Office of Public Service and Community Relations Work Group (Revised Report)
Initial Report – July 17, 2015
Revision – August 31, 2015

Work Group
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Members: Michael Harris, Sharon Rogers, and Paul Toriello
UCFS Coordinating Committee Liaison: Ron Mitchelson

Related Fiscal Sustainability Recommendation
CR-Consolidation and Reorganization 2. Consider movement of the Office of Public Service and Community Relations (PSCR) from the Chancellor's Division to the Office of Innovation and Economic Development (OIED).

Desired Outcome
The University Committee on Fiscal Sustainability convened a Work Group to determine the appropriate structural organization for PSCR. The outcome desired is the determination of a structural alignment that best fits the mission of the university and charge for PSCR.

Workgroup Charge
The Work Group felt the original UCFS recommendation was far too narrow and determined that broadening the charge would benefit PSCR and the University. Three options for locating PSCR within a division at ECU were considered:

1. Remain in the Chancellor’s Division;
2. Move to Research, Economic Development, and Engagement (REDE);
3. Move to OIED, within REDE.

Overview of REDE, OIED, PSCR, and the Chancellor’s Division
The Division of Research, Economic Development, and Engagement is comprised of three entities: Research Administration, Graduate Studies, and the Office of Innovation and Economic Development. The charge for REDE is pursuit of research and scholarship, delivery of graduate education, and engaging regional partners. REDE serves both the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Health Sciences. Through the Office of Research Administration, REDE promotes research and creative activity through faculty development, partnership with local communities, and improved access to information about Eastern North Carolina. Overall, the Division is focused on research, economic engagement, and technical activities to support this work (e.g., Office of Sponsored Programs, Office of Grants and Contracts, University Medical Center Institutional Review Board, Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee). The OIED is a more specifically targeted entity housed within REDE.

The OIED aligns around three major areas: community enhancement and regional leadership; innovation, entrepreneurship, and small business; and, cluster-based economic development. Each area is focused on creating programs and services that result in economic and community development to transform eastern North Carolina. There are nine programs within OIED: Community and Regional Development; Center for Survey Research; Sustainable Tourism Outreach; Small Business and Technology Development Center; Entrepreneurial Initiative; Office
of Technology Transfer; Innovation Workforce Preparation; Innovation Design Lab; and Industry and Economic Development. Sixteen staff positions are associated with programs in the OIED.

In comparison, PSCR is currently staffed by one and one-quarter positions, and located in the Chancellor’s Division. The Chancellor’s Division houses several offices including Communications, Marketing and Public Affairs, Environmental Health and Safety, Internal Audit and Management Advisory Services, University Counsel, Strategic Initiatives, Special Events, and Public Service and Community Relations. The Division is the central policy voice for the campus, leads in strategic direction, and has an institutional focus.

PSCR is charged to deliver quality improvement of public service through strategic planning and assessment, build community-university partnerships, and develop human capital for public service and engaged scholarship across ECU faculty, staff, and students. The Engagement Outreach Scholars Academy for both faculty and students is located in PSCR. In addition, the Office is responsible for ongoing faculty and staff development through campus-based workshops and symposia. In 2015, the Public Service Fellowship Program, an undergraduate internship program, began and is operated through PSCR. With the exception of the Public Service Fellowship Program, which is grant supported, funding for PSCR comes through recurring and non-recurring state dollars allocated by the Chancellor and Division of Academic Affairs. A director, university program specialist, and a graduate assistant presently staff PSCR. The director is a member of the ECU faculty and has a 75 percent reappointment to PSCR. The university program specialist has a 25 percent assignment to PSCR and is funded through the Division of Administration and Finance. It is important to note that there are no permanent salary lines budgeted for PSCR at this time.

