the university. Thus, outreach can exert a continuous shaping influence on the character, the orientation, and the activities of a university and its faculty, staff, and students.

### **Outreach Enhances Political and Financial Viability**

This identity, with the concomitant recognition of the university as a source of usable knowledge across many domains—social, scientific, technical, economic, educational, humanistic, medical, urban, and agricultural—has strong appeal for public, private, profit and nonprofit institutions, state and local governments, and individual citizens. Outreach also helps create an explicit link between the university and the larger society on which it depends for legitimacy and support.

### **Outreach Is Interdependent with Other Academic Functions**

A robust program of basic research (i.e., non-outreach research) is crucial, not merely to the reputation of the university, but to its very ability to contribute to society. Without the new and

renewed knowledge generated by basic research, other forms of scholarship lose their base, their freshness, and their intellectual energy.

Yet, basic research and other scholarship without obvious, direct application to current societal problems also profit from and even depend upon the public and political support that high-quality outreach engenders for the university. The contributions the university makes to society through outreach are far more easily communicated to, and recognized by, the public and legislators, the governor, and other public representatives than are the subtler and more indirect contributions of basic research. Failure to grasp the dependence of basic research on outreach jeopardizes basic research. Such a failure is just as damaging to the cause of scholarship at MSU as is the failure to recognize the reciprocal dependence of outreach on basic research.

### **Outreach Helps Balance the Academic Functions**

Even within our integrated way of thinking about outreach, including the recognition that outreach and non-outreach activities overlap, influence, and contribute to each other, the challenge of balancing these various activities remains. Maintaining balance involves the thoughtful management of real and enduring tensions.

To take advantage of MSU's natural diversification, everyone in the university—the board of trustees and administration, as well as the faculty, staff, and students—must honor the full range of functions, supporting the different mixes of functions appropriate for different units at different points in time.

Because the several functions of the university are mutually dependent in the ways suggested above, they form a system. To sustain the whole system as an institution with a land-grant mission, it is essential to maintain a working balance among the functions. Paradoxically, if any function were to become dominant at the expense of the others then, in the long term, that function's very success might spell its own demise. Just as we must begin to think more in whole-system terms if humankind is to develop appropriately, we must also think more in whole-system terms for the university to excel.

### **Outreach Contributes to the Institutional Capacity to Adapt**

The university is increasingly called upon to generate and provide knowledge about a widening array of social, cultural, economic, environmental, and technical challenges. A university in which outreach is integral to all units is in a far better position to respond to emerging problems and issues than one in which outreach is isolated in certain areas or units. Internal diversification enhances the institution's capacity to adapt to changing needs and circumstances.

### **Outreach Broadens Access to the University**

From the time of its founding in 1855, Michigan State University has provided access to post-secondary education for a much broader array of students than were served by traditional institutions of higher education. The university should continue to do so, but developments both within MSU and in the larger society suggest that the university's definition of "access" should itself be broadened.

Since MSU's founding, a dozen regional universities and many more community colleges have been launched and have matured into institutions serving every corner of the state. Together, they



provide ready access to virtually anyone who wishes to pursue postsecondary education. Meanwhile, MSU has become a research university of national and international reputation.

At the same time, society has entered what many describe as a "knowledge age" with an emphasis on learning across the lifespan. Continuous learning is needed today by nearly everyone to maintain and improve one's standing in the job market, to exercise citizenship, to enhance the whole individual, to improve the business climate, and to fulfill a variety of other important sociocultural functions.

Given this dramatically transformed configuration of capacities across the state and within the university, and the advent of the knowledge age, MSU can and should provide access to knowledge through a wide array of outreach activities. MSU's approach to providing access to its knowledge resources must be responsive to societal needs with the overriding goal of maximizing the social and economic return on the state's public investment.

### **Strategies for Strengthening Outreach at Michigan State University**

To assure that outreach is a major, well-rewarded, and well-supported function at Michigan State University, we offer recommendations in the following categories:

- ▶ Adopt the new conception and definition of outreach
- ▶ Create a measurement and evaluation system to track, assess, and adjust the amount of outreach
- ▶ Involve multiple parties in a dynamic process of outreach planning, but place primary responsibility at the unit level
- ▶ Reward units and faculty appropriately for engaging in outreach
- ▶ Stimulate, support, and recognize outreach at all levels of the university
- ▶ Enhance access to the university's knowledge resources
- ▶ Strengthen outreach through universitywide leadership.

#### **List of Recommendations**

Twenty specific recommendations are advanced across these seven categories for the purpose of declaring outreach as a major, well-rewarded, and well-supported function at Michigan State University:

#### ***Institutionalize the new way of thinking about outreach***

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** Michigan State University should formally adopt the conception and definition of outreach articulated in this report.

***Calibrate the amount of outreach that is taking place***

RECOMMENDATION 2: Michigan State University should establish a system for measuring, monitoring, and evaluating outreach. This system should have sufficient standardization to permit aggregation at the unit, college, and university levels, and also offer sufficient flexibility to accommodate important differences across disciplines, professions, and units.

***Set the outreach agenda using an integrated, decentralized approach***

RECOMMENDATION 3: Outreach planning at Michigan State University should involve multiple parties in an open, continuous, and interactive dialogue. This planning process should be undertaken with the understanding that primary responsibility for outreach resides at the unit level.

***Reward units for engaging appropriately in outreach***

RECOMMENDATION 4: Efforts should be undertaken at Michigan State University to reward outreach consistently and appropriately at the college and unit levels.

***Reward faculty for participating in outreach***

RECOMMENDATION 5: Each academic unit at Michigan State University should create explicit, written guidelines regarding the criteria to be used in making faculty merit salary increase and tenure and promotion decisions. These guidelines should include a clear indication that outreach is valued in the decision-making process.

***Create new, innovative, and exciting outreach programs***

RECOMMENDATION 6: Creative programs to stimulate outreach should be developed at Michigan State University.

***Stimulate outreach teaching***

RECOMMENDATION 7: Unit and faculty participation in instructional outreach should be stimulated and rewarded at Michigan State University.

***Stimulate student involvement in outreach***

RECOMMENDATION 8: Involving students—undergraduates, graduates, and graduate-professionals—in outreach should be a distinguishing feature of the Michigan State University educational experience.

***Stimulate outreach research***

RECOMMENDATION 9: As a land-grant, research-intensive institution, Michigan State University is uniquely qualified to be a world-class institution in the area of outreach research. This should be valued by the university as high priority work.

***Provide adequate resources for outreach***

RECOMMENDATION 10: Responsible, innovative, and sustainable strategies should be established with the goal of providing adequate resources for outreach at Michigan State University.

***Eliminate barriers to outreach***

RECOMMENDATION 11: Michigan State University should work aggressively to develop systems, structures, and policies that encourage outreach.

***Promote outreach through executive-level declarations and actions***

RECOMMENDATION 12: The Offices of the President and Provost should assume leadership for declaring the importance and value of outreach at Michigan State University.

***Recognize outreach through university awards***

RECOMMENDATION 13: Outreach should be appropriately recognized in the awards system at Michigan State University.

***Recognize outreach through the academic governance system***

RECOMMENDATION 14: Outreach at Michigan State University should be adequately recognized in the academic governance system.

***Showcase outreach strategically***

RECOMMENDATION 15: Exemplary outreach at Michigan State University should be strategically showcased on and off campus.

***Facilitate access to knowledge through advanced technology***

RECOMMENDATION 16: Investment in, and optimal use of, advanced technology in outreach should be a continuing priority for Michigan State University.

***Enhance user-friendliness for external constituencies***

RECOMMENDATION 17: Michigan State University should enhance the awareness of external constituents regarding its outreach activities, and then help them gain efficient access to these offerings.

***Join with other institutions in learner-focused outreach***

RECOMMENDATION 18: Michigan State University should join others in forming a confederation of organizations with learner-focused outreach as its goal.

***Strengthen the Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach***

RECOMMENDATION 19: The Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach should provide universitywide leadership, coordination, and support for the institution's outreach mission, as well as spearhead the implementation of recommendations presented in this report. But, as stated earlier, Michigan State University should continue to lodge primary leadership for outreach in the academic units.

***Expect leadership for outreach from all parts of the university***

RECOMMENDATION 20: Leadership, in the form of commitment, capacity, and vision, must emanate from across Michigan State University—from the faculty, students, and staff, to the board of trustees. This leadership, when exercised, will create an institutional environment that consistently demonstrates to all that outreach is a fundamental feature of the university's mission.

## Recommendation Highlights

Among the most notable of the 20 recommendations are:

### *Calibrate and evaluate outreach*

**Recommendation 2:** Michigan State University should establish a system for measuring, monitoring, and evaluating outreach. This system should have sufficient standardization to permit aggregation at the unit, college, and university levels, and also offer sufficient flexibility to accommodate important differences across disciplines, professions, and units.

If outreach is to serve as one of the primary indices of the university's productivity, then the quality and acceptance of the means by which it is measured and evaluated must be comparable to those of other commonly used productivity indices. Currently, there is no clear, accepted system for measuring outreach at MSU. With agreement upon the nature of outreach (as offered by the committee in this report), it should be no more difficult to measure and evaluate than on-campus teaching and basic research.

As data about outreach teaching, research, or service are aggregated at the unit, college, and university levels, considerable information about the content and nature of the activity is inevitably lost. For example, one student's participation in a 10-person seminar and another's participation in a 300-person lecture course may both produce three student credit hours. Or two research projects may produce the same number of publications in refereed journals, but the publications for one may offer a breakthrough in its field while those for the second may make only the most modest of contributions.

Even when we either already have or manage to create new metrics for outreach, the same problem of information loss through aggregation will inevitably pertain to outreach teaching and research at MSU, although the problem will be no worse for outreach than for non-outreach activity. The university should seek ways of preserving more information about the substance and nature of outreach across levels of aggregation. Otherwise it will be difficult to communicate the value of our outreach activity to the public, their representatives in government, and other outreach constituencies.

### *Set the outreach agenda using an integrated, decentralized approach*

**Recommendation 3:** Outreach planning at Michigan State University should involve multiple parties in an open, continuous, and interactive dialogue. This planning process should be undertaken with the understanding that primary responsibility for outreach resides at the unit level.

An integrated, decentralized approach to priority setting allows each unit considerable flexibility to set an agenda that will enable its faculty to make the maximum contribution. Each academic unit should deliberately choose a mix of activities that enables all of its members to contribute the maximum to the total scholarly productivity of the unit, and outreach as conceptualized here provides units with a broadened array of ways to demonstrate productivity.

Outreach activities should focus at the intersection of faculty expertise and interests, on the one hand, and high priority societal needs for knowledge, on the other. A close match between faculty expertise and the substantive foci of outreach activity is essential to ensure a robust level of authentically knowledge-based outreach, as well as to integrate outreach into the intellectual fabric

of the university. Therefore, the problems, needs, and opportunities to be addressed through outreach should be chosen at levels close to the individual faculty member—the level of the department or multidisciplinary center and institute.

The mix of activities pursued by a unit will depend upon such factors as the nature of the discipline, field, or profession to which it relates, the levels of seniority and range of talents represented in its faculty, and the demands and opportunities for non-outreach activity (e.g., for on-campus instruction and externally funded basic research), as well as the demands and opportunities for outreach activity.

To ensure that outreach activities focus on important societal needs, however, all units will want to design thoughtful ways of identifying and setting priorities among problems, frequently through the direct participation of advisory groups representing key external constituencies as well as formal needs assessments. Ideally, the construction of needs and the setting of priorities are derived from discussion between faculty and external constituencies. University administrators can and should help units manage these expectations not only by providing assistance in designing unit- and college-level needs assessment and priority-setting systems, but also by conducting broad-gauged, statewide needs assessments and using the results to establish universitywide thematic priorities.

This decentralized approach to planning recognizes and accommodates a fundamental tension associated with all aspects of academic planning: the need to balance the activities of the University as an institution as it responds to external pressures to fulfill its mission and to remain financially and politically viable with the activities of the University as a community of scholars as faculty members pursue their work, individually and in groups.

In taking this approach to planning outreach, units will be required to pose and answer a number of important questions. Five of these questions are raised here.

1. *How much outreach should be conducted and with respect to what subjects?*

Decisions about how much outreach and in what subjects should be made at levels close to the individual faculty and staff member—in many cases, the level of the department or school, interacting with topically focused multidisciplinary centers when appropriate. The overall balance between outreach and non-outreach activities should emerge from a process of explicit or tacit bargaining and planning and several levels: between central administrators and deans, between deans and unit administrators, and among unit administrators, faculty members, and external constituencies.

To the extent that the central administration and deans find ways to make outreach intrinsically appealing (by linking it to authentic faculty interests), easy (by offering effective forms of facilitation and support), and well-rewarded (through incentive and recognition programs), the potential conflict between the interests of the faculty and the interests of the institution (as interpreted by administrators) can be minimized. In addition, the focus and amount of outreach activity can be continuously revised through discussion, debate, and bargaining among groups both within and outside the University. Such an explicit, public process is the only one consistent with academic norms of open dialogue.

2. *Where should outreach take place?*

As a state, tax-assisted institution, Michigan State University has a special obligation to reach out to the citizens of Michigan. But the university should also continue to pursue national and international outreach activities vigorously. There are several compelling

reasons for the university to reach out beyond the state to national and international settings. First, involvement in national and international outreach enables our faculty to gain first-hand acquaintance with problems and developments at those levels, and this experience can be incorporated into non-outreach teaching. Second, outreach in national and international settings contributes in many and fundamental ways to the economic, social, and cultural development of Michigan.

Third, many national and international outreach activities are supported through grants and contracts from corporations, foundations, the federal government, non-governmental organizations, and national governments around the world. Such external support enables the people of Michigan to reap benefits without having to assume complete financial responsibility. And, fourth, national and international outreach has important and far reaching significance for Michigan State University. Such outreach was a fundamental feature of former President John A. Hannah's vision and efforts to transform MSU from college to university status. And, over the years, our institution has crafted an enviable record in outreach teaching, research, and service in national and international settings.

For all these reasons, national and international outreach should figure prominently in unit-level planning discussions. This work has value in its own right for mission-related and scholarly reasons, and because of its synergistic quality also contributes in significant ways to other outreach and non-outreach activities.

