



KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

SCHOLARLY ENGAGEMENT GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION FROM LEADERSHIP

From the provost and executive vice president

Engagement is foundational to Kansas State University's identity as the first operational land-grant institution. Our history demonstrates an enduring commitment to serving Kansas communities and beyond. Today, we are strengthening this commitment through our next-generation land-grant vision.

The 2024 Faculty Senate has thoughtfully integrated engagement language into our governing documents, underscoring our importance in this vital aspect of our mission. Scholarly engagement emphasizes university-community collaborations across research, teaching and service — creating mutual benefit and positive change.

I commend the many faculty, departments and colleges already deeply engaged in impactful work. To ensure the successful integration of engagement across the university, we must meaningfully reward and acknowledge scholarly engagement, particularly in promotion and tenure processes.

This guide provides essential resources for departments and faculty to establish clear guidelines that properly recognize and value these vital contributions. By collectively embracing scholarly engagement, we fulfill our land-grant mission more effectively while enriching scholarship, enhancing student learning and profoundly impacting the lives of Kansans and beyond.



Jesse Perez Mendez
Provost and executive vice president

From the Office of Engagement

To be a land-grant university is to engage. As the first operational land grant, Kansas State University has continually extended university knowledge into every Kansas community and beyond:

- **1887:** K-State faculty created educational pamphlets through the Kansas Agricultural Experiment Stations.
- **1914:** Extension professionals began working in all 105 Kansas counties.
- **2006:** The Center for Engagement and Community Development was established.
- **2023:** Formation of the engagement team under the vice president for external engagement and chief of staff.
- **2025:** Next-Gen K-State plan doubles down on K-State's engagement commitment.

This guide will help faculty, departments and colleges:

1. Develop a common language for scholarly engagement.
2. Recognize faculty effort and impact in engagement activities.
3. Establish guidelines in departmental documents for promotion, tenure and annual review.



Tim Steffensmeier
Professor, assistant vice president
and director of engagement and outreach

NEXT-GEN LAND-GRANT ENGAGEMENT: DEFINITIONS AND FRAMEWORK

Core definition

“Engagement is a form of research, teaching or service in which the university collaborates with the public and private sectors in scholarly activity that benefits communities.”

Key characteristics

- **Integration:** Engagement occurs within research, teaching and service.
- **Application:** Applies university expertise to address community/industry needs.
- **Collaboration:** Involves input from external stakeholders/partners.
- **Reciprocity:** Creates mutual benefits for scholars and partners.

Carnegie classification definition

“Collaboration between institutions of higher education 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. The purpose of community engagement is the partnership of university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values, and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good.”

Since 2010, Kansas State University has earned the [Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement](#).

