May 2016

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Doberneck, Diane M. (2016) 'Are We There Yet?: Outreach and Engagement in the Consortium for Institutional Cooperation Promotion and Tenure Policies,' Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship: Vol. 9 : Iss. 1 , Article 3.
Available at: https://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/jces/vol9/iss1/3

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Are We There Yet?: Outreach and Engagement in the Consortium for Institutional Cooperation Promotion and Tenure Policies

Diane M. Doberneck

Abstract

More than 20 years since Scholarship Reconsidered and 15 years since The Disciplines Speak raised awareness about multiple ways of defining, conducting, and rewarding engaged scholarship, faculty members continue to cite institutional barriers to outreach and engagement scholarship. This qualitative study analyzed promotion and tenure policies from 15 Consortium for Institutional Cooperation (CIC) institutions. Thematic and content analysis focused on documents, including policies, instructions, forms, and templates, and followed a two-stage coding process guided by both extant theory and emergent discovery. The study revealed unexpectedly wide variations in language used to describe faculty work; types of examples included in the documents; the role of outreach and engagement in the promotion and tenure process; and criteria for assessing quality and excellence. No policy stood out as an exemplar, though many incorporated exemplary elements. Implications for policy and practice and directions for future research are included in the conclusion.

More than 20 years since Boyer’s Scholarship Reconsidered and 15 years since Diamond and Adam’s The Disciplines Speak I and II raised awareness about the many ways of defining, conducting, and rewarding scholarship, faculty members continue to cite institutional policies as a significant barrier to scholarly outreach and engagement (Wenger, Hawkins, & Seifer, 2012). Institutional alignment—that is, ensuring an institution’s espoused values are reinforced by its faculty roles and rewards system—continues to be a significant challenge for many institutions of higher education. When institutions of higher education initiate alignment processes on their campuses, reappointment, promotion, and tenure policies for faculty are often a main focus of attention and in some cases a point of contention. In Becoming an Engaged Campus: A Practical Guide for Institutionalizing Public Engagement, Beere, Votruba, and Wells (2011) note:

There is probably no issue as fundamental to institutionalizing public engagement as reappointment, promotion, and tenure (RPT).…. Faculty are unequivocal in their views: RPT policies must support public engagement in order for them and their colleagues—especially junior faculty—to invest significant time and energy in the work (p. 124).

Some higher education institutions have worked to address the institutional alignment challenge by impaneling faculty and administrator committees to revise their RPT policies to better accommodate scholarly outreach and engagement. Little, however, is known about the nature and extent of these RPT policies: What has been changed? Do the revised policies reflect the scholarship of engagement? How much progress has been made? In other words, are we there yet?

Approach to the Study

Research Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this study was to understand how institutions recognize and encourage the reporting of scholarly outreach and engagement in their promotion and tenure policies. The researcher pursued the following research questions:

1. What language is used to describe faculty roles and responsibilities in general and outreach and engagement specifically?
2. What role, if any, may outreach and engagement play in faculty members’ promotion and tenure materials?
3. What types of scholarly activities are included in the description of faculty work to encourage the reporting of outreach and engagement?
4. What criteria, if any, are included in promotion and tenure policies to set expectations for quality and encourage excellence in outreach and engagement?

According to the CIC, engagement refers to 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” (CIC Council on Engagement, 2005, p. 2).

In this study, the phrase outreach and engagement was used because it acknowledges a broader range of collaborative arrangements with community partners than the term engagement (Doberneck, Glass, & Schweitzer, 2012) and because it more accurately reflects the language used in the CIC’s institutional policies.

**Purposive Sample**

The CIC was selected as a purposive sample for this qualitative, exploratory study (Kezel, 1999). Established in 1958 as the academic counterpart to the Big Ten Athletic Conference, the CIC focuses on collaborative research, teaching, purchasing, and technology agreements to amplify the impact of investments and ideas across the Consortium’s membership. Since 1958, the CIC has expanded from the original 10 to the 15 member institutions included in this study (Consortium on Institutional Cooperation, 2015).

