

Community Engagement Strategic Plan



Introduction to the Community Engagement Plan

Goal 4 of NMSU's strategic plan, Vision 2020, focuses on institutional performance as it relates to Economic Development and Community Engagement. Strategy 15 calls for the development and implementation of a Community Engagement Plan. Planning was carried out by the Vice President for Economic Development, Cooperative Extension Service, and the Deans, and implementation is coordinated by the Community Engagement Council.

The Community Engagement Plan's development was undertaken by three groups, the Idea Team (which developed plan narrative, goals and objectives), the Gold Team (which provided top level reviews), and the Writing Team (which combined narrative, goals and objectives into a working document and incorporated editorial revisions). Planning occurred over six meetings throughout the Fall 2014 semester, with five focused on extension, outreach, and service contributions to each of the five goals of Vision 2020, and one dedicated to Extension and Outreach, and Service Plan management and organization. Throughout the semester, guests from the campus community were invited to share their expertise and insights to supplement the discussion for each goal. Discussion throughout the planning process was grounded in a review of extension, outreach, and service activities already undertaken across NMSU, at each of its peer institutions, and best practices around the nation, the latter pointing to the evolution of extension, outreach, and service towards community engagement.

NMSU has engaged the larger community over generations through effective collaboration. Historically, the scope, magnitude, and impact of this engagement has been measured and reported within units rather than across colleges and divisions; their impact was thus not fully captured, aggregated, communicated, or leveraged in a systemic and sustaining fashion. A caring community can be built upon a celebration of current collaborative efforts, serving as the basis of models for future community engagement.

As a land-grant institution, community engagement and public service are inherent in the mission of NMSU. Historically, the needs of the communities beyond campus have been met through extension and outreach, and service programs offered by the Cooperative Extension Service (CES). Today, though, CES does not undertake these types of community engagement activities alone. Every college, department, and unit of NMSU participates in countless activities making significant impacts within communities both local and afar. These impacts in turn have consequences that return benefits to the institution and back on campus, creating collaborative reciprocal partnerships and networks.

Definitions for and expectations extension, outreach, and service at land-grant institutions—stable for many decades—are transforming to a larger notion of Community Engagement, both encompassing and extending beyond these activities. Upon examination, the Carnegie Foundation found that NMSU supports dynamic and noteworthy community engagement, shown by description and exemplary practice and, therefore, awarded the institution its 2015 Community Engagement Classification. Looking ahead, NMSU must place greater focus on measurably tracking and reporting on community engagement activity, and recognizing and rewarding faculty, staff and students for the work that they do for and within communities. Yes it is building upon its past, but NMSU is embarking on a new venture, one requiring a new plan, understanding Carnegie while respecting Boyer's scholarship of engagement as cited in NMSU's Policy Manual.

Those involved in analyzing, editing, and writing agree that now is the time for NMSU to begin moving beyond extension, outreach, and service to community engagement. A Community Engagement Plan for NMSU allows us to retain much of our present extension, outreach, and service but does require us to adopt new community engagement concepts and associated terminology; align community engagement and university mission, vision, and position; move beyond planning and focus on achievements for individuals, communities, and the institution; and undertake community engagement activities contributing to each of the five goals in Vision 2020.

The Community Engagement Plan laid out below addresses each element.

Community Engagement Strategic Plan

Mission:

NMSU prominently engages, serves, and collaborates across the university system and with the larger community for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources.

Vision:

NMSU will demonstrate its impact on the scholarship of engagement (local, regional, state, national, global) through application of knowledge and skills in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

Position:

As a caring community, NMSU is positioned through its prominence in community engagement, extension, outreach, and service to leverage university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching, and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good. NMSU transforms lives through discovery.

Charge:

Facilitate community engagement through university-wide extension, outreach, and service

The excellence of extension, outreach, and service organized within and managed by colleges and divisions, will serve as the campus-wide sense and accomplishment of community engagement across New Mexico.

Priorities:

1. Support a culture change in the definition of and support for community engagement in all forms
 2. Provide leadership and coordination of community engagement across the institution
 3. Cohesively capture, aggregate, and disseminate community engagement activities and impacts
 4. Recognize and reward the community engagement of faculty, staff, and students
 5. Address the assessment, partnership, faculty reward, and institutional alignment requisite to Carnegie Community Engagement re-classification
 6. Demonstrate and effectively communicate the impact and strategic value of community engagement to achieve greater recognition, prominence, external funding, private/public partnership, and philanthropy
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Carnegie Definition of Community Engagement:

Community engagement describes collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

The purpose of community engagement is the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching, and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good.

