COMMITTING TO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

THE ENGAGED DEPARTMENT INITIATIVE IN NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND

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# Table of Contents

Abstract.................................................................................................................................................1

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Engaged Dept. Movement .................................................................2

Chapter 2: The Northern New England Engaged Dept. Initiative .................................................5
  Overview ............................................................................................................................................5
  Lessons Learned from the NNE EDI (Challenges and Strategies) .............................................7
  How do these findings compare with other studies? .................................................................13

Chapter 3: A Guide to Curriculum Development in the Engaged Department ..........................16
  Step 1: Beginning the curricular revision process .................................................................19
  Step 2: Action planning and planned evaluation ................................................................24
  Step 3: Understanding current activities and attitudes .........................................................27
  Step 4: Identifying potential changes to curriculum ..........................................................31
  Step 5: Developing (or improving) meaningful partnerships .................................................33
  Step 6: Providing professional development .......................................................................35
  Step 7: Addressing resistance (by demonstrating success) ..................................................36
  Step 8: Celebrating success ...............................................................................................37
  Step 9: Sustaining the Change ............................................................................................38

Appendices
  A: Participating Units in the Northern New England Engaged Department Initiative ..........42
  B: Sample Learning Outcomes Document ............................................................................43
  C: 3-Phase Model for Service-Learning Curriculum Design ..............................................46

About the Authors ............................................................................................................................48
Abstract

This report is the product of the 3-year project on the part of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine Campus Compacts to involve units on their campuses in the "Engaged Department Initiative". Funded by the Davis Family Foundation, this project included 19 academic units that attended Engaged Department Institutes, applied for mini-grants to support engaged department initiatives, and provided progress reports and qualitative survey information on their progress. A major focus of this initiative was curriculum revision – the strategic integration of service-learning throughout the curriculum of a department, major, or school. The work resulted in the revision or creation of at least 94 service-learning courses across the three states and in a few cases campus-wide integration of service-learning. This report, after providing background information on the Engaged Department Movement, shares the common lessons learned among these units for supporting the planning and implementation of an engaged curriculum as part of a movement toward overall departmental engagement. It then presents concrete tools and strategies gleaned from this initiative that can be adapted and used by any department seeking to strategically integrate engagement into its curriculum.
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Engaged Department Movement

Origins

In the late 1990’s, as practitioners and leaders in the service-learning movement reflected on their progress, those connected with Campus Compact came to a valuable realization. While much work had been done with individual faculty members to integrate service-learning into distinct courses, and great progress had been made at the institutional level on many campuses, there was a piece missing in the middle. Departments (or other similar units) had yet to be engaged as a target audience. Yet, in so many ways, departments and their leaders play a critical role in determining the “fate” of engaged scholars – will their work be supported and valued? Can they continue to do their work amidst unit-wide pressures? Will others in their unit understand their work? Will their courses live “by themselves” or will they be part of a larger plan? What will happen to their partnerships if they leave the institution or the area, or even go on sabbatical?

In response to these and many more questions, as well as in a proactive measure to try to capitalize on the potential of department-level engagement, Campus Compact published the “Engaged Department Toolkit” (Battistoni et. al, 2003). This Toolkit was “designed to help departments develop strategies for including community-based work in their teaching and scholarship, making community-based experiences a standard expectation for majors, and encouraging civic engagement and progressive change at the departmental level” (www.compact.org). It includes both the rationale (why become an engaged department) and some of the processes (how to become an engaged department) that can help campuses to explore this idea. Concurrently, Campus Compact began sponsoring “Engaged Department Institutes,” bringing multiple members of academic units together to embark on the process of becoming an engaged department.

What is an Engaged Department?

An “engaged department” was described by Battistoni et al as one in which “the emphasis shifts from individual faculty, courses, and curricular redesign to collective faculty culture – changing the culture from one of ‘my work’ to one of ‘our work’” (p. 13). Further, the engaged department “is one that has shifted faculty culture toward a focus on the public work of department

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1 Service-learning is a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and development. Reflection and reciprocity are key concepts of service-learning (Jacoby, 1996).
members” (p. 13). The unit not only shares a common commitment to community engagement and public scholarship, but members of the unit support each other in carrying out the best practices of these commitments. This means everything from a common set of values (a mission/vision statement, common language, presence of these values in publications and public messages, and meaningful presence in the rewards structure), to shared commitment to community partners (who may work with different actors in the unit across time), to a comprehensive and strategically-planned curriculum that integrates engagement throughout the major or academic program.

Becoming an Engaged Department
Saltmarsh and Gelmon (2006) wrote that a department is ready to become an Engaged Department if: it has a “cadre of faculty, preferably including at least some senior individuals, who have experience with community based education,” has “department faculty who have experience with community partnerships,” if “there is an infrastructure on campus...intended to support faculty in community-based teaching and learning,” and if the departmental chair is supportive of the initiative (p. 35-36).

The Engaged Department Toolkit (2003) presented a basic set of practices and principles that could be used to move a department from individual engagement to a collective focus on engagement. It was designed as a resource to host an “Engaged Department Institute,” and includes material ranging from the conceptual to the practical – from examining and understanding departmental culture to concrete course planning and assessment tools. Narrative chapters are followed by worksheets, and a CD-Rom provides files that can be used by departments or facilitators in the process of an institute. The Toolkit provides a vision, and a number of reflective tools to begin the process of moving toward the vision (Chapter 3 will build upon these tools based on lessons learned since the Toolkit’s publication). Its self-declared role as a guide for an Engaged Department Institute situates it as a means for opening dialogue among department stakeholders, primarily faculty. Though somewhat theoretical when it was written (there was not yet a great deal of departmental experience to build from), the Toolkit proposes that becoming an engaged department, in essence, means: changing from an individual to shared culture, shifting in focus toward public purposes, making concrete changes in curriculum and values structures, and renewing commitment to community partnerships.

What makes an Engaged Department Initiative Successful?
Since the publication of the Engaged Department Toolkit, hundreds of departments across the country have moved forward with this initiative (a simple Google search will turn up a variety of examples). As is true with any movement, results vary. Some have made great progress, leading toward significant culture shifts and wholly revised curriculum. Others have simply made enough progress to make the unit a more welcoming home for engaged scholars. Still others have not made the progress they might have hoped, and individual faculty members find themselves struggling to find support for their individual engagement.

In 2006, Kevin Kecskes published Engaging Departments: Moving Faculty Culture from Private to Public, Individual to Collective Focus for the Common Good. With this book, Kecskes followed up on the
Engaged Department concept from the time of the publication of the original Toolkit, and collected case studies from units across the country that had taken part in the initiative. A valuable tool for departments embarking on the process, this publication includes case studies from 11 “national exemplars” in the Engaged Department movement – each shedding light on lessons learned and key strategies that helped them to make progress. It also includes a comprehensive analysis of the Engaged Department Initiative at Portland State University (Kecskes’ home campus) which included 20 departments. As identified by Edward Zlotkowski and John Saltmarsh in the concluding chapter of this book (p. 287), “The success of engaged department initiatives appears to rest on a few key factors: leadership... collaboration... curricula... reward... and infrastructure.” The case studies in Kecskes’ book are especially valuable in their focus on departmental culture – the imperative for individual faculty work to move toward collective departmental or unit goals and visions. *Lessons learned from the case studies in this book will be compared to the Northern New England Initiative in Chapter 2.*
Chapter 2: The Northern New England Engaged Department Initiative

Overview
In 2007, Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont Campus Compacts received funding from the Davis Family Foundation to embark on an Engaged Department Initiative. The goal of the proposal was to transform academic units from across the three states into more strategically engaged communities over the course of a 2-3 year time period. In the process, coordinators expected the initiative collectively to:

- Redesign, deliver, and assess at least 37 new service-learning courses;
- Train at least 50 faculty members new to service-learning;
- Create 19 action plans for service-learning integration at the department level;
- Complete at least 7 action plans focused on the revision of the tenure and promotion process to support service-learning;
- Disseminate successfully revamped majors, departmental action plans, and tenure and promotion processes over the National Campus Compact Website.