The CIC institutions were purposefully chosen for this exploratory study because the CIC Engagement Council was an early innovator in the engaged scholarship movement and author of Engaged Scholarship: A Resource Guide (2005), which compared institutional definitions; provided examples of community-engaged scholarship in research, teaching, and service; and promoted the adoption of institutional benchmarks and outcome indicators. The CIC’s institutional characteristics and engagement commitments are summarized in Table 1.

**Institutional characteristics.** All CIC institutions are classified as research universities/very high (RU/VH) by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; 87% are public universities; 13% are private, not-for-profit universities; none are for-profit institutions; 60% have student enrollments over 40,000; 97% are members of the Association of American Universities (AAU); and 87% are members of the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU).

**Institutional engagement commitments.** Eighty percent of the CIC institutions are institutional members of Campus Compact; 67% have received the elective Carnegie Engagement Classification; 53% are institutional members of Imagining America; 40% belong to The Research University Civic Engagement Network (TRUCEN); and 40% are Engagement Scholarship Consortium members.

**Sources of Data**

The researcher accessed promotion and tenure documents, including policies, instructions, forms, templates, guiding documents, and frequently asked questions from the CIC institutions’ main human resources websites during the summer of 2013. Documents from these websites represent the institution’s official policy and are, therefore, deemed to be credible and trustworthy sources of data for this study (Whitt, 2001). Documents posted on division, college, departmental, or outreach and engagement websites were excluded from this study unless they appeared as links on the main human resources webpage.

**Data Coding and Analysis**

Because little is known about the presence and role of outreach and engagement in the CIC’s promotion and tenure policies, the researcher employed an interdisciplinary *bricolage* approach to the inquiry instead of using an established conceptual framework in the analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). *Bricolage* is concerned with “diverse theoretical and philosophical understandings of various elements encountered during the research” (Kincheloe, 2001, p. 679). This approach allowed the researcher to explore the data thoroughly, drawing upon multiple and sometimes competing concepts from the engagement literature without limiting the exploratory analysis to a single scholarly perspective.

The researcher qualitatively analyzed the documents using a two-stage process: (1) thematic analysis focused on identifying variations and patterns (Boyatzis, 1998), and (2) interpretive content analysis focused on determining frequencies in the identified patterns (Krippendorf, 2004). For each research question, a code sheet was developed that summarized significant concepts from the engagement literature related to the particular research question. Both nominal codes and absence/presence codes were used in the data analysis (Boyatzis, 1998). Open-ended codes were also used to note emerging concepts relevant to the research questions. If an emerging concept appeared more than one time, the researcher returned to the coded data and re-coded it in light of the newly discovered concept. Through this constant comparative approach, the coding and analysis process incorporated key concepts from the engagement literature.
and remained open to the discovery of new ideas emerging from the data (Glaser, 1965; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The researcher used multiple strategies to ensure quality and rigor in this study, including purposive sampling, the creation of an audit trail, code and re-code strategies, and researcher reflexivity (Anafara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002; Creswell & Miller, 2000).

### Results

**Q1**: What language is used to describe faculty roles and responsibilities in general and for outreach and engagement specifically? For this research question, the researcher examined the promotion and tenure documents for the incorporation of Boyer's language, including the **scholarship of discovery, teaching, application, and integration** (1990) and the **scholarship of engagement**.
(1996); the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification definition (2015); and Imagining America’s continuum of scholarship (Ellison & Eatman, 2008). Analysis used absence/presence codes. Some institutions used more than one word to describe faculty responsibilities, so the reported numbers and percentages in this section exceed 15 or 100%. These findings are summarized in Table 2.

Analysis revealed that the majority of the institutions (73%) continued to use the word service in their policies. Of the 11 CIC institutions that used service, only four distinguished among service to the university, discipline, and community. Three of the 15 institutions used the word outreach in their policies. Three of the 15 institutions used the word engagement in their policies. Two institutions did not refer to service, outreach, engagement, or Extension as faculty responsibilities. One institution used the Kellogg Commission’s terms of discovery, learning, and engagement to describe faculty roles and responsibilities (Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities, 2000). None of the promotion and tenure policies incorporated Boyer’s language, referenced the Carnegie Foundation’s definition, or mentioned Imagining America’s continuum of scholarship.

