

What is NCSUE?

The National Center for the Study of University Engagement (NCSUE) seeks a greater understanding of how university engagement enhances faculty scholarship and community progress. How do scholars engage most effectively with their communities, and how, in turn, does such engagement enhance their scholarship? The Center convenes scholars and community fellows to explore ways of creating institutional support for building truly collaborative arrangements. NCSUE supports research studies and dissemination through publications, a speaker series, conferences, presentations, and workshops.

Current Issues

- Developing measurement and benchmarking criteria for outreach and engagement locally, nationally, and internationally
- Defining outreach and engagement and seeking national alignment on the meaning and scope of the nomenclature and typologies
- Assessing faculty perceptions of their outreach and engagement work and how this work enhances their scholarship
- Examining faculty reward policies and procedures and the effectiveness of revising promotion and tenure guidelines
- Investigating policies and practices that enable institutions to weave engagement into their culture
- Providing incentives for faculty to evaluate their work as engaged scholars
- Evaluating graduate and undergraduate learning outcomes related to engagement involvement
- Studying processes and impacts of university-community collaborations
- Analyzing community contributions to engagement and scholarship

The National Center for the Study of University Engagement strives to be a preeminent innovator within the scholarly movement of engagement in higher education. NCSUE deepens the study of and discussion about two key principles—**engaged scholarship** and the **scholarship of engagement**—to inform and advance the national agenda.

Engaged Scholarship

Outreach and engagement activities reflect a scholarship-based approach to teaching, research, and service for the direct benefit of external audiences. Such activities, in turn, enrich all of the faculty member's work.

Scholarship of Engagement

Faculty engaged in outreach activities are encouraged to reflect on, write about, and disseminate scholarship about their activities. Scholars in the field of outreach and engagement study the processes, relationships, and impacts of outreach work on engaged faculty, the Institution, disciplines, the academy as a whole, and the community partners with whom they work.

Need for a National Center

Several organizations around the country are addressing the various components of scholarly university engagement, but no one organization addresses the full spectrum of issues. This is an opportune time for MSU to expand its already extensive work to include not only MSU-based institutional research but also outreach and engagement scholarship more broadly.

NCSUE at MSU

In the late 1980s MSU established the office of University Outreach (now University Outreach and Engagement, UOE) and began to focus on the scholarship aspect of engagement: definition, applied community-based research practice, benchmarking and measuring, and national consultation and leadership. This work has, in fact, become a signature area of the University.

University Outreach started formally amassing and assessing the University's internal data resources in 1993, when a faculty report recommended that we conduct institutional research related to outreach and engagement.

From that report UOE developed a checklist of recommendations, among them several on evaluating, measuring, and rewarding outreach and engagement. The first result was *Points of Distinction: A Guidebook for Planning and Evaluating Quality Outreach* (1996). UOE's second effort was revision of the promotion and tenure guidelines (2001), which now utilize the quality indicators recommended by *POD*.

Identifying measures and benchmarks of faculty outreach and engagement was the next major effort. Faculty committees helped to construct a university-wide data collection instrument, the Outreach and Engagement Measurement Instrument (OEMI), launched in 2004. The OEMI is providing rich data for analysis and comparison about faculty effort, types of engagement, social issues, geography, and partnering characteristics. These indicators are helping MSU "tell the story" of exemplary engaged scholarship to administrators, legislators, and other stakeholders.

These efforts—as well as a variety of other initiatives—led MSU to launch the National Center for the Study of University Engagement in 2005.

NCSUE Initiatives

Outreach and Engagement Measurement Instrument (OEMI)

MSU developed the OEMI, an online survey that collects data about outreach and engagement activities conducted by MSU faculty and academic staff, to improve its capacity for reporting to the public on how the University directs its intellectual resources and research discoveries to benefit communities. The survey focuses on time spent in outreach and engagement, social issues on which the work focuses, geography, external funding, multidisciplinary nature of the work, and impacts on community and on faculty scholarship. First administered at MSU in 2005, the OEMI is being used by other universities and disciplinary associations. Contact us at ncsue@msu.edu for a guest account on a demonstration of the survey.

