A stylized map of the United States in orange and yellow. Four callout boxes with blue borders and white backgrounds point to specific geographic locations. Each callout contains the name and title of a university leader. The callouts are: 1. Top center: Susan Agre-Kippenhan, Dean Montana State University. 2. Left side: Sherril Gelmon, Professor and Chair Portland State University, Oregon. 3. Center: Judith Ramaley, President Winona State University, Minnesota. 4. Right side: Devorah Lieberman, Provost Wagner College, New York.

Susan Agre-Kippenhan, Dean  
Montana State University

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Wagner College, New York

Sherril Gelmon, Professor and Chair  
Portland State University, Oregon

Judith Ramaley, President  
Winona State University, Minnesota

# Taking Engagement to Scale:

## Different Positions, Different Perspectives

# Context of Engagement

## *Defining Engagement*

Engagement describes the collaborations between higher education institutions and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. [Carnegie 2006]



# Defining “Community” Engagement

- Application of institutional resources to address and solve challenges facing communities through collaboration with these communities
- Includes methods of community service, service-learning, community-based participatory research, training and technical assistance, coalition-building, capacity-building, economic development

Kellogg Commission on Community-Engaged  
Scholarship in the Health

Professions, 2005



# Motivations for University Engagement

- Social responsibility
- Economic opportunities
- Community development
- Academic innovations
- Politics



# Promoting Deep Organizational Change

(adapted from Rogers 1995)

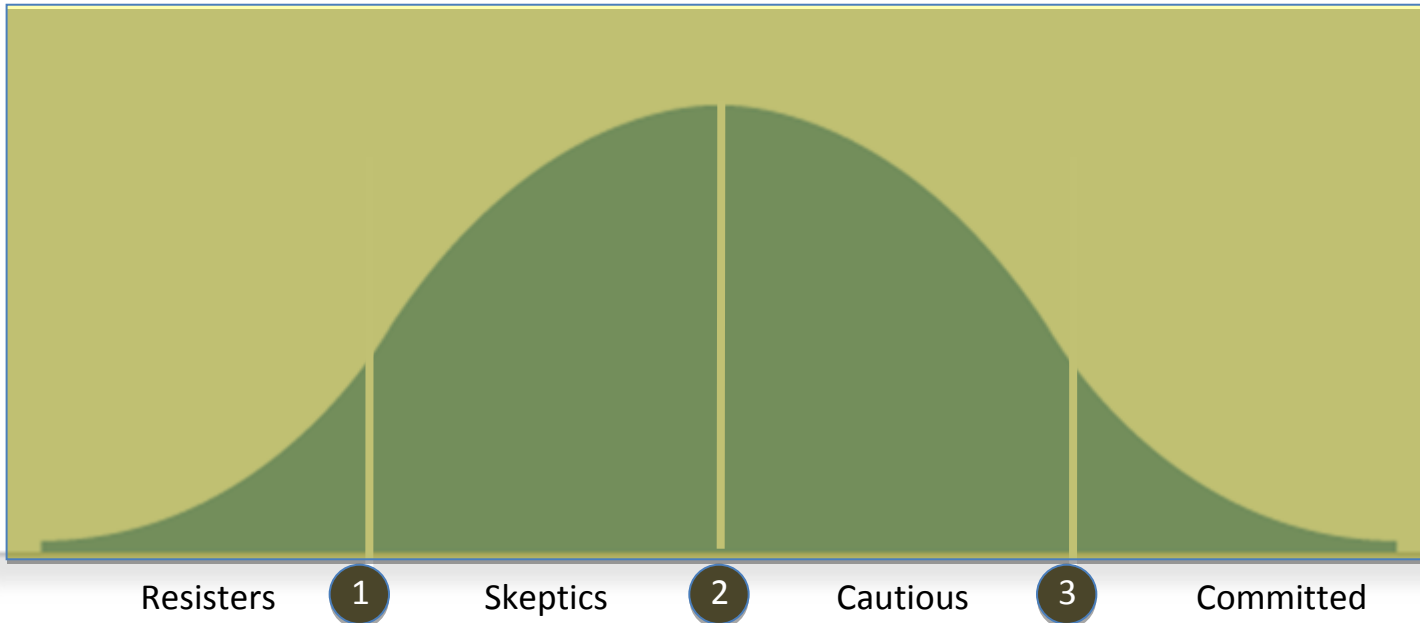
*The **innovation-diffusion process** is the pattern through which an individual or a group of people move*

- From first knowledge of an innovation or idea
- To forming an attitude about that innovation
- To deciding whether to adopt it or reject it
- To implementing the new idea and perhaps adapting it to their particular situation or challenges
- To confirming their decision and building it into their repertoire of practices and habits.