### 3. *Who should have access to knowledge resources?*

Commitment to outreach rests on promoting connections between MSU and its external constituents ranging from a few miles off-campus in Lansing, to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, to locations across the nation and throughout the world. Access makes it possible for groups outside of MSU to communicate with us in order to identify needs, to share information, technology, and knowledge, and to avail themselves of our knowledge generation, transmission, application, and preservation activities. Addressing issues of access allows Michigan State University to be an inclusionary, rather than an exclusionary, institution.

Access is a multidimensional concept, and decisions about access (to whom, how, when, etc.) are often difficult to make. A number of factors need to be taken into consideration as faculty, staff, students, and administrators make unit-level access decisions. Among the factors that need to be considered include: unit factors (e.g., areas of faculty strength); types of outreach undertaken (e.g., instructional outreach), types of access (e.g., longer-term problem solving outreach), cases where particular knowledge resources are available only from MSU and are not available through other knowledge providers cases where MSU offers unique academic strength or a special approach, and the need to collaborate with other knowledge providers to meet constituents' knowledge needs.

As access plans and decisions are being made, Michigan State must keep in mind the importance of ensuring access to traditionally underserved people, groups, and institutions. This way of thinking about access integrates two important aspirations—the University's internal commitment to diversity with its concomitant desire to serve the knowledge needs of a diverse constituency through its external activities.

### 4. *How should outreach success be calibrated?*

Units at Michigan State University should clearly identify the major dimensions of successful outreach and then adopt those dimensions when designing and evaluating

outreach efforts. The rooting of outreach in scholarship is a necessary, but not sufficient, characteristic of successful outreach. Other yardsticks might include: meeting the needs expressed by external audiences; satisfying standards of scholarship as expressed by professional peers; producing tangible products and/or processes; yielding positive, measurable outcomes; and bringing about few, if any, negative consequences for clientele.

It is improbable that a single metric can be established that meets the diverse circumstances of our complex campus. Indeed, it may well be that no single formula for successful outreach should be established at Michigan State. Consequently, the Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach should work with colleges and units to define outreach success in ways that are appropriate to various disciplines, professions, and fields. These standards can then be adopted and applied for planning, evaluating, and rewarding outreach. Units will then be held accountable for conducting work that is commensurate with the selected standards.

**5. *What role should be played by external constituents?***

Michigan State University units should develop and use processes for involving external constituencies in identifying outreach issues, problems, and opportunities that pertain to unit mission. Perhaps the ideal process is a collaborative one that involves the faculty and staff in direct discussions with external constituencies in order to define and address problems or issues. These direct discussions can be facilitated by the creation of unit- and college-level advisory or "visiting" committees where unit clients have an opportunity to advise faculty and staff on outreach directions and focus.

***Reward units for engaging appropriately in outreach***

***Recommendation 4:*** Efforts should be undertaken at Michigan State University to reward outreach consistently and appropriately at the college and unit levels.

Units at Michigan State University should consistently demonstrate that outreach is valued and rewarded. For example, the university could support multi-year, competitive proposals from colleges to support unit efforts to redistribute total faculty effort in accordance with unit goals and an expanded notion of scholarship. These proposals should be reviewed for effectiveness after a period of time (e.g., in three years). Or a college could ask units via the University's annual planning process to propose new outreach initiatives. If, for example, a dean selected a proposal from a department or school that had previously not devoted such effort to this kind of activity, that dean might then lower the target for that unit's academic credit hour (ACH) production. In this scenario, the college's commitment to on-campus instruction would not necessarily have to be sacrificed and might be made up by other units.

Incentives could be offered by colleges to units that seek to engage in significant, innovative outreach. After a period of time (e.g., two years), this assignment could be reviewed to assure quality, allow other departments/schools to avail themselves of this opportunity, and enable the original department to complete its outreach initiative, devote less effort to it, or devote more attention to another priority activity (outreach or non-outreach).

And it is important to point out that support for outreach can come in forms other than monetary rewards. One form of support may be helping faculty learn how to conduct successful outreach. Mentors are one source of knowledge. Other learning opportunities are to be found in seminars, workshops, and sabbatical opportunities for professional development. For example, a unit in

cooperation with a college might encourage interested faculty members to spend their sabbatical leaves at one or more other campuses (including off-campus sites) studying, observing, and perhaps participating in university outreach. Upon their return to MSU, these faculty members would be expected to apply in their home units what they had learned on their sabbatical leaves.

### ***Reward faculty for participating in outreach***

***Recommendation 5:*** Each academic unit at Michigan State University should create explicit, written guidelines regarding the criteria to be used in making faculty merit salary increase and tenure & promotion decisions. These guidelines should include a clear indication that outreach is valued in the decision-making process.

Valuing and rewarding faculty participation represent the centerpiece for advancing university outreach at Michigan State. We would not argue that all MSU faculty members should be expected to engage in outreach or that all faculty members should be expected to engage in outreach at all times throughout their careers for there are uneven opportunities across time and across the campus for faculty to participate in outreach. But, we do affirm that all academic units should be expected to engage in outreach.

Units must arrive at reasonable and acceptable solutions for managing the necessary tension between organizational responsibilities and the interests of individual faculty and staff. An extremely important outgrowth of these unit-level discussions will be the creation of guidelines regarding the role and value of outreach in the faculty evaluation and review process.

These unit-level policies, important for all faculty, are especially pertinent when applied to junior faculty. All too frequently, outreach is categorically rejected as not legitimate for supporting tenure decisions for junior faculty. We reject this position. Rather, we believe that the outreach activities of non-tenured faculty must be judged in terms of their excellence and their contributions to establishing the non-tenured faculty member as a respected scholar and recognized expert in his/her field, and to predicting the future success of the person as a scholar and expert.

Units granting tenure need to consider outreach activities just as they would on-campus teaching and research when evaluating potential for tenure. The category to which an activity belongs is far less important than the function it serves in establishing a scholarly foundation and predicting future success. Furthermore, just as teaching and research activities vary in their ability to build the foundation for a distinguished career as a scholar and to predict future success, some outreach activities may be better than others during the non-tenured stage of a person's career.

Non-tenured faculty should be given clear and consistent advice throughout their probationary period in order to strike the best individual balance among activities to meet their unit's criteria. And, criteria should be established that address excellence in outreach activities, and these should be followed during the tenure and promotion decisions. One way of accomplishing this goal would be to ask faculty to describe the three or four "best case" examples of outreach—cases that provide clear evidence of excellence (depending, of course, on that unit's definition of outreach excellence). This approach might be more valuable than asking faculty to enumerate all of their outreach activities.



***Stimulate outreach as a cross-cutting function***

***Recommendation 7: Unit and faculty participation in instructional outreach should be stimulated and rewarded at Michigan State University.***

In partnership with other organizations and institutions, Michigan State must continue to provide leadership for meeting the informational and instructional needs of a socially and culturally diverse public. One way this can be accomplished is through the provision of high-quality credit and non-credit courses, programs, projects, and training for both traditional and non-traditional learners. In today's and tomorrow's world, this will require making available MSU's knowledge in a variety of locations using innovative methods, curricula, schedules, and technology.

The instructional capacity of the university involves a variety of formats, including credit (e.g., degree and non-degree programs) and non-credit activities (e.g., workshops, seminars and conferences). Instructional programming is no longer limited to the university campus. The populations included in our student body, and the geographical locations for learning, are diverse across sites.

As instructional programming is modified to include additional changes in student body (e.g., nontraditional students), mode of learning (e.g., use of technology) and location (e.g., diverse learning locations), the structures, systems, and policies that support and guide instruction at Michigan State must be constantly reassessed. This is particularly important in the case of non-traditional learning audiences.

The vision described here might include inter-institutional collaboration to encourage the offering of joint degrees across institutions. This approach would make it possible to address the learning needs of unserved and underserved audiences. And Michigan State might expand its instructional programs to include more evening courses and programs. This will make the university more accessible to persons who reside in the Lansing vicinity and cannot attend class during traditional daytime hours. Expanding instructional programs in this way offers more extensive use of MSU facilities, more parking options for students, and allows students the option of maintaining full-time employment during the day while making more rapid progress toward degree completion.

Special efforts must be made to recognize and reward the efforts of units to expand instructional offerings. For example, a sliding scale of tuition reimbursement to units might be calibrated according to a unit's history in instructional outreach (significant return for a "first time" unit), a unit's attempt to meet the needs of distant learners through the use of technology (significant return for a unit that uses technology to offer courses in the Upper Peninsula), and a unit's overall level of instructional outreach activity (significant return for a unit that offers degree programs).

***Recommendation 8: Involving students—undergraduate, graduate, and graduate-professional—in outreach should be a distinguishing feature of the Michigan State University educational experience.***

Incorporating outreach experiences in students' educational lives is an excellent way of declaring what is special, if not unique, about an education at Michigan State University. Combining the traditions of both a research university with those of a land-grant institution, an MSU education would emphasize for students the vital importance of using and applying scholarly knowledge for the betterment of individuals, groups, organizations, and communities.

For example, a Service-Learning Fellows Program could be implemented. Currently, the Service-Learning Center is administered by the Vice President for Student Affairs and Services. Service-learning provides students with civic and course-related learning opportunities through experiential education (e.g., internships). However, students—especially undergraduate students—have not been traditionally viewed as knowledge resources to be drawn upon for university outreach. The Service-Learning Fellows Program would be one mechanism for further connecting the teaching and outreach functions of the university. In this program, faculty would be provided release time and operating funds to design and implement innovative outreach learning opportunities for students—undergraduate, graduate, and graduate-professional.

Michigan State University Extension could analyze its programming efforts with the goal of identifying roles that can be appropriately played by undergraduate, graduate, and graduate-professional students. An especially exciting opportunity would be to offer summer positions and internships to students in their home Michigan counties in conjunction with, or as a supplement to, their course work.

The work-study program offers an excellent, low-cost opportunity to involve students, especially undergraduate students, in outreach efforts. In many places around campus, work-study students are involved in clerical activities. Students learn important workplace skills through this employment. However, involving work-study students in outreach efforts holds great promise for enhancing students' course-related learning through field-based experience.

International students could be involved more extensively in outreach at MSU. Through the decades, many international students have earned Michigan State degrees. Some of these students have benefitted from exposure to MSU's outreach efforts. But many international students take courses on campus, complete their research requirements, and return to their home countries without ever participating in (or even knowing about) our university's outreach activities and programs. Important benefits are to be gained from having international students participate in outreach—benefits for the students, for faculty and staff, and for our outreach constituents. In addition, international students represent a large, generally untapped resource for outreach. Involving international students in outreach is a major opportunity for MSU; for example, International Studies and Programs has had numerous, positive experiences resulting from international student involvement in outreach teaching, research, and service projects and programs.

***Recommendation 9:*** As a land-grant, research-intensive institution, Michigan State University is uniquely qualified to be a world-class institution in the area of outreach research. This should be valued by the university as high priority work.

Any land-grant, research-intensive institution faces two challenges. First, it should be client-sensitive in that it seeks to meet constituent needs. Second, it should be knowledge-sensitive in that the knowledge functions are propelled by scholarly interests. Linking these two orientations is not only a challenge but a major opportunity for institutions such as Michigan State. Models are very much needed that illustrate how MSU faculty, staff, students and units have successfully engaged in the "balancing act" of being client-sensitive and, at the same time, conducting cutting-edge scholarship.

Some of the options that might achieve this balance include establishing an All-University Research-Outreach Grant program. The Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies coordinates the All-University Research Initiation Grant program, and the Vice Provost for University Outreach coordinates the All-University Outreach Grant program. A portion of the

funds from each program could be combined to create an All-University Research-Outreach Grant program. This type of program should significantly strengthen outreach research at MSU.

In addition, a MSU Extension Fellows program might be created. In this program, faculty would be invited to focus their scholarship on priority issues that can be addressed through outreach teaching, research, and service activities. This program could be used to accomplish a number of goals. For junior faculty, it would offer an opportunity to begin the process of integrating outreach into a broader portfolio of scholarship. The program also could offer professional development opportunities for more senior faculty—those who have had little prior outreach experience, and those who have had prior experience but want to move their research and/or teaching programs in new directions.

Fellows might also be involved in universitywide outreach agendas. For example, the University has initiated a statewide issues identification process under the leadership of MSU Extension (MSU-E). Outreach Faculty Fellows affiliated with this effort would work closely with regional and county-level MSU-E staff, Michigan citizens, and others (e.g., agency personnel) to determine how their scholarship might be best utilized (e.g., collaborative research with external audiences), and to identify how their scholarship can be best delivered to user audiences (e.g., through research reports for lay consumption, in-service training sessions for MSU-E field staff and/or agency personnel).

An Outreach Scholarship Program could be initiated. The scholarship of outreach refers to the array of issues associated with the art and science of engaging in outreach. This scholarship addresses such issues as determining which outreach strategies are related to successful outcomes in different situations; learning how to disengage from outreach without affecting the capacity of off-campus audiences to maintain and sustain outreach gains; and effectively predicting the amount of time it will take to undertake outreach successfully. Many faculty, staff, and students have been neither educated nor trained in the complex issues that are frequently confronted in outreach. For many, learning comes by obtaining experience.

A useful strategy for Michigan State is to view the subject of outreach as a legitimate area of scholarly inquiry and then to draw upon the results of this scholarship for education and training purposes. Through the Outreach Scholarship Program, research on outreach would be undertaken and the results of that work would be disseminated on campus and to the broader community of scholars.

Faculty, students, and staff participating in this program would be expected to publish their scholarship in appropriate outlets and to present their work at professional meetings and conferences.

The university could also work with state government to create a statewide Outreach Excellence Fund, a program designed to stimulate the application of knowledge on Michigan problems by bringing to bear the knowledge resources of faculty, staff, and students from public universities across the state.

*Provide adequate resources for outreach*

**Recommendation 10:** Responsible, innovative, and sustainable strategies should be established with the goal of providing adequate resources for outreach at Michigan State University.

Although the university is operating in a highly constrained fiscal environment, the committee believes that outreach is so deeply bound with MSU's overall mission that it must be supported along with MSU's other mission-related areas of concern. To the extent that MSU seeks balance and dynamism across its mission-related spheres, which we believe is fundamental to the long-term health of the institution, care must be given to ensure the vitality of all major outreach and non-outreach work. It is in this regard that the cross-cutting characteristic of outreach is especially prominent. The zero-sum arguments that typically accompany funding discussions are far less pertinent when outreach is factored into the budget equation. That is because outreach does not exist without connections to the University's fundamental knowledge enterprises—teaching, research, and service.

