

**Public Engagement at the University of Minnesota**  
**Office for Public Engagement and Council on Public Engagement**

Approved by COPE April 6, 2006

**University's mission statement:**

Extend, apply, and exchange knowledge between the University and society by applying scholarly expertise to community problems, by helping organizations and individuals respond to their changing environments, and by making the knowledge and resources created and preserved at the University accessible to the citizens of the state, the nation, and the world.

**Office for Public Engagement (OPE)**

The mission of the Office for Public Engagement is to advocate and foster the public engagement activities of the University of Minnesota, so as to support the University's mission and its goal of becoming one of the world's preeminent public research universities.

The Office for Public Engagement will carry out its mission by

- working with COPE to facilitate and coordinate the public engagement activities of its member organizations and committees
- working with the Provost, the Senior Vice President for System Administration, and the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences to assure that public engagement is adequately emphasized in college and coordinate campus compacts
- developing and using effective mechanisms to communicate with internal and external constituencies
- developing contacts and partnerships with external organizations
- facilitating intellectual discourse on the meaning, implications, and applications of public scholarship by
  - organizing and sponsoring conferences, forums, and workshops
- advocating and promoting public engagement skills among University community members
- encouraging public engagement initiatives within and among colleges
- working with faculty governance committees to promote engaged initiatives and strengthen a culture of engagement
- working with student governance, other student groups, and the Office of Student Affairs to support engaged programs
- supporting service-learning and civic learning programs as University-wide initiatives
- participating in projects that assess public engagement activities
- administering Seed Grant and Outstanding Community Service Award programs
- representing the University of Minnesota at local, regional, and national conferences and programs
- working with the UM Foundation and other organizations to raise funds to support engaged initiatives
- reporting periodically to the Board of Regents on publicly engaged activities and accomplishments
- maintaining the University of Minnesota's leadership role in public engagement in higher education

**Council on Public Engagement (COPE)**

The mission of the Council on Public Engagement (COPE) is to bring together people working on public engagement activities, along with representatives of faculty and student governance, colleges, and central administration offices, in order to

- serve as a "conscience for engagement" at the University of Minnesota by having public engagement recognized as a pervasive priority in teaching, learning, and research activities throughout the university

initiate, carry out, and publicize public engagement programs  
form networks of public engagement participants  
identify potential new participants in public engagement activities  
share information among active participants in public engagement enterprises and with other university stakeholders  
enlist support for public engagement among all segments of the university and in the larger community  
advise and assist the Associate Vice President for Public Engagement and the OPE

The membership of COPE should include

Leaders or representatives of all pertinent UM organizations, on all UM campuses involved in Public Engagement

Leaders or representatives of community organizations with which the U is engaged

Leaders or representatives of faculty governance committees (FCC, SCEP, Research, Faculty Affairs) and student governance (MSA, GAPSA, COGS)

College and campus liaisons

Vice Provosts for Undergraduate Education, Graduate School, Student Affairs, Faculty & Academic Affairs, and Distance Education and Instructional Technology

Faculty, staff, students, and others with special personal involvement or interest in engaged work

Standing committees of COPE should include

Steering Committee: selected by Associate Vice President for Public Engagement as a general advisory committee

Program Committee: propose annual forums, speakers, and other events on relevant themes

Seed Grant review committee

Outstanding Community Service Awards review committee

Campus Community Coordinators Alliance

Student Relations committee: maintain connections with student organizations and with other relevant university offices

Ad hoc committees or groups may form and dissolve as needed for specific purposes, and are encouraged to include interested people who are not members of COPE. They may come together either as an initiative of COPE members or at the request of the Associate Vice President for Public Engagement. Such purposes may include

Special interest groups for program initiation and development

Communication: Help OPE develop and test effective communication mechanisms within the public engagement community, the broader university, and external communities

Database: Help OPE develop a comprehensive listing of public engagement activities

Faculty and staff reward system: review collegiate and departmental initiatives to enhance recognition of engaged activities

Development: explore opportunities for external support for engaged initiatives

Alumni relations: develop connections with the Alumni Association to sponsor programs and promote engaged initiatives

Assessment: Help administrative offices develop suitable measures of public engagement

The Chair of COPE will be the Associate Vice President for Public Engagement.