

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

MSU Outreach and Engagement receives “Excellence Award for Innovations”

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EAST LANSING, Mich. – Michigan State University’s Outreach and Engagement Measurement Instrument (OEMI) has received this year’s Recognition of Excellence Award for Innovations in Outreach and Engagement from the University Continuing Education Association (UCEA).

The award was presented to MSU University Outreach and Engagement and its National Center for the Study of University Engagement by the UCEA Outreach and Engagement Community of Practice during the association’s annual conference in British Columbia on April 14, 2007. Burton Bargerstock, who leads the OEMI Project, accepted the award on behalf of the University.



The OEMI is an MSU-wide data collection system developed by University Outreach and Engagement researchers. Faculty and academic staff report their outreach and engagement activities yearly via an online survey. With its third year of institutional reporting recently completed, MSU now has one of the most sophisticated databases of scholarly outreach and engagement information within higher education.

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Increasing national interest in the scholarship of engagement has led MSU researchers to present the OEMI to a variety of academic audiences. The University of Kentucky and the University of Tennessee System (four campuses) have adapted the instrument for their own use. Kansas State University and other higher education institutions and professional societies are also in active discussions about piloting the OEMI.

“The committee was impressed with the OEMI as an effective tool for gathering institution-wide information on outreach and engagement activities and the fact that other universities are looking to replicate the model,” said Miriam Simmons, Chair of the Outreach and Engagement Awards Committee, for the University Continuing Education Association.

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“We are honored by the award and the recognition of our efforts in fostering a national discussion about what it means for an institution to meet its responsibilities to the public and to scholarship through engagement,” said Diane Zimmerman, director of the National Center for the Study of University Engagement.

“As higher education becomes more engaged with the communities it serves, well-planned outreach initiatives become increasingly important. And that means methods for planning and assessing the quality and impact of those initiatives are vital. The OEMI is a ground-breaking tool to assist with those efforts.”

It is the second time that Michigan State University has been recognized by UCEA for its innovative work in outreach and engagement. In 1996 MSU published *Points of Distinction: A Guidebook for Planning and Evaluating Quality Outreach*. This 50-page guidebook identified tools to help academic units, faculty, and the higher education community plan, monitor, evaluate, and reward outreach efforts. *Points of Distinction* received the UCEA Innovations Award in 1998.

In 1993 the Provost’s Committee on University Outreach issued a report entitled *University Outreach at Michigan State University: Extending Knowledge to Serve Society*. Recommendations from the report have since led to the *Points of Distinction* guidebook, development and implementation of the OEMI, and the establishment of the National Center for the Study of University Engagement at MSU.

For more information about the OEMI, visit <http://ncsue.msu.edu/measure.asp>.

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The National Center for the Study of University Engagement at Michigan State University seeks a greater understanding of how university engagement enhances faculty scholarship and community progress by studying the processes, relationships, and impacts of outreach work on engaged faculty, the academy, and communities.

Michigan State University's Office of University Outreach & Engagement (UOE) is dedicated to helping MSU academic units construct more extensive and effective engagement with communities. UOE advocates for and facilitates outreach initiatives across campus, and gathers information about MSU engagement activities in order to publicize the ways in which the university is fulfilling its land-grant mission.