**UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTION PLAN**

*(A Vision to advance engagement of UofL students, faculty and staff)*

**Preamble**

This agenda provides a framework for institutionalizing community engagement at the University of Louisville. This plan will serve as a guide for advancing engaged scholarship (teaching and research) of faculty, engaged learning opportunities for students, and engaged service of students, faculty and staff. This plan will foster the development of a culture of community engagement across our campuses and the development of effective partnerships throughout the broader community. Moreover, as UofL develops its reputation as an engaged institution, we will enhance our ability to attract world class faculty, recruit top students, fundraise, garner grants and contracts, and build public support for the University of Louisville.

**An Engaged Institution**

Community engagement describes the collaboration between a university and its broader communities (local, state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources with a commitment to partnerships and reciprocity[[1]](#footnote-1). As an engaged institution UofL creates and transmits valuable knowledge and ensures relevant and authentic teaching and learning experiences. Engagement is a central and defining characteristic of the University of Louisville[[2]](#footnote-2).

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IS A STRATEGIC PRIORITY OF THE UNIVERSITY.**

*By 2020, UofL will be known as a model metropolitan university, integrating academic excellence and research strength with civic engagement to transform Kentucky*.[[3]](#footnote-3)

**The University of Louisville’s strategic plan addresses five focus areas:**

1. Educational Excellence
2. Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity
3. ***Community Engagement***
4. Diversity, Opportunity and Social Justice
5. Creative and Responsible Stewardship

**It is important to understand and appreciate that community engagement serves to facilitate institutional advancement towards the other four university strategic goals:**

Engaged learning experiences produces **educational excellence**.

Engaged scholarship produces **world-class research and creative activity.**

Engagement promotes **diversity, opportunity and social justice.**

Engagement exemplifies **creative and responsible stewardship.**

**The university has developed appropriate structures and systems that support the advancement of community engagement:**

* Office of the Vice President for Community Engagement
  + Signature Partnership Initiative
  + College Connection Program (P-16) including Gear-Up, Upward Bound, and Governor’s Minority College Preparation (GMCPP) programs
* Steering Committee on Community Engagement
* University Community Partnership Advisory Board
* Ideas to Action
* Sustainability Council
* Office of Civic Engagement Leadership and Service
* Faculty liaisons for community engagement
* West Louisville Residents Advisory Council
* Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute’s Community Research Advisory Board
* Unit coordinators for compiling partnership information
* Recognition program for outstanding community engagement
* Financial incentives, seed grants, and other resources to facilitate community engagement of students, faculty and staff
* Review of promotion and tenure guidelines by schoolsand colleges

**However, to further the advancement of community engagement by the University of Louisville, the following action steps are recommended in five key areas: 1) Policy, 2) Programming-Internal, 3) Programming-External, 4) Resource Development, and 5)Documentation & Assessment.**

**POLICY: Support and advocate for university policies that facilitate community engagement.**

1. Support the review of faculty promotion and tenure guidelines for community engagement activities.
2. Consider community-based research and teaching as valid criteria for hiring and rewarding faculty.
3. Advocate that faculty annual work plans include proposed engagement activities.
4. Finalize glossary of terms to promote common understanding of different aspects of community engagement.
5. Link community engagement initiatives to the strategic plan.

**PROGRAMMING-INTERNAL**: **Educate the university campus on the importance of community engagement to foster a culture that embraces and supports engagement of students, faculty, staff and larger community.**

1. Showcase community engagement activities of students, faculty, and staff
2. Host conferences that highlight exemplary and best practices in community engagement.
3. Develop on-line inventory of engagement opportunities for university students, faculty, and staff, as well as community partners.
4. Provide support and resources for faculty to make the case for the importance and relevance of engaged scholarship (teaching and research) to promotion and tenure.
5. Support the integration of community-based learning across the curriculum, link to learning goals for students.
6. Support the integration of community-based research and learning across academic disciplines.

**PROGRAMMING-EXTERNAL: Educate the community on the importance of engagement and mutually beneficial partnerships.**

1. Enhance university website to facilitate internal and external communications regarding community engagement.
2. Develop annual report that highlights community engagement of students, faculty and staff.
3. Encourage and support the publication of community engagement activities and research of students, faculty and staff.

**RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT: Increase financial incentives, seed grants, and other resources to facilitate community engagement.**

1. Increase extramural funding to support community engagement activities.
2. Facilitate and coordinate alumni involvement in engagement activities.
3. Develop incentives that recognize and reward faculty, staff and student engagement.

**DOCUMENTATION & ASSESSMENT: Identify, document and assess community engagement activities**

1. Develop and implement on-line self-report community partnership data collection system.
2. Develop and implement coding system for community-based learning (CBL) courses in course catalog.
3. Develop on-line self-report student transcript to record student community engagement activities.
4. Develop format and methodology for assessment of community partnerships that measures impact on community and university.
5. Assist academic departments in developing criteria to assess the engaged scholarship (teaching and research) of faculty.
6. Maintain Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement.
7. Facilitate community involvement in defining, conducting and evaluating community-based research & teaching, and partnerships.

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1. Adapted from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Barbara A. Holland, 2006 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The 2020 Plan, University of Louisville’s strategic plan [↑](#footnote-ref-3)