



Creating a Great Campus Civic Action Plan

In signing the Campus Compact 30th Anniversary Action Statement, presidents and chancellors make a public commitment both to its principles and to developing a plan to put those principles into action. The following framework provides a shared foundation for Campus Compact members to approach Civic Action Plan (CAP) development while encouraging creativity, flexibility, and boldness.

Campus Compact will support members in the development of Civic Action Plans through online knowledge hubs, planning institutes, and technical assistance. We will share further information about these opportunities during the summer of 2016 as campuses commence planning.

We invite those who have made commitments to share plans publicly by March 2017—one year from the formal launch of the 30th Anniversary Action Statement at the Campus Compact Summit of Presidents and Chancellors.

30th Anniversary Action Statement of Presidents and Chancellors

In the mid-1980s, a group of higher education leaders came together based on a shared concern about the future of American democracy.

Motivated by their conviction that amidst the pressures toward personal acquisition and personal advancement, their students were not learning to think, speak, and act in the service of the public good, they resolved that higher education must reclaim its historic mission of preparing the next generation of citizens to achieve public goals and solve public problems.

This group—a handful at first, and more than one hundred within a year—decided to take action. They became the founders of Campus Compact. Their chosen language—a compact—signified a commitment to each other to work together to advance the public purposes of higher education on their campuses, in their communities, and across the country. It also signified a commitment to honor the longstanding compact between higher education and the public.



That initial commitment catalyzed a movement that has changed the landscape of higher education. Nearly 1100 institutions now belong to Campus Compact, which has grown to include a network of state and regional Compacts and has become a key element of a global movement for the public purposes of higher education. Campus Compact helped build a national network of engaged faculty and staff and a vast trove of research-based and experiential knowledge about how to educate students for democracy and build community partnerships for positive change. Because of the work undertaken through Campus Compact and a growing group of allies, what was once a novel and marginal idea—that college students should engage in sustained community-based experiences to develop their capacities as local and global citizens—is now in the mainstream of higher education.

In an effort to build from student engagement to deeper institutional change and community impact, Campus Compact in 1999 promulgated the **Presidents' Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education**, a statement calling for renewed action to magnify the impact of campus engagement. Evidence of the power of the Presidents' Declaration abounds: the emergence of civic engagement centers whose leaders have claimed a voice in higher education; the centrality of community engagement in campus strategic plans; countless innovative partnerships producing positive educational, health, environmental, and economic outcomes for communities; and the creation of the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement, the first mechanism for certifying an institution's substantive commitment to engagement.

These successes warrant celebration. They represent advancement of the public ends that are the very reason colleges and universities are brought into existence. Nonetheless, even as colleges and universities have deepened our commitment to the public and democratic ideals at the heart of Campus Compact, **the challenges around us have grown**. We have seen a decline in the culture and practice of democracy, as evidenced by the polarization of our political discourse and institutions. And we have witnessed a rapid increase in economic inequality, exacerbating America's persistent racial divide and eroding the capacity of higher education to play its historic role of enabling social mobility.

We therefore face a choice: We can conclude that the challenges are too great and scale back our ambitions for the public and democratic value of higher education, or we can redouble our efforts with a renewed commitment to preparing students for democratic citizenship, building partnerships for change, and reinvigorating higher education for the public good.

Recognizing the special responsibilities of presidents and chancellors in a democracy, we choose the latter course. We choose to articulate the public purposes of the institutions we lead. We choose to deepen the work of our campuses by ensuring that our teaching, research, and institutional actions contribute to the public good. And we choose to work together to accelerate the pace of change commensurate with the local, national, and global challenges we face. For while we compete for students, for funding, and for victories on the athletic field, when we act in the civic realm we act in concert, speaking with one voice to make the case for the contribution of higher education to the public good.

To advance the public purposes of higher education, WE AFFIRM THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS, which characterize our current commitments and name the ideals toward which we will work with renewed dedication, focus, and vigor.

