Frequently Asked Questions about the Partnership Data Collection

General

1. Why are we being asked for data on partnerships?

The UW System does not operate in a vacuum. Many of our contributions are amplified through collaboration with others. The UW System attempts to consciously recognize and communicate the breadth and impact of its partnerships. In addition, the UW System is required by the Wisconsin 2011-13 biennial budget (Act 32) to report on a variety of accountability measures, including partnerships. (See the UW System Accountability Dashboard and supplemental information at https://www.wisconsin.edu/accountability/) UW institutions are being asked to provide partnership data for these purposes. In addition, we hope institutions will find these data useful for understanding and increasing their community engagement.

2. What is meant by “partnership”?

Partnership in higher education occurs within the larger framework of community engagement. As defined by the Carnegie Foundation, partnership “...focuses on collaborative interactions with community and related scholarship for the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration, and application of knowledge, information, and resources (research, capacity building, economic development, etc.).”

For the purposes of this data collection, a partnership is a relationship between a UW institution and one or more external entities, in which each partner contributes resources that are not supplied by the other partner(s) and are necessary to achieve a common goal or goals. Resources include but are not limited to staff, facilities, money, and information. Partnerships can be either time-limited or ongoing.

Some elements of partnerships include:
- Reciprocity and/or exchange
- Mutual benefit
- Mutual planning, implementation, and assessment
- Increased capacity of both partners

3. Why are these particular items being requested? Why doesn’t this list include __________ as a type of partnership? (Examples: Dual degrees, collaborative degree programs, transfer articulation agreements, study abroad programs, educational/academic partnerships, interns from external organizations hosted by a UW institution, community outreach activities, etc.)

The requested items are at best a partial reflection of the range of partnerships at UW institutions. The items were identified based on (1) representation of a variety of different partnership activities, and (2) relative availability of information at a majority of UW institutions. Other types of partnerships, such as collaborative degree programs, transfer articulation agreements, and economic development collaborations, are addressed through other accountability reporting. Institutions are welcome to provide information on additional types of partnerships online through the Institution Highlights page of the UW System Accountability Dashboard website: https://www.wisconsin.edu/accountability/.
4. **Why are we asked to provide the number of partners rather than the number of students/interns/placements, the duration of the partnership, or the impact of the partnership?**

   This data collection focuses on the breadth of the UW System’s engagement with external partners. Impact and duration of partnerships vary widely with the nature and purpose of the individual partnerships and are captured through case study examples.

5. **Why are we asked to provide lists of partners in addition to an overall count of each type?**

   The lists of partners help us better understand the data UW institutions are currently able to provide. They also may be used to get a sense of the overlap in partners across institutions (for example, a business hosting interns from more than one UW). We have no plans to publish the lists. If some partnerships are subject to confidentiality agreements and you are not able to provide names of partners, please make a note on the form.

6. **Should we include the partnership data in our institutional accountability report / institutional Knowledge Powers Wisconsin’s Future report?**

   In 2015, the systemwide and institutional Knowledge Powers Wisconsin’s Future reports were replaced with the UW System Accountability Dashboard. Currently, the partnership data are not reported by individual institution, with the exception of UW-Madison as required by Wisconsin Act 32. Institutions are welcome to include their partnership data among the information linked through the Institution Highlights page of the UW System Accountability Dashboard website: [https://www.wisconsin.edu/accountability/](https://www.wisconsin.edu/accountability/).

7. **Is an entity a partner if it solely provides money?**

   Our intent is to capture partnerships that reflect mutual involvement to achieve a shared goal, rather than fee-for-service arrangements. In that sense, an organization that sponsors or funds a program, project, or event would be considered a partner. An organization renting a facility or paying for a standard training class would not be considered a partner.

8. **What is meant by “academic year”?**

   UW System Administration typically defines the academic year as summer, fall, winter, spring. If your data is for some other time period (fiscal year, calendar year, fall-spring-summer academic year), please make a note on the form.

9. **What is meant by “non-UW organizations”?**

   The intent is to capture partnerships that are external to UW institutions, rather than partnerships that are exclusively among UW institutions, their divisions, or their departments. As a rule of thumb, if an organization does not fall under the authority of the UW System Board of Regents, it can be considered a non-UW organization.

**Co-ops or internships**

10. **How do we count internships or other placements at multiple sites of the same business or organization?**
    (Examples: Students interning at different Walgreens, students placed at several clinics of the same HMO.)
We recommend counting each site as a partnership, based on the assumption that the mutual benefit or exchange is likely to have the greatest impact at the specific site.

11. If 25 different academic departments submit lists of organizations at which they placed interns, should duplicate organizations be removed?

Ideally, we would like the data to reflect the number of organizations (or sites) that benefit from each type of UW partnership, rather than the number of UW divisions or departments that are involved. (However, the duplicated information may be useful for UW institutions to understand levels of community engagement within different divisions or departments.)

12. Should internships include only credit-bearing internships?

Internships can be credit-bearing or non-credit bearing.

13. Should work study placements with an external organization be included with co-ops and internships?

No, but UW institutions may report that information through the Institution Highlights page of the UW System Accountability Dashboard website: https://www.wisconsin.edu/accountability/.

Service-learning, community-based research, or volunteering

14. What is meant by “community-based research”? Since it seems like a faculty activity, why isn’t it reported separately from service-learning and volunteering?

Community-based research occurs in a community setting and involves community members and/or organizations in the design and implementation of the project. It is similar to service-learning and volunteering in that it engages the university with the community and can involve students and/or faculty.

15. Is volunteering restricted to activity that is done as part of being a student or a staff member, or does it include personal volunteering?

Since the intent is to collect partnerships between UW institutions and external organizations, volunteering should reflect activity that a UW institution has some role in. For example, if a UW institution helps match volunteers with an organization, then it can be considered a partnership between the UW and the organization.

Business development assistance

16. For business development assistance, if a professor provides consulting to an organization, could this be counted? Does it matter if the consulting is paid or unpaid?

Yes. No.

Clinical, legal, or social work placements

17. Should a clinical placement in a school setting be counted as a clinical placement?
Yes.

**Student teachers**

18. **For the number of schools hosting student teachers, should we count schools or school districts?**

   We recommend counting at the school level, based on the assumption that the primary benefits of the partnership accrue at the school level and based on the understanding that student teacher placements are typically approved by school principals.

**Student organizations**

19. **The 2008-09 collection asked for the number of student chapters of national professional organizations. Is this information required for this year’s collection?**

   No, we are not requesting this information. However, campuses are welcome to collect and report it through the Institution Highlights page of the UW System Accountability Dashboard website: [https://www.wisconsin.edu/accountability/](https://www.wisconsin.edu/accountability/).