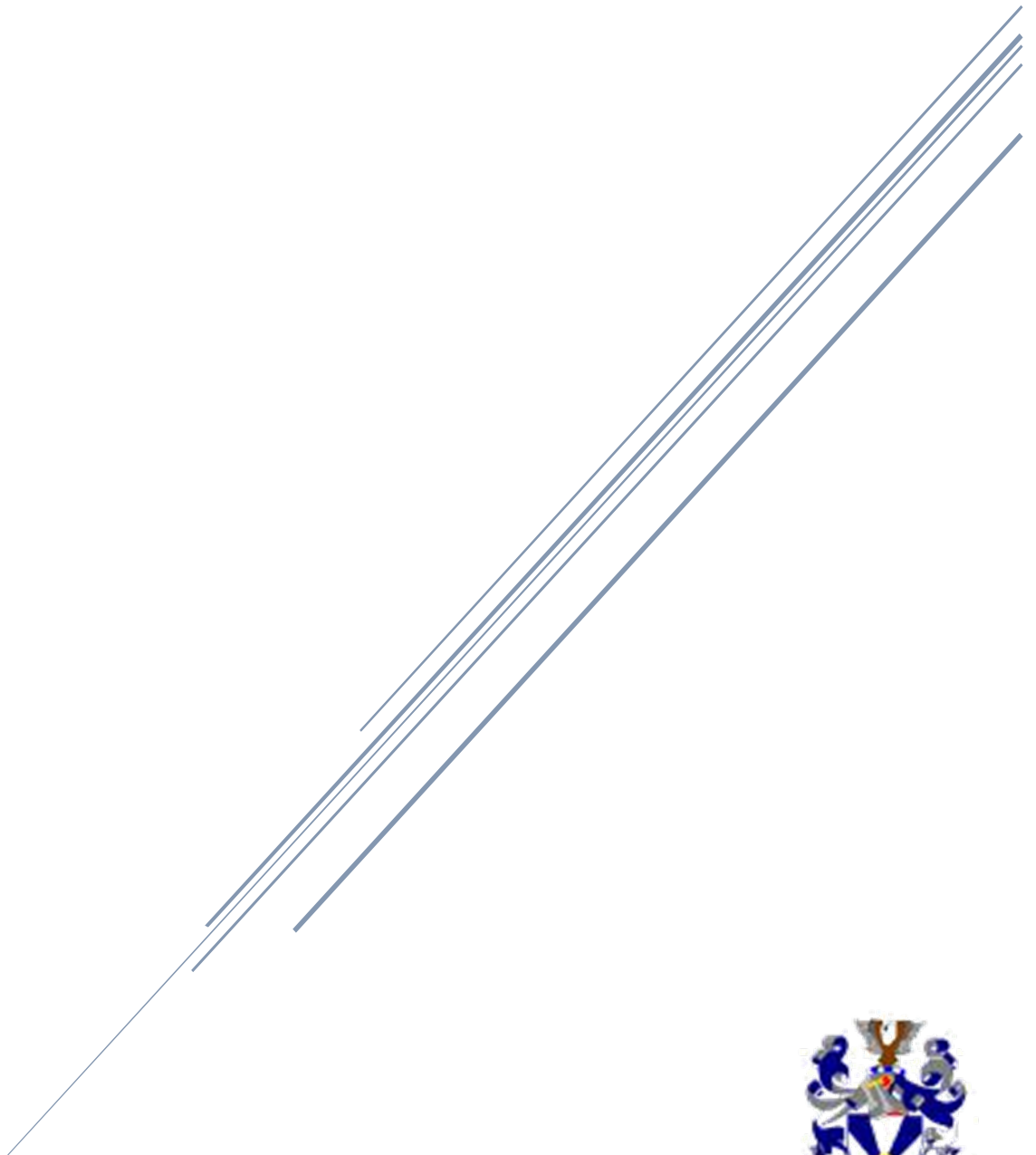


# UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2021



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. BACKGROUND</b> .....	2
1.1 CHARTER OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND VALUES; THEORY AND PHILOSOPHY UNDERPINNING THE STRATEGIC PLAN .....	6
1.2 RURALITY AND COMPREHENSIVITY .....	7
1.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AS SCHOLARSHIP .....	9
1.4 DESCRIPTION OF KEY CONCEPTS. ....	11
1.5 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICE .....	12
1.6. WHAT DOES COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MEAN FOR FACULTY WORK? .....	12
1.7. WHAT IS COMMUNITY-ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP? .....	13
1.8. RECIPROCITY .....	13
1.9. CURRICULA ALIGNMENT, CURRICULUM RENEWAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT .....	13
1.10. INTEGRATED STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ....	14
1.11. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES.....	15
1.12. CONCLUSION.....	16
<b>2. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	17
<b>4. SWOT ANALYSIS</b> .....	0
<b>5. THE FRAMEWORK</b> .....	0