Q2: What role, if any, may outreach and engagement play in faculty members’ promotion and tenure materials? For this research question, the researcher coded the documents inductively and examined the policies for key ideas including outreach and engagement as responsibilities that cut across research, teaching, and service (CIC Council on Engagement, 2005).

Emerging from the analysis were four mutually exclusive nominal codes that characterized the role of outreach and engagement in the promotion and tenure process. In University of Chicago and Northwestern University policies, outreach and engagement was not recognized or encouraged during promotion and tenure. In University of Iowa and University of Minnesota policies, outreach and engagement was recognized as a form of faculty work but explicitly described as one subsidiary to the main faculty functions of research and teaching. This excerpt from University of Iowa’s policy exemplifies the recognized but subsidiary code:

Continued teaching and research excellence, and to a lesser extent the quality of other major professional contributions to the University or to society in general, form the basis for salary increases as they do for promotion and tenure (University of Iowa, 2004, p. 4).… The criteria for promotion and tenure include teaching and research, and other forms of professional contributions. Since teaching and research are the central focus of faculty, other professional contributions are considered subsidiary to these fundamental tasks (University of Iowa, 2004, p. 12).

For the majority of institutions (53%), outreach and engagement were considered to be neither subsidiary nor privileged; faculty members could report scholarly outreach and engagement activities in the same way they would report traditional scholarship.

At the University of Illinois, Indiana University, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, faculty members had the option of reporting outreach and engagement as their primary form of faculty work. This excerpt from University of Illinois policy typifies this code:

There are certain faculty roles for which the weighting of criteria for measuring excellence in research, teaching, and service may be appropriately different, such as in some forms of outreach and public engagement (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2012, p. 6)…. Faculty members who are in positions that are primarily public engagement oriented should be evaluated with heavy weight on the quality of performance in the activities provided. Activities should share the following characteristics:

1. They contribute to the public welfare or the public good.
2. They call upon the faculty member’s academic or professional expertise.
3. They directly address or respond to societal problems, issues, interests or concerns (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2012, p. 7).

Finally, analysis showed almost half of the CIC’s institutional policies (46%) framed outreach and engagement as a scholarly endeavor that cuts across faculty responsibilities in teaching, research, and service. This excerpt from Pennsylvania State University policies exemplifies this cross-cutting characterization of outreach and engagement:
Outreach activities should be properly documented and considered in the promotion and tenure process: Under service when they are mostly service, under teaching when they involve teaching, and under research and scholarship when they result in publication or activity that can be valued in those terms (Pennsylvania State University, 2012, p. 8).

Q3: What types of scholarly activities are included in the description of faculty work to encourage the reporting of outreach and engagement? For this research question, the researcher analyzed the documents using the Typology of Publicly Engaged Scholarship (Doberneck, Glass, & Schweitzer, 2010); Bringle and Hatcher’s (1996) definition and description of service-learning; and Imagining America’s Figure
Eight concept describing academic and public products (Ellison & Eatman, 2008). Analysis used absence/presence codes followed by the grouping of institutions by the number of types of examples of outreach and engagement mentioned in the policies.

Analysis revealed that the University of Chicago, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and Northwestern University did not mention any types of outreach and engagement in their policies. Indiana University, the University of Iowa, the University of Minnesota, and Rutgers University included between one and four examples. The University of Maryland, the University of Michigan, and The Ohio State University included between five and eight examples. The University of Illinois, the Michigan State University, Pennsylvania State University, Purdue University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison included nine or more examples of outreach and engagement in their policies. The outreach and engagement activities most often mentioned were non-credit conferences, seminars, or workshops; professional short courses, certificates, or continuing education; educational materials to promote public understanding; and clinical, diagnostic, and patient care.