A stable, long-term revenue flow must be established for outreach. The committee feels strongly that this revenue flow should consist partly of new revenues raised outside the University, and partly of regular university funds. Non-outreach teaching is supported partly through tuition income and partly through general fund allocations, and non-outreach research is supported partly through grants and contracts, and partly through general fund and other university allocations. As a vital part of the university's mission, outreach needs a similarly balanced funding stream.

To achieve this stable and balanced funding base will require financial expertise beyond that possessed by this committee. Therefore, we recommend that an administrative task force be established. The proposed task force should include representatives from the Office of the Assistant Vice President for Finance, Office of Planning and Budgets; Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies; the Office of the Vice President for Governmental Affairs; the Office of the Vice President for Development; the Office of the Provost; and the Council of Deans.

This task force should focus attention on such questions as: How should the university's policies and procedures be revised to facilitate the intra-university and intra-unit reallocations that must be made to implement the plans that result from the university and unit-level planning processes discussed in this report? How can the university best encourage, stimulate, and reward scholarly entrepreneurship, including mission-related grant and contract activity, in outreach? What are appropriate and reasonable criteria to establish so that MSU works as a collaborator with, and not as a competitor to, the private sector? What are appropriate and reasonable criteria to guide the setting of fees so that outreach costs do not become an unfair burden to those who can least afford to pay? And how can the university insure that the process of generating new resources and redirecting existing resources will be accomplished without adding significantly to the university's administrative infrastructure?

#### ***Enhance user-friendliness for external constituencies***

***Recommendation 17:*** Michigan State University should enhance the awareness of external constituents regarding its outreach activities, and then help them gain efficient access to these offerings.

Users and potential users of Michigan State's knowledge resources, like customers everywhere, expect to be able to identify, access, and use these resources with considerable ease and efficiency. It is the committee's belief that the university needs to become more user-friendly in the ways that it extends itself to external audiences. Although there are many efforts underway in individual units to make potential clients more welcome, these efforts are scattered and are

often not well enough known either within or outside the university to guide effectively most of those seeking to avail themselves of MSU offerings.

The university should explore the following areas as possible ways of building a more welcoming atmosphere for off-campus users. This building process should develop in two directions. First, the university needs to be more effective in helping people find the person or unit that can most appropriately address their knowledge needs and/or learning concerns. Second, the university needs to be more effective in acquainting the public with those outreach activities it is especially interested in, and then provide the appropriate conditions (e.g., time, cost) for them to access outreach products and services.

Specifically MSU should: (1) be easy to contact; (2) make known its array of outreach resources and, at the same time, help constituents connect more efficiently with the right knowledge source; (3) communicate the ways in which outreach resources are made available; (4) take full advantage of its field infrastructure; and (5) be easy and pleasant to visit.

#### *Join with other institutions in learner-focused outreach*

***Recommendation 18:*** Michigan State University should join others in forming a confederation of organizations with learner-focused outreach as its goal.

By almost any measure, MSU has an impressive capacity to deliver knowledge through outreach. In the past, this extensive infrastructure has been viewed primarily as a link between campus and field, and as a means to facilitate two-way communication for the efficient extension of knowledge from campus to learners located off-campus. This function is still very important and uniquely positions MSU among knowledge resources in our state.

But another increasingly important function for Michigan State is to assist learners in identifying and securing knowledge resources whether or not those resources exist on our campus. By addressing this issue, MSU will increasingly become an institution that recognizes the strengths and knowledge resources associated with partner institutions. Such a perspective is crucial because MSU faculty, staff, and students are not the only sources of knowledge about the needs and problems facing the constituencies it serves or is MSU the only provider of knowledge for these constituencies.

Connections with other knowledge-based institutions, groups, and persons (e.g., universities, community colleges, corporations, and consultants) can result in creating timely and exciting university-industry, university-agency, and university-university partnerships, as well as referrals from MSU faculty and staff to professionals in other organizations and institutions.

These partnerships and referrals make sense at Michigan State for mission-related as well as for practical reasons. It is a way for MSU to balance its commitment to access within the limitations imposed by the realities of its own finite resources.

When Michigan State operates in this collaborative way, it takes a learner-focused approach to outreach. A learner-focused approach stresses the preeminence of learners' knowledge needs. It means that, in striving to meet learner needs, the university seeks to create strategic alliances with faculty, staff, and students across MSU and, externally, with other partners. To accomplish this goal, MSU campus-based and field-based personnel should view themselves as participants in a confederation of knowledge workers that includes, but also extends beyond the confines of, our

university. Their role is not to compete with other knowledge providers, but to collaborate and make more complete the learning opportunities available for people, groups, organizations, and communities. This approach can stimulate co-planning among knowledge providers, facilitate learner access to these opportunities, and most importantly encourage the delivery of learning opportunities that are most appropriate for learners.

***Expect leadership for outreach from all parts of the university***

***Recommendation 20: Leadership, in the form of commitment, capacity, and vision, must emanate from across Michigan State University—from the faculty, students, and staff, to the board of trustees. This leadership, when exercised, will create an institutional environment that consistently demonstrates to all that outreach is a fundamental feature of the university's mission.***

Leadership from the Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach is necessary but not sufficient for advancing the outreach mission at Michigan State University. Leadership must also be exercised by the faculty and staff, the deans, the provost, the president, and the board of trustees.

For example, at the unit level, faculty members must blend individual interests, aspirations, and strengths to create communities of scholars. Each unit must advance a scholarly agenda that is designed to fulfill the obligations associated with unit and university missions. And, chairpersons and directors must be able and willing to guide this process—ever mindful that MSU's mission includes multiple responsibilities. The notion that outreach is a cross-cutting enterprise, rather than a separate and competing activity, should make it easier to accomplish this goal. This planning process must include the voices of unit constituencies. If properly designed and undertaken, this input will enrich and enliven the scholarly debate—not overwhelm or control it.

The provost, as the university's chief academic officer, is in a position to monitor and adjust the overall academic direction of the university. Leadership with respect to outreach comes in various forms: making key personnel appointment decisions, allocating budget resources, evaluating unit performance, and reviewing faculty promotion and tenure recommendations. And the university president, as chief executive officer of the university, plays a distinct and unique role. As chief spokesperson for Michigan State, the president can articulate a vision for the institution that emphasizes the importance of outreach.

The recognition that comes from presidential affirmation cannot be underestimated. In saying this, though, it is imperative that rhetoric be consistently translated into practice. This connection process begins when a president understands outreach, listens to the issues and concerns expressed by faculty, staff, students, administrators, and the university's external constituents, and then promotes actions regarding outreach that are in the best interests of institutional growth and development. Together, the provost and president can affirm and reinforce the centrality of outreach at Michigan State in what they say and do about outreach. This institutional-level leadership is vital and necessary.

The board of trustees, as the policy-making body of the university, has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that Michigan State achieves mission-related excellence. This requires an informed understanding of Michigan State's role as a land-grant, research-intensive university, including the unique contributions to be made by MSU through its outreach activities. It also requires dedicated,

and often bold, leadership to ensure that MSU is consistently strong and vibrant in areas that are central to its institutional charter.

Finally, those in the public policy arena—including the governor, state legislators, and Michigan's congressional delegation—must be kept informed about the public benefits of outreach and the need to support it. The citizens of Michigan are already making a significant investment in Michigan State University. But there is a return on that investment in all the major functions undertaken by the university, including outreach. As the knowledge needs of our citizens and institutions continue to grow and expand, the value of outreach is sure to increase. Michigan State is the state land-grant university and, as such, must be viewed by those in the public policy arena as Michigan's flagship institution with respect to university outreach.

## **Chapter 15**

### **REPORT CONCLUSIONS<sup>25</sup>**

#### **Prologue**

1. Faculty, staff, and students across the University are engaged in a significant amount of important outreach, although they may not always call their activities "outreach."
2. Outreach, when viewed as a scholarly activity, represents an exciting and attractive opportunity for faculty.
3. Despite recent and significant progress associated with integrating outreach at the college and unit levels, much work remains to be done. This work cannot be done by administrators alone. Its accomplishment will depend upon broad-based leadership, especially from faculty at the unit level as they seek excellence in teaching, research, and service.
4. In addition to addressing outreach at a particular moment in the history of Michigan State University, it is important to stress that this report is not a call to do more with less. Nor is it a call to do more outreach at the expense of the other central functions of the university. Instead, the committee offers a way of thinking about outreach which is based in the faculty's commitment to the pursuit and communication of knowledge, which construes outreach as a mode of scholarship that can enrich and sustain the intellectual vitality of units throughout the campus, and which supports integration of the multiple dimensions of a scholar's life.

#### **A New Model for Outreach at Michigan State University**

1. This study is part of a new university model for outreach that has taken shape and form at MSU over the last decade through a variety of linked initiatives. The overall goal is to strengthen outreach by making it a more central and integrated dimension of the institution's overall mission.
2. For this report to advance the new model, an intellectual foundation for outreach—captured in a way of thinking about outreach and emphasizing its relevance for the university—must be created. Then, that foundation must serve as the base for advancing recommendations for strengthening outreach at Michigan State.

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<sup>25</sup> This material is drawn from the final report submitted by the committee to the Office of the Provost. The list of conclusions was organized by Frank A. Fear.



## A New Way of Thinking about Outreach at Michigan State University

### *Outreach as a form of scholarship*

1. We believe that the essence of scholarship is the thoughtful creation, interpretation, communication, or use of knowledge that is based in the ideas and methods of recognized disciplines, professions, and interdisciplinary fields. What qualifies an activity as "scholarship" is that it is deeply informed by accumulating knowledge in some field, that the knowledge is skillfully interpreted and deployed, and that the activity is carried out with intelligent openness to new information, debate, and criticism.
2. In our thinking, outreach has the same potential for scholarship as the other major academic functions of the university. This requires the need for a way of thinking about outreach that positions it at the heart of what the university is and does.
3. At Michigan State, the creative reconsideration of scholarship will require vigorous debate. That debate will include discussions about many issues, including how to evaluate the scholarly quality of outreach work, and how to separate outreach as scholarship vis-a-vis outreach that involves delivering knowledge in routine and repetitive ways.

### *Outreach as scholarship for the direct benefit of external audiences*

1. Outreach takes place when scholarship is exercised for the direct benefit of external audiences. It takes a variety of forms and is undertaken using a variety of approaches. At MSU, outreach sometimes takes the form of applied research and technical assistance to help clients, individually or collectively, to better understand the nature of a problem they confront. It may involve demonstration projects that introduce clients to new techniques and practices. Frequently, it extends the campus instructional capacity through credit and non-credit courses to meet the needs of adult students. Or it may provide policy analysis to help shape and inform the public process.
2. In much of the outreach it undertakes, MSU collaborates with end-users and other parties in a dynamic process of knowledge discovery and application.
3. By participating in outreach, MSU faculty, staff, and students not only extend knowledge to those who might benefit from it, they often learn and grow professionally and personally from these experiences.

### *Outreach as a means for the university to "reach out" to society*

1. The university extends itself (reaches out) through outreach to external audiences in one or more of these dimensions: distance, time, clientele, format, and approach. It extends itself—
  - a. In distance when it makes its knowledge resources accessible to those who do not live nearby.
  - b. In time and place when knowledge resources are made available at convenient times and locations.

- c. In format and approach when knowledge is made available in ways that are appropriate for those who seek it.

***Outreach as a cross-cutting function (cutting across teaching, research, and service)***

1. In the tripartite division of teaching, research, and service, outreach has been traditionally identified with "service." We suggest that outreach is better conceived as a cross-cutting function. In this way of thinking about outreach, there are forms of outreach teaching, research, and service, just as there are forms of non-outreach teaching, research, and service.
  - a. Off-campus credit coursework is an example of outreach teaching. On-campus coursework offered for undergraduate students Mondays–Fridays from 8 a.m.–5 p.m. represents non-outreach teaching.
  - b. Collaborative, problem-solving research with external clientele is an example of outreach research, in contrast to disciplinary research, which is often non-outreach research.
  - c. Medical and therapeutic services provided through a clinical service plan offers an example of outreach service. Service on university committees represents non-outreach service. Serving on a government commission, for example, is outreach service because the activity calls on the scholar's expertise and the subject-matter pertains to the programs and mission of the university unit(s) in which the scholar is appointed. On the other hand, a chemist serving on the fundraising committee of a local nonprofit organization—a role that is apart from the scholarly expertise and programs of the chemist's university unit—is engaging in non-outreach service.
2. Obviously, some activities span categories and there are certainly linkages between non-outreach and outreach work. Both types of linkages—between non-outreach and outreach activities, and between and among teaching, research, and service activities—are often required as Michigan State undertakes its activities.
3. Faculty and staff members routinely make knowledge available to the public, private, and nonprofit sectors in the form of consulting. This work is sometimes, but not always, undertaken on a fee-for-service basis. Outreach consulting takes place in conjunction with a unit's programs and in ways that advance a unit's mission. Consequently, it is our view that there is consulting-as-outreach and consulting-not-as-outreach. Whether a client pays a fee does not determine whether a consulting activity is outreach.

***Outreach as a major feature of university and unit missions***

1. As a land-grant university, Michigan State University has an historically recognized, as well as legislatively mandated, responsibility to extend its knowledge resources to the people of the state and the nation.
2. Tradition, pragmatism, and university policy have made the reach of this responsibility global. MSU's outreach responsibilities and capacities are unique in the state.
3. Accordingly, outreach should be considered a major function of the university, not a minor or ancillary function to be honored in rhetoric but minimized in practice.

4. As a form of scholarship and a major function of the university, outreach should be integral to the intellectual life of the entire university, not isolated and marginalized in special units.
5. At different levels and in ways appropriate to their discipline or profession, all academic units at Michigan State—though not necessarily every individual faculty member—should engage in outreach.

### **A New Definition of Outreach for Michigan State University**

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

### **The Relevance of Outreach for Michigan State University**

#### ***Outreach brings vitality to non-outreach research and teaching***

1. Outreach affords faculty, staff, and students windows on current reality, and the perspectives gained through these windows inform a scholar's understanding of the contemporary meaning, value, and use of their disciplinary or professional knowledge.
2. Outreach also raises fascinating and important questions. As a result, on-campus research and teaching become more vital, more alive, and the intellectual life of the whole university is more stimulating.

