A land-grant, research-intensive university, Michigan State University has a special obligation to make its expertise readily and constructively available to those seeking to improve themselves or the various communities to which they belong. Discovering truth and then disseminating it is too simple a model of the process through which the research university should fulfill this obligation.

The obligation of the land-grant, research-intensive university is best fulfilled in close collaboration with groups, organizations, communities, and individuals outside the academy. Such collaborations are successful when university faculty take our, often tentative, understandings – developed in laboratory or library – and combine them with the ideas and experiences of our partners to create and test innovative strategies for addressing real problems – whether they are found in the manufacturing floor or in an urban health clinic.

In these collaborations all partners are both learners and teachers. What those outside the academy learn from the collaboration, they apply and, often with our help, use to advocate changes in social or organizational policy that would allow for the generalization of the strategy. What we in the university learn from the collaboration, we use to expand our understandings of phenomena. We also disseminate those expanded understandings in scholarly (and sometimes popular) publications and in our on-campus classrooms. And often we use those expanded understandings – further refined in laboratory or library – to respond to additional issues facing groups, organizations, communities, and individuals outside academe – thus continuing the cycle of collaboration between the research-intensive, land-grant university and the public that so

When we participate in this cycle of collaborative exploration, we engage in what we at MSU call outreach scholarship. The Provost’s Committee on University Outreach, chaired by Professor Frank Fear, codified the pathbreaking definitions in a report published in 1993. The Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach is dedicated to promoting outreach scholarship across the campus to improve both MSU’s response to the needs of society and the information we publish and teach.

Outreach scholarship occurs in academic units throughout our campus. The Office of the Vice Provost seeks opportunities to facilitate new and ongoing efforts where possible. At this time, we have three major foci:

Expand and Customize Instruction with Distance Technology

The demand for lifelong learning continues to grow as changes in society and the workplace accelerate. Our efforts to respond will focus on serving practicing professionals and leaders in all the fields represented on our campus. We seek to build collaborations between faculty and professional organizations and business groups, collaborations that will design programs tailored – in terms of mode, time and place of delivery, and content emphasis – to the most pressing needs of those practitioners. The master’s degree in criminal justice with a security management emphasis now delivered entirely over the Internet, an offering that resulted from a collaboration with Target/Dayton-Hudson, is a good example of such collaboration. In addition to offering traditional courses and degree programs to these audiences, we need to develop more varied forms of credentialing – such as certificate programs – to meet practitioner needs. New certificate offerings in program evaluation and instructional technology – one a noncredit program growing out of faculty work with nonprofit social service agencies, the other a credit program stemming from the College of Education’s work with school districts – exemplify the potential of such efforts. Our office has increased its capacity to facilitate such collaborative customization of programming. See the article on Educational Ventures.

Expand Partnerships that Enhance Children, Youth, Families, and Healthy Cities

Outreach partnerships provide the basis for achieving collaborations essential to outreach scholarship. Successful collaborations require great skill and much time; formalized and on-going relations with community institutions – such as those that have been developed with Mott Children’s Health Center, the United Way of Michigan, Spectrum Health Systems, and Wayne County...

Provide National Leadership in Enriching Outreach Scholarship

In order to continue to provide national leadership in building a richer understanding of outreach scholarship, we will study how best to nurture it on the nation’s research campuses and how best to establish criteria of quality that will enable reliable evaluation of the work of individuals and academic units engaged in such scholarly work. Key to incorporating outreach fully into the land-grant university is the modification of the reward system so that superior outreach scholarship is rewarded as fully as strong laboratory-based research or on-campus teaching. That change will not occur until the academy agrees to criteria against which to judge outreach activities. Our publication, Points of Distinction: Planning and Evaluating Quality Outreach, put MSU in the forefront of institutions working on establishing those criteria and the means of judging unit and individual performance against them. The MSU Provost distributed Points of Distinction with this year’s promotion and tenure materials to encourage departments to adopt its suggestions for using a wider set of criteria in assessing scholarly productivity. The involvement of faculty from across the campus in the ongoing development and refinement of Points of Distinction described in the article on planning, evaluating, and rewarding outreach.

The articles that follow provide a glimpse into academic outreach at MSU. In the coming months, we will produce a series of articles giving additional examples of the many facets of faculty work in outreach.