Process

The analysis included examination of the internal structure of the university and benchmarking practices at other universities. The following criteria were used to evaluate perceived advantages and disadvantages of each option:

- Alignment of PSCR charge with Divisional charge;
- Common practice at peer universities, UNC system campuses, and Engagement Scholarship Consortium (ESC) member institutions (note: ESC is the leading national association of engagement universities in North America);
- Institutional integration across both East and West campuses;
- Connection to faculty, staff, and students;
- Perceived ability to interface with community organizations;
- Perceived institutional visibility of engagement activities.

Findings

The charge of PSCR aligns with both REDE and OIED, though there is a better connection with REDE given the broader scope of this division. There is certainly synergy between the community partnership activities associated with OIED and PSCR. OIED partnerships target our region through community development, economic development and innovation based projects and PSCR partnerships are broadly aimed at serving the public through a variety of strategies that help ensure higher levels of faculty engagement across the region. The faculty development components of PSCR and REDE are well aligned, as is the charge for pursuit of research, creative
activity, and scholarship between these two offices. The technical activities associated with REDE complement the work of both PSCR and OIED.

The structural alignment for engagement efforts at universities across the United States was examined to learn more about the practices in place on other campuses. Universities examined fell into three categories. The first was a comparison to the official peer universities that ECU uses for benchmarking (n=18), members of the Engagement Scholarship Consortium (ESC), the leading engaged scholarship campuses in the United States and Canada (n=30), campuses in the UNC system (n=16). [For more detail on this analysis see Appendix A.]

There are two primary structures in use. The first strategy, which is mostly associated with campuses that have a strong provost model, places engagement and outreach activities in divisions of academic affairs. In these instances the lead engagement position is at the associate vice provost level or higher. The other primary strategy is to create divisions that are responsible for engagement and outreach. Some campuses combine these activities with research and economic development while others separate the work. Engagement leaders in the latter model are in positions at the assistant vice chancellor level and higher. There are certainly structures unique to single campuses in use. For example, UNC-Asheville houses its engagement work in the Office of School and Community Engagement, a sub-unit of the Office of the Provost. An Executive Director leads this effort. There are several other examples of this sort of alignment.

It is imperative that PSCR has an institutional reach and visibility across both the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Health Sciences. All options under consideration satisfy this criterion. There is a more direct connection between Research Administration and PSCR to faculty, staff, and students on the ECU campus. OIED has programming that allows for interface with the academic community; however, these interactions are not as frequent as those undertaken by REDE and PSCR. All three options will allow PSCR to interface with community organizations.

With the location in the Chancellor's Division, PSCR has a high level of institutional visibility for both internal and external stakeholders. Opportunities to work on strategic initiatives that generate new partnerships and alliances exist within this division. Being located in REDE or OIED lessens those opportunities for collaboration. These issues may be mitigated through leadership structure as well as intentional strategies to preserve visibility, connection to senior leadership, and high profile community events.

**Recommendations**
The Work Group suggests that PSCR move to REDE. The opportunities to align research, engagement, and economic development are numerous if the three units are co-located. Because developing community partnerships, which is a core component of OIED, and establishing strong research portfolios are key charges of PSCR, it would be possible to align the activities of the three units within REDE. In addition, because REDE has campus-wide reach, this location preserves the connection PSCR has with units on both East and West campus. University-wide service (and faculty, staff and student access were) was the foremost consideration for the Work Group, and locating PSCR within REDE could help facilitate that and add value to the division.

This second highest ranked option was to allow PSCR to remain in the Chancellor’s Division. There is value in allowing PSCR to stay in the Office in the Chancellor’s Division given the connections,
interactions, and campus-wide scope of the work. The Work Group felt it is important for PSCR to maintain the ongoing engagement with institutional leadership and interaction with community partners ranging from local government staff and officials to nonprofit leaders. Allowing PSCR to be in the Chancellor’s Division is an efficient means to incorporate PSCR into formal and informal activities to support the work of the Office; however, it is possible to create strategies to preserve and build on the activities PSCR has been involved in other structural locations.