#### ***Outreach enhances institutional identity***

1. As both a land-grant and a research university, Michigan State has long represented a distinctive combination of teaching, research, and public service.
2. Our definition of outreach changes the way these functions have traditionally been conceptualized and labeled. But in so doing, it highlights rather than diminishes the uniqueness of the university's identity among the state universities of Michigan.
3. Even when outreach is restricted to solving problems with existing knowledge, it often inspires new research, thereby enriching and guiding the scholarly work of the university. Thus, outreach can exert a continuous shaping influence on the character, the orientation, and the activities of a university and its faculty, staff, and students.

#### ***Outreach enhances political and financial viability***

1. This identity, with the concomitant recognition of the university as a source of usable knowledge across many domains—social, scientific, technical, economic, educational, humanistic, medical, urban, and agricultural—has strong appeal for public, private, profit and nonprofit institutions, state and local governments, and individual citizens.

2. Outreach also helps create an explicit link between the university and the larger society on which it depends for legitimacy and support.

***Outreach is interdependent with other academic functions***

1. A robust program of basic research (i.e., non-outreach research) is crucial, not merely to the reputation of the university, but to its very ability to contribute to society. Without the new and renewed knowledge generated by basic research, other forms of scholarship lose their base, their freshness, and their intellectual energy.
2. Yet, basic research and other scholarship without obvious, direct application to current societal problems also profit from and even depend upon the public and political support that high-quality outreach engenders for the university.
3. The contributions that the university makes to society through outreach are far more easily communicated to, and recognized by, the public and legislators, the governor, and other public representatives than are the subtler and more indirect contributions of basic research.
4. Failure to grasp the dependence of basic research on outreach jeopardizes basic research. Such a failure is just as damaging to the cause of scholarship at MSU as is the failure to recognize the reciprocal dependence of outreach on basic research.

***Outreach helps balance the academic functions***

1. Even within our integrated way of thinking about outreach, including the recognition that outreach and non-outreach activities overlap, influence, and contribute to each other, the challenge of balancing these various activities remains. Maintaining balance involves the thoughtful management of real and enduring tensions.
2. To take advantage of MSU's natural diversification, everyone in the university—the board of trustees and administration, as well as the faculty, staff, and students—must honor the full range of functions, supporting the different mixes of functions appropriate for different units at different points in time.
3. Because the several functions of the university are mutually dependent in the ways suggested above, they form a system. To sustain the whole system as an institution with a land-grant mission, it is essential to maintain a working balance among the functions.
4. Paradoxically, if any function were to become dominant at the expense of the others then, in the long term, that function's very success might spell its own demise. Just as we must begin to think much more in whole-system terms if humankind is to develop appropriately, we must also think much more in whole-system terms for the university to excel.

***Outreach contributes to the institutional capacity to adapt***

1. The university is increasingly called upon to generate and provide knowledge about a widening array of social, cultural, economic, environmental, and technical challenges.
2. When outreach is integral to all units, a university is in a far better position to respond to emerging problems and issues than if outreach is isolated in certain units. Internal diversification enhances the institution's capacity to adapt to changing needs and circumstances.

**Outreach broadens access to the university**

1. From the time of its founding in 1855, Michigan State University has provided access to postsecondary education for a much broader array of students than were served by traditional institutions of higher education.
2. But developments both within MSU and in the larger society suggest that the university's definition of "access" should itself be broadened.
  - a. Since MSU's founding, a dozen regional universities and many more community colleges have been launched and have matured into institutions serving every corner of the state. Together, they provide ready access to virtually anyone who wishes to pursue postsecondary education.
  - b. Meanwhile, MSU has become a research university of national and international reputation.
  - c. At the same time, society has entered what many describe as a "knowledge age" with an emphasis on learning across the lifespan. Continuous learning is needed today by nearly everyone to maintain and improve one's standing in the job market, to exercise citizenship, to enhance the whole individual, to improve the business climate, and to fulfill a variety of other important sociocultural functions.
3. Given this dramatically transformed configuration of capacities across the state and within the university, and the advent of the knowledge age, MSU can and should provide access to knowledge through a wide array of outreach activities. MSU's approach to providing access to its knowledge resources must be responsive to societal needs with the overriding goal of maximizing the social and economic return on the state's public investment.

**Strategies for Strengthening Outreach  
at Michigan State University**

To assure that outreach is a major, well-rewarded, and well-supported function at Michigan State University, we offer recommendations in the following categories:

- ▶ Adopt the new conception and definition of outreach
- ▶ Create a measurement and evaluation system to track, assess, and adjust the amount of outreach
- ▶ Involve multiple parties in a dynamic process of outreach planning, but place primary responsibility at the unit level
- ▶ Reward units and faculty appropriately for engaging in outreach
- ▶ Stimulate, support, and recognize outreach at all levels of the university
- ▶ Enhance access to the university's knowledge resources

- ▶ Strengthen outreach through universitywide leadership

***Institutionalize the new way of thinking about outreach***

***Recommendation 1:*** Michigan State University should formally adopt the conception and definition of outreach articulated in this report.

- a. Despite the fact that outreach has been an important feature of Michigan State's history, a lack of clarity about outreach persists to this day.

***Calibrate the amount of outreach that is taking place***

***Recommendation 2:*** Michigan State University should establish a system for measuring, monitoring, and evaluating outreach. This system should have sufficient standardization to permit aggregation at the unit, college, and university levels, and also offer sufficient flexibility to accommodate important differences across disciplines, professions, and units.

- a. If outreach is to serve as one of the primary indices of the university's productivity, then the quality and acceptance of the means by which it is measured and evaluated must be comparable to those of other commonly used productivity indices.
- b. Currently, there is no clear, accepted system for measuring outreach.
- c. With agreement upon the nature of outreach (as offered by the committee in this report), it should be no more difficult to measure and evaluate than on-campus teaching and basic research.

***Set the outreach agenda using an integrated, decentralized approach***

***Recommendation 3:*** Outreach planning at Michigan State University should involve multiple parties in an open, continuous, and interactive dialogue. This planning process should be undertaken with the understanding that primary responsibility for outreach resides at the unit level.

- a. An integrated, decentralized approach to priority setting allows each unit considerable flexibility to set an agenda that will enable its faculty to make the maximum contribution.
- b. A close match between faculty expertise and the substantive foci of outreach activity is essential to ensure a robust level of authentically knowledge-based outreach, as well as to integrate outreach into the intellectual fabric of the university.
- c. A decentralized approach to planning recognizes and accommodates a fundamental tension associated with all aspects of academic planning: the need to balance the activities of the university as an institution, as it responds to external pressures to fulfill its mission and to remain financially and politically viable, with the activities of the university as a community of scholars—as faculty members pursue their work, individually and in groups.
- d. We believe that this tension can be adequately managed if outreach activities grow out of, or at least closely match, faculty and staff interests and expertise.

- e. In taking this approach to planning outreach, units will be required to pose and answer a number of important questions. Five of these questions are raised here.

*How much outreach should be conducted and with respect to what subjects?*

- (1) The Vice Provost for University Outreach and the individual deans do and must have at their disposal ways of influencing unit decisions. During the annual planning and budgeting process, for example, the central administration now employs a combination of pressures and incentives to assure necessary levels of academic credit hour (ACH) production. Their capacity to do so is essential if the university is to contend effectively with financial and political realities.
- (2) The question is, how strong should the central administration's influence be? On the one hand, most faculty and staff will instinctively seek to minimize central power and to preserve maximum discretion to pursue their own intellectual interests and preferences. They tend to identify the pursuit of their intellectual interests as the central function of the university. On the other hand, external pressures and demands are generally more salient at higher levels of the administrative hierarchy, and administrators tend to believe that they need stronger instruments of influence to respond to these pressures and keep the institution viable. Obviously, both sets of interests are legitimate. The issue, then, is one of appropriate balance.
- (3) To the extent that the central administration and deans find ways to make outreach intrinsically appealing (by linking it to authentic faculty interests), easy (by offering effective forms of facilitation and support), and well-rewarded (through incentive and recognition programs), the potential conflict between the interests of the faculty and the interests of the institution (as interpreted by administrators) can be minimized.

*Where should outreach take place?*

- (1) As a state, tax-assisted institution, Michigan State University has a special obligation to reach out to the citizens of Michigan. There are several compelling reasons for the university to reach out beyond the state to national and international settings:
  - (a) Involvement in national and international outreach enables our faculty to gain first-hand acquaintance with problems and developments at those levels, and this experience can be incorporated into non-outreach teaching. National and international outreach can also be instrumental for conducting world-class non-outreach research. Both problems and advances in knowledge are increasingly internationalized because we live in a global community.
  - (b) Outreach in national and international settings contributes in many and fundamental ways to the economic, social, and cultural development of Michigan. MSU students and Michigan citizens need to be educated not only as citizens of Michigan, but also as citizens of the nation and the world. In addition, the economic competitiveness of our state is increasingly related to the ability to position Michigan's services and products in a global marketplace.
  - (c) Many national and international outreach activities are supported through grants and contracts from corporations, foundations, the federal government, non-governmental organizations, and national governments around the world. Such external support enables the people of Michigan to reap benefits without having to assume complete financial responsibility.

- (d) National and international outreach has important and far reaching significance for Michigan State University. Such outreach was a fundamental feature of former-President John A. Hannah's vision and efforts to transform MSU from college to university status. Thus, outreach to constituents outside of Michigan has become a vital part of the MSU tradition. Over the years, our institution has crafted an enviable record in outreach teaching, research, and service in national and international settings.

This record includes, but is certainly not limited to, overseas credit instruction (outreach teaching), research designed to directly benefit the health and well-being of people (outreach research), and efforts to establish or revitalize institutions around the world (outreach service). Many of the efforts undertaken by MSU in the spheres of business and industrial development, technology transfer, policy development, program evaluation, and community development in the United States and around the world either are outreach or draw upon outreach.

- (2) This work has value in its own right for mission-related and scholarly reasons, and because of its synergistic quality also contributes in significant ways to other outreach and non-outreach activities.

*Who should have access to knowledge resources?*

- (1) Commitment to outreach rests on promoting connections between MSU and its external constituents ranging from a few miles off-campus in Lansing, to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, to locations across the nation and throughout the world.
- (2) Access makes it possible for groups outside of MSU to communicate with us in order to identify needs, to share information, technology, and knowledge, and to avail themselves of our knowledge generation, transmission, application, and preservation activities.
- (3) Access is a multidimensional concept, and decisions about access (to whom, how, when, etc.) are often difficult to make.
- (4) A number of factors need to be taken into consideration as faculty, staff, students, and administrators make unit-level access decisions. Among the factors that need to be considered are:
- (a) **Unit factors:** mission; faculty, staff, and student strengths; available fiscal capabilities; the sense of the different time-scales associated with outreach efforts (i.e., how much time and effort will be required); and how long outreach efforts will be maintained with university personnel and associated funding resources.
  - (b) **Types of outreach:** course and program offerings especially for advanced degree work and continuing professional education, i.e., instructional outreach (also known as lifelong education); and knowledge that can be applied for problem-solving purposes, i.e., problem-focused outreach.
  - (c) **Types of access:** open access—access to all persons and groups, irrespective of who they are or whom they represent; targeted access—access offered to specific persons and/or groups; and intensive access—efforts that require labor- and/or capital-intensive response.



- (d) Cases where particular knowledge resources are available only from MSU and are not available through other knowledge providers (e.g., regional universities).
  - (e) Cases where MSU offers unique academic strength or a special approach.
  - (f) The goal of collaborating, rather than competing, with other knowledge providers to meet constituents' knowledge needs.
- (2) As access and decisions are being made, Michigan State must keep in mind the importance of ensuring access to traditionally underserved people, groups, and institutions. This way of thinking about access integrates two important aspirations—the university's internal commitment to diversity with its concomitant desire to serve the knowledge needs of a diverse constituency through its external activities. This internal-external commitment (and connection) reflects the spirit of, and the expectations associated with, the MSU IDEA—Institutional Diversity: Excellence in Action.

*How should outreach success be calibrated?*

- (1) The rooting of outreach in scholarship is a necessary, but not sufficient, characteristic of successful outreach. Other yardsticks might include—
- (a) Meeting the needs expressed by external audiences
  - (b) Satisfying standards of scholarship as expressed by professional peers
  - (c) Producing tangible products and/or processes
  - (d) Yielding positive, measurable outcomes
  - (e) Bringing about few, if any, negative consequences for clientele
- (2) It is improbable that a single metric can be established that meets the diverse circumstances of our complex campus.

*What role should be played by external constituents?*

- (1) Although it is important to engage external constituencies in the identification of problems and issues for outreach, the university and its faculty and staff have a right and a responsibility to play the role of critics, as well as servants, of the surrounding society. Thus, issues defined at faculty and staff initiative should receive at least equal weight with those defined by external constituencies.
- (2) Perhaps the ideal process is a collaborative one that involves the faculty and staff in direct discussions with external constituencies in order to define and address problems or issues. These direct discussions can be facilitated by the creation of unit- and college-level advisory or "visiting" committees where unit clients have an opportunity to advise faculty and staff on outreach directions and focus.

*Reward units for engaging appropriately in outreach*

*Recommendation 4:* Efforts should be undertaken at Michigan State University to reward outreach consistently and appropriately at the college and unit levels.

***Reward faculty for participating in outreach***

***Recommendation 5:*** Each academic unit at Michigan State University should create explicit, written guidelines regarding the criteria to be used in making faculty merit salary increase and tenure and promotion decisions. These guidelines should include a clear indication that outreach is valued in the decision-making process.