# Diffusion of Innovation

(Rogers 1995)



- 1 Risk Management
- 2 Culture of Evidence Barrier
- 3 Disciplinary Barrier and Definitions of Scholarship

# What influences adoption of innovation?

(adapted from Rogers 1995)

**Relative advantage:** Is this way better?

**Compatibility:** Is this consistent with the values, experiences and needs of people who will use it?

**Complexity:** Is this easy to understand?

**Scalability:** Can you start small and grow?

**Observability:** Are the result visible and compelling?

**Adaptability:** Can this be adjusted to different settings, disciplines/perspectives and situations?



# Common Grounding: Shared Experiences

Portland State University 1994-2006

- Top Down/Bottom Up change strategy
- Shared knowledge of common themes
- Motto: “Let Knowledge Serve the City”
- View the city as an extended laboratory for learning
- Creation and support of mutually reciprocal partnerships with community organizations
- Extensive faculty development programs



## Specific PSU Initiatives

- University Studies – general education
- Promotion and tenure guidelines
- Campus center for teaching and learning
- Community-university conversations
- Public profile of university as city partner



# Lessons from Portland State University 1990-97

## A Presidential Perspective

*The change process has many dimensions. At best, it is a form of participatory action research.*

- Build a compelling case.
- Create clarity of purpose.
- Work at a significant scale and in a scholarly mode.
- Develop a conducive campus environment.
- Create the capacity to continue the process over time and to learn from the experience.



# Create capacity to continue change over time

- Establish a theory of action.
- Frame the question and exploring assumptions.
- Select the first target based on a theory of action.
- Set meaningful goals.
- Identify and use available capacity effectively.
- Make connections that reinforce and expand the effort and its impact.
- Learn from the experience and apply what you have learned as the next phase begins, revising your theory of action if necessary.



# Four Organizational Perspectives: What We Have Learned



Wagner College, New York

A private liberal arts college in a large metropolitan center.



Montana State University

A land-grant university with high research activity in a small regional center.



Winona State University, Minnesota

A regional comprehensive university in two locations: one small setting, one metropolitan.



Portland State  
UNIVERSITY

Portland State University, Oregon  
An urban comprehensive university in a mid-size metropolitan setting.

Wagner College

# Institutional Variables Affect Diffusion of Engagement

- Size of Wagner College faculty
- Size of Wagner College students
- Location of college - Staten Island/NY City
- Mission statement of the college
- Why students choose to attend this college
- The Wagner Curriculum
- Recognition and support – P & T, financing



Wagner College

# Infusing Engagement Across the Curriculum

- Wagner Plan
  - First Year Program
  - Intermediate Learning Community
- Civic Innovations
  - Community Connected Departments
  - College Connected Communities
- Example of Port Richmond Initiative



Four Organizational  
Perspectives

# Engagement must fit the institution

- Big State, Small Population
- Demographics of Montana and the region
- Carnegie Foundation ranks MSU as one of 96 universities with "very high research activity"
- CORE curriculum requires research/creative activity
- Disciplinary Focus for engagement



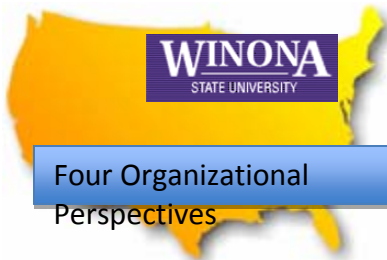
Montana State University  
Listen + Position

- Strategy connected to the College
- MSU model of engagement
- Articulated with different language
- Connected with campus culture
- Use existing structures
- Take people from where they are...



# Challenges to Engagement at Winona State University

- Minnesota facing budget deficit FY2009 of \$426 million.
- Given this:
  - How can we stay focused on our priorities?
  - How can we find resources to invest in our future?
  - How can we make engagement a solution , not just another expense?



# Institutional Priorities and Targets for Investment

- Enrich the student experience and support student success.