Transformations in Higher Education: Scholarship of Engagement Book Series

The National Center for the Study of University Engagement, in cooperation with the Michigan State University Press, is pleased to announce the creation of the Transformations in Higher Education: Scholarship of Engagement Book Series. The Series is designed to provide a forum where scholars can address the diverse issues and changes in universities and communities that must occur in order for American society to generate innovative solutions for its problems and sustain its status as one of the world's leaders in science, arts, and technology. Interested authors are invited to submit short letters of inquiry to: NCSUE Book Series, University Outreach and Engagement, Michigan State University, Kellogg Center, Garden Level, East Lansing, MI 48824-1022.

Emerging Engagement Scholars Workshop

This intensive professional development program provides advanced doctoral students and early career faculty with background literature, facilitated discussion, mentoring, and presentations designed to increase their knowledge and enhance their practice of community engaged scholarship. In cooperation with a group of committed doctoral students,

NCSUE helped create the Workshop in 2007 and continues to sponsor it in partnership with the annual National Outreach Scholarship Conference. Learn more at ncsue.msu.edu/eesw.

Study of Faculty Rewards for Outreach and Engagement Scholarship

As part of NCSUE's broader studies on how faculty understand and evaluate their participation in various forms of outreach and engagement, we are analyzing how they present their outreach/engagement accomplishments in the materials they submit for reappointment, promotion, and tenure consideration. We are interested in exploring how faculty in different disciplinary traditions understand the terms "outreach" and "engagement," the criteria they use—and ask their colleagues to use—in evaluating that work, and how or whether they integrate the work with their teaching and research responsibilities.

Faculty Interviews

MSU has implemented a variety of initiatives to promote and foster engagement as scholarship. In order to understand more about how faculty perceive engagement as it relates to their teaching and research and to better understand how the work of the faculty is influenced by changes at the institutional level, NCSUE staff are conducting in-depth interviews across multiple fields and disciplines. An important focus of those interviews is how the engagement work of faculty impacts all of their scholarly activities and how they represent their engaged scholarship in publications, presentations, and other forms of dissemination.

Engaged Scholar Speaker Series

NCSUE periodically invites nationally renowned speakers to discuss the theory and practice of engagement, with a particular focus on community-based participatory research. Topics to date have ranged from research using citizen knowledge work (IT and usability) to partnerships in the health professions, balancing hope and critique in the public humanities, higher education's public mission, the urban setting, and work and family issues. The sessions are free, open

to the public, and most are available as webstreamed video at ncsue.msu.edu/less.

National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) – Council on Engagement and Outreach (CEO)

As a member of NASULGC, MSU participates in the CEO's Benchmarking Task Force. MSU's efforts include helping to define the qualities of university engagement and giving presentations to the Council on the assessment and documentation of outreach teaching, research, and service.

Carnegie Classification of Engaged Institutions

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has created a new Community Engagement designation as part of an overall revision of its classification system. This designation allows higher education institutions the option to describe and represent their outreach and engagement work. MSU was one of 12 colleges and universities that helped to develop the indicators and framework for the classification, and one of the first to receive the new designation as a fully engaged university. carnegiefoundation.org/classifications/index.asp?key=1213

Benchmarking University Engagement Accomplishments Conference (May 2005)

NCSUE organized and hosted an event to discuss and ponder benchmarks for engaged scholarship. The conference included a series of renowned panelists who represented a wide range of interests: the National Science Foundation, the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, *U.S. News & World Report*, and the Higher Learning Commission of the NCA, as well as several individual institutions. Research-intensive universities sent teams to participate in the interactive sessions. Materials are available at: ncsue.msu.edu/conf2005.

Find more information at ncsue.msu.edu



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