## 1. BACKGROUND

The strategic plan of the University of Zululand (Unizulu) Community Engagement (CE) is embedded in the broader landscape of policy formulation for higher education in South Africa as set by the Council for Higher Education (CHE) as well as the vision, mission and strategic framework of the Unizulu. The White Paper on Higher Education (Department of Education, 1997) describes Community Engagement along with Teaching and Research as the pillars of a national education system that serves both individual and collective needs. *This requires of higher education institutions to:*

- make expertise and infrastructure available for community service programmes
- to promote and develop a sense of social responsibility amongst students and
- to raise the awareness of students for the role of higher education in social and economic development through community service programmes

The National Plan for Higher Education, for academic programmes, research, and community service explicitly focuses on the need to respond to regional and national needs (Ministry of Education. 2001).

The HEQC Institutional Audits Manual (CHE, 2007: 24-25) clearly outlines criteria that are used in reviewing community engagement activities. In **Criterion 18** it is stated that: “Quality related arrangements for community engagement are formalised and integrated with those for teaching and learning where appropriate, and are adequately resourced and monitored. In order to meet this criterion, the following are examples of what would be expected:

- Policies and procedures for the quality management of community engagement.
- Integration of policies and procedures for community engagement with those for teaching and learning and research, where appropriate.
- Adequate resources allocated to facilitate quality delivery in community engagement.
- Regular review of the effectiveness of quality related arrangements for community engagement”

However, despite clear policy mandates on Community Engagement and the involvement of many higher education institutions in research, teaching and outreach activities that involve community engagement, these activities are often uncoordinated and result in individual initiative, rather than strategic, integrated initiatives.

Although the mission statements of colleges and universities continued to purport a commitment to social purposes, higher education's commitment to address current and important societal needs did not occupy a prominent or visible place in the academy (Votruba, 1992). In response, Institutions of Higher Education are asked to rethink their structure, epistemology, pedagogy; integration of teaching, research and service missions; and reward systems in favour of public good. In his book *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* (Boyer 1990, 1997) Ernest Boyer develops his theory on the Scholarship of Engagement as a way of doing the work of academia. He argues that academics should break out of the tired old teaching versus research debate by discovering a more creative way of being a scholar. These arguments have strong accord with Ramaley's (2005, p. 1) definition of engagement:

*“Engagement refers to an educational and research initiative conducted through some form of partnership and characterised by shared goals, a shared agenda, agreed upon definitions of success that are meaningful to both the university and the community participants, and some pooling or leveraging of university resources and public and private funds provided by other participants. The resulting collaboration or partnership is mutually beneficial and is likely to build the capacity or competence of all parties”.*

Engaged research and teaching and learning produce knowledge outcomes and products that are valuable assets for both academia and the public interest. This expands the role of higher education from a passive producer of knowledge to an active participant in collaborative discovery activities that have diverse and immediate benefits to a variety of stakeholders. Typically, engaged research brings more than one discipline to bear on a problem. Therefore, engaged research activities are often trans-disciplinary (using the many disciplines in the context of application), opportunity-driven and demand-driven.

Scholarly community-university engagement provides opportunities to share knowledge and expertise, to build social capital and co-generate learning (Arden, McLachlan & Cooper 2009).

This approach will translate into “knowledge-based community service”. Underpinning this renewed approach to engagement is the understanding that not all knowledge and expertise reside in the academy, and that both expertise and great learning opportunities in teaching and scholarship also reside in non-academic settings. This broadened engagement philosophy is built on the understanding that most societal issues are complex and inherently multidisciplinary and that the kinds of specialized knowledge that dominated the latter part of the 20th century are inadequate to address fully today’s complex societal issues.

The HEQC Institutional Audits Manual (CHE, 2007: 9-11) deems “Engagement with the local and broader community [as] one of the core functions of higher education through which institutions use their resources and expertise to address issues relevant to their communities”. The Higher Education Quality Committee also identified “knowledge-based community service” as a basis for programme accreditation and quality assurance and indicated that reporting on Community Engagement will specifically be addressed in institutional audits.