- a. External incentives to participate in outreach activities include the emerging policies of national funding agencies, such as those of the National Science Foundation, which encourage knowledge application and promote research-outreach connections.
- b. But other factors must be taken into consideration when analyzing the issue of faculty participation in outreach. One of the most notable factors is the way that outreach work is perceived by Michigan State faculty. Some colleagues question the value of outreach and consider it to have limited scholarly value. For others, participating in outreach may be "hazardous to one's professional health" in terms of merit increases and promotion and tenure decisions. And some feel that outreach involvements may hurt their professional mobility.
- c. In many ways, valuing and rewarding faculty participation represent the centerpiece for advancing university outreach at MSU.
- d. We would not argue that all Michigan State faculty members should be expected to engage in outreach or that all faculty members should be expected to engage in outreach at all times throughout their careers, for there are uneven opportunities across time and across the campus for faculty to participate in outreach. But, we do affirm that all units should be expected to engage in outreach.
- e. Unit-level policies, important for all faculty, are especially pertinent when applied to junior faculty. All too frequently, outreach is categorically rejected as not legitimate for supporting tenure decisions for junior faculty. We reject this position. Rather, we believe that the outreach activities of non-tenured faculty must be judged in terms of their excellence and their contributions to establishing the non-tenured faculty member as a respected scholar and recognized expert in his/her field, and to predicting the future success of the person as a scholar and expert.
- f. Units granting tenure need to consider outreach activities just as they would on-campus teaching and research when evaluating potential for tenure. The category to which an activity belongs is far less important than the function it serves in establishing a scholarly foundation and predicting future success.
- g. Furthermore, just as teaching and research activities vary in their ability to build the foundation for a distinguished career as a scholar and to predict future success, some outreach activities may be better than others during the non-tenured stage of a person's career.

***Create new, innovative, and exciting outreach programs***

***Recommendation 6:*** Creative programs to stimulate outreach should be developed at Michigan State University.

- a. The availability of funded programs is an important means to sustain the outreach work being done by those who have been historically involved in outreach. It is also a means

to entice the participation of those who have been historically less involved or uninvolved in outreach.

### ***Stimulate outreach teaching***

***Recommendation 7:*** Unit and faculty participation in instructional outreach should be stimulated and rewarded at Michigan State University.

- a. In partnership with other organizations and institutions, Michigan State must continue to provide leadership for meeting the informational and instructional needs of a socially and culturally diverse public.
- b. In today's and tomorrow's world, this will require making available MSU's knowledge in a variety of locations using innovative methods, curricula, schedules, and technology.
- c. The instructional capacity of the university involves a variety of formats, including credit (e.g., degree and nondegree programs) and noncredit activities (e.g., seminars, workshops, and conferences). Instructional programming is no longer limited to the university campus. The populations included in our student body, and the geographical locations for learning, are diverse across sites.

### ***Stimulate student involvement in outreach***

***Recommendation 8:*** Involving students—undergraduate, graduate, and graduate-professional—in outreach should be a distinguishing feature of the Michigan State University educational experience.

- a. Incorporating outreach experiences in students' educational lives is an excellent way of declaring what is special, if not unique, about an education at Michigan State. Combining the traditions of a research university with those of a land-grant institution, an MSU education can emphasize for students the vital importance of using and applying scholarly knowledge for the betterment of individuals, groups, organizations, and communities.

### ***Stimulate outreach research***

***Recommendation 9:*** As a land-grant, research-intensive institution, Michigan State University is uniquely qualified to be a world-class institution in the area of outreach research. This should be valued by the university as high priority work.

- a. Any land-grant, research-intensive institution faces two challenges. First, it should be client-sensitive in that it seeks to meet constituent needs. Second, it should be knowledge-sensitive in that the knowledge functions are propelled by scholarly interests. Linking these two orientations is not only a challenge but a major opportunity for institutions such as Michigan State.
- b. Models are very much needed that illustrate how MSU faculty, staff, students and units have successfully engaged in the "balancing act" of being client-sensitive and, at the same time, conducting cutting-edge scholarship.

***Provide adequate resources for outreach***

***Recommendation 10:*** Responsible, innovative, and sustainable strategies should be established with the goal of providing adequate resources for outreach at Michigan State University.

- a. Although the university is operating in a highly constrained fiscal environment, the committee believes that outreach is so deeply bound with MSU's overall mission that it must be supported along with MSU's other mission-related areas of concern.
- b. To the extent that MSU seeks balance and dynamism across its mission-related spheres, which we believe is fundamental to the long-term health of the institution, care must be given to ensure the vitality of all major outreach and non-outreach work.
- c. It is in this regard that the cross-cutting characteristic of outreach is especially prominent. The zero-sum arguments that typically accompany funding discussions are far less pertinent when outreach is factored into the budget equation. That is because outreach does not exist without connections to the university's fundamental knowledge enterprises—teaching, research, and service.
- d. To achieve a stable and balanced funding base for outreach will require financial expertise beyond that possessed by this committee.

***Eliminate barriers to outreach in university systems, structures, and policies***

***Recommendation 11:*** Michigan State University should work aggressively to develop systems, structures, and policies that encourage outreach.

- a. In our discussions with faculty and staff, we learned about impediments to outreach in Michigan State's systems, structures, and policies. The committee also found evidence of university-level policies that discourage outreach.

***Promote outreach through executive-level declarations and actions***

***Recommendation 12:*** The offices of the president and provost should assume leadership for declaring the importance and value of outreach at Michigan State University.

- a. Our institutional leaders can affirm and reinforce the centrality of outreach at Michigan State in what they say and do about outreach. This institutional-level leadership is vital and necessary.

***Recognize outreach through university awards***

***Recommendation 13:*** Outreach should be appropriately recognized in the awards system at Michigan State University.

- a. Awards represent a public and valued means by which to honor scholarly excellence.
- b. If outreach is viewed and valued as scholarship, then excellence in outreach should be recognized on a regular basis through our university award system.

- c. Awards that do not consider outreach excellence as a requisite for honoring faculty for general scholarly excellence impede progress toward the committee's integrative goal.
- d. At the same time, the creation of separate awards for outreach scholarship should be avoided except in those cases where integrative excellence is being honored. Service-learning awards for faculty, staff, and students, for example, affirm outreach connections with teaching and service.

***Recognize outreach through the academic governance system***

***Recommendation 14:*** Outreach at Michigan State University should be appropriately recognized in the academic governance system.

- a. An important strategy for strengthening outreach at MSU is to ensure that outreach-related issues, concerns, and needs are given adequate attention in Michigan State's academic governance system.
- b. This is a delicate matter, however, given the cross-cutting feature of outreach. The goal is to enhance the institution's outreach capacity, but not in a way that positions outreach against other university functions.

***Showcase outreach strategically***

***Recommendation 15:*** Exemplary outreach at Michigan State University should be strategically showcased on and off campus.

- a. In showcasing outreach, the institution benefits as more and more people learn about what Michigan State is doing to extend itself to meet constituent knowledge needs. Participating MSU faculty, staff, and students also benefit from the public recognition that ensues when those on and off campus learn about how knowledge is being generated, transmitted, applied, and preserved for the benefit of external audiences.
- b. Just as important, celebrating and publicizing outreach fulfills an important educative function. Important stories can be told about the outreach work being undertaken at Michigan State. Certainly these include descriptions of what is being done, but also involve equally important stories about how it is being undertaken, with what benefits to whom, and how dilemmas and problems are being addressed (e.g., sustaining outreach efforts over time).
- c. We fully recognize that MSU outreach is currently being publicized in a variety of ways and to a variety of audiences. Yet, we also believe that the showcasing function can be performed more systematically and comprehensively.

***Facilitate access to knowledge through advanced technology***

***Recommendation 16:*** Investment in, and optimal use of, advanced technology in outreach should be a continuing priority for Michigan State University.

- a. To extend itself effectively to those who seek access to its knowledge resources, Michigan State must work aggressively to overcome the distance that separates learners and campus. Technology can be used to bridge that distance.
- b. Indeed, facilitating access to its knowledge resources by external audiences rests on the strategic use by MSU of its advanced technology.
- c. It is impossible to discuss outreach without considering the advanced technology function.
- d. It is important that Michigan State have an advanced technology agenda, and that it be a high priority for the university. We believe that technology, especially electronic technology and the combination of computer and telecommunications technology, provides the foundation for the 21st century information infrastructure. The computerization, miniaturization, and telecommunication of information through knowledge management has caused a significant increase in the amount of information available.
- e. The goal of such management is to make information and knowledge readily accessible to external consumers.

***Enhance user-friendliness for external constituencies***

***Recommendation 17:*** Michigan State University should enhance the awareness of external constituents regarding its outreach activities, and then help them gain efficient access to these offerings.

- a. Users and potential users of Michigan State's knowledge resources, like customers everywhere, expect to be able to identify, access, and use these resources with considerable ease and efficiency.
- b. It is the committee's belief that the university needs to become more user-friendly in the ways that it extends itself to external audiences.
- c. Although there are many efforts underway in individual units to make potential clients more welcome, these efforts are scattered and are often not well enough known either within or outside the university to guide effectively most of those seeking to avail themselves of MSU offerings.

***Join with other institutions in learner-focused outreach***

***Recommendation 18:*** Michigan State University should join others in forming a confederation of organizations with learner-focused outreach as its goal.

- a. By almost any measure, MSU has an impressive capacity to deliver knowledge through outreach.
- b. In the past, this extensive infrastructure has been viewed primarily as a link between campus and field, and as a means to facilitate two-way communication for the efficient extension of knowledge from campus to learners located off-campus.
- c. This function is still very important and uniquely positions MSU among knowledge resources in our state.

- d. But another increasingly important function for Michigan State is to assist learners in identifying and securing knowledge resources whether or not those resources exist on our campus.
- e. In doing so, MSU will increasingly become an institution that recognizes the strengths and knowledge resources associated with partner institutions.
- f. Such a perspective is crucial because MSU faculty, staff, and students are not the only sources of knowledge about the needs and problems facing the constituencies it serves or is MSU the only provider of knowledge for these constituencies.
- g. Indeed, MSU could not possibly meet all of the knowledge needs of its constituents even if it devoted all of its institutional resources to outreach. Consequently, connections with other knowledge-based institutions, groups, and persons (e.g., universities, community colleges, corporations, and consultants) can result in creating timely and exciting university-industry, university-agency, and university-university partnerships, as well as referrals from MSU faculty and staff to professionals in other organizations and institutions.
- h. These partnerships and referrals make sense at Michigan State for mission-related as well as for practical reasons. It is a way for MSU to balance its commitment to access within the limitations imposed by the realities of its own finite resources.
- i. When Michigan State operates in this collaborative way, it takes a learner-focused approach to outreach. A learner-focused approach stresses the preeminence of learners' knowledge needs. It means that, in striving to meet learner needs, the university seeks to create strategic alliances with faculty, staff, and students across MSU and, externally, with other partners.

***Strengthen the Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach***

***Recommendation 19:*** The Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach should provide universitywide leadership, coordination, and support for the institution's outreach mission, as well as spearhead the implementation of recommendations presented in this report. But, as stated earlier, Michigan State University should continue to lodge primary leadership for outreach in the academic units.

- a. The Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach was established in 1990 as a means to integrate outreach at the college and unit levels more fully.
- b. While the major programmatic responsibility for outreach activities resides in the academic units, the Vice Provost is charged with overseeing all aspects of MSU's outreach efforts with the goal of ensuring that these efforts are internally coordinated, externally linked, responsive to important social needs, and consistent with the university's mission, strength, and priorities.
- c. To carry out these responsibilities, the Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach is strongly linked to the other functions and offices associated with the Office of the Provost, as well as to the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies.

- d. Additional responsibilities include engaging in outreach strategic planning; establishing and maintaining an array of external linkages with government agencies, higher education institutions, professional associations, and private and nonprofit sector organizations; building collaborative relationships, networks, and structures with these partners; recommending policies, systems, and structures that enhance university outreach at MSU especially in relationship to enhancing access to the university's knowledge resources; nurturing and promoting interdisciplinary and interprofessional strategies for addressing current and emerging societal issues; working with deans, unit administrators, faculty, and staff, and students to support outreach planning and programming at the unit level; and conducting ongoing evaluation of the university's outreach programs.
- e. In this new structure, the Office is responsible for encouraging a more integrative and interactive outreach program across the campus.
- f. We support the approach of integrating outreach into academic programs throughout the university. The move to decentralize outreach, although not without its challenges, enhances this integration process. Because the decentralization process has been unevenly adopted across the university, one of the foremost roles of the Vice Provost's office is to nurture and stimulate outreach programs and support services where they are most needed.
- g. We believe that if university outreach is to become more fully integrated into MSU's mission, it cannot be "owned" by the Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach. Because of the recent efforts to downsize the internal structure of the Office, including the elimination of administrative positions, resources that otherwise would be devoted to structure are now available to support outreach programming throughout the university.

***Expect leadership for outreach from all parts of the university***

***Recommendation 20:*** Leadership, in the form of commitment, capacity, and vision, must emanate from across Michigan State University—from the faculty, students, and staff, to the board of trustees. This leadership, when exercised, will create an institutional environment that consistently demonstrates to all that outreach is a fundamental feature of the university's mission.

- a. Leadership from the Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach is necessary but not sufficient for advancing the outreach mission at Michigan State University.
- b. Leadership must also be exercised by the faculty and staff, the deans, the provost, the president, and the board of trustees.
  - (1) At the unit level, faculty members must blend individual interests, aspirations, and strengths to create communities of scholars. Each unit must advance a scholarly agenda that is designed to fulfill the obligations associated with unit and university missions.
  - (2) Chairpersons and directors must be able and willing to guide this process—ever mindful that MSU's mission includes multiple responsibilities. The notion that outreach is a cross-cutting enterprise, rather than a separate and competing activity, should make it easier to accomplish this goal. And, this planning process must include the voices of unit constituencies. If properly designed and undertaken, this input will enrich and enliven the scholarly debate—not overwhelm or control it.



- (3) Deans, who oversee the work of multiple units, are responsible for stimulating, recognizing, and rewarding units' mission-related work. Deans have the tools at their disposal to steer outreach in new and exciting directions. These tools include appointing chairpersons and directors who believe in the importance of outreach, ensuring that outreach-supportive faculty evaluation criteria are established and consistently applied in each unit for which they have responsibility, and rewarding units and faculty for outreach excellence.
  - (4) The provost, as the university's chief academic officer, is in a position to monitor and adjust the overall academic direction of the university. Leadership with respect to outreach comes in various forms: making key personnel appointment decisions, allocating budget resources, evaluating unit performance, and reviewing faculty promotion and tenure recommendations. It is in this regard that the concept of balance, discussed earlier in this report, is critical. A balanced approach to scholarship—one that sanctions the array of scholarship that is required at Michigan State University—is of utmost importance. These efforts can and should be done in collaboration with the faculty, chairpersons/directors, and deans, as well as in conjunction with all other vice presidents.
  - (5) The university president, as chief executive officer of the university, plays a distinct and unique role. As chief spokesperson for Michigan State, the president can articulate a vision for the institution that emphasizes the importance of outreach. The recognition that comes from presidential affirmation cannot be underestimated. In saying this, though, it is imperative that rhetoric be consistently translated into practice. This connection process begins when a president understands outreach, listens to the issues and concerns expressed by faculty, staff, students, administrators, and the university's external constituents, and then promotes actions regarding outreach that are in the best interests of institutional growth and development.
  - (6) The board of trustees, as the policy making body of the university, has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that Michigan State achieves mission-related excellence. This requires an informed understanding of Michigan State's role as a land-grant, research-intensive university, including the unique contributions to be made by MSU through its outreach activities. It also requires dedicated, and often bold, leadership to ensure that MSU is consistently strong and vibrant in areas that are central to its institutional charter.
- c. Finally, those in the public policy arena—including the governor, state legislators, and Michigan's congressional delegation—must be kept informed about the public benefits of outreach and the need to support it.
  - d. The citizens of Michigan are already making a significant investment in Michigan State University. But there is a return on that investment in all the major functions undertaken by the university, including outreach. As the knowledge needs of our citizens and institutions continue to grow and expand, the value of outreach is sure to increase.

