

**Administrative Advisory Committee
for Public Engagement/Outreach
Final Report**

May 15, 2002

Administrative Advisory Committee

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Charge Statement from Robert Bruininks, Executive Vice President and Provost

September 17, 2001

“Provide a report with recommendations for improving funding, accountability, and communication strategies with respect to the University’s public engagement/outreach activities.”

Appendix A provides the full charge letter.

Executive Summary of Recommendations

This document is based on the following core principals: Engagement is part of the core mission of the University of Minnesota that enhances teaching and research and/or serves the public good. Engagement provides good will. Because there is ever increasing accountability, there is a compelling reason to better define public engagement/outreach in order to determine the best means of financing public engagement. UMN needs to determine how these expenses are covered, the source of revenue, and the kind of revenue including sponsored, non-sponsored funds and gifts.

Recommendation: Scope

The University of Minnesota might use the following definition for public engagement/outreach:

An engaged university strengthens and transforms community and economy; applies knowledge to address key social issues in teaching and research; informs its discovery agenda through teaching and outreach, and values the open marketplace of ideas.

Recommendation: Value

The people of Minnesota should value public engagement/outreach at the University of Minnesota for the following reasons:

The University provides access to new knowledge; speaks with a trusted voice; provides relevant research and teaching; the University's learning environment is enhanced to promote interaction between learners and teachers; and it uses the tools of engagement to foster the public good.

Recommendations: Priorities/Communication

Recommendation 1

The University should be proactive in communicating with the public regarding outreach. Powerful messages can be framed for the public focusing on the results of outreach rather than the activity of outreach, and emphasizing the powerful synergy between teaching, research, and outreach. Outreach results that are transforming in their impact often take years to come to fruition, and the public needs to be aware of the process and progress being made.

Recommendation 2

In its external communication, the University should focus on relationships between collegiate units and their primary constituents as the crucible in which the most meaningful outreach with the most significant public benefit is forged, recognizing also that interdisciplinary relationships often contribute to the results they achieve and the messages they can convey.

Recommendation 3

Because the results of outreach efforts may take years to come to fruition, collegiate units should be evaluated on their ability to establish and manage mutually productive relationships with their primary constituents, and their success in achieving an appropriate level of funding for their outreach, which is a reflection of its value.

Recommendation 4

Recognizing the public's perception that the University is a personal and constituent resource for information, the University should manage expectations about its capacity to provide responses to every constituent.

Recommendations: Cost

The University should define the parameters and determine the expenditures of public engagement using a set of tools made available to colleges, departments, and campuses.

Recommendation 1

Define parameters of public engagement/outreach in order to be clear when asked for the costs and return on investment.

Recommendation 2

Determine the expenditures of public engagement using a set of tools made available to colleges/departments/campuses and following a common template:

- Expenditures analysis should be done over a multiple year period establishing a track record for the college, unit, or campus;
- Tools may include an external review using standard cost models and an internal Internet template to determine faculty, civil service, and other indirect costs.
- Descriptive statistics of public engagement /outreach should be included to provide a narrative of the kinds of engagement that exists.

Recommendation 3

Create guidelines for how much of public engagement/outreach should be covered to sustain existing good will and mission, finding new funding methods, or be eliminated.

- If engagement is necessary for teaching and research in a particular college, then resources can be allocated accordingly.
- There is a need to prioritize what is paid for by fees, grants, sponsored and non-sponsored funds, tuition revenues and where costs can be shifted to make the best and most appropriate use of available resources.

Recommendation: Leadership

One of the following options/alternatives to provide central leadership for public engagement should be considered:

- Place Public Engagement in the portfolio of one or several people in central administration
- Have each college/coordinate campus appoint a liaison for public engagement
- Establish a coordinating council with a chair designate to report to the Provost
- Coordinate with other University-wide efforts with University Relations, alumni, and foundations

Section 1: Scope

What is the definition of public engagement and outreach?

In order to define public engagement, the committee began with definitions developed at peer institutions, NASULGC, Kellogg, and elsewhere.

An exemplary, engaged University

- Strengthens and transforms community and economy;
- Applies knowledge to address key social issues in its teaching and research;
- Informs its discovery agenda through teaching and outreach; and
- Values the open marketplace of ideas.

An engaged university can be recognized by its responsiveness; respect for partners; institutional neutrality; balanced scholarship; accessibility; integration; coordination; and, resource partnerships.

