Incorporating Community Engagement Language into Promotion and Tenure Policies: One University's Journey

Lynn E. Pelco
Virginia Commonwealth University, lepelco@vcu.edu

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Abstract
This presentation was given at the 2016 Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities Conference in Washington, D.C.

Keywords
community engagement, promotion and tenure, higher education, community, engagement

Disciplines
Higher Education
Incorporating Community Engagement Language into Promotion and Tenure Policies: One University’s Journey

Lynn E. Pelco, Associate Vice Provost for Community Engagement
Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities Annual Conference
Washington, D.C. October 2016
Theme III: Become a national model for community engagement and regional impact

31,242 students
Very high research activity
Urban public serving university
Medical & academic campuses
Located in Richmond, Virginia

Division of Community Engagement (DCE)
Admin unit located within the Provost’s Office
Led by a Vice Provost of Community Engagement
Employs 20 full time staff members
Supports engaged teaching, research, & outreach

DCE’s Council for Community Engagement (CCE)
40 members from all academic and admin units
Advisory and campus outreach functions
Educates campus about comm. engagement
Distributes $100,000/yr in comm. engage. grants
SPRING 2011 – SUMMER 2011
VCU launches a new strategic plan that includes community engagement as one of four key themes. CCE discusses VCU’s need for university-wide community engagement definitions. DCE graduate assistant completes literature review on community engagement definitions.

FALL 2011
CCE works to draft university-wide community engagement definitions. DCE hires an external consultant to work with academic deans in clarifying what community engaged scholarship looks like within their disciplines.

SPRING 2012
External consultant assists CCE in finalizing the community-engagement definitions.
Provost charges a 19-member Ad Hoc Committee to review and revise the university’s P&T policies to align with the new strategic plan. New policies must include community engagement language. Ad Hoc Committee drafts P&T language. External consultant collaborates with committee co-chairs and makes presentation to entire committee. Committee agrees to utilize CCE definitions and integrates CE language into research, teaching, and service categories. Committee submits its P&T policy revision draft to Provost.

Public comment period for policy draft results in no significant changes. Board of Visitors approves revised P&T policies in May 2013.

All academic units update their P&T policies to align with the new university policy.
VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

KEY CHAMPIONS

UNIVERSITY PROVOST
VICE PROVOST FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
EXTERNAL CONSULTANT
AD HOC COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS
VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH
CE AS SERVICE OR A 4TH CATEGORY: ‘WHAT v. HOW’

UNFAMILIARITY W/ CE SCHOLARSHIP INFRASTRUCTURE

CE SCHOLARSHIP REQUIRED FOR ALL

LOCAL ENGAGEMENT NEGATES PREEMINENCE
ENLIST & EMPOWER CHAMPIONS

IDENTIFY & ADDRESS LOCAL CE MYTHS

EMPHASIZE SCHOLARSHIP RIGOR

IDENTIFY NEXT STEPS