### **Postscript: The 21st Century University and Outreach**

1. Large, public universities, such as Michigan State University, have historically responded to the knowledge needs of diverse audiences. These audiences include undergraduate and graduate students, and many groups and organizations that seek access to the university's knowledge resources, including professionals working in all fields of endeavor encompassed by the university.
2. The need to respond to multiple audiences creates pressures at all levels of the university: at the central level, the college level, the unit level, and the faculty/staff level.
3. But no institution can afford to be "all things to all people," and every institution must answer fundamental questions: Why was this organization established? What is its mission? What are its priorities?
4. The pressures besetting the modern university, although different in type, are no more severe than the challenges facing all contemporary institutions—public, private, and nonprofit. Virtually all institutions are making hard choices.
5. These choices—the new realities of the late 20th century—are propelling institutions to reinvent, refocus, and reform how they operate in turbulent, unpredictable environments.
6. Universities cannot escape these pressures. Indeed, as knowledge enterprises, they should be shining examples of how institutional transformation can be effected.
7. Without question, postsecondary education (especially public higher education) has entered an era of significant change. The change process can be led by the Academy if it moves appropriately and deliberately. At issue is not whether change will occur, only when it will occur and who will lead it.
8. Sometimes organizations do not see the need to make necessary change, fail to move quickly enough, or resist change even when others call for it. When such failure or resistance happens, those inside the organization often lose the ability to lead and direct change.
9. At Michigan State University, the institutional change process must be fundamentally tied to our institution's status as a public, land-grant institution. This standing, expressed in our institutional mandate and mission, underscores the university's covenant with the people of Michigan, the nation, and the world. In addition, MSU shares a bond with all other institutions of higher education: it is a community of scholars where scholarship is exercised in the form of knowledge generation, transmission, application, and preservation.
10. Certainly, university outreach is not the only variable in the change equation, but it is an important one. Outreach is one of several major functions that takes place at Michigan State, but it has special relevance because of our institution's mission-related obligations.
11. Although the challenges are many, the future holds great promise for Michigan State University. This promise can be realized only if MSU confronts and masters challenges. It will be lost if the university avoids making difficult choices or waits for others to lead. Otherwise, excellence will be an impossible dream rather than an achievable reality.

12. Today, in unprecedented ways, our university is being asked to make its knowledge resources available and accessible to society.
13. The all-important question is: Will Michigan State be at the forefront of the movement of universities into the 21st century? We believe that the answer is yes.

## **Chapter 16**

### **REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS<sup>26</sup>**

#### **A New Way of Thinking about Outreach at Michigan State University**

##### ***Outreach as a major feature of university and unit missions***

1. As a form of scholarship and a major function of the university, outreach should be integral to the intellectual life of the entire university, not isolated and marginalized in special units.
2. At different levels and in ways appropriate to their discipline or profession, all academic units at Michigan State—though not necessarily every individual faculty member—should engage in outreach.

#### **The Relevance of Outreach at Michigan State University**

##### ***Outreach helps balance the academic functions***

1. To take advantage of MSU's natural diversification, everyone in the university—the board of trustees and administration, as well as the faculty, staff, and students—must honor the full range of functions, supporting the different mixes of functions appropriate for different units at different points in time.

##### ***Outreach broadens access to the university***

1. Given this dramatically transformed configuration of capacities across the state and within the university, and the advent of the knowledge age, MSU can and should provide access to knowledge through a wide array of outreach activities. MSU's approach to providing access to its knowledge resources must be responsive to societal needs with the overriding goal of maximizing the social and economic return on the state's public investment.

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<sup>26</sup> Material presented in this chapter was included in the final report submitted by the committee to the Office of the Provost. The recommendations in this chapter were organized by Frank A. Fear.

## Strategies for Strengthening Outreach at Michigan State University

To assure that outreach is a major, well-rewarded, and well-supported function at Michigan State University, we offer recommendations in the following categories:

- ▶ Adopt the new conception and definition of outreach
- ▶ Create a measurement and evaluation system to track, assess, and adjust the amount of outreach
- ▶ Involve multiple parties in a dynamic process of outreach planning, but place primary responsibility at the unit level
- ▶ Reward units and faculty appropriately for engaging in outreach
- ▶ Stimulate, support, and recognize outreach at all levels of the university
- ▶ Enhance access to the university's knowledge resources
- ▶ Strengthen outreach through universitywide leadership.

### ***Institutionalize the new way of thinking about outreach***

***Recommendation 1:*** Michigan State University should formally adopt the conception and definition of outreach articulated in this report.

- a. The conception of outreach outlined here should become an essential feature of Michigan State's mission statement and other documents used to describe the university.
- b. It should also be adopted for measuring individual and unit outreach activity levels. This would lead, for example, to revisions in both the Professional Accomplishments form that is annually completed by faculty, and in the unit-level Academic Program Planning and Review (APP&R) process.
- c. In addition, the conception of outreach should become the common reference point for relevant university forms, including those associated with promotion and tenure reviews for faculty.
- d. Finally, the concepts and perspectives included in this report should be drawn upon by key administrative and academic officers, including the board of trustees, the President, the Provost, and the Vice Provost for University Outreach, when they are making public presentations and writing about outreach.

### ***Calibrate the amount of outreach that is taking place***

***Recommendation 2:*** Michigan State University should establish a system for measuring, monitoring, and evaluating outreach. This system should have sufficient standardization to permit aggregation at the unit, college,

and university levels, and also offer sufficient flexibility to accommodate important differences across disciplines, professions, and units.

- a. With agreement upon the nature of outreach (as offered by the committee in this report), it should be no more difficult to measure and evaluate than on-campus teaching and basic research.

- (1) In teaching, ACHs are readily aggregated at the unit, college, and university levels, and they apply equally well to formal instruction that we would classify as outreach (off-campus) and to non-outreach (on-campus) instruction. Student evaluations of instruction are accepted as one criterion of quality. We see no reason to insist upon better information about the quality of outreach teaching than we are prepared to accept for similar on-campus activity. Thus, our definition of outreach demands no new measures or developments in the area of credit instruction.

We do not, however, have good measures for other types of outreach teaching, including: noncredit workshops, conferences, seminars, or training events; lectures, addresses, or talks; consultation and technical assistance; and radio or television appearances as an expert. As to evaluation of such nonformal outreach teaching, surveys of client satisfaction—the rough equivalent of student evaluations of teaching—may be possible in many though not all cases. Some have suggested that genuine evaluation of this type of teaching would have to involve some assessment of its impact. If so, this higher standard should be applied equally to on-campus and outreach teaching.

- (2) In the area of research, the picture is also mixed. Examples of outreach research include policy studies or data analyses commissioned by federal, state, or local agencies; action research projects carried out in collaboration with outreach clientele; public opinion surveys conducted for the media or for such clients as labor unions; exploratory (often collaboratory) research with and/or for a corporation; safety or health-oriented tests of products or packaging; and clinical trials of drugs or other experimental medical products or methods. The traditional indices of research productivity include the amount of external funding generated, the number of grants from prestigious agencies (such as the National Science Foundation or the National Institutes of Health), the number and nature of research publications, and patents and copyrights.

Outreach research brings in external funding. It also generates publications, which are published in peer-refereed journals. Nor is it uncommon for outreach research to produce valuable intellectual property protected by patents or copyrights. While these types of output are not difficult to quantify, they are harder to evaluate. That is, many of these outputs do not have a recognized value for faculty in a unit or in a scholarly community. A unit's faculty may simply have no way of "calibrating" their judgment of such activities, or they may routinely accord them negligible value. Here, some combination of client satisfaction surveys and evidence concerning the impact or utility of the work may be helpful.

- (3) We assign several types of activity to the outreach teaching category that others might have chosen to assign to the category of outreach service (for example, consultation and technical assistance, which we think of as teaching because they involve direct interpersonal communication or transmission of knowledge, albeit in a use-oriented

context). For this reason, the outreach service category applies to a relatively small number of activities across the university. These include, but are certainly not limited to, clinical service or the provision of medical or psychological services by physicians, nurses, and therapists; and recitals, exhibitions, and other modes for conveying faculty expertise to the public.

- b. As data about teaching, research, or service are aggregated at the unit, college, and university levels, considerable information about the content and nature of the activity is inevitably lost. For example, one student's participation in a 10-person seminar and another's participation in a 300-person lecture course may both produce three student credit hours. Or two research projects may produce the same number of publications in refereed journals, but the publications for one may offer a breakthrough in its field while those for the second may make only the most modest of contributions. Even when we either already have or manage to create new metrics for outreach, the same problem of information loss through aggregation will inevitably pertain to outreach teaching and research at MSU, although the problem will be no worse for outreach than for non-outreach activity.
- c. The university should seek ways of preserving more information about the substance and nature of outreach across levels of aggregation. Otherwise it will be difficult to communicate the value of our outreach activity to the public, their representatives in government, and other outreach constituencies.

***Set the outreach agenda using an integrated, decentralized approach***

***Recommendation 3:*** Outreach planning at Michigan State University should involve multiple parties in an open, continuous, and interactive dialogue. This planning process should be undertaken with the understanding that primary responsibility for outreach resides at the unit level.

- a. Outreach activities should focus at the intersection of faculty expertise and interests, on the one hand, and high priority societal needs for knowledge, on the other.
- b. The problems, needs, and opportunities to be addressed through outreach should be chosen at levels close to the individual faculty member—the level of the department or multidisciplinary center and institute. The mix of activities pursued by a unit will depend upon such factors as the nature of the discipline, field, or profession to which it relates, the levels of seniority and range of talents represented in its faculty, and the demands and opportunities for non-outreach activity (e.g., for on-campus instruction and externally funded basic research), as well as the demands and opportunities for outreach activity.
- c. To ensure that outreach activities focus on important societal needs, however, all units will want to design thoughtful ways of identifying and setting priorities among problems, frequently through the direct participation of advisory groups representing key external constituencies along with formal needs assessments. Ideally, the construction of needs and the setting of priorities are derived from discussion between faculty and external constituencies.
- d. University administrators can and should help units manage these expectations not only by providing assistance in designing unit- and college-level needs assessment and priority-

setting systems, but also by conducting broad-gauged, statewide needs assessments and using the results to establish universitywide thematic priorities.

- e. In taking this approach to planning outreach, units will be required to pose and answer a number of important questions. Five of these questions are raised here.

*How much outreach should be conducted and with respect to what subjects?*

- (1) Decisions about how much outreach and in what subjects should be made at levels close to the individual faculty and staff member—in many cases, the level of the department or school, interacting with topically focused multidisciplinary centers when appropriate.
- (2) The overall balance between outreach and non-outreach activities should emerge from a process of explicit or tacit bargaining and planning at several levels: between central administrators and deans, between deans and department chairs/directors, and among chairs/directors, faculty members, and external constituencies.
- (3) The focus and amount of outreach activity can be continuously revised through discussion, debate, and bargaining both within and outside the University. Such an explicit, public process is the only one consistent with academic norms of open dialogue.

*Where should outreach take place?*

- (1) As a state, tax-assisted institution, Michigan State University has a special obligation to reach out to the citizens of Michigan. But the university should also continue to pursue national and international outreach activities vigorously.
- (2) National and international outreach should figure prominently in unit-level planning discussions. This work has value in its own right for mission-related and scholarly reasons, and because of its synergistic quality also contributes in significant ways to other outreach and non-outreach activities.

*Who should have access to knowledge resources?*

- (1) Michigan State University should be an inclusionary, rather than an exclusionary, institution.
- (2) As access plans and decisions are being made, Michigan State must keep in mind the importance of ensuring access to traditionally underserved people, groups, and institutions. This way of thinking about access integrates two important aspirations—the university's internal commitment to diversity with its concomitant desire to serve the knowledge needs of a diverse constituency through its external activities. This internal-external commitment (and connection) reflects the spirit of, and the expectations associated with, the MSU IDEA—Institutional Diversity: Excellence in Action.

*How should outreach success be calibrated?*

- (1) Units at Michigan State University should clearly identify the major dimensions of successful outreach and then adopt those dimensions when designing and evaluating outreach efforts. Encouraging successful outreach at MSU is, we believe, an important goal.



- (2) It is improbable that a single metric can be established that meets the diverse circumstances of our complex campus. Indeed, it may well be that no single formula for successful outreach should be established at Michigan State. Consequently, the Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach should work with colleges and units to define outreach success in ways that are appropriate to various disciplines, professions, and fields. These standards can then be adopted and applied for planning, evaluating, and rewarding outreach. Units will then be held accountable for conducting work that is commensurate with the selected standards.

*What role should be played by external constituents?*

- (1) Michigan State University units should develop and use processes for involving external constituencies in identifying outreach issues, problems, and opportunities that pertain to unit mission. These unit-level outreach planning processes should be integrated into the normal APP&R processes.
- (2) Both university and unit level processes should take special care to listen to the voices of those who are currently underserved for reasons of racial, ethnic or cultural difference, poverty, powerlessness, geographical remoteness, or handicapping condition.
- (3) Although it is important to engage external constituencies in the identification of problems and issues for outreach, the university and its faculty and staff have a right and a responsibility to play the role of critics, as well as servants, of the surrounding society. Thus, issues defined at faculty and staff initiative should receive at least equal weight with those defined by external constituencies.