As evidenced by the focus on service-learning, curricular revision was a major component and expected outcome of the initiative. Yet through Engaged Department Institutes, additional workshops, and ongoing consultation, the initiative also sought to address key cultural transformations, the faculty rewards system, and assessment priorities. As will be discussed in “lessons learned” the time to focus on departmental culture and rewards became an essential step to making curricular reform possible.

The initiative also utilized an action planning protocol (as discussed in Chapter 8 of the Engaged Department Toolkit), requiring each participating unit to develop an action plan consisting of overarching goals, steps to achieve them, participating team members, etc. (p. 79).

The first phase of grants focused on action planning for curricular engagement, and the second phase consisted of planning and implementation related to faculty rewards. This report specifically addresses the first component of the initiative.

Participating units
19 Units (including departments, majors, minors, schools, and core curricula efforts) were awarded grants for the first year, and 17 of them continued into a second year (see Appendix A for a full list of participating units). Institutions represented included state colleges and universities, private liberal arts
colleges, faith-based institutions, and specialty colleges (art). There were a wide variety of disciplines represented including: environmental science, art, communications, sociology, linguistics, behavioral sciences, criminal justice, and French. It is important to note, as well, that 6 of the 19 “units” were actually institution-wide interdisciplinary initiatives such as core curricula, first year seminar, and general education programs. Each unit’s initiative was spearheaded by a planning team comprised primarily of faculty (though the role of other stakeholders and contributors will be discussed in lessons learned).

Each unit was asked to submit a narrative with their proposal identifying the characteristics of their department that made them a good candidate for the initiative. Similar to Saltmarsh and Gelmon’s criteria for departments that are ready to become engaged (2006, p. 35-36), coordinators were looking for units in which a significant number of faculty already had experience in service-learning or engaged scholarship, in which the department chair was supportive of the proposal, and in which a group of committed faculty were ready to attend an institute and commit to long-term planning. Matching funds from the department were also required.

**Major initiative components**

Two “Engaged Department Institutes” were held that brought together representatives of participating units with external facilitators and coordinators from the Campus Compact offices (each unit was required to attend one of the institutes). The Institutes included time for visioning, planning, and reflection and included a focus on overarching topics (culture, mission, vision) as well as more specific topics (course design, action planning, etc). Teams left these institutes with a draft action plan and the opportunity to develop a funding proposal for a sub-grant from the overall funding source.

Grants of $2000 each were awarded to participating units based on submitted narratives outlining the opportunities and capacities within the unit and completed action plans. Matching funds were required, and units were asked to re-apply for second year funding (17 of the 19 units did so).

Faculty training in service-learning was made available in each state by the Campus Compact office, mostly in the form of 2-day curriculum development institutes. Some campuses also offered training locally, using funding from the grant and internal or external consultants.

Consultation was available to all participating units from both Campus Compact representatives and facilitators of the Engaged Department Institutes, as well as previously identified Campus Compact consultants.

State-based gatherings were also held to bring together participating units within the state at the midpoint of the initiative. These meetings focused on sharing strategies and lessons learned, identifying and addressing challenges, and identifying next steps.

**Results/impacts**

The NNE EDI accomplished most of its quantitative goals, including:
• the creation or revision, and delivery, of 94 service-learning courses across the three states;
• the assessment of 76 service-learning courses through a tri-state course survey;
• the training of over 100 faculty members in service-learning pedagogy for the first time;
• the creation of 19 action plans for integration of service-learning at the departmental level;
• and (in phase 2), the inclusion of 5 campuses in a promotion and tenure grant initiative.

A complete project report on this initiative can be requested by contacting Liz McCabe Park at Maine Campus Compact (epark@bates.edu).

Lessons learned
Over the two years of the grant, participating units were asked to complete: a first-year progress report, a second-year final report, and a concluding (optional) survey on their experience. In addition to original proposals, these documents were analyzed first to prepare a report to the Davis Foundation on results and impacts (see above). Secondly, they were analyzed for this report – with the goal of discovering common lessons learned on process and strategy – what worked and didn’t work for these departments? How did they overcome challenges? What would they change if they were to do it all over again? What components were key to success? etc. Taken collectively, these lessons provide insight to units who may be just planning to start such a process. Lessons learned were also compared to findings in Kescke’s 2006 publication; while many similarities were found, there are also some unique views offered by these units that can be added to the overall set of resources for engaged departments.

Challenges & strategies
The following table outlines challenges identified by grantees in the NNE EDI, and presents strategies identified to address them. Common challenges/strategies have been grouped, and the challenges are presented in approximate order of how frequently they were cited by participants.

(Note: many people mentioned challenges directly related to service-learning practice, but here we address more of the macro-level challenges in terms of departmental change)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHALLENGE 1: TIME</th>
<th>STRATEGIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling meetings, getting group together, planning time for course development and reflection on courses, staying focused over time</td>
<td>Create a sense of shared ownership – ensure that a diversity of faculty and staff members are involved and will take responsibility for leadership. You may not always need everyone to be together at once, but the initiative will continue if multiple stakeholders are committed. Split up the work, go out to do it, and get together at planned intervals or when you already have something scheduled. Consider strategies to gather information or communicate progress without having to get people together (a monthly e-mail update; updates at departmental meetings).</td>
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Use grant funding to support faculty development time (actually pay for their *time* in addition to cost of training, conference, etc.). If you are going to include this in a grant, be realistic – include a full course release if possible.

Start small - “Service-learning light,” - and build on those projects (in terms of student work and partnerships) to set up for future success and eliminate the need to create entire new initiatives. Similarly, set incremental and achievable objectives for large departmental goals.

Stay flexible- it may take more time than initially expected. Keep focused, and acknowledge progress in order to avoid frustration.

Use conferences, workshops, retreats, etc. as good places to continue planning (participants especially cited resources and events offered by Campus Compact) – if they happen more than once that’s even better to help keep things moving. You don’t have to plan all of these events on your own, but consider incorporating on-campus options to alleviate pressure of having to travel off-campus.

Engage student leadership, such as teaching assistants, S-L assistants, etc. to help with tasks that take additional faculty time (be sure to provide training to these students).

Build in staff support, either specific to your unit or take advantage of staff support at the institutional level – staff can help in partnership development and maintenance, curriculum development, professional development and training, S-L facilitation, etc.