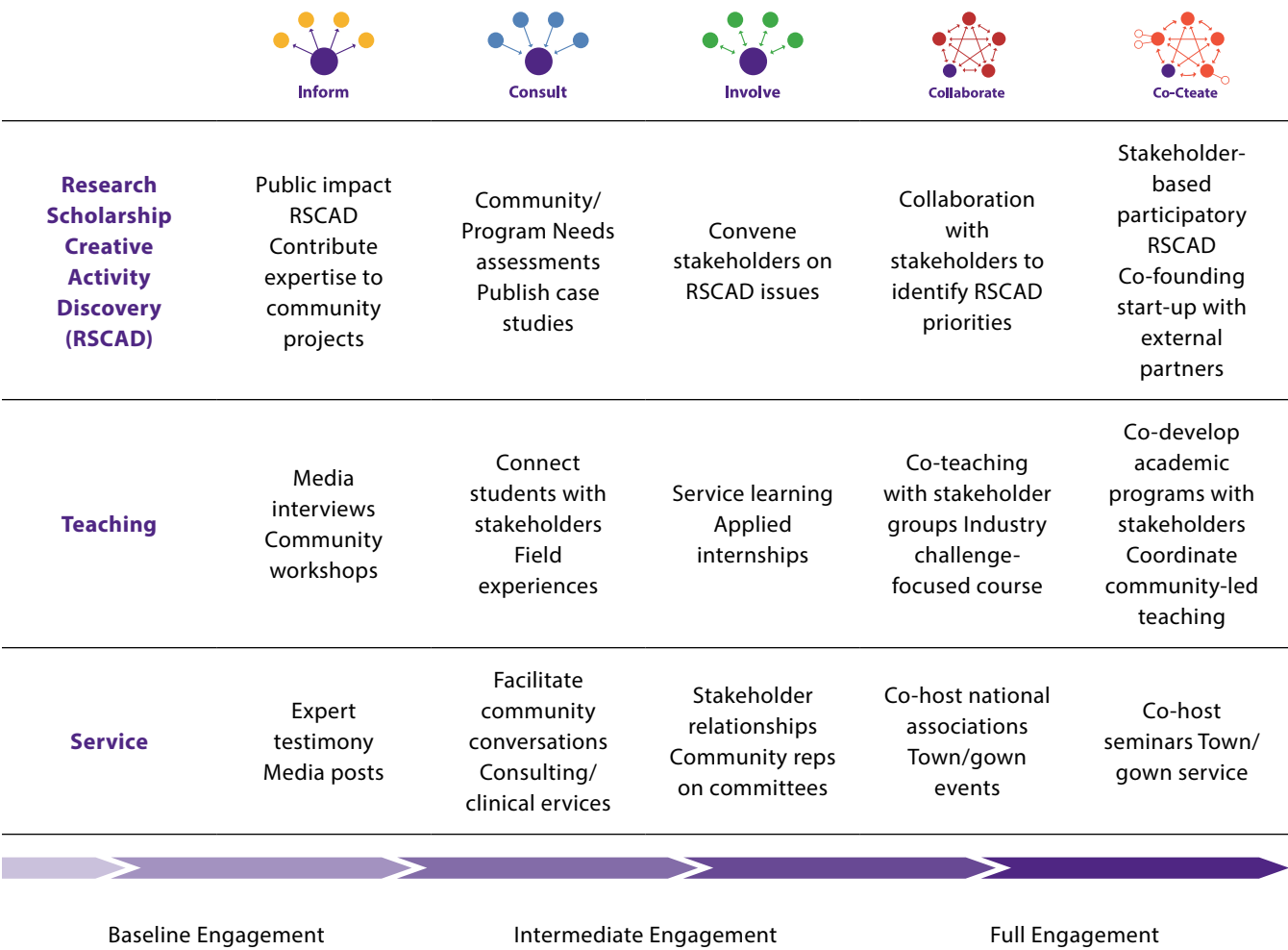
CONTINUUM OF ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

In 2024, K-State Faculty Senate co-created this continuum to help faculty locate their engaged scholarship. The continuum acknowledges that an array of engaged activities is needed to be the leading next-generation land-grant university.

CONTINUUM OF ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarly engagement is research, teaching, and service in which the university collaborates with public or private sectors in activities that benefit individuals and communities.

This continuum represents a few examples of engaged activities with increasing levels of external involvement.



PROMOTION AND TENURE LANGUAGE

The following examples demonstrate how K-State departments and other universities describe what counts as engaged scholarship in promotion and tenure documents. These descriptions are not exhaustive but provide frameworks for recognizing engagement in Research, Scholarship, Creative Activity and Discovery, or RSCAD.

RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, CREATIVE ACTIVITY, DISCOVERY

K-State — Applied human sciences

- Stakeholder-based participatory research activities and discovery.
- Development and administration of community/program needs assessments.
- Development, implementation, evaluation and refinement of community-based programs.
- Publication of case studies.
- Convening stakeholders for research collaborations.
- Contributing expertise to community projects.

K-State — Diagnostic medicine and pathobiology

- Invitations to testify before governmental groups on research activities.
- Membership in critical scholarly expeditions or explorations.
- Publishing extension/outreach activities in peer-reviewed and professional journals.

K-State — Landscape architecture, regional and community planning

- Conventional research, scholarship of engagement, scholarship of teaching and learning, and creative works.
- Publications on service-learning or outreach projects.
- Community engagement grants or regional significance work.
- Engagement awards and recognition.

K-State — Media and communication

- Community-engaged research products (white papers, reports, exhibits, programs, videos) can count as up to two peer-reviewed article equivalents.
- Equivalence based on: Scope of contribution, methodological rigor, amount of original research and demonstrated impact.