*Reward units for engaging appropriately in outreach*

*Recommendation 4:* Efforts should be undertaken at Michigan State University to reward outreach consistently and appropriately at the college and unit levels.

Units at Michigan State University should consistently demonstrate that outreach is valued and rewarded. Below are examples of ways to accomplish this goal:

- a. The university could support multi-year, competitive proposals from colleges to support unit efforts to redistribute total faculty effort in accordance with unit goals and an expanded notion of scholarship. These proposals should be reviewed for effectiveness after a period of time (e.g., in three years).
- b. A college could ask units via the APP&R process to propose new outreach initiatives. If, for example, a dean selected a proposal from a department or school that had previously not devoted such effort to this kind of activity, that dean might then lower the target for that unit's academic credit hour (ACH) production. In this scenario, the college's commitment to on-campus instruction would not necessarily have to be sacrificed and might be made up by other units.
- c. If faculty members want to mount a new outreach program, they might obtain the additional time needed by arranging with their chairs/directors to offer less on-campus instruction.
- d. Incentives could be offered by colleges to units that seek to engage in significant, innovative outreach. After a period of time (e.g., two years), this assignment could be reviewed

to assure quality, allow other departments/schools to avail themselves of this opportunity, and enable the original department to complete its outreach initiative, devote less effort to it, or devote more attention to another priority activity (outreach or non-outreach).

- e. Support for outreach can come in forms other than monetary rewards. One form of support may be helping faculty learn how to conduct successful outreach. Mentors are one source of knowledge. Other learning opportunities are to be found in seminars, workshops, and sabbatical opportunities for professional development. For example, a unit in cooperation with a college might encourage interested faculty members to spend their sabbatical leaves at one or more other campuses (including off-campus sites) studying, observing, and perhaps participating in university outreach. Upon their return to MSU, these faculty members would be expected to apply in their home units what they had learned on their sabbatical leaves.

### ***Reward faculty for participating in outreach***

**Recommendation 5:** Each academic unit at Michigan State University should create explicit, written guidelines regarding the criteria to be used in making faculty merit salary increase and tenure & promotion decisions. These guidelines should include a clear indication that outreach is valued in the decision-making process.

- a. We would not argue that all Michigan State faculty members should be expected to engage in outreach or that all faculty members should be expected to engage in outreach at all times throughout their careers for there are uneven opportunities across time and across the campus for faculty to participate in outreach. But, we do affirm that all units should be expected to engage in outreach.
- b. Units must arrive at reasonable and acceptable solutions for managing the necessary tension between organizational responsibilities and the interests of individual faculty and staff. An extremely important outgrowth of these unit-level discussions will be the creation of guidelines regarding the role and value of outreach in the faculty evaluation and review process.
- c. Non-tenured faculty should be given clear and consistent advice throughout their probationary period in order to strike the best individual balance among activities to meet their unit's criteria. And, criteria should be established that address excellence in outreach activities, and these should be followed during the tenure and promotion decisions. One way of accomplishing this goal would be to ask faculty to describe the three or four "best case" examples of outreach—cases that provide clear evidence of excellence (depending, of course, on that unit's definition of outreach excellence). This approach might be more valuable than asking faculty to enumerate all of their outreach activities.

### ***Create new, innovative, and exciting outreach programs***

**Recommendation 6:** Creative programs to stimulate outreach should be developed at Michigan State University.

- a. ***An All-University Research-Outreach Grant program***  
The Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies coordinates the All-University Research Initiation Grant program, and the Vice Provost for University Outreach

coordinates the All-University Outreach Grant program. A portion of the funds from each program could be combined to create an All-University Research-Outreach Grant program. This type of program should significantly strengthen outreach research at MSU.

b. *A Service-Learning Fellows program*

The Service-Learning Center is administered by the Vice President for Student Affairs and Services. Service-learning provides students with civic and course-related learning opportunities through experiential education (e.g., internships). However, students—especially undergraduate students—have not been traditionally viewed as knowledge resources to be drawn upon for university outreach. The Service-Learning Fellows program would be one mechanism for further connecting the teaching and outreach functions of the university. In this program, faculty would be provided release time and operating funds to design and implement innovative outreach learning opportunities for students—undergraduate, graduate, and graduate-professional.

c. *A Michigan State University Outreach Faculty Fellows program*

In the MSU Outreach Faculty Fellows program, faculty would be invited to focus their scholarship on priority issues that can be addressed through outreach teaching, research, and service activities. This program could be used to accomplish a number of goals. For junior faculty, it would offer an opportunity to begin the process of integrating outreach into a broader portfolio of scholarship. The program also could offer professional development opportunities for more senior faculty—those who have had little prior outreach experience, and those who have had prior experience but want to move their research and/or teaching programs in new directions. Fellows might also be involved in university-wide outreach agendas.

For example, the university has initiated a statewide issues identification process under the leadership of MSU Extension (MSU-E). Outreach Faculty Fellows affiliated with this effort would work closely with regional and county-level MSU-E staff, Michigan citizens, and others (e.g., agency personnel) to determine how their scholarship might be best utilized (e.g., collaborative research with external audiences), and to identify how their scholarship can be best delivered to user audiences (e.g., through research reports for lay consumption, in-service training sessions for MSU-E field staff and/or agency personnel).

d. *An Outreach Scholarship program*

The scholarship of outreach refers to the array of issues associated with the art and science of engaging in outreach. This scholarship addresses such issues as determining which outreach strategies are related to successful outcomes in different situations; learning how to disengage from outreach without affecting the capacity of off-campus audiences to maintain and sustain outreach gains; and effectively predicting the amount of time it will take to undertake outreach successfully. Many faculty, staff, and students have been neither educated nor trained in the complex issues that are frequently confronted in outreach. For many, learning comes by obtaining experience.

A useful strategy for Michigan State is to view the subject of outreach as a legitimate area of scholarly inquiry and then to draw upon the results of this scholarship for education and training purposes. Through the Outreach Scholarship program, research on outreach would be undertaken and the results of that work would be disseminated on campus and to the broader community of scholars. Faculty, students, and staff participating in this program would be expected to publish their scholarship in appropriate outlets and to present their work at professional meetings and conferences.

***Stimulate outreach teaching***

***Recommendation 7:*** Unit and faculty participation in instructional outreach should be stimulated and rewarded at Michigan State University.

- a. In partnership with other organizations and institutions, Michigan State must continue to provide leadership for meeting the informational and instructional needs of a socially and culturally diverse public. One way this can be accomplished is through the provision of high-quality credit and non-credit courses, programs, projects, and training for both traditional and nontraditional learners.
- b. In today's and tomorrow's world, this will require making available MSU's knowledge in a variety of locations using innovative methods, curricula, schedules, and technology.

These goals can be accomplished through such means as:

- c. A mechanism could be established whereby elected faculty within the governance system are charged with addressing issues and problems associated with instructional outreach, as well as with assuring and maintaining appropriate institutional focus on instructional outreach.
- d. University systems and policies pertaining to nontraditional students should be constantly reviewed and assessed relative to such issues as student rights and privileges, enrollment processes, degree requirements (e.g., residency), and fee structures.
- e. Interinstitutional collaboration should be expanded to encourage the offering of joint degrees across institutions. This approach would make it possible to address the learning needs of unserved and underserved audiences.
- f. Michigan State should consider expanding its instructional programs to include more evening courses and programs. This will make the university more accessible to persons who reside in the Lansing vicinity and cannot attend class during traditional daytime hours. Expanding instructional programs in this way offers more extensive use of MSU facilities, more parking options for students, and allows students the option of maintaining full-time employment during the day while making more rapid progress toward degree completion. To provide incentives to faculty to teach evening courses, we might consider options such as returning (as discretionary income) a portion of the tuition revenue earned by such classes to the offering department or school.
- g. To facilitate ease of access to degree programs, MSU could establish a "Weekend College." This program would be the university's "window" to those persons who prefer to complete degree programs on an accelerated basis during Friday evenings and Saturdays. Weekend College programs could be funded through the partial tuition reimbursement strategy suggested above.
- h. Special efforts must be made to recognize and reward the efforts of units to expand instructional offerings. For example, a sliding scale of tuition reimbursement to units might be calibrated according to a unit's history in instructional outreach (significant return for a "first time" unit), a unit's attempt to meet the needs of distant learners through the use of technology (significant return for a unit that uses technology to offer courses in the Upper Peninsula), and a unit's overall level of instructional outreach activity (significant return for a unit that offers degree programs).

- i. Issues of access must be addressed for continuing education activities. Access is now open to those who can afford it, which does not assure access for those who may most need it.
- j. To enhance efficient and effective noncredit programming, infrastructure needs should be identified that are required to support the decentralized non-credit process and maintain program activity. This is not to suggest a return to MSU's centralized mode, but to support unit activity that may on occasion exceed unit capacity.

***Stimulate student involvement in outreach***

***Recommendation 8:*** Involving students—undergraduate, graduate, and graduate-professional—in outreach should be a distinguishing feature of the Michigan State University educational experience.

- a. The Service-Learning Fellows program (described earlier) could be implemented.
- b. Outreach offers an excellent vehicle for organizing undergraduate "capstone" experiences. The undergraduate capstone experience was recommended by the Council on the Review of Undergraduate Education (CRUE).
- c. Course offerings could be analyzed at the unit level with the goal of including outreach experiences for students. The Office of the Provost, working in conjunction with the Vice President for Finance and Operations and Treasurer, could establish a fiscally responsible and feasible method for returning to units a portion of the tuition dollars paid by students who participate in outreach. These revenues might then be drawn upon by units to involve students in outreach, as well as to defray the expenses incurred through faculty and staff involvement.
- d. Michigan State University Extension could analyze its programming efforts with the goal of identifying roles that can be appropriately played by undergraduate, graduate, and graduate-professional students. An especially exciting opportunity would be to offer summer positions and internships to students in their home Michigan counties in conjunction with, or as a supplement to, their course work.
- e. The work-study program offers an excellent, low-cost opportunity to involve students, especially undergraduate students, in outreach efforts. In many places around campus, work-study students are involved in clerical activities. Students learn important workplace skills through this employment. However, involving work-study students in outreach efforts holds great promise for enhancing students' course-related learning through field-based experience.
- f. Through the decades, many international students have earned Michigan State degrees. Some of these students have benefited from exposure to MSU's outreach efforts. But many international students take courses on campus, complete their research requirements, and return to their home countries without ever participating in (or even knowing about) our university's outreach activities and programs. Important benefits are to be gained from having international students participate in outreach—benefits for the students, for faculty and staff, and for our outreach constituents.

In addition, international students represent a large, generally untapped resource for outreach. Involving international students in outreach is a major opportunity for MSU; for example, International Studies and Programs has had numerous, positive experiences resulting from international student involvement in outreach teaching, research, and service projects and programs.

- g. We believe that graduate training should include experience in one or more dimensions of outreach—outreach teaching, outreach research, and outreach service. Toward this end, MSU should create a new category of graduate assistantship—the "OA"—the outreach assistantship. These would be young scholars who would assist faculty and staff in outreach teaching, research, and service efforts. One of the most fruitful ways to create the next generation of outreach-sensitive scholars is to provide today's graduate students with professionally stimulating, productive, and personally meaningful outreach opportunities.

### ***Stimulate outreach research***

***Recommendation 9:*** As a land-grant, research-intensive institution, Michigan State University is uniquely qualified to be a world-class institution in the area of outreach research. This should be valued by the university as high priority work.

- a. Any land-grant, research-intensive institution faces two challenges. First, it should be client-sensitive in that it seeks to meet constituent needs. Second, it should be knowledge-sensitive in that the knowledge functions are propelled by scholarly interests. Linking these two orientations is not only a challenge but a major opportunity for institutions such as Michigan State.
- b. Models are very much needed that illustrate how MSU faculty, staff, students and units have successfully engaged in the "balancing act" of being client-sensitive and, at the same time, conducting cutting-edge scholarship.

Some of the options that might achieve this balance include:

- c. Establish an All-University Research-Outreach Grant program (discussed earlier).
- d. Establish a program to generate knowledge where gaps exist in the knowledge base on subjects identified as high priority through the university's statewide issues-identification process.
- e. Work with state government to create a statewide Outreach Excellence Fund, a program designed to stimulate the application of knowledge on Michigan problems by bringing to bear the knowledge resources of faculty, staff, and students from colleges and universities across the state.
- f. Give special funding preference to multi- and interdisciplinary projects when the same outreach research priorities have been identified by several units.
- g. Provide funding to communicate the findings of non-outreach research to targeted, applied audiences through such knowledge transmission products as bulletins, manuals, on-line alternatives, and videos.

- h. Encourage institutes, centers, and programs to focus a percentage of their efforts on outreach research.
- i. Create a council of institutes and centers for the purpose of stimulating discussion about, and work in, innovative outreach research.
- j. Highlight exemplary outreach research through a quarterly newsletter and videos jointly produced by the Vice Provost for University Outreach and the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies.

***Provide adequate resources for outreach***

***Recommendation 10:*** Responsible, innovative, and sustainable strategies should be established with the goal of providing adequate resources for outreach at Michigan State University.

- a. A stable, long-term revenue flow must be established for outreach.
- b. The committee feels strongly that this revenue flow should consist partly of new revenues raised outside the university, and partly of regular university funds. Non-outreach teaching is supported partly through tuition income and partly through general fund allocations, and non-outreach research is supported partly through grants and contracts, and partly through general fund and other university allocations. As a vital part of the university's mission, outreach needs a similarly balanced funding stream.
- c. We recommend that an administrative task force be established. The proposed task force should include representatives from the Office of Planning and Budgets, the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, the Office of the Vice President for Governmental Affairs, the Office of the Vice President for Development, the Office of the Provost, and the Deans' Council. We suggest that the following questions guide, but not limit, the task force's focus:
  - (1) How should the university's policies and procedures be revised to facilitate the intra-university and intra-unit reallocations that must be made to implement the plans that result from the university and unit-level planning processes discussed in this report?
  - (2) How can the university best encourage, stimulate, and reward scholarly entrepreneurship, including mission-related grant and contract activity, in outreach?
  - (3) Should those participating in noncredit work sponsored by the university contribute to the support of the university's instructional technology resources as students taking for-credit courses do through paying the infrastructure/technology support fee?
  - (4) What are appropriate and reasonable criteria to establish so that MSU works as a collaborator with, and not as a competitor to, the private sector?
  - (5) What are appropriate and reasonable criteria to guide the setting of fees so that outreach costs do not become an unfair burden to those who can least afford to pay?
  - (6) Should the university establish a continuing stream of funding to support the initiation of new outreach programs and services? If so, should this funding stream be created

in a manner similar to the way that funding for new research initiatives is made available by allocating to the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies both an annual contribution from the MSU Foundation and a subvention from the general fund that grows as the university's indirect cost-sharing revenue increases?