<table>
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<th>CHALLENGE 2:</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional Support</strong></td>
<td><strong>administrative/ institutional commitment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Connect the EDI concept to departmental and institutional mission(s) – make this connection overt – talk frequently about how engagement helps you to meet your existing goals, and is not just another thing to add to our to-do list on top of everything else.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Connect to other large initiatives on campus (first-year programs, core curriculum); if engagement is a part of these initiatives, you help to justify support and to ensure ongoing conversations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn to talk about engagement as a form of teaching and research, not something totally different; more work to begin with, but more hope of achieving goals too. Acknowledge additional work (and find ways to support it), but focus on additional reward.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
| Budget / Resources | Engage a wider group of faculty and include senior/more tenured members – if only a few faculty are working on the initiative and it doesn’t go beyond them, buy-in might not spread.  
Seek, and use, staff support/central office for supporting engaged learning.  
Talk about the work publicly whenever possible. Press releases, publications on and off campus, frequent communication to administration, celebrating successes publicly, etc.  
Consider the creation of a civic engagement certificate as formal recognition and institutional structure to support S-L.  
Use grant funding to leverage other funding – on-campus and off.  
Link to larger campus initiatives/programs so that you aren’t providing all of the necessary resources.  
Collaborate with nearby campuses to sponsor trainings, bring in consultants, etc. |
|---|---|
| **CHALLENGE 3:** Knowledge/Skills/Best Practices | **Definitions** – making sure people have a common understanding of “service-learning, engagement, etc.”  
Spend time at the beginning on definitional conversations – brainstorming followed by priority exercise to come to common agreement. Once a common definition is established, use it consistently and frequently; try to avoid frequent revisiting/questioning.  
Consider using established definitions from the field rather than creating your own if possible; while buy-in is important, starting from scratch can create pressure.  
Show evidence of success and impact so that you can spend less time discussing whether this approach is valid and move on to how to improve it (“meeting of the minds”). |
| **Skill development** – professional development for faculty in service-learning; | Take advantage of external opportunities for professional development/training – use grant funding to cover costs, and use these opportunities to either: attend individually and report back; or attend as a team. |
| **Best practices –** identifying, following, learning from; Assuring quality in courses | Consultation – use grant funding to bring in external consultant to both build skill and offer credibility. Create trainings that are specific to your unit’s needs and speak directly to your areas of focus.  
Mentorship – create venues and structures for more knowledgeable colleagues to provide feedback, guidance, and advice to newer faculty.  
Collaborate in course design - create venues and structures for faculty to share syllabi, project designs, assignments, reflection tools, etc.  
*Venues* could include: faculty brown-bag lunches, seminar series, meetings, consultations, one-on-one mentoring experiences, etc. |
|---|---|
| **CHALLENGE 4:** Student Workload/Capacity | Know your students and consider their developmental levels and progress - pay attention to skill level, knowledge capacities, and identities (part-time, nontraditional?) when designing your overall curriculum. Don’t set them up for failure or set up a workload that is beyond their capacity.  
Build S-L/engagement into the curriculum at multiple levels so as to prepare students to work at higher levels later (scaffold).  
Make sure that students won’t be expected to enroll in multiple service-learning courses in a given semester.  
Explore on-campus partnerships to alleviate needs for extensive travel and time outside of courses (especially at the beginning levels). Bring partnerships and project work into established course meeting times when possible.  
Remember to substitute, not add, to a given course. |
| **CHALLENGE 5:** Assessment Of overall initiative | Include students in reflection on overall initiative; consider student surveys to gather information about their experiences. Host formal and informal conversations; engage students as researchers to conduct / facilitate this evaluation.  
Connect to accreditation and program/major assessment initiatives |
going on at the same time. They can help inform each other and it will be more helpful if they happen concurrently.

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<th>CHALLENGE 6: Resistance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Involvement of “established” faculty members whose “pedagogical philosophies” might not match up.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use assessment (both at your institution and beyond) to prove effectiveness of the pedagogy;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connect to central departmental or institutional mission (see above); talk about engagement as a tool to meet a variety of goals and objectives (a win-win);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realize and acknowledge the variety of pedagogical strategies that will help to meet departmental goals; SL might not fit in all courses and could be complemented by other teaching strategies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDI in a “nontraditional unit” – general education, integrated studies, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central institutional support is key; make sure key leaders are voicing support; again, link to campus mission, vision, and strategic planning.</td>
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<th>CHALLENGE 7: Partnerships</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality, Relationship-building, Communication b/t faculty in relation to partnerships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop more strategic tools for assessing the appropriateness of partners – choose carefully and thoughtfully so that partnerships can last beyond an individual course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop long-term relationships with nonprofits (and other partners) so that when opportunities arise you have that relationship in place, instead of developing relationships only for a specific course or project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss partnerships among faculty – know who is working with whom, who has existing long-term relationships, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Host gatherings with departmental-level partners to facilitate and build relationships – to get feedback, discuss future projects, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Think about the role of a S-L coordinator in sustaining and supporting relationships with partners. Is there someone in this...</td>
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Further questions on the survey asked participants to expand upon key elements of the initiative. Participants were asked: “Who was involved and what difference did that make?” (through multiple questions.) They were also asked to complete two sentences: “We could not have made progress in this initiative without _____” and “If we were to do it all over again we would do _____ differently.” These questions shed light on the relative importance of some of the above strategies, and are discussed further below in the categories of “Key Players” and “Key Resources.”

**Key Players**

- **Faculty** buy-in is essential, including participation from those who might not already be “converts” to the engaged department process. Participants in the Northern New England Engaged Department Initiative (NNE EDI) cited the importance of having one or more faculty members initiate the Engaged Department process – preferably faculty members who have service-learning experience, but also solid reputations and relative seniority in the unit. Faculty members were most often cited as the ones who initiated the project or brought the opportunity to the rest of the unit. As one unit described, it was important that faculty involvement be “democratic” and participatory. It was also important that faculty members who were not inclined to use service-learning were still included in, and supportive of, the overall conversation. While they may not be actively pursuing engaged teaching, their courses are still a part of the overall student experience and can complement the engagement.

- That said **staff support** seems to be just as important. A number of units expressed the imperative that a staff member (a service-learning coordinator, Campus Compact liaison, or external consultant) play a significant role in both catalyzing the engaged department initiative and keeping it going. Units who did not have a staff member coordinating or supporting the initiative cited the lack of such support as one thing they would change if they could go back and do it again.

- **Administrative** (Dean, Chair, etc.) support and “blessing” was also important, but not mentioned nearly as much as faculty collaboration and buy-in. The concept of collegiality and shared culture among colleagues appeared to have a stronger influence, though some mentioned that association of the initiative with a less favorable leader could in fact harm the process.

- Fewer units were able to meaningfully involve **students** and **community members** in the planning process, though they were mentioned heavily in terms of stakeholders on which the process was focused. Some units did collect feedback and input from students through surveys or other involvement, but did not involve them as members of planning committees. The nature and culture of higher education could certainly explain this fact – the need to address internal culture among faculty colleagues can be the most prevalent and challenging aspect of the initiative, and having students or community partners in the room could be both awkward and a waste of their time until there is a more active role for them to play.
Key Resources

- **Trainings, workshops, professional development**: In addition to staff support as a key resource, units also cited the importance of involving experts (internal or external consultants) and of attending regional and local trainings. The importance of these elements was three-fold:
  
  o First, developing the knowledge and skills of faculty was important to making sure there was capacity within the unit to accomplish their goals;
  
  o Second, obtaining feedback and consultation on curriculum development and unit-wide initiatives proved helpful to both keep the movement going and make good decisions about curricular changes;
  
  o Third, enabling participants from the unit to spend time reflecting, visioning, and dialoguing with each other was cited as key to making positive culture change and maintaining momentum.