As an engaged institution, the University of Minnesota must

- Be organized to respond to the needs of today's tomorrow's students, not yesterday's.
- Enrich students' experiences by bringing research/discovery and engagement into the curriculum and by offering practical opportunities for students to prepare for the world they will enter.
- Put its critical resources (knowledge and expertise) to work on the problems the communities it serves identify.

Scope of outreach

Outreach activities are separated from the other activities of the University only incompletely and with difficulty. Outreach activities are integrated into the daily activities of University personnel. Using a "first-contact" definition, outreach would encompass all the first-hand experiences people have with University resources through people, media, print, and technology. From a broader perspective, outreach would include the impact research discoveries and teaching have on our community.

Recommendation

The University of Minnesota should use the following definition for public engagement/outreach:

An exemplary engaged university strengthens and transforms community and economy; applies knowledge to address key social issues in teaching and research; informs its discovery agenda through teaching and outreach, and values the open marketplace of ideas.

Definitions Workgroup: Shirley Baugher (Chair), Geri Malandra, Billie Wahlstrom

Section 2: Value

Why should the people of Minnesota value public engagement/outreach at the University of Minnesota?

The University provides access to new knowledge.

- Public engagement is a way for citizens and their communities to have a voice at the University. Community needs inform teaching in the classroom and research/discovery in the laboratory, ensuring relevance of the academic enterprise.
- New knowledge can be translated and applied to address individual and community needs.
- The next generation of professionals is a tangible University product. Their continuing education is essential to the quality of life for all citizens.
- Technology enhances access to the intellectual assets of the University.

The University speaks with a trusted voice.

- Education at the University is world-class, ranging from formal credit and degree programs to informal life-long learning opportunities. Students emerge equipped to recognize and discuss issues of importance.
- Research that produces new knowledge is balanced and unbiased.
- The University creates “public spaces” in which faculty and citizens can wrestle with pressing and sometimes controversial contemporary issues.

Why should the University of Minnesota value public engagement outreach?

Public engagement makes research and teaching more relevant

- Public engagement is a way for the University to listen to and learn from the people it serves, enriching the institution’s research/discovery and teaching agenda.
- As engagement with an informed citizenry increases, the University’s capacity to address current societal issues will increase.

The University’s learning environment is enhanced.

- Through public engagement, faculty’s ability to learn through research and discovery as well as its ability to enhance teaching is enhanced.
- Public engagement provides for the creation of virtual and actual spaces where faculty and learners can come together as citizens.
- An engaged curriculum yields learners who are better prepared to contribute to the public good as a result of their exposure to relevant research and teaching.

Public Engagement/outreach builds public support.

- The University uses the tools of civic engagement to shape its contribution to the public good so that it will be valued and visible.
- Stakeholders will understand and experience the University's public value.
- The University's ivory tower/silo culture will change.

Recommendation

The people of Minnesota should value public engagement/outreach at the University of Minnesota for the following reasons:

The University provides access to new knowledge; speaks with a trusted voice; provides relevant research and teaching; the University's learning environment is enhanced to promote interaction between learners and teachers; and it uses the tools of engagement to foster the public good.

Value Workgroup: Chuck Casey (Chair), Al Sullivan, John Brandl, Don Sargeant

Section 3: Priorities/Communication

How can engagement be viewed proactively?

Framing outreach/access/engagement for the public

- Starts from the premise that outreach/access/engagement has had enormous impact on the State and the broader society over the years;
- Defines outreach/access/engagement clearly and explains its synergistic relationship with teaching and research;
- Focuses on results, not current activities. What matters is not how much we can demonstrate that we spend or how extensive the list of activities in which we engage, but what results can be demonstrated;
- Requires that a long-term perspective be applied, recognizing that some outcomes we are experiencing now are actually the result of work done 10—25 years ago (e.g., companies founded and jobs created, leaders educated, breakthrough inventions yielding new products or methodologies);

Collegiate units should be central in determining Outreach priorities

- Some outreach results in benefits to the general public (e.g., medical breakthroughs or major companies like Medtronic founded). Nevertheless, outreach occurs most often through sustained relationships with primary constituents or direct stakeholders, and it is often through those relationships that the public good is served.
- Collegiate units have different primary constituencies, and both in the specific and the aggregate, these constituencies make up the public.
- Strategic relationships with primary constituents are the most meaningful long-term, and should be fostered as a function of outreach initiatives;
- Colleges should be expected to engage in outreach that is strategic for them, and if they do, they will be achieving “the greater good” for the greater number of people;
- The synergies to be gained between teaching-research-outreach will be different for different colleges (e.g., Medical School and CLA);
- The economic model for funding outreach will vary across colleges, with different reliance on fees for service, grant funding, central subsidy, etc.