The Work Group felt strongly about the following points:

- The term “engagement” should be in the title of the division in which PSCR is located;
- The position leading engagement and public service efforts at ECU should be a direct report to at least a Vice Chancellor;
- A positional change from director to assistant or associate vice chancellor would elevate public service and engagement work at ECU;
- Budgetary autonomy and sufficiency is critical for PSCR, and specifically:
  - At a minimum, it is necessary to create a full-time administrative position for the office;
  - PSCR needs sufficient operating and staff support to meet its charge;
- Advocacy to and involvement with senior university leadership is critical for PSCR. For the purposes of continuing, strengthening, and building on the public service and engagement efforts already underway, the PSCR Director (pending any change in title) should:
  - Participate in Academic Deans and Directors meetings;
  - Serve as a liaison to the ECU Board of Visitors Engagement Committee;
  - Participate in Town-Gown meetings;
  - Attend informal events to support community-university partnerships aimed at satisfying the university mission and strategic plan.
  - Regularly advise the Chancellor, his Chief of Staff, and the Executive Council about public service initiatives;
  - Request an annual meeting between the Chancellor and the Public Service and Community Relations Council to report on engagement events, activities, achievements, and needs;
  - Develop a strategy to routinely advise the Board of Trustees on engagement and public service activities.

Any recommended course should include mechanisms for ongoing development of engagement and public service activities at ECU. The PSCR budget request for fiscal year 2015-16 does not include funding for personnel or programming beyond the status quo. The recommendation is to move PSCR to REDE using a phased approach. In Phase 1, which the Committee recommends occur during Fiscal Year 2016-17, the primary focus should be on adequately staffing PSCR. Phase 2 (Fiscal Year 2017-18) would be focused on improving and expanding programs associated with the Office.

Additional funding to support expansion of engagement activities including working with administrators and faculty to recognize engaged scholarship in faculty productivity measures is critical for generating return on investment for this office. While that may mean increasing expenditures associated with PSCR, the likely productivity gains would benefit the university and community through increased numbers of partnerships, research and creative activity, and capacity of faculty, staff, and students for purposeful engaged scholarship. Table 1 provides a
comparison of the current PSCR budget to a preliminary proposal for fully funding activities associated with the Office.

Table 1. Proposed Adjustment to PSCR Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>FY 2015-16</th>
<th>FY 2016-17 (Phase 1)</th>
<th>FY 2017-18 (Phase 2)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Operating</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Engaged Scholarship Symposium</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td></td>
<td>10,000</td>
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<td>43,498</td>
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<td>University Support Associate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty Engagement Fellow</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EOSA coaches</td>
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<td>5,000</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EOSA graduate assistants</td>
<td></td>
<td>65,000</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>EOSA alumni conference travel</td>
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<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programming</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>EOSA research awards</td>
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<td>50,000</td>
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<td>Faculty interest group</td>
<td>development funds</td>
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<td>Engagement advancement grant</td>
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<td>321,399</td>
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Funding to support advanced public service and engagement activities is expected to yield higher returns on investment through expanded grant submissions, additional consulting contracts, and other activities that will generate revenue. The budget projections associated with moving PSCR to REDE are almost entirely related to staffing the Office. Proposed salaries are based on comparison to similar positions in other units at ECU as well as other universities in the comparison groups.

In Phase 1 of the proposed move the focus is on personnel. Funding for the PSCR Director currently supports course buyouts (4) and a leadership stipend. The salary for this position comes through funds allocated to the faculty line at the college level. The Committee recommends that REDE staff PSCR with an Assistant Vice Chancellor position, at a salary comparable to other positions in the Division. Funds currently allocated to PSCR for the director would continue to be appropriated to the Office. Therefore, only the net change in funding is reflected in Table 1. Current funding for a University Program Specialist is a part of the budget in the Division of Administration and Finance, which supports the allocation of a quarter-time position to duties associated with PSCR. This recommendation is to assign a .5 FTE University Support Associate to
support PSCR activities. REDE will provide in-kind support for office administration. REDE is positioned to provide in-kind support to PSCR for finance and personnel management; however, additional funding is necessary for routine office support as the activities associated with the Office will exceed the capacity of current REDE administrative staff.