These are commitments we make to each other with a recognition that **our goals** for a thriving and sustainable democracy cannot be achieved if we act alone—and that they cannot be denied if we act together. Our success over the last thirty years gives us confidence that we can build a world in which all students are prepared for lives of engaged citizenship, all campuses are engaged in strong partnerships advancing community goals, and all of higher education is recognized as an essential building block of a **just, equitable, and sustainable future**.

In affirming these statements, each of us makes a **commitment** to develop a **Campus Civic Action Plan within one year** after March 20, 2016, or the date thereafter on which we become signatories.

Our Civic Action Plans will state the **actions our campuses will take** as we **move forward** with a **renewed sense of urgency**, along with the **impacts we expect to achieve**. Our Civic Action Plans will be **shared publicly**, as will our assessments of the progress we are making in achieving the goals stated in the Plans.

We empower our students, faculty, staff, and community partners **to co-create mutually respectful partnerships** in pursuit of a **just**, **equitable**, and **sustainable future** for communities **beyond the campus**—nearby and around the world.

We prepare our students for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good.

We embrace our responsibilities as place-based institutions, contributing to the health and strength of our communities—economically, socially, environmentally, educationally, and politically.

We harness the capacity of our institutions—through research, teaching, partnerships, and institutional practice—to challenge the prevailing social and economic inequalities that threaten our democratic future.

We foster an environment that consistently affirms the centrality of the public purposes of higher education by setting high expectations for members of the campus community to contribute to their achievement.





Building a Great Plan Together

The Civic Action Plan development process is an opportunity for all campuses to maximize the impact of engagement for students, communities, and our shared world. We encourage all colleges and universities to move forward from your own starting point, with the most engaged institutions pushing beyond existing limits. In that spirit:

Plans may emphasize **improving existing efforts** or **launching new initiatives**. The emphasis should follow from the context and goals of the institution.

Plans should emphasize **sustainable change**, primarily through building **lasting capacity** and **changing systems**, **policies**, and **culture**.

Great Civic Action Plans will move campuses toward comprehensive engagement for the common good. Rather than focusing on a single area, such as student engagement, CAPs create an opportunity to envision an integrated approach to engaged teaching, scholarship, partnerships, and institutional action.

Plans will demonstrate how your institution will broaden and deepen its work in realizing **the five commitments from the Action Statement** on page 5.

The commitments are neither a checklist to be accomplished nor a menu of options. Instead, they are a set of guideposts for developing an integrated and comprehensive approach to achieving the public purposes of higher education.



Elements of a Great Plan

As you build your plan, consider including sections that address the following topics:

PLAN RATIONALE

In the context of your institution—its history, traditions, priorities, new directions—why do the principles embedded in the Action Statement matter to you now?

How do the public purposes of higher education guide your work?

How is your institution's commitment reflected in existing documents, such as mission statements and strategic plans?

INSTITUTIONAL BASELINE: WHERE DO YOU BEGIN AS YOU SEEK TO MOVE YOUR CAMPUS FORWARD IN ACHIEVING THE PUBLIC PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

Describe the existing engagement infrastructure on your campus. How do you already support community engagement? How is your college or university serving as an anchor institution in the community?

How are the five Action Statement commitments currently being addressed on your campus?

What existing data do you have that may allow you to create benchmarks in relation to the five commitments?



STRATEGIC APPROACH:
How will you organize
your engagement
efforts to maximize impact?

CAMPUS TEAM: WHO ARE THE RIGHT PEOPLE TO DEFINE A BOLD VISION AND DRIVE INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE?

Who will be on your team? What positions this group to see the big picture at the institution and in the community? What gives your team the necessary perspective, persistence, and power to make lasting change?

What are the expectations of team members and of the team as a whole? How will the team ensure that voices beyond those included on the team are heard?

Is the team inclusive of the variety of stakeholders involved in an aligned approach, including the following: senior administrator (preferably CAO); strong representation from academic leadership (deans, department chairs); engagement leadership (e.g., center directors); engaged faculty; students; key community-affecting functional areas such as admissions, financial aid, human resources, purchasing, real estate; key community leaders; institutional research?