What expectations should the University and the public have for colleges with respect to outreach, and how should collegiate efforts be evaluated?

- The University should expect colleges to be linked with their primary constituents in meaningful ways so useful information can flow between them.
- Colleges should be expected to “close the loop” so that when input is obtained from constituents of a college, the college subsequently shares how it has responded and why.
- Colleges should be responsive to the needs of their primary constituents and the public they serve.

- Collegiate units should be asked if they are using an economic model that responsibly funds outreach not at the expense of teaching or research but in proportion to the benefits to all.

Not all outreach/access/engagement efforts can be conducted on the collegiate level, and the same questions with regard to “expectations” that are asked of colleges could be applied here as well.

An effort needs to be made to capture results that are not captured with a collegiate-level of analysis. These efforts might include the following:

- Results from interdisciplinary activities such as research centers or joint research or teaching programs;
- Public access to library and other commonly-held resources;
- Programming and attendance at various museums and galleries as well as sporting and other cultural events; and
- Course access for non-admitted students.

Recommendation 1

The University should be proactive in communicating with the public regarding outreach. Powerful messages can be framed for the public focusing on the results of outreach rather than the activity of outreach, and emphasizing the powerful synergy between teaching, research, and outreach. Outreach results that are transforming in their impact often take years to come to fruition, and the public needs to be aware of the process and progress being made.

Recommendation 2

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Recommendation 3

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Recommendation 4

Recognizing the public’s perception that the University is a personal resource for information, the University should manage expectations about its capacity to provide responses to every constituent.

External Work Group: Mary Nichols (Chair), Kjell Knutsen, Donna Peterson, Jan Swanson

Section 4: Cost

What are the expenditures of public engagement/outreach?

- The University should define the parameters and determine the expenditures of public engagement using a set of tools made available to colleges, departments, and campuses.
- An expenditures analysis should be done over a multiple year period establishing a track record for the colleges, units, and campuses.
- Tools used to determine expenditures might include an external review using standard cost allocation models and an internal Internet template to determine faculty, civil service, and other indirect costs including infrastructure
- Despite the complexity of determining what resources are actually allocated to teaching, research and engagement, such an analysis may be complex but can and should be done.

Recommendation 1

Define the parameters of public engagement/outreach in order to be clear when asked for the costs and return on investment.

Recommendation 2

Determine the expenditures of public engagement using a set of tools made available to colleges/departments/campuses and following a common template:

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How is public engagement/outreach financially supported?

Recommendation 3

Create guidelines for how much of public engagement/outreach should be covered to sustain existing good will and mission, finding new methods, or be eliminated.

- If engagement is necessary for teaching and research in a particular college, then resources can be allocated accordingly.
- There is a need to prioritize what is paid for by fees, grants, sponsored and non-sponsored funds, tuition revenues and where costs can be shifted to make the best use of available resources.

Internal Expenditures Workgroup: Chuck Muscoplat (Chair), Terry Bock, Tom Fisher, Steve Yussen

Section 5: Central Leadership

What are the recommendations for central leadership for public engagement?

The consensus of the Administrative Advisory Committee of Public Engagement/Outreach is that leadership from central administration is essential for coordination and integration of public engagement issues into the overall priorities of the University. Public engagement addresses the land-grant mission of the institution. Public engagement can create synergy between teaching and research. Public engagement needs to be in the portfolio of one or several individuals in the central administration. Public engagement will receive increasing attention in the next decade. Public engagement helps articulate the public value of the University to the people of the state.

Central leadership might include the following responsibilities:

- Coordinate various public engagement efforts
- Serve as a voice at the table for the value of public engagement at the UMN
- Articulate the value of public engagement, its benefits and challenges
- Oversee overall budget for public engagement
- Integrate with initiatives such as the portal project
- Serve as an integrator for issues like community service awards, civic engagement, vital aging, etc.
- Coordinate efforts of colleges, centers, and coordinate campus efforts
- Communicate public engagement efforts
- Work with University Relations to “tell the story”
- Become a central contact point for community requests
- Expand Extension and CCE as a model to other colleges

Recommendation

One of the following options/alternatives to provide central leadership for public engagement should be considered:

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- Have each college/coordinate campus appoint a liaison for public engagement
- Establish a coordinating council with a chair designate to report to the Provost
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