Only Pennsylvania State University and the University of Michigan mentioned service-learning specifically. Indiana University and the University of Michigan included special instructions to administrators and promotion and tenure committee members to consider collaborative scholarship, new scholarly communications, impact on diverse communities, and interdisciplinary or entrepreneurial forms of scholarship that may differ from traditional scholarship. This excerpt from the University of Michigan's memo exemplifies these special instructions:

I encourage you to give full recognition, both in evaluating tenure and promotion cases, and in considering faculty annual activities reports, to the broad range of entrepreneurial, outreach, and creative activities in which faculty engage. These activities may enhance any of the criteria on which faculty are measured—teaching, research, and service. They may include involvement with other sectors of a sort that has not traditionally been considered in faculty evaluations, or they may include creative activity that does not take the form of traditional scholarship. Examples include:

1. Creating service-learning and action-based learning opportunities for students.
2. Creating new instructional methods.
4. Engaging in research funded by industrial, non-profit, or other non-federal or foundation sources.
5. Creating a start-up company that enhances the broader scholarly, public service, or health care missions of the university.
7. Creating new or enhanced practices, products, or services.
8. Working with the Office of Technology Transfer to patent or license an invention.
9. Encouraging and instructing students in entrepreneurial and public service activities.

Q4: What criteria, if any, are included in promotion and tenure policies to set expectations for quality and encourage excellence in outreach and engagement? For this research question, the researcher examined the promotion and tenure documents for the inclusion of quality and excellence criteria from Lynton (1995), Michigan State University’s Points of Distinction (1996); Glassick, Huber, & Maeroff (1997), and the Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH) expanded Glassick list of criteria (Jordan, 2007). The documents were also analyzed for references to the National Review Board for the Scholarship of Engagement (a national body that peer reviews faculty promotion and tenure dossiers), CES4Health (a national body that peer reviews scholarly community-engaged products created for public audiences), and the inclusion of community partners as peers in the promotion and tenure review process (Freeman, Gust, & Alsohen, 2009; Gelmon, Jordan, & Seifer, 2013). These findings are summarized in Table 3.

Analysis revealed that two-thirds of the CIC institutions made no reference to criteria for traditional scholarship or outreach and engagement in their policies. The University of Illinois, Indiana University, the University of Iowa, Michigan State University, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln
included criteria for quality and excellence for all types of faculty scholarship. The University of Illinois and Indiana University included additional evaluation criteria for outreach and engagement. This excerpt from Indiana University’s policy exemplifies these additional criteria:

Evaluations of research can never be reduced to a simple metric: judgments about the quality of work, and its influence, impact, utility, and creativity cannot be fully captured by the count of publications and citations or by a journal impact factor (Indiana University, 2013, p. 6).... Excellence in Service/Engagement: Candidates seeking tenure and/or promotion on the basis of Excellence in Service/Engagement must provide evidence for national/international visibility and stature resulting from service activities (even abundant local committee work is insufficient). The key is to demonstrate that the candidate’s efforts have been sustained and transformative, for a professional association, government agency, or non-academic community (Indiana University, 2013, p. 8).

None of the promotion and tenure policies refer to criteria promoted by Lynton (1995), Glassick, Huber, and Maeroff (1997), or the CCPH’s expanded Glassick list of criteria (Jordan, 2007). Only Michigan State University included all four criteria from Points of Distinction (e.g., significance, impact, scholarship, and context), though three additional institutions included one or more of those criteria in their policies. None of the policies mentioned the National Review Board for the Scholarship of Engagement or CES4Health as options for external review of the dossier or products, respectively. Even though the University of Illinois policy includes this statement about the review of public engagement, “There are some public engagement activities...[that] should be evaluated thoroughly by both inside and outside evaluators” (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2012, p. 7), none of the CIC’s policies advocated for the inclusion of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIC Institutions</th>
<th>Evaluation Criteria in RPT Policies</th>
<th>For all scholarship</th>
<th>For engaged scholarship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Chicago</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Illinois</td>
<td>Excellence, Innovation, Impact, Scholarship</td>
<td>Quality; Impact; Dissemination or Adoption; If appropriate, integration with research and teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana University</td>
<td>Quality, Influence, Impact, Utility, Creativity</td>
<td>National and International Visibility (abundant local activity is insufficient); Sustained and transformative activities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Iowa</td>
<td>Quality, Quantity, Effectiveness</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Maryland</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Michigan</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan State University</td>
<td>Scholarship, Significance, Impact, Context</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>University of Minnesota</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Nebraska-Lincoln</td>
<td>Quality, Impact, Significance</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ohio State University</td>
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<td>Pennsylvania State University</td>
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<td>Rutgers University</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Wisconsin-Madison</td>
<td>None</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
community partners as peers in the promotion and
tenure review process.