Boyer's Concept of the Four Scholarships Relevance to Community Engagement:

3. The ***scholarship of engagement*** refers to the many and varied ways to responsibly offer and employ knowledge and skills to matters of consequence to the university and the community;

(NMSU Policy Manual, Section 5.90.4.2)

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. (2012). Carnegie Classification Description. Retrieved from http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/descriptions/community_engagement.php.

Boyer, E.L. (1990). Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate. Princeton, NJ: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

Community Engagement Goals

Community Engagement Goal 1: Academics and Graduation

Enhance higher education access and outcomes through effective community engagement

NMSU aspires to increase access to the institution for people of all ages, and realize enrollment gains through enhanced assessment of the impacts and outcomes of its large footprint of community engagement activities. NMSU will utilize resources to foster increased participation by faculty, staff, and students.

Objectives:

1. Introduce potential students to NMSU through effective extension, outreach, and service to the larger community
2. Integrate service learning and community engagement in degree programs
3. Support timely graduation through student participation in community engagement activities
4. Engage the PK-20 academic and industry communities to enhance academic programs through service learning and community engagement.

KPI 1 - Impact of community engagement on increased enrollment, completion and timely graduation

KPI 2 - Impact of community engagement and service learning on student preparation and skill development

Community Engagement Goal 2: Diversity and Internationalization

Use community engagement as a tool to build a rich academic environment embracing diverse people and perspectives, promoting an intercultural community

NMSU's culture of a caring community is dependent upon an appreciation of common experiences and respect for differences on campus and in the larger community. Excellence in learning through discovery requires diversity of thought culled from an expansive variety people, perspectives, and experiences.

Objectives:

5. Engage with communities at home and abroad to recruit diverse faculty, staff, and students
6. Support retention of diverse students through integration of community engagement with diverse and international student support systems
7. Facilitate diverse and international partnerships and collaborations through community engagement and the scholarship of engagement

KPI 3 – Impact of community engagement on the enrollment, retention and graduation of diverse and international students

KPI 4 - Impact of community engagement on building diverse and international partnerships

Community Engagement Goal 3: Research and Creative Activity

Develop, reward, and share the impacts of community engagement related to research and creative activity

The activities of teaching, research, and service through community engagement are intrinsically interrelated. NMSU strives to promote extension, outreach, and service activities, recognizing that increased engagement of faculty, staff, students, and community members serves to create opportunities for research and creative scholarship, and builds reciprocal collaborative community partnership. Enhancement of research methodology in the assessment of engagement activities serves both the internal and external communities.

Objectives:

8. Align research and creative activity with demonstrated community needs and potential partners
9. Increase publication and presentation by faculty and students of research and creative activities with demonstrable community impacts

KPI 5 – Impact of community engagement on research, creative activity and sponsored programs

Community Engagement Goal 4: Economic Development and Community Engagement **Utilize effective community engagement to leverage NMSU's assets and address the needs of the larger community**

The land-grant mission is grounded in extending the scholarships of teaching, research, extension, outreach, and service to address societal growth and development. Partnership, collaboration, innovation, and communication are key to understanding issues, guiding solutions, and identifying opportunities for economic development and community engagement.

Objectives:

10. Promote and support the economic development of New Mexico's communities through community engagement and partnerships
11. Provide relevant research-based knowledge and information, educational programs, and professional development training to achieve community and regional economic development

KPI 6 – Impact of community engagement on industry and employment growth and retention

KPI 7 – Impact of community engagement on workforce preparedness, employer satisfaction and academic innovations

Community Engagement Goal 5: Resource Stewardship

Through community engagement provide valuable insight and transparency as the public face of the institution

NMSU strives to use effective community engagement strategies and activities to make connections with donors, and as a method for maintain these donor relationships. Faculty, staff, and student community engagement activity often serves as the point of first contact, opening the door to engage and entice potential donors to partner with and give gifts to NMSU. Community engagement is the public face of the institution, and the community engagement work conducted by faculty, staff, students, and alumni serves to represent the institution as a whole, and opens new avenues for partners and stewardship. Community engagement is stewardship and stewardship is about all of us.

Objectives:

12. Enhance alumni and friend stewardship through community engagement
13. Provide effective external communications about enhancements to professorships, facilities, services, and research capabilities

KPI 8 – Impact of community engagement on philanthropy, donations, scholarships and foundation awards