In Phase 2 the Committee recommends the focus turn to expanding programmatic offerings. A faculty engagement fellow would be added to work with the SECU Public Service Fellowship program, develop and lead continuing education efforts for faculty and staff, and work with EOSA scholars to support advanced research efforts. Funds to support proposal development through faculty interest groups and an engagement advancement grant would be a part of the expanded development activities of PSCR, especially as provided through the Faculty Engagement Fellow. The expectation is that these additional programs will result in grant submissions related to engaged scholarship, proposal development for consulting projects, and greater numbers of peer-reviewed academic submissions.

Adding these staff support positions will allow the PSCR director to engage more directly in building additional community partnerships and work to develop better validity and reliability for the public service assessment activities conducted at ECU. Additional travel to professional engagement conferences and meetings was included in the proposed budget to support development of the Faculty Engagement Fellow.
Appendix A: Support for Recommendations

The Work Group investigated the nomenclature associated with offices charged with outreach, engagement, and community or economic development. Three groups were studied: members of the Engagement Scholarship Consortium (ESC), the premier association of engagement universities in the United States; members of the UNC system; and universities that are peer comparisons for ECU. The practices across universities recognized for engaged scholarship differ from the other groups analyzed. For example, there is much variation in terms associated with engagement, outreach, and development in the UNC system and more connection between economic development and community engagement on campuses in the peer group than on campuses of ESC member institutions.

Figure 1. Placement of Engagement Offices.

Among the ESC members the dominant alignment was by far in divisions or offices of “Outreach and Engagement.” Twelve of 18 universities in this group use “Office of Engagement” or “Outreach and Engagement” to describe the unit. Some campuses in the group use only the term “engagement” (n=6) or modify it slightly by adding “community” or “public.” Interestingly, ESC members do not often combine the functions of economic development with community engagement and outreach. Only one campus lists these activities in the same division.

“Outreach and/or engagement” is used to describe the location of five of the 16 public service and/or engagement efforts on campuses in the UNC System. But half of the campuses (n=8) have a unique term in use for offices that manage projects with external constituents. Examples include “Chancellor’s Office of Community Partnerships”, “Economic Development and External

Source: University websites.
Relations”, “Engagement and Events”, and Outreach, Special Events, and Programs. Only three of the sixteen university campuses in the UNC system are members of the ESC. Of those North Carolina State University has an Office of Outreach and Engagement structurally located in the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor; ECU has the Office of Public Service and Community Relations, which is in the Chancellor’s Division; and UNC-Asheville, the newest ESC member institution, coordinates its engagement efforts through the Office for School and Community Outreach Programs and Partnerships, which falls under the oversight of the Provost.

Engagement is clearly connected to the activities of 16 of the 18 campuses in the ECU peer group. Across those campuses offices of “outreach and engagement" or “community engagement" dominate (n=10). However, in this group there are more connections between economic development and external relations, without a focus on engaged scholarship specifically. Here there were two offices of economic development specifically and another two campuses that unite outreach, engagement, and regional development in one office. One campus, East Tennessee State, has an “Office of Community Outreach and Applied Research.” This was the only such office found across all comparison groups.

Engagement Staffing
Among peer universities six have a vice chancellor or vice president level position that is responsible for engagement, outreach, and/or economic development. Those divisions often include offices for economic development and community engagement. There are some campuses (n=6) that assign the duties of engaged scholarship and community outreach to associate vice provosts or associate vice chancellors that then report primarily to the senior academic officer for the institution.

Figure 2. Senior Engagement Staff Title.

Source: University Websites.