Discussion
This study revealed unexpectedly wide
variations in how CIC institutions recognize and
encourage outreach and engagement in their
promotion and tenure policies. There was little
congruence in language used to describe faculty
roles and responsibilities or in the role of outreach
and engagement in promotion and tenure review
processes. In addition, types of outreach and
engagement included as examples in the policies
varied. Very few policies included standards for
quality and excellence.

Seventy-three percent of the CIC institutions
permitted the reporting of outreach and
engagement as either a primary focus or a part of a
faculty member's promotion and tenure materials.
This is in keeping with recent observations that
the engagement movement has made advancements—
namely, there is more of it and structures are
in place to support it (O'Meara, 2011). Despite
this recognition, the majority of the CIC insti-
tutions continue to use the word service instead
of engagement in their policies, and of those using
service, only a few make the critical distinction
among service to the university, the discipline, and
the community.

Are we there yet? Not quite. While the CIC
institutions have made some progress in revising
their policies, there is still a long way to go to fully
align promotion and tenure policies to encourage
and support scholarly outreach and engagement.
No institutional policy clearly stands out as an
exemplar; however, many policies have strong
elements that are noteworthy, including:

- Pennsylvania State University policy
defines all forms of faculty work as
scholarly endeavors and sets forth faculty
expectations in these terms: the scholar-
ship of teaching/learning; the scholarship
of research and creative accomplishment;
and the scholarship of service to univer-
sity, society, and profession (Pennsylvania
State University, 2012, p. 3).

- Indiana University and University of
Michigan policies acknowledge newer
forms of scholarship and encourage
reviewers to consider them. Purdue
University recognizes a variety of achieve-
ment and the diversity of academic
enterprise at a land grant institution
(Purdue University, 2012, p. 1).

- University of Illinois, Indiana University,
and University of Wisconsin-Madison
policies allow faculty to report outreach
and engagement as their primary form of
faculty work.

- Michigan State University's policy en-
courages faculty members to indicate
peer reviewed publishing (p. 11) and con-
tracts and grant awards (p. 15) that have
outreach and engagement components
with asterisks (Michigan State University

- Rutgers University's policy makes distinc-
tions between expectations for county
agents and Extension specialists at differ-
ent levels of review (Rutgers University,
2013a, 2013b, Form 1-C, Form 1-D, Form
II-3, Form II-4) and promotes detailed re-
porting of non-credit instructional activi-
ties by requiring descriptions of program,
title, duration, audience, enrollment, eval-
uation/teaching effectiveness, and evalua-
tion/program content (Rutgers Universi-
ty, 2013b, Form 1-C, page 3).

- University of Illinois and Indiana Univers-
ity policies include specific evaluation
criteria for outreach and engagement
(University of Illinois at Urbana-Cham-
paign, 2012, p. 12; Indiana University,
2013, p. 8).

- University of Iowa's policy encourages
post-tenure allocation of effort to focus
on learning, quality, and responsibility,
with an expanded view of service,
administration, and outreach (University
of Iowa, 1994, p. 15).

