

## **Event Two**

An online threaded discussion board sponsored by the UCEA Outreach and Engagement Community of Practice on 9/16/02 through 9/20/03

Speaker Ted Settle

Topic: Creating a Culture to Support Outreach and Engagement: Defining and Operationalizing Outreach & Engagement

Ted Settle - Moderator

As chair of the UCEA Community of Practice on Outreach & Engagement, I want to welcome you to the second of three COP-sponsored activities in conjunction with the Outreach Scholarship Conference at The Ohio State University on October 6-8, 2002.

This activity is a threaded discussion and will focus on defining and operationalizing outreach and engagement. I will serve as moderator of the discussion from September 16-20. The third activity will be an on-line chat session with Dr. Moser in late October following the conference.

Dr. Moser has prepared the following thoughts to help start this threaded discussion. Please join me in being an active participant in this discussion and in our learning together about understanding and advancing the concept of outreach and engagement.

From Dr. Moser:

In just a few short weeks I hope you will be with me at the Outreach Scholarship conference in Columbus, Ohio. I look forward to our discussions at the conference and at our online session in October. The opportunity to share ideas and thoughts related to advancing outreach/engagement will be beneficial for all of us. I am pleased that we are able to begin and continue this sharing through this online learning community.

Let's begin by discussing what outreach and engagement means. I have found that at Ohio State it has been key to have a common language about what these terms mean. Only by having a common language can we begin to move forward in this arena. Each institution needs to operationalize a definition that suits their culture. For us at Ohio State, we use the terms "outreach and engagement" as almost one word. The definition we use follows:

The Ohio State University has defined "outreach and engagement" as a meaningful and mutually beneficial collaboration--partnering education, business, and public and social service. The concept of "outreach and engagement" represents

\* that aspect of teaching enabling learning beyond the campus walls

\* that aspect of research making what we discover useful beyond the academic community

\* that aspect of service directly benefiting the public.

During this week, let's discuss these questions:

1. What language do you use to define this type of work?
2. How do you define it?
3. How do you operationalize it in your institution? Specifically, how do you:
  - a. involve faculty in outreach and engagement?
  - b. measure/document outreach and engagement?
  - c. systematically integrate outreach/engagement into the culture of the institution?

What do you think? I look forward to hearing from you.

Participant M.H.

I like Ohio State's description of ps and o, because it is all-encompassing. What occurred to me not long ago is that the tripartite mission statement for public universities that most of us accept almost Pavlov-anally (!) - "teaching, research, and service" - creates by its very use a Gallian template ("Omnia Gallia est divisa in partes tres..."), in which the "third" mission is presented as separate and distinct from the other two. This is a major problem for all of us, even in terms of how we organize ourselves.

Ted Settle – Moderator

I agree totally with the problem of thinking that the third mission, service, is synonymous with outreach & engagement. In fact, I believe that each of the three missions (instruction, research, and service) has outreach and non-outreach components. For example, when faculty deliver credit courses to regular, on-campus, undergraduate and graduate students, this is non-outreach instruction. And, when they deliver non-credit courses, or sometimes credit courses with distance technology, this is outreach instruction. So, the instructional mission includes both outreach and non-outreach components.

I am giving the keynote address at a UCEA Region III meeting on O&E in Anchorage in two weeks, and this notion of outreach & engagement being embedded into each of the three functions is part of my remarks. Over the weekend, I sent a draft of a chart to Lorilee Sandmann, so you might check with her about what I've developed.

MH, I think the issue you raised is further accentuated with Vice Provost for Outreach positions. This further reinforces the third silo. Unfortunately, I am not a good critic, as I don't have a better suggestion for organization.

Participant M.H.

Of course, Ted, one of the virtues of a separate vp for "service/outreach/engagement" (fill in the blank) is that at least this part of the mission will get the attention it deserves. Historically, at least at most campuses,

if the service mission is put under instruction or research, it will either disappear or be relegated to second-tier status. There is certainly no easy answer to this. That's why it's such a good topic!