We are very interested in your reactions to this insert featuring scholarly outreach. We will share with you further opportunities to work with us on projects, to cooperatively investigate grant possibilities, and to obtain administrative resources to assist you in your work. Please contact us at 335-8977 or outreach@pilot.msu.edu.
Michigan State University is putting new emphasis on the importance of high quality outreach. This past fall, the Provost included explicit instructions for evaluating outreach in a memorandum to deans, directors and chairpersons that guides them in promotion, tenure, and reappointment (PTR) decisions. What should peer review committees expect from faculty accomplishments in outreach if they were to carry out reappointment or the award of tenure or promotion? New language in the Provost’s directions states:

Assessment of faculty performance should recognize the importance of both teaching and research and their extension beyond the borders of campus as part of the third dimension. Assessment should take into account the quality of the outcomes as well as their quantity, and also acknowledge the creativity of faculty effort and its impact on students, the University campus, and, on the fields in which the faculty member works...Within this context, faculty must demonstrate substantive and sustained achievement in both teaching and outreach and the infusion of this scholarship in outreach programs.

The Definition of Outreach

This expansion of the PTR guidelines is the culmination of many years of effort to define outreach at the university and to elevate its status among faculty. A major step in this process was the Provost’s Committee on University Outreach, which submitted its report in October 1993. A more formal definition of university outreach emerged from that faculty committee, one that has been adopted by universities around the country. The definition locates university outreach within the traditional values and activities of the American university and elevates outreach achievement to something worthy of major university recognition and reward. It includes the following key concepts:

• Outreach is a form of scholarship. The scholarly activity and values imbedded in a specific project distinguish the project from a similar project being done, for example, by private industry or a government agency.
• Outreach is cross-cutting. A specific outreach project should have research and/or instructional components, as well as the expected service component. Outreach is more than simply service.
• Outreach involves the generation, transmission, application, utilization, and preservation of knowledge. A specific outreach project may have one type of scholarship or any combination of types.
• Outreach is not a one-way street. Both the external community and the university benefit from a specific project. Expectations from both constituent groups are addressed.
• Outreach taps into a faculty member’s professional expertise and role at the university, not personal commitments or hobbies.
• Outreach is consistent with the mission of the university and the units of the faculty participants.

Faculty Participation in Outreach at MSU

An understanding of outreach incorporates basic university values and permits significant recognition and reward for achievement. A faculty member on outreach, conducted in 1995 by Charles Ostrom, professor of political science, underscores the need to reward outreach activity. Among Ostrom’s findings were the following:

• 67% of the faculty responding (709 out of 2,000 tenured-stream faculty) had performed outreach to a moderate or great extent in the previous year.
• Most faculty indicated that their outreach efforts resulted in projects, presentations, reports, and other forms of interaction with the community.

Planning, Evaluating, and Rewarding Outreach

By Patrick McConeghy, Associate Dean, College of Arts and Letters

• Few results published in professional journals in the field.
• 90% of the faculty expected to participate in outreach in the future.
• 6%, primarily those whose faculty appointment contains an explicit extension or outreach dimension, believed it mattered in tenure decisions.
• 8% desired a change in the university reward system.

The survey results implied that a large number of faculties had been affected by recent local and national rhetoric on the central role of outreach in the modern American university and that, if they were expected to perform outreach and were doing it, they should be recognized and rewarded for it.

Faculty who wished to have their outreach achievements included and appropriately recognized in their annual merit or PTR review, however, faced two major problems. First, in many parts of the university, outreach was valued less than published scholarship or teaching and second, even if it were valued, there were few commonly accepted standards by which outreach accomplishment could be assessed for quality.

Valuing and Evaluating Outreach

Establishing the value and assessing the quality of outreach were challenging given to the Ad Hoc Committee on Evaluating Quality Outreach by the Provost in the spring of 1995. In order for the university to recognize and reward the increasing commitment to outreach among the faculty, peer review committees would have to find reason to value outreach accomplishments and (2) need legitimate standards and measures by which they could evaluate the quality of those efforts.

Eighteen months later, the committee published Points of Distinction: A Guidebook for Planning & Evaluating Quality Outreach (copies are available in the office of each unit administrator). Readable and pointedly free of jargon, the booklet was developed by colleges and universities across the country as well as MSU campus units with a significant outreach dimension. As a result, Points of Distinction has been acclaimed as a model for planning and evaluating high-quality outreach for higher education, and committee members have conducted workshops at a variety of professional organizations and individual campuses for its implementation.

Points of Distinction especially useful for units whose mission has not included significant outreach objectives thus far. Faculty who are at the planning stages of a new outreach project or who will be submitting dossiers to peer review committees in the PTR process several years from now should also find this publication useful in strengthening projects and portfolios. Faculty who are in the process of submitting outreach accomplishments for recognition and reward often find it difficult to recover appropriate documentation after the fact to demonstrate quality according to Points of Distinction standards.