Limitations and Future Research Directions
This study was exploratory, with a small,
purposive sample that provided limited analysis of
outreach and engagement in institutional policies.
Because institutional characteristics influence
faculty members' participation in outreach and
engagement (Colbeck & Wharton-Michael, 2006;
O'Meara & Rice, 2005; Thornton & Jaeger, 2008;
Wade & Demb, 2009), future research could
build upon this study by analyzing policies from
different institutional groupings or by expanding
the sample size. Second, there is growing evidence
that disciplines influence how faculty members
frame, collaborate, and execute outreach and
engagement (Buzinsk, Dean, Donofrio, Berger,
Heighton, Selvi, & Stoecker, 2013; Doberneck,
Glass, & Schweitzer, 2012; Kreber, 2009;
Volgelgesang, Denson, & Jayakumar (2010), Wade & Demb (2009)). Future studies could analyze division, college, or departmental level policies to better understand how disciplinary expressions of outreach and engagement are manifest in mid-level institutional promotion and tenure policies. Third, the analysis of institutional policy is by definition a study of formal structures within institutions. In contrast with official written policies, there is some evidence to suggest faculty, especially junior ones, are informally counseled to under-report their outreach and engagement during promotion and tenure reviews (Ellison & Eatman, 2008). Future research could focus on better understanding of the informal structures and messages (e.g., hallway conversations, advice from mentors, feedback on draft dossiers) faculty receive about whether and how to include outreach and engagement in their promotion and tenure materials. Related research may also explore the gap between stated institutional policy and actual implementation by RPT committees and identify successful strategies for closing the policy-implementation gap. This is vitally important if future faculty from Generation X, Generation Y, and Millennials are to be recruited, retained, promoted, and tenured at institutions of higher education (Janke, Medlin, & Holland, 2013). Finally, institutional policies supporting outreach and engagement are necessary but not sufficient for changing institutional cultures. Future studies could determine effective ways to build capacity for mentors, promotion and tenure committee members, and external reviewers to provide critical and constructive feedback to faculty about their outreach and engagement across all phases of their careers—from hiring, annual reviews, promotion and tenure, and post-tenure review (Beere, Votruba, & Wells, 2011). National organizations, including the National Review Board for the Scholarship of Engagement and CES4Health.info are national mechanisms for peer review of reappointment, promotion, and tenure documents and scholarly products for public audiences, respectively. These organizations are important, but additional capacity building efforts to strengthen peer review of community engaged scholarship on college and university campuses are needed as well.

Implications for Policy and Practice

This study’s findings point to a significant gap between the language promoted by community engagement leaders and those making institutional policies. Closing this rhetoric-policy gap should be a priority for leaders of the community engagement movement. Second, key concepts from the scholarship of engagement, such as Imagining America’s continuum of scholarship or Figure Eight concept (2008) and CCPH’s expanded Glassick criteria (Jordan, 2007) are absent from all CIC’s promotion and tenure policies. National level organizations need to make more effort to include key concepts from these nationally recognized, evidence-based studies about outreach and engagement in institutional promotion and tenure policies. Third, outstanding examples of scholarly outreach and engagement in reappointment, promotion, and tenure should be identified, celebrated, and shared broadly, so that they may serve as exemplars and counteract the shared narrative about the difficulty of outreach and engagement in promotion and tenure. In addition, more effort needs to be made to identify successful faculty scholars and to encourage them to serve as mentors for pre-tenure faculty. Fourth, many of the CIC’s promotion and tenure policies have strong elements supportive of outreach and engagement as valued faculty work. Because cooperation is one of the CIC’s strengths, fostering cross-institutional dialogue about outreach and engagement in promotion and tenure policies could significantly strengthen each institution’s policies and establish a more supportive culture for outreach and engagement throughout its member institutions.

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Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank Michigan State University’s National Collaborative for the Study of University Engagement for its support of this project; Berlinda Tolsma for assistance with data entry and analysis; and John Schweitzer for review of presentation and manuscript drafts. The author would also like to thank conference participants at the 2013 Engagement Scholarship Conference in Lubbock, TX, and 2014 International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement in New Orleans, LA, for their thoughtful comments on preliminary presentations of this data.

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