Purdue University

Faculty are eligible for promotion and tenure based on engagement scholarship, which is distinguished from industrial projects, service work or volunteer work by:

- Purpose-driven work for specific communities.
- Reciprocal partnerships involving knowledge exchange.
- Creation, delivery and assessment of timely educational materials and programs.
- Measurable outcomes that empower people and improve the quality of life.

University of North Carolina — Biomedical engineering

- Engaged scholarship includes collaborative interactions with partners outside universities.
- Quality is evaluated through external funding, peer-reviewed publication and expert evaluation.
- Interdisciplinary and translational research is valued in promotional decisions.
- Evidence of translational impact may include industrial support, patents and commercialization activities.

TEACHING

K-State — Diagnostic medicine and pathobiology

- Presentations on teaching before professional societies.
- Testimony before governmental groups concerning educational programs.
- Honors or recognitions for teaching accomplishments.
- Selection for special teaching activities outside the university.
- Competitive grants for innovative teaching activities.
- Development of innovative educational/outreach strategies.

Northern Kentucky University

- Effective presentations in various teaching venues.
- “Active learning” is a pedagogy that enhances student learning.
- Engaged teaching that connects students with communities.
- Community-based learning experiences, internships and special projects.



University of North Carolina — Biomedical engineering

- Engaged teaching takes students outside traditional classrooms.
- Courses help students engage with non-academic communities.
- Evaluation includes student assessment, peer review and feedback from community participants.
- Digital technologies and interdisciplinary teaching approaches are valued.

University of North Carolina — Civic leadership

- High-quality teaching demonstrated through student evaluations, peer review and teaching portfolio.
- Administrative contributions, curriculum development and leadership recognized.
- Publishing on teaching contributes to the teaching mission.
- Activities that enhance civic life and leadership are considered for teaching faculty.

SERVICE

K-State — Diagnostic medicine and pathobiology

- Recognition of diagnostic expertise through speaking invitations.
- Committee participation at department, college, university and national levels.
- Public-based service applying professional expertise for non-academic audiences.
- Dissemination of professional knowledge to civic groups.
- Technology delivery through development projects.

K-State — Landscape architecture, regional and community planning

- Service activities are often related to professional growth, research and teaching.
- Pro bono consultations and community-based projects address environmental problems.
- Faculty plays a strong role in departmental governance and program development.
- Meaningful public service is essential to the land-grant mission.

Northern Kentucky University

- Community service extends beyond university borders.
- Service to local, regional or global communities or governmental agencies.
- Facilitation of organizational development and economic development.
- Consulting services and technical assistance.
- Planning and implementation of public events.
- Service on boards and committees utilizing disciplinary expertise.

University of North Carolina — Biomedical engineering

- Engaged service informed by scholarly expertise.
- Interactions with groups outside academic organizations.
- Digital technology service is recognized as an essential contribution.
- Industry consulting is valued as professional expertise.

University of North Carolina — Civic leadership

- Public engagement activities are recognized as a critical service.
- Engagement formats include public lectures, debates, workshops and town halls.
- Community education and civic leadership activities are highly valued.

EXEMPLARY ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP AT K-STATE

Engagement occurs in every college and campus at K-State. The following examples demonstrate diverse approaches to scholarly engagement.

Veterinary medicine: One Health community outreach

Program overview: The College of Veterinary Medicine partners with local veterinarians, healthcare providers and social service organizations to deliver One Health services to pets and vulnerable populations.

Impact:

- 110 scheduled One Health community events annually across Kansas.
- Services in Manhattan, Topeka, Wichita, Kansas City and partner reservations.
- Since 2015, veterinary students have performed 44,000-plus surgical procedures for shelter animals.
- 5,000 pet families served through community outreach.

Key engagement elements:

- Multisector collaboration connecting academic expertise with community needs.
- Student service-learning that builds professional skills and community awareness.
- Addresses access barriers for underserved populations.
- Demonstrates One Health approach connecting human, animal and environmental health.



Geology and Johnson Cancer Research Center: Water quality research

Program overview: K-State geologists study water quality in domestic wells in south-central Kansas, investigating potential links between contamination and regional health issues.

Impact:

- Testing of 90-plus wells in south-central Kansas since 2020.
- Discovered 50% of the tested wells exceed Environmental Protection Agency nitrate standards.
- Investigation of potential links between water quality and elevated cancer rates.
- Education for well owners about testing, contamination and treatment options.