Committee on Evaluating Quality Outreach

Mary Andrews, Human Ecology; Robert Banko, Office of the Provost; Bruce Burke, College of Education; Frank Fear, Resource Development; Hiram Fitzgerald, Psychology and Applied Developmental Sciences; Lee Manindersch, Agricultural Economics; Patrick McConeghy, Arts and Letters; Merry Morash, Criminal Justice; Charles Ostrom, Political Science; Lorilee Sandmann, University Outreach; Shveta Smalley, MSU Extension; Diane Zimmerman, University Outreach

Continuing Resources for Units and Individual Faculty Members

Individual faculty and unit administrators can call upon the Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach (contact: Lorilee Sandmann, Committee Chair, 5-4589) and the Evaluating Quality Outreach Task Teams for assistance. The teams are prepared to:

• meet with chairs and faculty affairs committees to introduce Points of Distinction and discuss its utility and potential applications
• load faculty forums on what constitutes scholarly activity, especially in outreach situations
• work with faculty currently engaged in outreach to develop concrete examples of the planning, documentation, and evaluation strategies found in Points of Distinction and to work these case studies into publishable articles
• assist with the development of faculty portfolios, drawing on the results of the national project on the “Peer Review of Professional Service”
• communicate and exercise evidence of high-quality outreach to internal and external constituencies.

Points of Distinction provides:

• Advice for units on the integration of outreach more fully into its mission, where appropriate
• Advice for individual faculty members on planning and documenting high-quality outreach projects in which they participate
• A matrix that assists in the planning and documentation of high-quality outreach projects (available as an independent publication)
• Significance, attention to context, scholarship, impact the attributes of any high-quality project
• Sample questions to help guide planning and evaluation
• Examples of qualitative indicators
• Examples of quantitative indicators that reflect the values listed above
• A variety of tools that help units plan, evaluate, and reward high-quality outreach and that provide models for individual outreach portfolios.
The realties rather than theories of life are distilled in the community-based laboratories of MSU's Applied Developmental Science (ADS) program. An interdisciplinary program involving faculty and staff from MSU departments, schools, and institutes, ADS presents an approach to knowledge application that has strong roots in MSU's land-grant tradition and commitment to outreach research. ADS is rooted in scholarly and its goals are to engage people live and work in neighborhoods and communities.

Hiram Fitzgerald, professor of psychology, and L. Annette Abrams of the Office of Vice Provost for University Outreach share ADS leadership. The program is a model for university outreach research and instruction focusing on linking faculty and staff directly to community partners. Partnerships address community-defined concerns and help solve problems in economics, psychology, medicine, and nursing to build community capacity for self-sufficiency.

Operating as a virtual organization, ADS has four broad objectives: (1) to facilitate university-community partnerships and interdisciplinary affiliations for systematizing research policy, and practice; (2) to address issues of concern that enhance university research and instructional programs; and, (3) to broker faculty-community connections that mature into sustained collaborations.

ADS is nurturing 15 partnerships that involve over 30 faculty/staff and both graduate and undergraduate students. The MOMS (Mothers Offering Mutual Support) program at Butterworth Hospital in Grand Rapids (now part of Spectrum Health), under the direction of Lee Anne Roman, brings together the disciplines of epidemiology, economics, psychology, medicine, and nursing to demonstrate whether training community peers can effectively intervene with young mothers of high risk infants, enhancing life chances for their babies. Another example is the Girl Scout project, co-directed by Joanne Keith (Family and Child Ecology) and Timothy Bynum (Criminal Justice), designed to reduce barriers to participation in Scouting for girls in foster care and to promote a sense of success, competence, and self-esteem.

Fitzgerald says, "It's exciting to be involved with colleagues who are committed to applying methodologies developed in the social and behavioral sciences to real problems in the next millennium. Their teachers struggle to


generate new knowledge, and build

community capacity for self-sufficiency.

Designing Faculty Outreach Portfolios

Young students who bend over their work in libraries today are the leaders of the world in the millennium. Their teachers struggle to create a curriculum that is technologically up to date and practice teaching methods that will help ensure their students' success. Cheryl Rosaen, associate professor in the Department of Teacher Education, has devoted her recent professional life to the scholarly pursuit of best practices for enhancing professional teacher development to better prepare teachers for their vital task of educating K-12 students.

Rosaen's goal is to study the initial and continuing professional development of teachers in a scholarly outreach setting that would benefit her research, collaboration with teachers and students, and the standards of practice within her profession as a teacher educator. She works with students and faculty at the Elliott Professional Development School in Holt, Michigan, designing a series of projects around the role of collaborative inquiry as a way to improve the education of prospective and experienced teachers.

