What is Community Engagement?

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville uses the Carnegie Foundation’s definition of community engagement:

“Community Engagement describes the collaboration between higher education institutions 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.”

- Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

At UTK, community engagement is carried out through the three pillars of our land-grant mission: **teaching, research, and service.**

Terms & Definitions

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<th>Community</th>
<th>A group of people external to the campus who are affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, similar situation or shared values.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>The application and provision of institutional resources, knowledge or services that directly benefits the community. Examples include music concerts, athletic events, student volunteers, public lectures, or health fairs.</td>
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<td>Engaged Service</td>
<td>The key factor that distinguishes engaged community service is that the university employee utilize their academic expertise to jointly solve problems faced by members of the community. There should be collaboration between the faculty member and the community. The agenda should be set collaboratively and be mutually beneficial. Community-engaged service may entail the delivery of expertise, resources and services to the community.</td>
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<td>Engaged Teaching</td>
<td>A pedagogical approach that connects faculty and students with projects, programs, activities, and educational processes. Most importantly engaged teaching requires connections between the community’s benefit/prerogatives and student learning outcomes.</td>
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</table>
### Terms & Definitions

**Teaching as Engaged Scholarship**

These two can be translated to engaged scholarship if, for example, the faculty member submits for publication a description of the unique educational presentation or measures the impact of the service learning experience on the student or community and submits the results for publication, then the scholarship teaching is exemplified.

**Service Learning**

Service-learning is a course-based experiential learning strategy that engages students in meaningful and relevant service with a community partner while employing ongoing reflection to draw connections between the service and course content. When done well, service-learning has the potential to enhance academic learning, promote civic responsiveness, and strengthen communities.

**Engaged Research, Scholarship, or Creative Activity**

Extends faculty endeavors to serve the public. It may include basic discovery, applied or action research, original performances, creative production and applied policy. Engaged research/scholarship/creative activities is often seen as an externally focused activity that brings together faculty and the community collaborators to address real world problems and issues.

**Extension**

Engaged teaching may also extend the university’s instructional capacity to provide learning opportunities to audiences outside of the traditional classroom setting via UT Extension and outreach programs. Such teaching may employ innovative uses of technologies to make university resources accessible to those at a distance, particularly those who have not traditionally had access to the university, through online courses or the design of educational websites. Additional examples of Extension and outreach include workshops, public lectures, or

**Volunteer**

A person who voluntarily offers to take part in an enterprise or undertake a task to help others or organizations.
References


Adapted From: UT Academic Outreach and Engagement Council Implementation Task Force

For questions or comments, please contact:

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