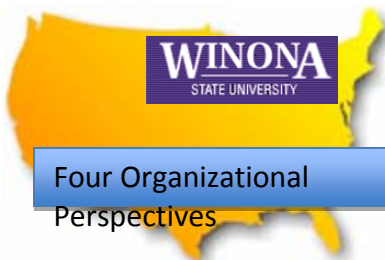
*Think about student impact first.*

- Support academic innovation and excellence.

*Be distinctive.*

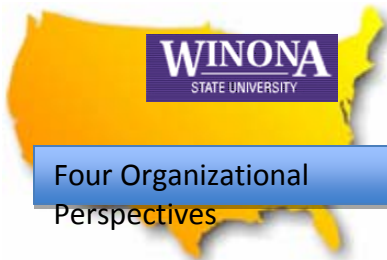
- Expand our climate commitment and sustainability efforts.

*WSU goes green.*



# Things to keep in mind if you are leading change in challenging times.

- Understand your institutional history
- Avoid decision traps
- Approach engagement as a scholarly act
- Be clear about your educational philosophy
- Take time to learn about the change process
- Listen, respond, be clear, and communicate
- Treat your budget as an investment portfolio
- Test every discretionary expense



# Portland State University: 10+ Years Later

- Curriculum development/evolution
- Leadership
- Faculty roles and rewards
- Institutional research portfolio
- Community positioning

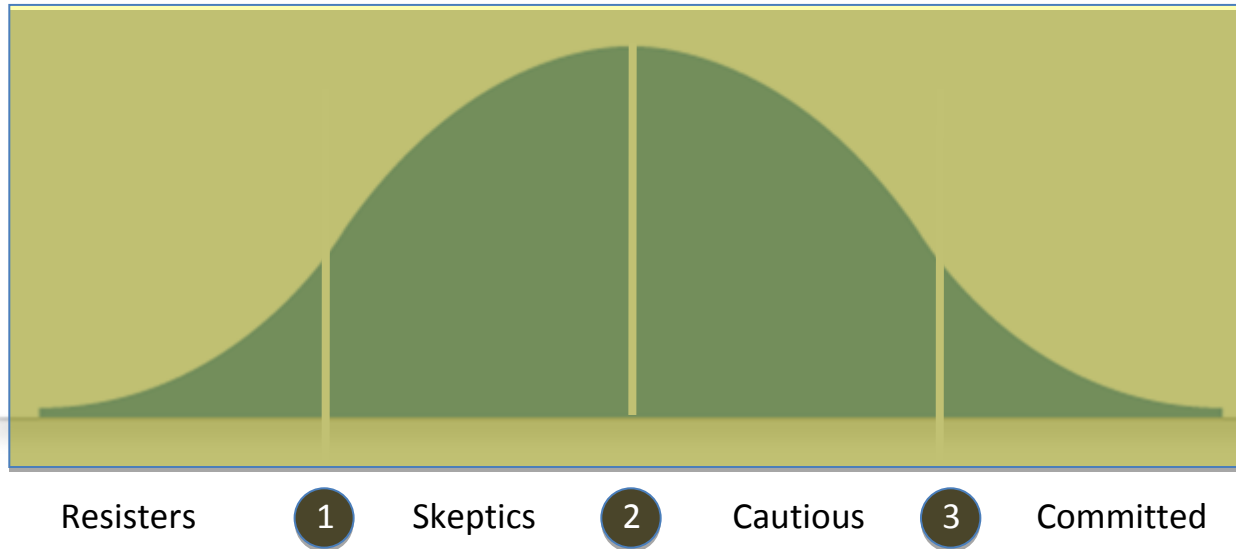


Four Organizational  
Perspectives

# Taking engagement to scale

- Wagner– Multiple innovations to infuse engagement with emphasis on faculty
- MSU– Campus culture leads to focus on early adopters/easy wins
- WSU– Budget realities create opportunities
- PSU– Institutional commitment expands and adapts

To create a conducive campus environment remember the bell-shaped curve.



- Approaches to promotion and tenure
- Clarify working definitions
- Create infrastructure

- Pay attention to your communities
- Create a culture of evidence
- Treat nay-sayers with respect

# Promoting the Public Purpose of Liberal Education

## Knowledge of Human Cultures & the Physical & Natural World

*Focused by engagement with big questions, both contemporary and enduring*

## Intellectual & Practical Skills

*Practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more*

*challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance*

## Personal & Social Responsibility

*Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges*

## Integrative Learning

*Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills, and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems*

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