- (7) How can the university most effectively pursue line-item state funding and foundation/corporate funding to support priority and innovative outreach work?
- (8) How can the university insure that the process of generating new resources and redirecting existing resources will be accomplished without adding significantly to the university's administrative infrastructure?

*Eliminate barriers to outreach in university systems, structures, and policies*

**Recommendation 11:** Michigan State University should work aggressively to develop systems, structures, and policies that encourage outreach.

- a. Perhaps the first order of business is to study the impacts of decentralizing outreach. While the committee believes the movement to decentralize outreach promotes the goal of integration, some adjustments in the currently available infrastructure may be needed to better accommodate a decentralized system.
- b. The committee recommends that the assistant/associate deans for university Outreach/Lifelong Education, in cooperation with the staff in MSU's field offices, prepare a priority list of university policies and procedures that serve to impede outreach. The Vice Provost for University Outreach should then work with other university offices to remove each barrier. Examples of work that could be undertaken in this regard are:
  - (1) Work with the Vice President for University Development to identify foundations and corporations that are specifically interested in university outreach, and then make available these potential funding opportunities to MSU faculty and staff.
  - (2) Work with the Vice President for University Relations to create a section in the *MSU News Bulletin* on outreach funding opportunities—similar to the research funding opportunities provided by the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies and currently reported in that periodical.
  - (3) Identify providers that offer cost-effective, high quality conference services, and make the names of these providers available to faculty and staff. Revise the list based on faculty/staff evaluation of services provided.
  - (4) Collaborate with the Office of the Provost and the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies to create standards for undergraduate and graduate-level certificate programs so that faculty can design, market, and implement high quality, high demand certificate programs for practitioners.
  - (5) Work with the Office of the Provost and the Vice President for Finance and Operations and Treasurer to create a financially responsible strategy for eliminating the fee gap between part-time and full-time degree-seeking students.



**Promote outreach through executive-level declarations and actions**

**Recommendation 12:** The Offices of the President and Provost should assume leadership for declaring the importance and value of outreach at Michigan State University.

- a. Routinely include outreach in the messages that are communicated about Michigan State University. This includes referencing the outreach function as part of MSU's mission in faculty position postings, and including outreach as a topic in new faculty orientation programs.
- b. Adopt the Council on the Review of Research and Graduate Education (CORRAGE) recommendation #6 that calls for adjustment in "The Recommendation for Reappointment, Promotion or Tenure Action" form so that outreach becomes a more legitimate and valued activity.
- c. Adjust the boundaries of scholarship used to select persons for distinguished faculty honors (e.g., Hannah Chairs) so that, in the future, some of those appointed will have distinguished records in outreach.
- d. Establish a lectureship and award program to honor distinguished outreach teaching, research, and service work. This award can be bestowed annually on a national figure (selected by a panel of MSU faculty and staff) who has a distinguished record in outreach. The award to, and the lecture by, this distinguished scholar can be accompanied by papers and presentations made by MSU's scholars in the area in which the honoree has distinguished her/himself.
- e. Declare, as part of the institutional agenda, the goal of national leadership in outreach. Universities are expected to excel at innovative scholarship. When this principle is applied to outreach, it means that universities should strive to expand the knowledge frontiers associated with generating, transmitting, applying, and preserving knowledge for the direct benefit of external audiences.

**Recognize outreach through university awards**

**Recommendation 13:** Outreach should be appropriately recognized in the awards system at Michigan State University.

- a. Awards that do not consider outreach excellence as a requisite for honoring faculty for general scholarly excellence impede progress toward the integrative goal the committee seeks.
- b. At the same time, the creation of separate awards for outreach scholarship should be avoided except in those cases where integrative excellence is being honored.

**Recognize outreach through the academic governance system**

**Recommendation 14:** Outreach at Michigan State University should be appropriately recognized in the academic governance system.

The Vice Provost for University Outreach, working with key academic and administrative leaders, must work strategically and on multiple levels to—

- a. Encourage faculty with outreach interests to seek election to the Faculty Council.
- b. Encourage students with outreach interests to seek election to Student Council and to the Council of Graduate Students.
- c. Encourage adequate representation of persons with outreach interests on important Academic Council standing committees, including the University Committees on Academic Environment, Academic Governance, Academic Policy, Curriculum, Faculty Affairs, Faculty Tenure, and the Graduate Council.
- d. Create an Advisory Consultative Committee for Outreach—a committee advising the Vice Provost for University Outreach and responsible for monitoring outreach issues on a universitywide basis.

***Showcase outreach strategically***

***Recommendation 15:*** Exemplary outreach at Michigan State University should be strategically showcased on and off campus.

- a. Outreach work must be celebrated and publicized.
- b. Elements in a plan to showcase outreach might include:
  - (1) Publish and broadly distribute an annual report on MSU outreach to university administrators, the board of trustees, key external constituencies, and the faculty.
  - (2) Sponsor an on-campus outreach seminar series for faculty and students.
  - (3) Promote the nationally acclaimed noncredit learning experiences conducted by the MSU Alumni Association.
  - (4) Hold open houses at MSU's field offices to show MSU's numerous contributions to the people of Michigan.
  - (5) Conduct outreach briefings for state and federal officials, and for corporate and private foundation officials.
  - (6) Promote MSU outreach nationally through the mass media (e.g., Cable News Network) to widely publicize the university's outreach record and reputation.
- c. We recommend the creation and implementation of a strategic plan designed to showcase Michigan State outreach programs.

***Facilitate access to knowledge through advanced technology***

***Recommendation 16:*** Investment in, and optimal use of, advanced technology in outreach should be a continuing priority for Michigan State University.

- a. Information and knowledge should be readily accessible to external consumers.
- b. To accomplish this goal, it is important that MSU have the capacity to use contemporary instructional technologies.
- c. For this to happen, significant emphasis must be placed on purchasing these technologies and training and encouraging faculty, staff, and students to use them in their outreach work.
- d. Appropriate application and use of this infrastructure, on a sustaining basis, requires strategic and proactive plans and actions.

Those plans and actions might include these elements:

- e. MSU should expand its technological capability with a coordinated plan to build systems that serve various audiences. Capacity is required to meet a variety of needs: instructional needs associated with national and international teleconferencing (including degree programs), the needs of Michigan citizens to have access to MSU's degree programs (including the advising function), the need for data management and transfer systems to support knowledge generation, and the need for systems to encourage community-university collaboration that are designed to address societal needs.
- f. All instruction undertaken at Michigan State should be considered fundamental to our institution's mission. Units should not have to absorb increased costs for using technology to conduct off-campus credit or noncredit instruction. MSU must be committed to undertaking programs that promote learning across the lifespan. Both credit and noncredit offerings are an important part of this learning agenda and must be treated accordingly.
- g. To optimize the use of scarce resources, MSU's technology capacity should be developed in collaboration with partners, namely, other educational, public, and corporate systems. In addition, local site development and technology capacity across Michigan should mesh with local needs and be developed in partnership with local decision makers and users.
- h. As the technological capacity is built, a coordinated plan should be implemented to develop the human interface with technology. This involves developmental activities for campus and community-based faculty, students, and our partners in outreach instruction and problem-focused projects.
- i. Faculty should be rewarded for the appropriate and creative use of innovative technologies. These rewards might include special recognition through merit salary increases. Rewarding faculty for innovative use of technology for scholarly purposes could go a long way toward encouraging the adoption and ongoing use of advanced technology for outreach.

***Enhance user-friendliness for external constituencies***

***Recommendation 17:*** Michigan State University should enhance the awareness of external constituents regarding its outreach activities, and then help them gain efficient access to these offerings.

- a. The university should explore ways of building a more welcoming atmosphere for off-campus users. This building process should develop in two directions.

- (1) First, the university needs to be more effective in helping people find the person or unit that can most appropriately address their knowledge needs and/or learning concerns.
- (2) Second, the university needs to be more effective in acquainting the public with those outreach activities it is especially interested in, and then provide the appropriate conditions (e.g., time, cost) for them to access outreach products and services.

Specifically:

- b. MSU should be easy to contact.

Because of its size, MSU can be an overwhelming place—especially for a person who is trying to access the institution for the first time. One way of facilitating access would be to create toll-free telephone access through an 800-number. In this way, individuals would have an efficient way to describe their needs or interests. These inquiries could then be accurately routed to the appropriate unit or person.

In addition, it is important to expand awareness of the MSU Office of Adult Services, which regularly assists learners who are interested in continuing their education at MSU.

- c. MSU should make known its array of outreach resources and, at the same time, help constituents connect more efficiently with the right knowledge source.

In order to make outreach activities and programs better known to constituents, units might publish directories and brochures describing available knowledge resources and then update this information regularly. These directories could be made available in multiple formats—hard copy, disk, and on-line. A universitywide outreach resource directory, combining those of individual units, could be cross-indexed by, say, *problem area* (e.g., small business development, addictive drug use) to help users quickly locate the appropriate MSU resource.

- d. MSU should communicate the ways in which outreach resources are made available.

In order to help potential participants understand what they can expect from MSU outreach projects, units should develop guidelines covering the conditions under which they engage in outreach. These guidelines could cover such issues as how a unit chooses the outreach activities in which it engages, the length of time that unit personnel typically are willing to commit to an outreach project, the role of undergraduate and graduate students in outreach, the fees that it charges for various outreach products and services, and the expectations that it has for university and external participants when an outreach effort is being designed and then undertaken.

- e. MSU should take full advantage of its field infrastructure.

Michigan State is fortunate to have an extensive field infrastructure for outreach, and constituents often initiate their contact with the university through it. The more knowledgeable field staff are about MSU's programs, the more helpful they can be when they receive constituent inquiries. In many cases, field staff are familiar with the knowledge resources available in some departments, centers, and institutes, but not with others. To make this infrastructure more helpful to external constituents, special efforts

should be taken to familiarize field-based staff with the full range of the university's knowledge resources. At the same time, East Lansing-based faculty and staff should become more familiar with MSU's field infrastructure. Initiatives, such as the "Meet Michigan" program, are helpful in this regard.

- f. MSU and its field offices should be easy and pleasant to visit.

The university should work to make our campus and field offices as easy and as pleasant to visit as possible. We should work to insure that convenient parking, handicapper access, easy-to-understand signage and directions, reasonably priced programs, and courteous and friendly staff are available to external audiences seeking to use the university's outreach resources.

### ***Join with other institutions in learner-focused outreach***

**Recommendation 18:** Michigan State University should join others in forming a confederation of organizations with learner-focused outreach as its goal.

- a. MSU campus-based and field-based personnel should view themselves as participants in a confederation of knowledge workers that includes, but also extends beyond the confines of, our university. Their role is not to compete with other knowledge providers, but to collaborate and make more complete the learning opportunities available for people, groups, organizations, and communities. This approach can stimulate co-planning among knowledge providers, facilitate learner access to these opportunities, and most importantly encourage the delivery of learning opportunities that are most appropriate for learners.

### ***Strengthen the Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach***

**Recommendation 19:** The Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach should provide universitywide leadership, coordination, and support for the institution's outreach mission, as well as spearhead the implementation of recommendations presented in this report. But, as stated earlier, Michigan State University should continue to lodge primary leadership for outreach in the academic units.

- a. ***Expand the advisory structure.***  
The Provost's Committee on University Outreach is an *ad hoc* group. Every university assembles such groups from time-to-time to advise the administration on relevant and appropriate policies. Currently, the Vice Provost's office is advised by a Deans' Advisory Committee. We recommend expanding the Office's advisory structure to include campus faculty and staff, students, administrators, field-based faculty and staff, and external constituents of MSU's outreach programs.
- b. ***Undertake outreach functions without adding permanent administrative positions.***  
Many persons, inside and outside academe, believe that higher education suffers from "administrative bloat." Yet, programmatic effectiveness is diminished if outreach is not planned, coordinated, and evaluated. To carry out these functions without adding to administration, the committee recommends that the Vice Provost continue using a system of release-time administrative appointments for faculty and staff members. This approach will introduce a rotating set of persons to outreach administration and, at the same time,

not burden the Office with recurring administration commitments for specific personnel and positions.

c. *Strengthen outreach linkages with Michigan's colleges and universities.*

In an era of public resource constraints, it is absolutely essential that Michigan's colleges and universities work together to meet the educational and knowledge needs of the citizenry. Redundancy in programming and competition between institutions must be directly addressed, reduced and, preferably, eliminated. Because the state of Michigan does not have a statewide governing board (or boards) for higher education, the state's colleges and universities use other means to share information, coordinate, and collaborate. Michigan State University has always been a prominent actor in these efforts, especially in the area of lifelong and continuing education.

In light of MSU's standing as the state land-grant university, the Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach must play a proactive role in working with other higher education institutions in Michigan. This leadership role will include the need to strengthen existing alliances and may also require establishing new structures. The goal of this work is straightforward: to enable the knowledge resources of Michigan's colleges and universities to flow to the people of Michigan efficiently and effectively.

d. *Strengthen outreach linkages with universities in the United States and throughout the world.*

Michigan State's standing extends beyond the boundaries of our state. Our institution has an enviable reputation nationally and around the world. For decades, Michigan State has sought to be, and has been viewed as, a leader among institutions of higher education on matters pertaining to university outreach. Without question, MSU is an institution with national and international interests and obligations.

Consequently, this report should be broadly distributed nationally and internationally. Peer reaction to the report is not only valuable, it is vital. In addition, the Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach, in collaboration with other offices across the university, should assist other higher educational institutions in their quest to improve the outreach function. This activity is in line with the university's longstanding role of institutional partner and global citizen. And, as always, MSU will learn important lessons as it shares its experiences with other institutions.

***Expect leadership for outreach from all parts of the university***

***Recommendation 20:***

Leadership, in the form of commitment, capacity, and vision, must emanate from across Michigan State University—from the faculty, students, and staff, to the board of trustees. This leadership, when exercised, will create an institutional environment that consistently demonstrates to all that outreach is a fundamental feature of the university's mission.