- **External support and funding**: When asked to complete the sentence “We could not have made progress in this initiative if not for: __________,” 9 out of 10 survey respondents emphatically mentioned Campus Compact, the events and structures of the initiative (institutes, action planning guides, etc.) and the actual grant itself. As one unit said, “I think we’d still be talking about doing this if we hadn’t applied for the grant.” The workshops, funding, and consultation from Campus Compact staff were described as “critical” to catalyzing the initiative and providing the time, space, and resources to make progress.

- **Time**: Many units mentioned the benefit of having time to work together as a unit and reflect on the process, but even more mentioned the lack of time as something they would change if they could do it all differently. While finding time to meet and do the actual planning was one element of the need for time (see above chart), the actual time span of the project also arose as an area of focus. Phrases like “we would have started earlier, we would make more progress with just one more year, or we’re getting there but need a little more time” were common. This notion was related to both the planning process for the engaged department as a whole, and for designing specific service-learning courses. They seem to indicate that what seemed like a do-able project in two years at first, became something that would take at least three years to fully accomplish, with more time dedicated to planning conversations at the beginning. Being flexible and open to changes while concurrently maintaining momentum became an important strategic need.

**How do these findings compare to other studies?**

As mentioned above, Zlotkowski and Saltmarsh (2006) concluded that “the success of engaged department initiatives appears to rest on a few key factors” including: leadership, collaboration, curricula, reward, and infrastructure (p. 287).
Leadership, as defined by Zlotkowski and Saltmarsh, includes support from the department chair in providing advocacy and creating a supportive environment (p. 287). Kecskes, in his 2006 chapter outlining lessons learned from EDIs at Portland State University (Chapter 15) also cited the important role of the department chair; “In many cases where the chair leads the effort,” he said, “there are higher percentages of engaged faculty, increased numbers of opportunities to disseminate the work, and a higher number of courses in the curriculum that were revised and/or made permanent in the core curriculum” (p. 228-229). Involvement of the chair was certainly cited as important by participants in the NNE initiative, especially in convincing those who might be resistant and in helping to shape cultural values in the unit. However, participants were more likely to discuss collegiality and shared culture among faculty colleagues as a priority/necessity (the second element on Zlotkowski and Saltmarsh’s list).

In addition, staff support to actually make things happen was even more of a focus (as discussed above under “Key Players”), and would be included in the notion of “infrastructure” in the above list; likewise Kecskes (2006) described the importance of a “Point Person” – someone who keeps momentum going and can be turned to for support and assistance (p. 230,238). He goes so far as to suggest that units re-appropriate funds to support such a point person (as some units in the NNE initiative did).

This lack of emphasis on administrative role in the reports of the NNE initiative (compared to previous research) is an interesting comparison. It is possible that further conversation would reveal roles that the chair played that were not as visible to participants, or that felt more like “a given.” Alternatively, it is also possible that collaboration surpassed hierarchical leadership for many of these units. This possibility should be considered by future EDI units – knowing your culture and the balance between leadership and “democratic” participation that would work in your setting would be paramount to success – one size does not fit all.

Institutional-level support was a commonly cited challenge among the NNE participants, and aligns with the notions of reward and infrastructure as mentioned above. The strategies mentioned regarding aligning the EDI with existing campus initiatives align with Kecskes’ findings in 2006. “Intentionally recognizing the connections to and leveraging community-based learning and research agendas with broader community priorities can attract resources and quickly extend the reach of unit-wide initiatives,” he said (p. 229). This was especially true for those who were pursuing the EDI in nontraditional “units” such as interdisciplinary majors or campus-wide curricula. This trend of incorporating engagement into cross-campus programs was perhaps not part of the early Engaged Department vision. However, with current national initiatives focusing on inter- and trans-disciplinary learning outcomes (such as the AAC&U Global Learning for a New College Century document), the imperative to look at engagement across departmental boundaries becomes even more important. Further research could study specifically the best practices and strategies for the EDI in units not traditionally considered “departments.”

It should be noted that during the second year of this initiative the NNE Campus Compacts did issue a call for proposals around faculty rewards – a faculty rewards institute was held in which action plans were created – some by the same departments involved in the EDI and some at the institutional level. This paper does not include an analysis of the reports from that component of the initiative, but it is
important to recognize the role that rewards play in this conversation, as noted by Zlotkowski and Saltmarsh (2006).

Other strategies identified by NNE participants also align with recent research (providing professional development, providing incentives and paying for faculty time, starting with small steps, the importance of strategic partnerships, etc.).

Somewhat unique to this experience (though perhaps parallel to Kecskes’ office’s role with departments at PSU) was the role that an external organization played. Almost every unit identified Campus Compact as an important support structure to the initiative. Many, in fact, gave this organization as their answer to the question asking “We could not have made progress in this initiative without ______.” By offering the Institute(s), additional professional development opportunities, action planning structures, and funding, and by requiring periodic reporting, this external body helped to maintain momentum and expectations within each department. There was someone to whom you had to propose formal plans, report your progress, etc. Accountability and support were both in place through this relationship.

While all Engaged Department Initiatives focus in part on the curriculum, this initiative held up clear expectations about curricular revision. As such, it also offers a series of tools and strategies around curriculum development. *The following chapter outlines those “take aways.”*
Chapter 3:  

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Important: Read this First!

When you purchase a new piece of electronic equipment, there is always that little booklet staring at you from the top of the box—important, read me first! You will not be able to work this piece of complicated machinery, it seems to be saying, if you don’t first read all of the warnings and directions provided herein. Yet how many of us read it? Most of us, we would guess, toss it aside to use as a later reference and dig into the wires and pieces to assemble our new equipment. We’ll go back to use the directions and warnings if we run into trouble. How many times have you realized that you might have avoided some frustration if you had heeded that warning and read the original information?

The same is true for trying to make institutional change. Have you turned to this section of the report because you’re looking for concrete tools to change the courses in your department? Did you do so before reading the sections that came before? If so, we urge you to STOP HERE and go back. Over the years since this Initiative began, participating units have learned valuable lessons about the culture shift that is required when a department decides to move toward strategic engagement. There are ways to lay the groundwork, begin the conversation, and frame the effort that will help you to be successful and to avoid, or at least foresee, some of the frustrations that other units have encountered.

In addition to reading about the lessons learned from this particular Engaged Department Initiative, we encourage you to read the original Campus Compact Engaged Department Toolkit (available at www.compact.org), as well as Kecskes’s 2006 “Engaging Departments” (especially chapters 1, 3, 15, and 18 as well as any case studies that relate to your goals).

