

“Beyond Engagement: Promoting non-monetary social relevance in contemporary academic departments.”

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary academic departments are faced with constant demands to innovate and justify expenditures, personnel and sometimes even their existence. With increased university ‘corporatization’, department chairs need to develop more effective methods of communicating their department’s importance beyond the monetary value they create through enrollment. If all value is placed in terms of monetary revenue, alternative revenue streams can be developed and used to justify replacing existing academic departments. This presentation outlines methods of creating academic social relevance that are not based on simple monetary value thereby affording academic departments a measure of protection against undue resource attenuation. The presentation provides methods of promoting both internal and external social relevance. Due to the inherent differences between the Humanities, Social and Natural Sciences, a variety of social relevance projects and methods will be outlined. Special attention will be given to methods of measuring and reporting growth in departmental social relevance.