From their definition of engagement, members of the Kellogg Commission (2000: 22) generated seven characteristics of effective societal engagement, which included: being responsive to community concerns; involving community partners in co-creative approaches to problem solving; maintaining neutrality in order to serve a mediating role when there are divergent community views; integrating engagement with the institution’s teaching, research, and service missions; aligning engagement throughout the university; and working with community partners to jointly seek funding for community projects. This emphasis clearly supports the goals of Development Research Uptake in Sub-Saharan Africa. The DRUSSA programme is designed to support Sub-Saharan African [SSA] universities with a genuine interest in focusing on what is being termed Research Uptake Management [RUM]. The focus is on delivering good research outputs and developing strategies toward better research utility. Research Uptake Management focuses on building administrative functions and systems to really connect research with the community – be it local communities, industry, policymakers and other stakeholders in society, with returns for both the university and for external stakeholders (Grobbelaar, 2013). New developments with regard to engagement and research thus postulate a new framework for scholarship that moves away from emphasizing products (e.g., publications, volunteerism) to emphasizing building of institutional capacity to make **meaningful impact on contexts in which universities reside.**

This new approach towards “knowledge-based community service” and engagement “with” rather than “on behalf of” is embedded in a broader theoretical and philosophical paradigm that will inform the Strategic plan for Community Engagement at Unizulu.

## 1.1 CHARTER OF ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND VALUES; THEORY AND PHILOSOPHY UNDERPINNING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The underlying strength of any engagement activity lies in the establishment of a foundation that is built upon values such as trust and ethical practices. Such a foundation enables engagement practices to develop, be accountable, have impact and responsibly lead to the realisation of goals and objectives. It also serves as a reference point for all its academic and administrative policies, programmes and procedures and it binds the entire university community by shared ethical principles and values. The following principles and values following the Charter of ethical principles and values informed the philosophy and theory underpinning the strategic plan:

- Accepting that the purposes of education include the realization of our humanity as well as our responsibility to self, family and community;
- Recognizing that in the pursuit of truth and knowledge, the university, as an institution of higher learning, shall maintain in all that it does an unwavering focus on excellence;
- Affirming that a crucial role of education is to instil in students' respect, tolerance and social responsibility in an environment of academic freedom, dialogue, friendship and understanding.
- To respect and affirm the dignity, equality, freedom and rich cultural diversity of all human beings as the basis for peace and social justice.
- To commit ourselves to the pursuit of truth, intellectual honesty, openness to ideas and excellence through the attainment of the highest professional and ethical standards in teaching, learning, research and community engagement.
- To endorse and encourage the endeavour for academic success as being critically linked with striving towards an ever-deepening expression of our humanity.
- To uphold and honour the dignity of the university; to preserve its heritage, spirit and assets and to observe its statute, rules and regulations as well as the laws of the country.
- To encourage an orientation of imaginative, collaborative, problem-solving and entrepreneurial thinking in addressing the challenges that we face.
- To be ever conscious of the need to develop a responsible relationship with the earth and to understand our critical role to protect and preserve it for future generations.

- To undertake teaching and research that will responsibly harness the benefits of all the sciences for the well-being of humanity, being conscious of the harm inherent in the irresponsible use of knowledge.

Community Engagement at UNIZULU situates community engagement within the postmodern social constructivist paradigm with the emphasis on multiple realities and the co-construction of community engagement knowledge and practises. This paradigm is closely aligned to the principles and values set out above and calls for a holistic and multidimensional approach to Community Engagement. In practically applying it to the context of community engagement it translates into the following:

- In working with students and communities we are not lured in trying to simplify processes, or attempt to find “quick fix” solutions for complex problems. Constructivism does not come without its own discomforts. It no longer assumes that simple solutions to human processes and problems are available.
- Postmodernism implies critical thinking and self-reflection in all community engagement practices. In using this approach, we cannot entirely rely upon the views of experts. What people and books offer are not solutions in any final sense, but their own ideas, understanding, and outcomes of their experiences (Fisher, 1991: 7).
- Postmodernism points to the adoption of a person-centred approach for engagement with communities which will focus on and release participatory processes and methodologies.
- Community Engagement would then never be service to or on behalf of others, but would be learning and serving together with all involved.

Community Engagement in Higher Education thus distinguishes itself as being an academically grounded scholarship.

## 1.2 RURALITY AND COMPREHENSIVITY

Guided by its comprehensive nature and where it is situated, rurality and comprehensivity become part of the philosophical suite underpinning Unizulu’s CE strategy. Although rurality is complex in nature and is subjected to different interpretations; it is however ‘empirically’ defined around geography, context, demographics, culture, and experiences (Green & Reid, 2014; Roberts & Green, 2013; Moreland, Chamberlain & Artaraz, 2003). Scholars pervasively agree



that rurality is a difficult concept to define; hence, it provides Unizulu with an opportunity to contextualise rurality in their own terms, experiences and needs. Also, the university, through its Community Engagement agenda, will plug the hole on the scarce rurality research, to contribute towards the development of rural counties and preservation of its *authenticity* (heritage/ indigenous knowledge systems,) which has a potential to impact on the development of rural areas *rurally* (Chigbu, 2013).