Key engagement elements:

- Student involvement in meaningful research with direct community impact.
- Cross-disciplinary collaboration between geology and cancer research.
- Community education about water safety and public health.
- Extension partnerships to address regional concerns.



K-State Salina: Drone research for event safety

Program overview: The Applied Aviation Research Center uses drone technology to enhance public safety at large events, providing real-time monitoring capabilities for first responders.

Impact:

- Support for safety response at the Kelce Jam music festival and the Kansas State Fair.
- Live video streams enabling efficient direction of emergency resources.
- Development of streamlined disaster response processes.
- Creation of more efficient communication practices for emergency situations.

Key engagement elements:

- Technology application solving real-world problems.
- Partnerships with state agencies and law enforcement.
- Student involvement in applied research.
- Research findings improve future emergency response capabilities.



APDesign: Brownfield Fellowships

Program overview: Three professors received Environmental Protection Agency-funded Technical Assistance to Brownfields Fellowships to provide community assistance and support graduate research on brownfield revitalization.

Focus areas:

- “Imagining Together” — Innovative community engagement for brownfield redevelopment.
- Intersection of brownfield redevelopment and affordable housing.
- Brownfield redevelopment for community resilience and hazard mitigation.

Key engagement elements:

- Faculty expertise addressing environmental challenges.
- Student involvement in community-based solutions.
- Creation of toolkits and resources for wider community use.
- Cross-disciplinary approaches to complex problems.



Agriculture: Sweet synergy honey project

Program overview: Bakery science students collaborate with the entomology department and Valor Honey, a veteran-led nonprofit, for a national baking competition using honey from campus hives.

Impact:

- Cross-departmental collaboration connects diverse agricultural disciplines.
- Support for veteran mental health through beekeeping initiatives.
- Student learning about the functional properties of local honey.
- Expansion of workforce training through the American Honey Institute.

Key engagement elements:

- Cross-disciplinary student collaboration.
- Community partnership with nonprofit organization.
- Connection to K-State economic growth initiative.
- Integration of education, research and community service.

Kansas land treaties project: Kaánze Ié language documentary

Program overview: K-State partnered with the Kaw Nation and Johnson County Community College to produce “Creator Gives Us Language,” documenting efforts to revitalize the Kaw language.

Impact:

- Documentary highlighting language revitalization efforts.
- Educational materials development for K-12 and university curricula.
- Preservation of cultural heritage and indigenous knowledge.
- Support for intergenerational language learning.

Key Engagement Elements:

- Respectful partnership with indigenous community.
- Cross-institutional collaboration.
- Documentation of cultural heritage.
- Creation of educational resources with broader societal impact.

ENGAGEMENT AWARDS

UNIVERSITY AWARDS

[Excellence in Engagement Award](#)

Recognizes outstanding engaged scholarship bridging university expertise with public and private sectors to address societal challenges.

[University Outstanding Scholar Awards](#)

Recognizes exceptional tenured faculty members on an accelerated path to academic distinction.

[Rex and Jean McArthur Family Faculty Award](#)

Presented annually to a K-State Salina faculty member demonstrating teaching excellence, research commitment and service to college, university and community.

NATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AWARDS

[W.K. Kellogg Foundation Community Engagement Scholarship Awards](#) and [C. Peter Magrath Community Engagement Scholarship Award](#)

Recognizes universities that have redesigned their learning, discovery and engagement missions to develop deep and enduring community partnerships.

Engagement Scholarship Consortium Awards:

- [Excellence in Faculty Community Engagement Award](#)
- [Excellence in Student Community Engagement Award](#)
- [Community Partner Excellence Award](#)
- [Excellence in Outreach and Engagement Professional Award](#)
- [Distinguished Dissertation Award](#)

International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement:

- [Distinguished Career Award](#)
- [Early Career Award](#)
- [Community Outcomes and Impact Award](#)
- [International Research Award](#)
- [Publication of the Year Award](#)



OFFICE OF ENGAGEMENT SUPPORT

The Office of Engagement is available to assist academic units with:

- Facilitating conversations about engagement in departmental documents.
- Promoting the impact of faculty engaged work.
- Developing engagement skills for faculty and staff.

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