TIMELINE AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

What is the overall timeframe for the plan? How long will it take to build capacity, reform systems and policies, and deepen the campus culture of engagement?

When will key plan steps take place?

Who is responsible for each element of the plan?

What reporting mechanism will allow for ongoing plan monitoring? Who is responsible for monitoring plan progress?

- → There are several strategic approaches described on the next page. Will you adopt one of those? Or will you develop an approach of your own?
- → How will this approach relate to your existing engagement infrastructure? Who will do what? Do you need to change relationships or structures to achieve the outcomes you seek?
- → How does your strategic approach connect to the other strategic priorities of your institution?

OUTCOMES: HOW WILL YOU PUT THE ACTION STATEMENT COMMITMENTS INTO PRACTICE?

How are these outcomes tied specifically to the five commitments in the Action Statement?

Describe the performance measures and indicators tied to the outcomes. How can progress be measured over time?

How will these actions change your institution? How will medium-term changes contribute to lasting change for students and communities? Key elements to address:

- → Sustainable capacity development: How will you increase the capacity of your faculty, staff, and students to engage effectively with communities beyond the campus? How will you build your institution's capacity to support partnerships?
- → Culture: How will you create a culture in which all units expect to advance public goods through their work? How will you spur a campuswide conversation about the public purposes of the whole institution?
 - Example: How will you create an environment in which your purchasing and HR departments consider whether their efforts can reinforce relationships built through teaching and research partnerships?
- → Policy and systems: How will you advance progress in policy areas such as tenure, promotion, and faculty rewards; staff evaluation and rewards; curricular change; admissions and financial aid; employment, purchasing, and real estate decisions; and community voice and participation?

EGBOLD GENERAL STATES

Your strategic approach should be organically connected to the outcomes and indicators you described above and should link to your existing infrastructure and your plans for improving it. Your strategic approach is the overarching framework for enacting the change you seek. Here are some examples:

Platform partnership: A central partnership between your institution and one or more external entities to achieve a set of shared goals. This might be, for example, a partnership with a particular neighborhood or a K-12 school system that allows for engagement by many faculty, students, and units on campus.

Leadership in a collective impact network: Perhaps your community seeks to achieve a goal that requires broad collaboration, such as increasing degree attainment across a city or neighborhood. Your institution might take the lead on such an effort, coordinating the work of others and aligning your own engagement efforts in pursuit of that outcome.

Signature model: This is an approach in which the institution's identity is tied to an overarching engagement commitment. The opportunities for engagement might be varied, but they are structured, for example, to give every student an engagement experience of one kind or another.

As an action-oriented coalition of colleges and universities, we ask that members work toward field-level change in collaboration. The following components of the Civic Action Plan are designed with this in mind.

How will you communicate with others about your work, share lessons, inspire others? What will you contribute to Campus Compact to share with all members? How will you draw on the tools and resources provided by Campus Compact?

How will your campus president or chancellor participate in leading a campaign to advance the public purposes of higher education in partnership with other institutional leaders?

- → Promotion and tenure policies that reward community engagement
- → Sustainability
- → Higher education participation in Pre-K-20 partnerships
- → Increasing access, success, and completion through community engagement
- → Higher education as an engine for breaking down inequality
- → How else can we work together?

Campus Compact is here to help

Campus Compact, both through our national office and through state and regional Compacts, stands ready to help our members build great CAPs. Throughout the spring and summer of 2016, we will be building web resources to support your efforts. Check **compact.org** frequently. Reach out to the national office or your state or regional Compact office for advice and guidance.

With hundreds of Campus Compact members simultaneously developing and implementing Civic Action Plans, we have an opportunity to accelerate the pace of positive change on our campuses and in our communities. On each campus, our impact can be significant. Across the country, our impact can be extraordinary.

Let's go bold together.



compact.org