To ensure that rural areas are beneficiaries of wide range of programmes that will ensure access to education, the Department of Education (2004: 5) mandated South African Comprehensive Universities to ensure:

- Diversity: through the programmes that are offered
- Accessibility: through opportunities created by a variety of entry and exit points
- Student mobility: through developing strong vertical and horizontal articulation pathways
- Responsiveness: through the development of a suite of educational programmes and research foci appropriate to local, regional and national needs
- Flexibility: through the strengthening of relationships with community, civic, government, business, and industry partners for local and regional development. Flexibility should characterise the institutions' **ability to meet the human resource needs of the local (and wider) context through its training programmes, and to contribute to the development of the communities it serves through the application and extension of its knowledge and expertise.**

### 1.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AS SCHOLARSHIP

In view of the above discussion, Community Engagement at UNIZULU will move beyond the concept of Community Engagement as an outreach activity, an ad hoc activity merely involving the community, or as a mere good public relation exercise, towards *Community Engagement as academically grounded scholarship within the Higher Education arena*. The Community Engagement portfolio will strategically transform the notion of Community Engagement starting with a move towards academically grounded Community Engagement practices “with” instead of mere community service “for” (often also referred to as “outreach” activities and or programmes). Community services refer to services or activities done “for” and “provided” to the <sup>1</sup>community born out of the intentions of doing good *for* others perceived as less fortunate and motivated out of a sense of social responsibility. The beneficiary of such services has very little to no control over the distribution, governance and or organisation of the service. The sustainability of such charitable activities mainly lies within the hands or the donor or service provider.

The move towards academically grounded Community Engagement practices refers to activities that are *undertaken with community members in a context of reciprocal partnership*. This means an active dialogue with all Community Engagement role players (academics, students and communities) whereby knowledge is shared and awareness created regarding each other’s expertise, skills and coping mechanisms, thus leading to the co-construction of the type of services that will make a difference and that will benefit the teaching and learning practices as well as the community.

**1.3.1 Engaged research** is closely tied with Community Engagement as a scholarly activity. Engaged research recognises the community as knowledge-rich partners; the university’s research capacity becomes more accessible as a resource to address community problems or aspirations. This approach to research may result in knowledge transfer and exchange in several forms that are important to academic as well as economic and social improvement including the commercialisation of intellectual property, the establishment or improvement of businesses or non-governmental organisations, the design of new and effective interventions or public policies, or other joint venture activity between universities and community partners. Engaged research promises significant social, cultural, and environmental benefits, many of which are

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<sup>1</sup>The term ‘community’ is used here in its broadest sense referring to any group of people we become involved with during the course of our community engagement endeavours.

economically quantifiable. Through engaged research activity universities can contribute to improvements in community conditions, educational attainment, health and well-being, social inclusion and social capital, cultural understanding, cultural expression, and economic growth (Australian Universities Community 2008-2010: 2).

These gains occur because of the approach and strategies involved in engaged research. Methodologies such as community-based research or participatory action research involve external partners and voices in shaping research questions and studies in ways that recognise community knowledge, expertise, and objectives. Through such collaborations, these methods of engaged research advance academic knowledge and research performance while also enhancing community capacity and quality of life. Engaged research brings more than one discipline to bear on a problem. Therefore, engaged research activities are often *transdisciplinary* (using the many disciplines in the context of application), opportunity-driven and demand-driven (Gibbons et al, 1994). Engagement often leads to intra- and inter-institutional collaboration, thus enhancing the overall capacity of higher education to contribute to community, state, and national objectives.

**1.3.2 Engaged Teaching and Learning** as core activity of the university addresses community labour market needs while also helping students to become knowledgeable and active citizens of their region, their nation and the globalised world. Research has shown that engaged teaching strategies enhance student retention, career selection, academic performance, and the development of social and civic responsibility. These positive effects arise from student opportunities to learn outside the classroom where they experience knowledge through direct action which confers benefits such as self-esteem, confidence, communications skills, and motivation.

Student learning as part of an engaged teaching program will ensure graduate employability while also communicating leading edge knowledge to the government, business, industry, school and community-based settings that host students. Work integrated learning, internships, academic service-learning, international experiences and other forms of experiential learning provide opportunities for students to develop a sense of commitment to their career, certainly, but also a commitment to lifelong learning and the betterment of their communities. Because of the positive impact on student learning and development, engaged teaching strategies are important and enriching activities that universities seek to provide, within the resource

constraints created by current funding models driven by lecture-dominated instruction. Engaged Teaching and Learning depends on external partnership relationships and the greater benefits in learning are derived from a greater investment in experiential and active learning models.

