

OFFICE FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Student Experiences

CHARGE: To explore the development and implementation of opportunities that offer students more articulated and advanced public engagement experiences that are tied to their degree programs, professional aspirations, and personal goals and interests.

RATIONALE: An engaged institution provides students with opportunities to participate in community-based learning experiences that enhance their academic, personal, vocational, and civic learning and development. Policies and structures that support student engaged participation need to be in place in order for public engagement to become fully institutionalized at the University. While the University has many courses, programs, and organizations that support and reward student engagement work, student engaged scholarship remains largely disconnected from academic degree program requirements and students' personal and professional development.

RECOMMENDED TASKS AND QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE:

- 1) Evaluate students' current attitudes towards engaged learning. Are students in certain schools, disciplines, etc., more amenable to or more able to participate in engaged learning? What do students perceive to be the greatest barriers to participating in engagement work? To what extent do students feel that engaged learning is supported or encouraged by their department or programs?
- 2) Elaborate upon the different ways that engaged learning is interpreted in different disciplines. In what ways are disciplinary interpretations of engaged learning similar or different? What are some common denominators that transect and exemplify student engaged learning across the academic spectrum?
- 3) Develop a student-based approach geared towards advancing and promoting engaged learning and participation. In what ways could the University encourage student engaged learning and participation? Given limited resources, what kinds of experiences does the University identify as satisfying a public engagement component? Is the interpretation of what is considered to be public engagement the same for students and faculty?

- 4) Examine engaged learning at similar academic institutions. Do any universities provide a working template for engaged learning and participation that could be emulated and improved upon by the University?
- 5) Suggest programs and systems that can better articulate students' engagement experiences? What mechanisms can be put in place to ensure students have the most meaningful and impactful engagement experiences? What are ways in which engagement activities can be tied to other aspects of students' work and lives? What are some ways students' involvement in engagement can be sustained over the years in which they are enrolled at the University of Minnesota?