Ted Settle – Moderator

If O&E is important and is embedded/integrated into the fabric of daily faculty life, how should it be organized on the campus? Do we need a separate VP for Outreach & Engagement, even though O&E exists in all three missions? What other options do we have, as M.H. notes that it might disappear without this organizational visibility?

Any ideas about other organizational models?

Participant M.G.

Ted and MH: Perhaps we have not made a strong enough case for the importance of outreach and engagement. We all know how important our work is, but does the rest of the academy. Unless we can demonstrate the significant impact of our work in ways that are understood and valued, then we will continue to run the risk of being marginalized or possibly disappearing.

Participant M.H.

This is a great point, MG. Our former VP for service and outreach, used to say that he had to sell his mission every day, since others on campus really did not understand it or appreciate it (except for the money it could bring in, of course). We are still in that posture today, for the most part, but we are making some progress. What is especially appealing and important about the Outreach Scholarship Initiative is that it is speaking in terms that the other side of the house can relate to. To the extent that we can demonstrate empirically and in a scholarly fashion the value of what we are doing, to that extent we will be taken seriously on campus. But for many of us, this is new wine.

Participant M.G.

Dear Ted and Bobby: Permit me to offer some words my Chancellor. He has written, "The Engaged Institution will be one in which the traditionally third element of higher education, whether it's called extension, outreach or public service--is valued equally with teaching and research and integrated with them. Furthermore I would assert that the distinctive mark of a great public university in the 21st century, when the campuses no longer hold the exclusive charter for discovery and dissemination of knowledge, will lie in how the institution uses public service to inform its research and inspire its instruction."

We have always sought to bring the resources of the university to the citizens of the state where they live and work, but engagement suggests that we change this relationship so that the citizens and their organizations are partners with us in lifelong learning. They can and should influence our instruction, perhaps through service learning, and our research agenda, through identification of areas and issues that will benefit from research as well as participating in the research design. Through partnerships, we will be able to leverage knowledge

and resources that exist beyond the boundaries of the campus and ultimately have greater impact than we would have alone.

Ted Settle – Moderator

Well said. I'll integrate some of his thoughts in my Anchorage remarks. It would be an interesting discussion to identify examples of how engagement differs from (supplements/augments) outreach. Your thoughts have started us down this road. Specifically, what more is engagement that outreach is not?

We are working with one example at Virginia Tech where off campus graduate courses taught under contract (i.e., outreach instruction) have led to \$100K of additional sponsored (applied) research (i.e., outreach research). I'm developing a picture that this stuff is much more integrated than we believe or how we behave, especially when taken from the view of the work of an individual faculty member.

Participant K.B.

This is a very interesting discussion, and one that gets at the root of how we approach outreach/engagement at our institutions. At my university we also talk that outreach/engagement is not "an end in itself", but rather part of the total work/process of faculty/university work. It is part of the process by which we do teaching, research and service. What we learn through engagement should then influence how we do our teaching, research and service (inside and outside the institution). Just like research should influence what we teach in the classroom or our service work on committees or in the community.

Ted Settle – Moderator

An aspect of this discussion is how to systematically integrate outreach/engagement into the culture of the institution. What specific actions have you taken, especially involving faculty, to facilitate this effort? We at Virginia Tech have altered the P&T guidelines, and this feels like a necessary condition. However, this will take a very long time to have an impact, and it may not be a sufficient condition.

Another option I am exploring involves sourcing new business from the external community and taking these opportunities to the faculty, assuming they represent real problems and are intellectually challenging. Thus far, I've never been turned down, including by very busy faculty. If so, then the issue might be one of identifying more opportunities to place before the faculty. And, if these activities are satisfying and stimulating, I suspect they will worm their way into the department P&T processes, possibly faster than through the altered formal guidelines.

Obviously this is not an either-or situation. Both are probably worth pursuing. What have you done or are considering?