**1.3.3 Engaged internationalisation** is based on the presupposition that internationalisation in the context of a university is by its very nature comprehensive. Consequently, internationalisation affects the entire existence of the university as we come to understand it. Therefore, the common perception in International Higher Education circles is that internationalisation that does not influence the curriculum, the research agenda and the way the university orientates itself toward the creation of new knowledge, seize to be true internationalisation (Johnson 2013: 4).

Internationalisation of the curriculum does not, by any stretch of the imagination, suggest that the curriculum ought to be changed; however, what it does is challenge our institutions to capacitate students to be skilled as global citizens in an environment that renders itself to the dictates of the globalisation of knowledge. Processes in the university context should thus enable students to engage beyond traditional boundaries and to play a leading role in the development and shaping of societies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Johnson 2013: 4).

To be relevant with regard to Community Engagement, Teaching and Learning, and Research; we need to move beyond regional and national boundaries and globally expose and expand our academic programs, students, staff, and engagement endeavours.

## 1.4 DESCRIPTION OF KEY CONCEPTS.

Through **Community Engagement**, community and university knowledge and resources are brought together in and out of the classroom, as well as on and off campus to “enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged graduates, staff and citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good.” The “community” in Community Engagement is not defined by sector, such as private or public, for-profit or nonprofit; rather, community is broadly defined to include individuals, groups, and organizations external to campus that use collaborative processes for the purpose of contributing to the public good.

## 1.5 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community Engagement and community service (often referred to as “outreach”) are often confused and/or conflated because both approaches may occur in the community and/or include activities that involve or serve community entities. While the latter describes activities that are provided to, intended for, or done in communities; the former describes activities that are undertaken with community members in a context of reciprocal partnership. Rather than activity or place, the key distinction between Community Engagement and community service can be determined by the processes and purposes that each emphasizes, as further explicated below:

- ***Community Engagement*** requires collaborative, reciprocal processes that recognize, respect, and value the knowledge, perspective, and resources shared among partners, whereas ***community service*** may be provided in a unidirectional, often times “expert,” model in which university resources are extended to serve community individuals, groups, organizations and the public in general;
- ***Community Engagement*** intends to serve a public purpose, builds the capacity of each of the individuals, groups, and organizations involved to understand and collaboratively address issues of public concern, whereas ***community service*** activities may focus on the delivery of expertise, resources, and services to community individuals, groups, organizations, and the public in general.

## 1.6. WHAT DOES COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MEAN FOR FACULTY WORK?

In the context of university documents and policies regarding faculty work, Community Engagement refers to research/creative activities, teaching, and service activities that are collaboratively undertaken by faculty members with community partners, staff, and/or students through processes that exemplify reciprocal partnerships and public purposes.

## 1.7. WHAT IS COMMUNITY-ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP?

*The term community-engaged scholarship (sometimes also referred to as the scholarship of engagement) refers to research/creative activities, teaching, and service undertaken by faculty members in collaboration with community members (and often students) and that embody the characteristics of both community engagement (i.e., reciprocal partnerships, public purposes) and scholarship (i.e., demonstrates current knowledge of the field/discipline, invites peer collaboration and review, is open to critique, is presented in a form that others can build on, involves inquiry). It is important to note that scholarship and research are not synonymous, as stated in the UNCG University-wide Promotion and Tenure Guidelines, and, therefore, should not be conflated. It is also important to note that not all community-engaged activities undertaken by faculty comprise scholarship. Definitions of Community Engagement, reciprocity, and community are provided in the section above:*

## 1.8. RECIPROCITY

Reciprocity is the recognition, respect, and valuing of the knowledge, perspective, and resources that each partner contributes to the collaboration.

## 1.9. CURRICULA ALIGNMENT, CURRICULUM RENEWAL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Teaching and Learning are not limited to what takes place in the classrooms. The process involves the development and design of relevant academic programmes that are in line with the national policy framework. Faculties are supported in **reviewing and (re)-curriculating** their programmes and courses to comply with the HEQF and also meet the needs of students. This entails providing the necessary support for external review of programmes to ensure quality teaching and learning, as well as relevance and responsiveness to influences of the market and its stakeholders (Toni, 2013: 4). Institutions of higher education are required to move away from operational practices where primacy is attached to teaching and research functions and to develop a conceptual framework for the alignment of teaching and learning and research with community engagement. This requires a new approach where community engagement is not an “add on” but instead may in many cases actually contribute to improvement of teaching and learning practices as well as research practice and output. The rationale for this task is embedded in higher education policy and requirements that are set for institutions of higher education.

Community Engagement initiatives should be part of the curriculum and clear assessment criteria as well as outcomes related to engagement practices should be incorporated in the curriculum. This enables academics and students to be academically accountable for any Community Engagement practices that are undertaken and to scholarly report on and substantiate the rationale for engagement initiatives during auditing processes. The need for developing an enabling environment for scholarly community engagement and engaged research is interrelated with the development of training programmes for academic staff and students, the development of academic programmes, during curriculum renewal and in rewarding staff for academic practice that reflects the integration of core academic processes.