About this “Guide”

The following suggested tools and strategies are those that seem to have worked well for the units involved in the Northern New England Campus Compact Initiative, and are especially drawn from work at the University of Vermont (UVM). Presented is a menu, in approximate order, of the tools you might use as you go about integrating service-learning more strategically and extensively into the curriculum of any given unit. Keep in mind, however, that your unit is unique—your culture, values, goals, and visions may vary from this timeline. We encourage you to pick and choose what is useful to you,
keeping in mind the lessons learned from other units. These steps were developed collaboratively by staff in the Office of Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning (CUPS) at UVM and faculty members from participating departments. They are informed and enhanced for this publication by the stories and reports of other campuses and units involved in the larger regional initiative.

Case Study: Engaged Departments at the University of Vermont

The University of Vermont’s approach
The Engaged Department Initiative at the University of Vermont (UVM) has involved two academic units with support and facilitation from the Office of Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning (CUPS) and Vermont Campus Compact. Building on a long history of service-learning and civic engagement, UVM created the CUPS Office in 2003 to support and advance academic civic engagement. By 2007, over 60 service-learning courses were being offered across at least 20 disciplines. In some units, service-learning courses were more prevalent with faculty involvement growing year-by-year. These units had high levels of engagement, but had not initiated a department-wide conversation about this growing trend. Some faculty were also encountering challenges such as disincentives in the rewards process, lack of student readiness for upper-level service-learning courses, or overcommitted students taking several service-learning courses in a single semester. With support from Vermont Campus Compact and civic engagement literature such as the Campus Compact Engaged Department Toolkit (2003), the CUPS Office partnered with academic units to address some of these challenges and to build on existing success to strengthen the potential impact of engagement. In both cases, the academic units chose to focus on enhancing curricular service-learning at the undergraduate level first, although both units have since explored other areas such as faculty culture and faculty rewards policies for engaged scholarship.

Case Study 1: The Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources
Established in 1973, the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources (RSENR) is one of 10 colleges and schools at UVM. The RSENR is home to about 40 faculty, 20 research staff, 16 administrative staff, close to 600 undergraduate students across six academic majors (Natural Resources, Wildlife Biology, Forestry, Environmental Science, Environmental Studies, and Recreation Management), and nearly 120 students in M.S. and Ph.D. programs. The RSENR approached the process of becoming an Engaged Department from a curricular level with the goal of increasing capacity across the School for student and civic engagement through “collaborative learning” (Smith and McGregor, 1992). Collaborative learning, in this case, refers to learning experiences in which students work with each other and/or with the community to achieve learning objectives; in RSENR this includes problem-based learning, community-based learning, and service-learning. Objectives for achieving this goal included identifying key desired student learning outcomes, incorporating appropriate types of collaborative learning into the School’s core curriculum, providing professional development opportunities to faculty and teaching assistants, and disseminating information about their process.
Case Study 2: The Department of Community Development and Applied Economics

The Department of Community Development and Applied Economics (CDAE) is one of six units within the UVM’s College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS). The mission of the department reflects its commitment to engaged teaching and research: “CDAE supports sustainable local, regional, and international communities through interdisciplinary research, education, and outreach that serve the public interest.” A relatively young department at UVM (established in 1996), it has recently experienced tremendous growth in its three undergraduate majors, eight minors, and two master’s degree programs. The department has approximately 300 undergraduate majors and 90 graduate students. CDAE approached the Engaged Department process with the goal of examining “how community engagement is integrated throughout the Department.” CDAE outlined the following objectives to help them work towards their goal: 1) identify challenges and opportunities for community engagement; 2) support service-learning faculty and courses; and 3) investigate more strategic incorporation of community engagement throughout the three undergraduate majors.
Step 1: Beginning the curricular revision process

1a. Why change our curriculum? Developing a rationale for revision

There are many reasons an academic unit might undergo a curriculum revision process—assuming, of course, that curriculum revision ever ends! Many departments enter this process before or after an accreditation review or a change in the leadership of the unit. Others might view the curriculum as a key leverage point in addressing concerns around the student experience (e.g. too many credits, too little time). The Engaged Department Initiative supports curriculum revision with the goal of addressing a variety of concerns (student workload, preparation, and skill development; faculty support for engaged teaching; improved community partner relationships, etc.). However, it also presents a more overarching goal of “becoming more engaged,” at the heart of which is improving student, faculty and community partner impacts and experiences in service to the greater good.

What is the rationale for your department? Is “becoming more engaged” enough, or can you combine that goal with a rationale that also helps to solve other departmental challenges? Can you present the opportunities that come with engagement as key to your mission or your discipline? Defining the unit’s rationale based on key motivations and driving factors, individually and collectively, is the first step for a successful curriculum revision process. Doing so requires understanding the current challenges in the unit, as well as the opportunities for improvement. Internal documents such as mission/vision statements, alumni survey reports, student evaluations, curriculum learning outcomes, etc. can be useful sources of “data” to justify the needs and commitment of the unit. “Data” could also include stories, gut instincts, things people wish the department did, etc. Consider beginning the process with the collection and review of such documentation, evidence, and testimony. What messages, themes, and commonalities arise? Do these reflect what is actually happening in the unit? What challenges or opportunities can be identified to which engagement can be connected?

Table 1 lists key questions you might ask in your unit to assess “readiness and commitment” for a redesign process. Questions such as “What are your unit’s civic engagement strengths?” and “How does this initiative fit into your broader program vision and other curriculum reform initiatives?” point to the importance of defining this process in terms of your own department’s goals. You may need to conduct additional research in your unit to fill in gaps in knowledge about departmental needs or stakeholder attitudes and opinions (see Step 2 for specific tools).
Once you have identified a rationale based on internal data and stories, consider connecting it to external data – resources from the community engagement or higher education field can help to provide legitimacy to your instincts. Consider finding examples of engagement within your discipline, or engaged units in your discipline at other institutions (see Kecskes’ 2006 “Engaging Departments”).

1b. Who’s going to take this on? Identifying key players and stakeholders

In addition to clear and agreed upon rationale, a successful curriculum redesign process requires balanced input from unit leaders, stakeholders, and “worker bees” (to conduct research and facilitate the process). Key questions to consider are:

- Who will leverage their leadership position to ensure that this process is sustained and supported from the top?

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Table 1: Key Questions for Assessing Readiness and Commitment*:

- Please describe your department/unit’s civic engagement strengths on an individual and departmental level.
- How many courses does your department/unit offer?
- How many of these courses have an engaged component? Briefly describe the engaged components.
- Identify faculty already using service-learning, community based learning/research, etc.
- With what community partnerships is your department or unit already involved?
- What other assets related to your department’s current civically engaged work would you like us to know about?
- How might this initiative further your work as a department?
- Why are you interested in this initiative?
- Does your department regularly review the major/program, and if so, where are you in that review process?
- How does this initiative fit into your broader program vision and other curriculum reform initiatives?
- If this initiative fits with disciplinary or professional initiatives, please describe.
- How does it align with or contribute to your institutional goals and/or initiatives?
- Please describe your department’s commitment to this initiative.
- What is the time commitment/ structure you will create to support this work?

* (NNE Campus Compact, 2007)
- Who will be the face(s) of this initiative at faculty meetings and other key presentations?
- Who will facilitate the logistics of planning and scheduling necessary meetings and communication?
- Who will collect necessary data or conduct literature reviews?
- Who needs to be at the table to influence (and own) the outcome?
- Who has something to contribute (time, unique perspectives, data, social capital)?

