

Definitions Related to Outreach and Engagement

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Outreach is one of three basic parts of the University of Idaho's land grant mission. Through outreach, the university makes its research useful beyond the academic community, enables learning to occur outside the classroom, encourages the creation and dissemination of knowledge, and directly benefits the public. At their best, outreach activities are "engaged," that is, they involve mutually beneficial partnerships with diverse external constituencies to enhance teaching, learning, discovery and creativity.

Engagement is not the sole purview of outreach. Instead, it is a desirable characteristic of all three parts of UI's mission, including not only outreach but also teaching and research.

Outreach occurs from every college on UI's Moscow campus, the UI Library, and from each of the University's physical locations around the state. Our outreach infrastructure includes 42 county Extension offices, UI Boise, UI Idaho Falls, UI Coeur d'Alene, multiple research and learning facilities, and the telecommunications infrastructure that bridges physical distance.

The scholarship of outreach is a professional activity that addresses societal problems, challenges, and understanding. It should reflect: (1) a substantive link with and direct application of knowledge to significant human needs and social issues; (2) use of a faculty member's academic and professional expertise; (3) public benefits; and (4) generation, validation and communication of new knowledge.

Activities involving outreach

The scope of UI's outreach activities is far-reaching. The following list illustrates many types of these activities. Most of the examples provided, such as distance education, are not exclusively outreach. Instead, they lie in the intersection of outreach and / or teaching and research. Over time the Goal 3 team will inventory the many centers, institutes, initiatives and continuing education programs through which UI outreach occurs.

Extension was established by the Smith-Lever Act in 1914, when the teaching and research activities of the nation's land grant universities were extended beyond the campus through the creation of the Cooperative Extension Service. Through a three-way partnership intended to respond to constituency needs, Extension is funded by state, county, and federal governments. The University of Idaho Cooperative Extension System (known as UI Extension) provides non-formal educational programs that help people use research-based knowledge to improve their lives. UI Extension transfers knowledge from the university beyond the academic community and informs university faculty about public issues, information needs, and service opportunities. UI Extension offers educational programs in the areas of

agriculture and food, environment and natural resources, families and youth, health and nutrition, and community and economic development. Extension may be at the intersection of Strategic Plan goals 1, 2 and 3.

Distance education is the process through which learning occurs when teachers, students, and support services are separated by physical distance. Technology, sometimes in tandem with face-to-face communication, is used to bridge the distance gap. Distance education is at the intersection of Strategic Plan goals 1 and 3.

Service learning integrates student learning with service and civic engagement to meet real community needs. It uses structured reflection tools to improve learning outcomes. Tools include discussions, journaling, group presentations, papers, and exams. Service-learning can be used in curricular settings (i.e. academic courses) or co-curricular settings, (e.g. ASUI's volunteer / civic engagement programs). Service learning is at the intersection of Strategic Plan goals 1 and 3.

Cooperative education is a structured educational strategy that blends classroom studies with learning through productive work experiences. It provides progressive experiences for integrating theory and practice. Co-op education (including internships and externships) is a partnership between students, educational institutions and employers, with specified responsibilities for each party.¹ Cooperative education is at the intersection of Strategic Plan goals 1 and 3.

Technology transfer is a process through which knowledge, technical information, and products developed through various kinds of scientific, business, and engineering research are provided to potential users. Technology transfer encourages and accelerates testing and using new knowledge, information and products. The benefit of technology transfer may accrue either at the community (public) or firm (private) level. Technology transfer may be at the intersection of Strategic Plan goals 1, 2 and 3.

Professional service can be both intramural and extramural and is the responsibility of faculty members in all units. **Extramural professional service is a form of outreach** in so far as it reaches beyond the university locally, nationally, or internationally. Examples include: participation in professional and scientific organizations; serving on governmental, non-governmental or private sector bodies; applying expertise in response to client requests; and/or building collaborative programs locally, regionally, statewide, nationally or internationally. **Intramural service, such as advising students or serving on a promotion and tenure committee, is not outreach.** Rather, it focuses on the internal workings of the university itself. Extramural professional service may be at the intersection of Strategic Plan goals 1, 2 and 3.

¹ Source: National Commission for Cooperative Education - <http://www.co-op.edu/aboutcoop.htm>