## 1.10. INTEGRATED STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Community Engagement function at the University of Zululand takes into account the following existing national policies, Unizulu policies, guiding documents as well as the Unizulu strategic plan (2016-2021):

- White Paper on Transformation of Higher Education,
- Unizulu Community Engagement policy
- The following Unizulu Policies:
  - Charter of Ethical Principles and Values
  - Institutional Quality Policy Framework
  - Human Resources Development Policy
  - Performance Management Policy
  - Academic Promotions Policy
  - Co-operative Education Services
  - Research and Innovation policy
  - Teaching and Learning policy

The Community Engagement office's strategic plan is also directed at attaining the Vision and Mission of the Unizulu stated as:

### **The Vision of the University of Zululand**

A leading comprehensive university providing quality education

#### **Mission**

To provide globally competitive graduates, relevant for the human capital needs of our country by providing quality education that upholds high standards of research and academic excellence.

### **1.11. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

By way of addressing the above mentioned challenges, the University of Zululand Community Engagement strategy strives to achieve the following aims:

- Establish the University as an engaged university, deepening and promoting the scholarship of engagement.
- Ensure that Community Engagement will move beyond 'service projects' toward a more encompassing *scholarship* endeavour and vision for the University.
- Establish the University as a recognized cornerstone of the community, and also as a community of practice striving for sustainable social, cultural and economic development of our community, province and nation.
- Make the University's core activities more relevant, responsive and accessible to the public and private sector, as well as the broader community we seek to serve. This includes the study of the pedagogy of engagement through finding open and balanced engagements where people can *mutually* grow and learn.
- Engage internally, and with national partners, to better establish the systems to guide and support the growth of this scholarly emphasis.

The aims listed above provide a framework for the integrated strategic objectives for Community Engagement. The strategic plan (2009-2016: 36) identified the following **seven sub-objectives** for (Teaching and Learning, Research and) Community Engagement to be applied across campuses according to the relevant strategic position and context of that campus:



- a. Conceptual development and curricula renewal
- b. Develop a culture of scholarly excellence in Teaching and Learning, Research and Community Engagement (research, internationalisation)
- c. Internationalisation
- d. Stakeholder partnerships
- e. Academic development

## 1.12. CONCLUSION

Community Engagement is a multifaceted, multidimensional term that may be applied to a vast range of activities, as well as to a certain view of the role the university has to play in society. In this view, universities move from the agenda of simply increasing the education of the general population and the output of scientific research towards a model in which engaged university education and research should work towards specific economic and social objectives, by means of co-creating and exchanging knowledge, by sharing resources, skills and processes with the public good in mind.

Therefore, the *vision for the Community Engagement portfolio* can be formulated as;

*“Aligning, Integrating, Infusing and Capacitating the University of Zululand’s Community Engagement practices with Teaching, Learning and Research”.*

The preceding discussions provides a framework for Community Engagement’s five strategic objectives supported by Community Engagement goals translated into key activities in fulfilling the vision of the office as set out below.

# THE PLAN

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The University of Zululand strategic plan for Community Engagement has been initiated in the office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC): Research and Innovation, Prof G De Wet. It takes cue from the Unizulu Strategic plan 2016-2021. The strategy came about as a means to ensure quality compliance to Higher Education mandate as well as commitment and accountability towards the partners, collaborators and society at large.

The University aspire to contribute towards the social transformation of Zululand region and beyond, socio-economic status, the rural needs, challenges and opportunities; and the indigenous knowledge system through its core mandate, i.e. Teaching and Learning, Research and Social Innovation, and Community Engagement.

Unizulu hopes to sustain, revive, and forge new partnerships with its stakeholders through Community Engagement to support its graduates, Teaching and Learning, Research and Innovation. Hence, key strategic focus of this plan is to *establish* enabling environment for Unizulu staff and students undertaking Community Engagement projects towards enrichment of the Scholarship of Engagement (SoE). To *strengthen* existing Community Engagement efforts; encourage staff to *collaborate* and partner across Faculties and departments on Community Engagement projects; to *capacitate* staff and students where necessary; to *intensify* and nurture existing partnerships.

## 3. CE VISION 2021

### VISION

Align, Integrate, Infuse and Capacitate the University of Zululand's Community Engagement practices with Teaching, Learning and Research.

### MISSION

To enhance Teaching and Learning, Research and Innovation for the public good and social transformation of rural society.