As evidenced by the testimony of units in the NNE initiative, the role of faculty in creating a collegial and democratic approach to the initiative is paramount. They are the ones who are going to be teaching the classes, working with partners, and managing their workload in order to make the engaged curriculum possible. They need to be not only involved in the process, but taking a significant leadership role in determining goals and priorities. That said, faculty members also need support to keep the initiative moving forward. It is imperative that someone is identified to “staff” the engaged department initiative and curriculum revision process. That person could be an actual staff member (within the department or in a collaborating civic engagement office) but it could also be a faculty member who is awarded course release time to focus specifically on the initiative, or an administrative leader who is asked to take this on as part of their departmental leadership role. Either way, this person needs to be ready to be both task-master and skilled community creator, engaging stakeholders in meaningful and productive ways, ensuring shared ownership of the initiative, and maintaining momentum and energy around the project.

Revisit the “challenges and strategies” table, as well as the section on “Key Players” in Chapter 2 to remind yourself of the lessons learned by units engaged in the NNE initiative, then think about how those ideas apply in your own context. Consider who will be involved in your initiative and what role they will play. Make sure that anyone who is a stakeholder gets an opportunity to be involved at some level. While faculty members may be the primary players, community partners and students will be heavily impacted by the initiative – how can you capture their voices, offer opportunities for ideas and feedback, and engage them in helping to accomplish specific tasks of the initiative? Based on the experience of units at UVM and beyond, it may be difficult for these stakeholders to take part in the initiative as leaders, but their involvement is still incredibly important (refer to the challenges and strategies table in Chapter 2 for ideas on how to involve students and community partners).

Both Engaged Department processes at UVM units have a committed academic leader (Dean or Chair), staff support (AmeriCorps VISTAs and graduate assistants) coupled with participatory leadership of faculty members (though not all faculty members) and input from students and community partners.
1c. What will involvement look like? Designing appropriate committee, task group, or working team structures.

Your first instinct might be to create a totally inclusive Engaged Department Committee (ours was, and likewise with many of the units in the NNE initiative). You might want to invite a number of faculty members, community partners, students, and staff to join that committee and start scheduling times for them to meet. But wait...is a giant committee really the right way to go? Your intentions are good and you are trying to be inclusive, but will it be effective?

Your first challenge will be time. As many of the units in the NNE initiative testified, finding time for even a small group of stakeholders to meet or to attend off-campus trainings can be a huge challenge. And faculty time is valuable – to truly get the time you might need for faculty to play a leadership role in the initiative you would have to buy out a number of course releases (so who would teach the students?).

Your second challenge will be meaningful involvement. Anyone who has worked in civic engagement efforts on a campus knows that there is always a great deal of “figuring out” to do among faculty before community partners and students can contribute (from the details about distribution of credits to the faculty rewards system). Do you want them sitting in the room during these conversations wondering why they are there or how they can be helpful?

Members of the Keene State College Integrative Studies planning group encourage others to “carefully consider team composition, not only related to position, but also to personality (team dynamics) and a true commitment to the effort” (Year 1 Narrative).

Think critically about who should be involved in the planning, at what level, and how you will use their time. In the RSENR at UVM, we learned that the large committee was not going to be effective, so we shifted to a small “executive committee” structure that included 3-5 faculty members who played key roles with the courses that were identified as potential “fertile ground” for service-learning (in this case the core curriculum), 1 administrator (in this case the Dean, who was supportive of the initiative), and the staff person who was supporting the initiative (an AmeriCorps VISTA). This group met regularly. Rather than maintaining a large, separate committee of more involved stakeholders, they relied on existing groups and used already planned meeting times to communicate with these groups. For example, they gave periodic updates to the faculty at faculty meetings, and they eventually merged their efforts with the existing core curriculum committee in the school. While community partners and students had initially served on the larger committee, we decided that their time was not being used efficiently, so we asked instead that community partners give feedback at key strategic times (e.g. inviting nonprofits to share the skills they would be looking for as future employers). We used an existing student leadership program within the
school to get feedback from a group of students periodically, and we had a senior student gather feedback on service-learning courses as part of her senior thesis.

In contrast, CDAE did not have a planning committee. Rather, a staff person worked with the department chair to identify action steps and priorities. She engaged faculty members through a survey, regular updates and conversations at faculty meetings, and one-on-one conversations. When it came to planning for curriculum change, she met and worked with faculty members associated with each major to get initial thoughts, went off to map their curriculum, then came back to them with findings to help them consider next steps.

Many participants in the NNE initiative used similar strategies – delegating work to individuals and reporting back periodically, aligning EDI work with existing committee or working group structures rather than creating something new, etc. Membership in that core group, then, becomes even more important – make sure you have faculty members with some seniority and “clout” in the department as well as newer faculty who have new energy and ideas.

1d. Where do we want to go? Creating a shared vision
Lastly, as you begin an Engaged Department Initiative, it is important to agree to a common vision. Coming to consensus around shared goals, outcomes, and indicators of success will help to establish a common pathway for improvements and will provide a framework for later evaluation. It is critical to involve representatives from each stakeholder group in this process in order to build participants’ motivation and excitement for the process. Bring your stakeholders together to reflect on where your department is, and where you want to be. A conversation could be based on the data and departmental driving factors discussed above, and/or may include reading and discussing a common article or unit stakeholder story. At UVM, both RSENR and CDAE used “Chapter 2: Creating an Engaged Department” from the Engaged Department Toolkit (2003) to launch the process by raising key questions and making sure all participants understood the broader goal.

This is also the time to explore definitions of the terms and concepts you associate with your engaged department initiative – what does “engagement” mean to you? How does your department define “public service” or “service-learning?” How do you define “community?” As many participants in the NNE initiative discovered, making assumptions that we all mean the same thing when we use certain terms can create roadblocks to progress. Addressing this issue right from the start helps to create a shared vision that is commonly understood. Castleton State College’s Sociology Department was one of many units that took time to craft a unit mission statement and to make sure that there was a “meeting of the minds” – a “general agreement or consensus by the involved stakeholders of the importance of engaged learning” (Year 1 report). Consider whether you want to use existing definitions (from engagement
literature) or go through the process of creating your own definitions. The latter could be a never-ending pursuit or the most important thing you do – only you will know!

The RSENR at UVM approached this task by outlining seven key desired learning outcomes that the School hoped to achieve through participating in a revised curriculum as a result of the Engaged Department Process. Members of the School’s Engaged Department Committee drafted this set of outcomes loosely based on the AAC&U’s Essential Learning Outcomes (American Association of Colleges and Universities, 2007). The Committee then developed a survey and a set of focus group questions, which were used to gather feedback about the outcomes from students, faculty, and community partners. This allowed the School to identify the results they wanted to achieve through the Engaged Department Process and also provided a framework for tracking the connections between learning outcomes and courses (see Appendix A for an example of a learning outcomes document that served as a tool for identifying vision in RSENR).

Your shared vision could take many forms…from a vision statement crafted collaboratively and included on all initiative materials; to a logic model identifying inputs, outputs, and outcomes; to a set of assessable learning objectives identified for graduating students (or all of the above). The important point is that you both identify and document your vision, so that it can serve as both a guiding concept and inspiration as you move forward.

**Step 2: Action planning and planned evaluation**

So you’ve convinced everyone that this initiative will be worth the effort, and you’ve identified your vision and goals and your team is in place…what next? When the actual work begins, how will you make sure that it is effective, efficient, and meaningful to stakeholders?