"I have been collaborating with teachers for the past nine years to engage in and conduct action research," says Rosaen. "Our collaborative inquiry is designed to help us improve teaching and learning through systematic investigation into real problems of practice identified by classroom teachers."

Her research goals are consistent with the MSU professional development school goals and include improved education of prospective and experienced teachers, improved teaching and learning for K-12 students, generation of knowledge used to enhance teaching and the teaching profession, and capacity building and developing models of university-school partnerships. She illuminates each goal with written statements of the impacts on teaching, the professional development knowledge base, and her research. These findings have been published in professional journal articles and have become the basis for the creation of an outreach portfolio.

Rosaen and three other MSU faculty participated in a national study on "Peer Review of Professional Service" conducted by Ernest Linton, University of Massachusetts-Boston and Amy Driscoll, Portland State University. The purpose of the project, initiated in 1996, is to facilitate the emergence of an outreach agenda as an institutional priority at all levels. Out teen outreach has the importance and scholarly challenge comparable to other mission domains.

To accomplish this goal, project participants were asked to create outreach portfolios. These consist of a written documentation of the purposes, procedures and outcomes of a scholarly outreach project. Rosaen documented her work with the Elliott School including a self-critique of her scholarly work. This portfolio was then reviewed by several of her colleagues to sharpen and deepen her understanding of her work and its meaning to outreach scholarship.

An important aspect of the portfolio creation is peer review of the documentation of outreach scholarship as well as the quality of the actual outreach project itself. Faculty reviewers assist in both aspects of the creation of the portfolios. The conversation, the insights and the learning about outreach scholarship in general and my own work in particular are ample rewards for the time invested."

Rosaen adds, "I rejected traditional roles university faculty have played in school settings such as "staff developer" or "consultant" or "researcher." Instead, I embraced the projects with the intent of joining with teachers, graduate students, and children in living, learning, and growing together over time. I wanted to see how, through a relationship of reciprocity and interdependence we can learn more together than we might learn separately."

Reflecting on her own experience in research and outreach as she worked on the portfolio, she wrote, "This type of work is rich, complicated and diverse. It makes important contributions to solving practical problems while it also contributes significant knowledge. We need to develop better ways to communicate the potential of outreach scholarship."

Rosaen is now a member of the Evaluating Quality Outreach faculty working committee and is willing to share her experience and expertise in outreach with other faculty members who are interested by the opportunity to understand and document their own research.

Please contact Cheryl Rosaen at crosaen@pilot.msu.edu for assistance in developing outreach projects.
By Lorilee Sandmann,
Coordinator, Outreach Partnerships

The Office of Educational Ventures, a new outreach initiative, will link educational training needs of professional and industry groups with Michigan State University’s resources and faculty. Educational Ventures works closely with Executive Programs in The Eli Broad College of Business, with the latter taking responsibility for the college’s training programs for business practitioners and Educational Ventures working to involve other colleges in providing customized educational programs.

Marcella Stewart, the new director, explains, “The office will focus on providing in-house customized certificate programs for professionals and managers. These programs should be practical and applicable to industry, government and professional groups in national and international markets. At the end of the program, we expect participants to take away not simply the knowledge received, but also the methods to apply it to their current jobs.” The programs will be delivered using such distance education technologies as the Internet and two-way interactive video as well as face-to-face instruction. Depending on customer needs, programs can extend from one week to a year. “Our intention is to establish a long-standing and mutually beneficial relationship with these organizations,” says Stewart.

Stewart’s first task was to identify MSU’s core competencies. She is currently seeking to identify the training needs of customers and, working with academic departments, to match these needs with MSU faculty expertise. The goal is to develop programs fully in a particular area of study and then offer them to other groups as a certificate program with appropriate modifications, tailoring them according to the organization’s learning objectives. “Over time,” Stewart notes, “we expect to increase the number of program offerings and their accessibility to participants to build a positive revenue stream.”

If you have any questions about this newly established office and its mission, contact Marcella Stewart, Director of Educational Ventures, at (517) 353-0143 or e-mail stewa174@pilot.msu.edu. She is interested in ideas for program development, identification of marketing niches, and names of contact people in various organizations.

“We intend to offer responsive, customer focused, quality programming to better promote MSU as a leader in contract training to business and industry.”

Before coming to MSU, Marcella Stewart worked for the University of Southern California’s Marshall School of Business in the Office of Executive Development. Working in partnership with faculty leaders, she was responsible for curriculum development, planning, evaluations and delivery as well as assessing and advising customers about program needs and faculty capabilities.

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Please visit University Outreach’s web site at http://www.msu.edu/unit/outreach/ for additional information on outreach resources.

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