## 4. SWOT ANALYSIS

### S

- Existence of Community Engagement Department, CE Policy
- Capacity building workshops
- Existing CE projects
- Location (rurality), Comprehensiveness of university
- Entrepreneurship
- Food security
- Building towards knowledge economy
- Willingness of farmer participation

### O

- Key stakeholders closer to the university
- Potential sponsors (NRF, IKS, Ford Foundation, Wellcome Trust)
- Collaborations with community leaders, Industry, NGOs
- Research
- Rurality
- Integrated holistic approach (3 pillars of the university)
- Publications
- Collaborations
- Funding
- Research
- Collaboration with other organisation
- Access to IKS
- Language issue

## W

- Uneven engagement across departments
- Less interest on CE
- Limited funding within CE Office
- Poor response from teachers
- Few staff
- No MoAs
- Lack of awareness by academics (faculties)
- Lack of reciprocity
- Poor collaboration amongst the pillars of the university
- Poor collaboration between departments
- Lack of beneficiation
- Limited funding
- Once off visit

## T

- No Faculty CE plans
- Most partnerships are based on individual relationships
- Not able to report systematically
- No feedback to communities
- Limited collaboration
- No mutual benefits
- Safety
- Lack of transport
- Dropouts from the programme
- Theft of products
- Poor record keeping
- Lack of funding

## 5. THE FRAMEWORK

Unizulu intends to make Community Engagement a significant focus of the university to rebuild trust amongst the local communities and gain support and cooperation with partners and stakeholders by focusing on the following goals in the next five years.

### DETAILS BY GOAL

#### GOAL 1

Establish the University as an engaged university, deepening and promoting the scholarship of engagement.

#### RATIONALE

Unizulu has never had a strong and coordinated CE; hence, its re-establishment will focus on the promotion and deepening of the SoE.

#### TACTICS FOR ACHIEVEMENT

- Community Engagement Committee is an advisory body for CE at Unizulu. The committee will be formed by the representatives from the four Faculties and other strategic departments, units, centres and community members and partners. The committee is chaired by DVC: Research and Innovation.
- Development of CE policy to guide and support CE strategic directions
- Map current Unizulu CE initiatives by Faculties and staff at large to understand the prevailing situation
- Road shows and workshops to promote CE at large, and
- Faculty and departmental meetings to deepen understanding of engagement
- Seminars and symposium to promote the culture of engagement
- Increase the number of scholars and [students] who conduct engaged teaching and research by encouraging establishment and participation on CE project
- VC CE excellence awards for Unizulu staff and students
- CE should be part of staff promotion policy [Unizulu staff [CE] initiatives should prove to be consistent, sustainable and credible to obtain points]
- Formulation and alignment of CE niche areas to Faculty Niche areas
- CE, faculties, administrators and student's attendance of relevant symposiums and conferences

#### POINTS OF INTEGRATION

- Faculties with CE champions together document CE projects and properly register them.
- CE and Deans, CE committee members, design and undertake workshops, road shows in promotion of CE internally.
- CE manager present strategy, policy and principles of CE as adopted by the university.
- CE unit organise symposium at Unizulu to promote SoE.
- Faculties with postgraduate students formulate research projects to promote CE.
- CE, faculties, administrators and students attend relevant symposiums and conferences.

## **INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

- CE Committee's ToR formulated
- Policy presented in different committees and boards of the university for recommendation and approval
- Documented projects
- Registration of new projects
- Faculty based workshops
- Departmental road shows
- Presentations in different Unizulu platforms
- Annual symposium at Unizulu
- Formal procedures for conducting CE activities are formulated

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- CE unit should be supported with human resource capacity to effectively execute CE mandate
- Signature projects fully supported
- Funds for faculty based workshops
- Funds for annual symposium
- Funds for the Awards
- Funding for Postgraduate projects
- Funds for external conferences, symposiums and workshops

## GOAL 2

Ensure that Community Engagement will move beyond ‘service projects’ toward a more encompassing *scholarship* endeavour and vision for the University.

### RATIONALE

In many instances university staff and students participate in volunteerism and outreach initiatives without translating the efforts into fully-fledged scholarship. Unizulu CE strategic plan aims to help staff and students to move towards engaged scholarship

### TACTICS FOR ACHIEVEMENT

- Engage in multidimensional and transdisciplinary engagement projects
- Encourage engaged teaching strategies

### POINTS OF INTEGRATION

- Faculties, students and community work together to co-generate knowledge.
- CE unit, Faculties, TL, students and communities to work together towards development of an engaged curriculum.
- TL, Faculties, Institutional Planning, work towards effective use of technology in teaching.
- Documentation of students’ Community Engagement projects

### INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

- Projects co-owned by faculty members, students and communities
- Use of technology in lecture halls with large classes to assist engaged teaching strategies: Wired classes and use of clickers in lecture rooms / other methods
- Increasing programmes with engaged modules

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Funding to support multidimensional and transdisciplinary projects co-owned by communities, students and faculties
- Research funding towards development of engaged curriculum research and equipment
- Funding towards increasing engaged modules



### **GOAL 3**

Establish the University as a recognized cornerstone of the community, and also as a community of practice striving for sustainable social, cultural and economic development of our community, province and nation.