2a. How will we get the work done? Action planning can be formal and flexible

The action planning process for each unit will look different depending upon identified goals, unit culture, and individuals taking leadership roles. At UVM, the RSENR curriculum redesign process was largely structured by an Engaged Department Initiative grant though Campus Compact. With this grant, formal action plans were required that detailed specific actions that would be taken over a given year. Specific areas for curriculum changes were identified within the plan by the Planning and Executive Committees, such as “institutionalize collaborative learning in the senior year core curriculum” and “revise the sophomore year experiences within the core curriculum based on developmental level and the desired outcomes of collaborative learning.” The action plans brought legitimacy to the process for stakeholders who may have been somewhat skeptical of the process and its outcomes; they also provided a sense of
accountability and standards – stakeholders knew where the group was headed and progress could be measured against these goals.

Sample action planning and strategic planning rubrics are included in both the Engaged Department Toolkit (pg. 79-87) and Kevin Kecskes’ Engaging Departments (Appendix A, p. 291). Below is a sample action planning rubric developed for one component of RSENR’s initiative (based on a rubric provided in the NNE proposal criteria).

**RSENR Objective 1:** Better incorporate principles of collaborative learning across our curriculum by improving our understanding of the key desired outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action To Be Taken</th>
<th>Evidence of Success</th>
<th>Individuals To Be Involved</th>
<th>Lead Individual</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Prioritize key desired outcomes of collaborative learning for RSENR students that are identified by faculty, current students, recent alumni and community partners/future employers | Process for collecting ‘key desired outcomes’  
A written guide to these ‘key desired outcomes’ | RSENR faculty, Associate Dean, Coordinator of Community-Based Learning, Current Students, Alumni, Community Partners, Guest speaker | Associate Dean and Coord. of CBL | Completed Fall 2008 |
| Assess development of the ‘key desired outcomes’ through collaborative learning in the curriculum | Assessment tools in place to evaluate collaborative learning outcomes | Engaged Curriculum Planning sub-committee (PI and co-PIs), faculty, students | Associate Dean and Coord. of CBL | Completed Spring 2009 |
| Celebrate and reward collaborative learning achievements | Opportunities to showcase student, faculty and community partnerships | Student Advisory Board, Coord. of CBL, Career Services Coordinator | Associate Dean and Coord. of CBL | Ongoing in 08-09 - incorporate into event by May 2010 |

Table 2: Sample Engaged Department Action Planning Rubric from the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Vermont.

In comparison to the formal action planning in RSENR, CDAE’s action planning was more flexible and data-driven, reflecting the atmosphere of the department. Given the department’s applied mission, the majority of faculty members had already bought into
the integration of civic engagement throughout the curriculum. The action planning for the CDAE work was developed through an on-going conversation between the Department Chair and the facilitating staff member and informed by both dialogues with faculty members at monthly department meetings and one-on-one conversations. One step of the process (usually an effort to collect information), led to the next (a decision on what to do with that information) and tools and processes were brought in to the initiative when they seemed to be most needed and appropriate. This flexible approach also worked well because the staff person had a menu of tools in her “toolkit” that she could use when appropriate (such as those that are listed in this Chapter).

Flexibility is key in engaged department planning. As Plymouth State University’s Art Department testified, there is a “need to remain flexible and adaptable to changing dynamics and to new and emerging opportunities within the community” (Year 1 narrative).

2b. How will we know what’s working or whether we have succeeded? Thinking in advance about evaluation and assessment

Having a strong action plan, vision, and set of goals and objectives provides you with a basis upon which you can evaluate your success. As such, if you have these things developed you’ve already taken a first step toward evaluation and assessment of your Engaged Department Initiative. Plymouth State University’s Environmental Science and Policy program, for example, created a student survey to be distributed to participants in service-learning courses before those courses were even implemented (NNE EDI Survey), and the Northern New England Campus Compacts created a survey tool to measure the impact of newly created service-learning courses on student retention.

There are a number of effective resources out there for planning your assessment strategy. Consider reviewing Chapter 7 in The Engaged Department Toolkit or consulting the Campus Compact book Assessing Service-Learning and Civic Engagement: Principles and Practices (Gelmon, S., 2001). This publication will not attempt to cover those topics, since existing resources are strong.

We would, however, like to add two important points to the topic: evaluation should be both formative and summative. Just as reflection in service-learning should happen throughout an experience and not just at the end, evaluation of an Engaged Department Initiative (both formal and informal) should be a periodic, planned agenda item. In the case of both UVM efforts, “reflection” became a key word; not only did members of the planning committees and unit leadership take time throughout the initiative to reflect on the process and progress, but the key staff people from each unit held monthly meetings with each other to share strategies, compare notes, and discuss ideas. In addition, these staff people facilitated public presentations of the work, bringing faculty members and leadership from the two units together to present common lessons.
learned. This collaborative communication between units was replicated in state-based engaged department gatherings held to achieve similar goals in each state. While hearing from other engaged units might not always be easy, or a priority, if you can find a way to do so that is convenient and constructive, it can be a great support structure and means for reflecting on your own progress.

We would also add that there is a lesson to be learned from facilitative leadership (Interaction Associates, Inc., 2007); it is important to assess and reflect on not only concrete results, but also the process and the relationships formed throughout the initiative (Interaction Associates, Inc., 2007, Section 2). These areas can be equally, if not more important, than the more concrete numbers of courses revised or students involved. The development of long-term relationships with partners, or the increased communication between faculty members, can be a hugely valuable “result” of the initiative that will have long term impacts.

Be intentional about your plans to evaluate, and pay attention to what you are planning to evaluate – your outcomes will be much more than concrete numbers and statistics.

**Step 3: Understanding current activities and attitudes**

It is important to gather baseline data and participant input about current activities and attitudes surrounding engagement early in the Engaged Department Process. This will help determine current levels of community engagement in the academic unit. It will also involve faculty members and students in a preliminary conversation about community engagement. Both the RSEN and CDAE began the Engaged Department process by collecting baseline data about the community engagement activities already in existence in each unit. This work not only illustrated the ways in which the departments were engaging with the community, but also helped to identify opportunities and barriers for future engagement. Below is information about two specific tools that academic units can use to collect information about current activities and attitudes with regard to civic engagement in their department, school, or campus.

**3a. What are Faculty Already Doing? The Faculty Community Engagement Tool (FCET)**

The Faculty Community Engagement Tool (FCET) (Westdijk, Koliba, & Hamshaw, 2010) was designed at the University of Vermont with the goal of aligning the collection of baseline data on faculty community engagement activities with the development of programming and policies designed to facilitate, develop, and sustain these activities across the university. Both departments involved with the Engaged Department Process utilized a FCET in an effort to gather preliminary information about faculty activities and attitudes. In both cases, an electronic survey was used to poll faculty about current practices regarding connections with the community, as well as their perceptions about possible opportunities and barriers for supporting civic engagement. In addition to the
FCET, the RSENR also conducted a student survey to gather information from students about the types of community interaction they participated in as part of their coursework, and how they generally experience community-based teaching practices (this survey was conducted by an undergraduate student as her senior thesis). Both the FCET and the student survey provided RSENR and CDAE with a deeper understanding about their departments’ current involvement with civic engagement.

