

# UNIVERSITY of NEW HAMPSHIRE

## *Excellence in Outreach Scholarship*

### *Outreach Scholars Academy*

#### **Lessons Learned**

- Key to the success of the academy is a team approach and adequate financial resources. We believe that in order to successfully undertake this program at other institutions, a leadership and operational team with the necessary financial resources to develop, execute and sustain the program is required.
- Support from a range of institutional administrators is critical to the academy's ultimate success. At UNH this includes ongoing communication and discussions with the provost and the vice president for research. Deans and department chairs can also provide ongoing support by identifying and nominating potential candidates for the academy and by articulating their support to participants.
- We have learned that faculty participants find it easier to add outreach to existing research agendas, rather than attempting to make current outreach more scholarly.
- The interdisciplinary nature of the academy is highly beneficial to faculty participants and thus we advise recruiting a cross section by discipline and rank. Participants report their academy experience as one of only a few opportunities for this kind of cross-disciplinary discourse which can serve to enhance opportunities for future scholarly collaboration.
- Language and terminology are important. When the academy began in 2004, UNH faculty tended to better understand and resonate with the term "outreach scholarship" vs. "engaged scholarship". In reality this program supports faculty success in engaged scholarship (i.e. 2-way mutually beneficial partnerships).
- We believe it is important to provide a small participant stipend (\$250 – \$1,000) however the amount of the stipend did not affect the likelihood that a faculty member would participate.
- We have provided a "competitive pool" of resources (\$5000 – 15,000 per project) to help support implementation of identified projects. This has increased the likelihood of project implementation.
- We found that a semester-long program (as opposed to a year-long) worked better at UNH and increased the likelihood of faculty commitment. We require faculty to sign a "letter of commitment" prior to acceptance into the program.
- Video conferencing with external experts is a viable delivery method. However, we learned that video conferences were more effective if first preceded by rapport building, face-to-face interactions between participants and experts. Case study and team discussions have helped participants internalize and apply concepts.
- We have found an optimal class size to be 15 – 16.

*A Community Engaged University  
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- Many alumni remain interested in the academy after graduation and we have attempted to capitalize on this interest by involving them in a variety of ways. This includes involvement as nominators, speakers, coaches, reviewers for proposal panels and as members of future selection committees. Each alumnus also receives an invitation for the induction and graduation ceremony/luncheon for future classes and they are also featured on the website.