#### **RATIONALE**

Unizulu is a comprehensive university in the middle of a rural environment and serves mostly communities from the three district municipalities (i.e. King Cetshwayo, uMkhanyakude and Zululand District Municipalities) as well as graduates from neighbouring African countries. It is also one of the long standing universities in the province. Unizulu can play a significant role in achieving sustainable development goals and contribute positively towards the economic development and social justice of not only the community but the whole province as well as national through initiatives by Faculties and students.

#### **TACTICS FOR ACHIEVEMENT**

- Dissemination and utilisation of research results beyond journals and conferences
- Encourage social innovation through new projects by students and staff
- Become the hub of knowledge for economic and community development projects through the use of research findings in enterprise initiatives to address and solve social ills
- Develop CE research database to allow students and community to access it easily
- Capacitate staff and students on how to communicate research to lay communities

#### **POINTS OF INTEGRATION**

- Faculties work with students and CE office to model social innovation projects
- Faculties with students disseminate findings that have positive implications towards sustainable social, cultural and economic development

#### **INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

- Dissemination of results from CE projects by faculties and students
- Communication of science and research to enhance knowledge of lay communities
- Used research findings to contribute towards enhancement of developmental projects
- Forums or seminars on presentation of complex ideas

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- Funds to support social innovation projects
- Funds for dialogues, dissemination, science communication activities
- Funds for workshops on how to disseminate findings

## **GOAL 4**

Make the University's core activities more relevant, responsive and accessible to the public and private sector, as well as the broader community we seek to serve. This includes the study of the pedagogy of engagement through finding open and balanced engagements where people can *mutually* grow and learn.

### **RATIONALE**

Unizulu, due to its nature as a comprehensive university, should seek to be relevant towards the needs of the public, private and community that it serves. This will happen through engaged pedagogies and curriculum, including other initiatives of engagement.

### **TACTICS FOR ACHIEVEMENT**

- Promote pedagogy of engagement among faculties to contribute towards professional human capital of engagers
- Develop courses to promote engaged research; hence, give students an opportunity to deal with complex social issues through community engagement and service
- Encourage faculties and students to attend and present in conferences that promote pedagogy of engagement

### **POINTS OF INTEGRATION**

- Faculties, TL and CE units work together in structuring modules and programmes to assist the university to be relevant towards the communities, public and private partners
- Faculties, CE and administrations staff together work towards making core activities of the university to be accessible and relevant to the wider community and partners

### **INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

- Number of CE conferences attended where both students and faculties presented
- An increased number of programmes which teach and promote engaged research

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- Financial support towards attending and presenting in CE conference nationally and internationally
- Funds towards continuous development of staff and students (e.g. grants applications, methodology developments, writing retreats etc.)

## **GOAL 5**

Engage internally, and with national partners, to better establish the systems to guide and support the growth of this scholarly emphasis.

### **RATIONALE**

The purpose is to increase an internal dialogue within Unizulu with students and faculties. As well as developing internal and external systems to support and emphasize the growth of SoE.

### **TACTICS FOR ACHIEVEMENT**

- Undertake seminars, workshops and forums to promote internal engagements.
- Identify and engage national partners
- Join national bodies

### **POINTS OF INTEGRATION**

- Faculties and CE unit agree on systems to emphasise and support internal engagements

### **INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

- Membership with national bodies as a platform to form partners
- Seminars, forums and workshops held to promote CE and its scholarship

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- Membership fees
- Promotional material to host the seminars

## **GOAL 6**

Establish, maintain, restore/ revive relationships with communities, industry and business partners, and the alumni of the university

### **RATIONALE**

The purpose is to sustain relations with different groups of stakeholders and community at large to enhance the partnership between the parties.

### **TACTICS FOR ACHIEVEMENT**

- Introductory meetings with business and industry alumni, faith organisations, traditional leadership, influential people and leadership structures in communities, local, district and provincial government structures and partners
- Workshops to capacitate partners, determine and manage their expectations, needs and challenges

### **POINTS OF INTEGRATION**

- Work together with faculties and departments to build capacity needs in communities
- Work with faculties and departments to identify working strategy to enter communities with respect, disseminate results and identify projects from the research that was done

### **INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

- Consultative meetings with partners
- Disseminated results,
- Capacity building workshops for different communities

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- Transport, meetings, workshops

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