Table 3 shows selected results from the FCET administered to the CDAE department at UVM in 2009. Faculty were presented with a list of common challenges associated with community-based teaching and were asked to identify all those that they have experienced when having their students interact with the community. More than 80% reported experiencing at least one challenge. The most commonly reported challenge was communication issues between students and the community partners (52%). Faculty also indicated another important challenge was a lack of time to effectively plan interactions with community partners (44%). Several faculty members further emphasized how much time is necessary to effectively plan and implement meaningful service-learning projects in their open-ended responses. Students being unable to complete necessary tasks and having conflicts within their groups were also named as significant challenges (39%).

Understanding what challenges are commonly experienced within a unit provides insight into identifying what strategies or resources might be effective at addressing these issues. It also builds a support network amongst faculty members who realize that they are not the only ones having difficulties with student-partner communication or finding time for collaboration with their partners. The FCET is designed to provide information to both the facilitators of the Engaged Department process and the members of the academic unit who have completed the survey. The FCET data provide an excellent foundation to discuss and validate the faculty activities, while envisioning future directions. The FCET is more fully described, and an example provided, in an article published in the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* (Spring 2010); please see this article for more information.
Table 3. Challenges related to community-based teaching reported by CDAE faculty. (Note: Responses were not mutually exclusive; n=23).

3b. What is happening in our curriculum right Now? Curriculum mapping

Another tool that can be used to develop a common understanding of current curricular practices regarding civic engagement is a curriculum mapping exercise, which is presented in Campus Compact’s *Engaged Department Toolkit* (Battistoni et al., 2003, p.43). As stated in the Toolkit, the curriculum map is “meant to provide a structured way to view what is currently present in the curriculum in order to determine what additional revisions can be made in line with the department’s civic engagement goals and definition” (p. 42).

At the University of Vermont both the RSENR and CDAE completed curriculum maps that were loosely based on the Toolkit’s template and were designed to answer the following questions: 1) How many courses are consistently taught as service-learning? 2) What is the nature of the service-learning experience?; and 3) Where in the curriculum does each service-learning course take place (e.g. first year, junior year, etc.)? Depending on the departmental goals and vision, these maps also included such information as common community partners, learning outcomes targeted in the class, and knowledge areas covered. The curriculum map not only provided answers to these questions, but also highlighted inequities or gaps in the curriculum (e.g. students in one major are taking five service-learning courses before graduating but students in another
major are only taking one). Having a comprehensive understanding of what is currently taking place in the curriculum provides an opportunity to think more intentionally about what ought to be taking place and what revisions are needed to make that happen.

**CDAE Public Communication Major Curriculum Map**  
05/10/10; Prepared by Kelly Hamshaw

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Name and Number</th>
<th>Requirement or Elective</th>
<th>Semester Taught</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Key Concept or Skill</th>
<th>Products</th>
<th>Type of Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CALS 001/183: Communication Methods</td>
<td>CDAE requirement</td>
<td>Fall and Spring</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Critical Thinking, Effective Public Speaking, Group Work</td>
<td>Presentations, Speeches, Written Reflection, Critique</td>
<td>First Year, skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALS 002/085: Information Technology</td>
<td>CDAE requirement</td>
<td>Fall and Spring</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Critical Thinking, Public Speaking, Writing Skills, Information Technology Skills</td>
<td>Web pages, Presentation, Resume, Graphs, Report, Spreadsheets</td>
<td>First Year, skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDAE 002: World Food, Population, &amp; Sustainable Development</td>
<td>CDAE requirement</td>
<td>Fall and Spring</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Critical Thinking, global awareness, diversity</td>
<td>Critical Thinking Essay, exams, creative extra credit</td>
<td>Large Lecture, global survey,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDAE 014: Visual Design Studio</td>
<td>PCOM requirement</td>
<td>Fall and Spring</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Design, Software</td>
<td>2 Portfolios including analysis, postcard, logos, ads, posters, &amp; brochures</td>
<td>Lab; potential SL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDAE 015: Visual Communication</td>
<td>CDAE requirement</td>
<td>Fall and Spring</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Understanding visual language/images and influence of the visual</td>
<td>Class Assignments and Journal</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDAE 016: Digital Illustration</td>
<td>PCOM Elective</td>
<td>Every Spring</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Effective use of Illustrator &amp; Photoshop; illustration skills for use in communication</td>
<td>Poster, calendar, &amp; brochure imagery. Illustrator projects.</td>
<td>Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDAE 024: Fundamentals of Public Communication</td>
<td>PCOM requirement</td>
<td>Every Fall</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Communication theory and concepts</td>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDAE 061: Community Development Economics</td>
<td>CDAE requirement</td>
<td>Every Fall</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Introduction to microeconomic theory and concepts and implications for community development</td>
<td>Exams, class assignments</td>
<td>Lecture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Excerpt from a Curriculum Map of the Public Communications Major in the Department of Community Development and Applied Economics at the University of Vermont.
Step 4: Identifying potential changes to curriculum

The activities outlined above will most likely lead quickly to suggestions for revision to the curriculum, but you’ll want to think carefully about evaluating and prioritizing those possible changes. This is a great time for feedback and external research to help inform which of the opportunities for change your department will pursue.

4a. Who are our students and what do they need to succeed?

Student development and service-learning

As you envision the integration of community engagement into your departmental curriculum at all levels, you’ll need to think strategically about where, when, and how engagement (usually in the form of service-learning) will occur. This means you’ll need to think about how course design will vary depending on the course level and objectives, with special consideration to which students are likely to enroll in each course.

In the authors’ experiences supporting service-learning at the University of Vermont, a foundational reason for faculty, student, and community partner dissatisfaction could be traced back to a mismatch between the expectations of the projects included in courses and what students would be able to achieve given their skills, experiences, and developmental level. As a result, the authors consulted literature on student development theory in order to shed light on strategies for developmentally appropriate service-learning course design. Using this research, we developed a tool to assist practitioners in designing service-learning programs and course that effectively:

- Align expectations with student competencies;
- Offer the appropriate balance of challenge and support;
- Build student skills to progressively prepare them for the next level;
- Result in more positive and reciprocal relationships with community partners.

The Three -Phase Model for Service-Learning Course Design (Appendix B) is informed by student development theory and based on the principle of scaffolding—meeting students at the level they are at while challenging them to take one step up (not three). For example, learners early in their development may need an instructor to provide a high level of project structure and management, but as the instructor challenges them to gain confidence in their skills, they can move toward more involvement in their own learning, eventually being able to be self-directed. Instructors should adjust their role accordingly as learners develop, eventually becoming more of a “coach” and “consultant” to help them succeed. In addition to “instructor role,” the model explores considerations of the “extent of teamwork,” the “intensity or duration of the service-learning project,” the appropriate student “level of responsibility,” and the extent of “community contact”; it encourages faculty to design experiences that provide students with “exposure,” “capacity building,” and eventually “responsibility” for service-learning project completion. By moving service-learners through “phases” in
a course or curriculum, we are able to build their capacity over time while enhancing impact and satisfaction for all involved.

Phase I experiences provide a foundation for later service-learning experience by introducing students to concepts of service and the community perhaps through hypothetical or indirect projects. At the second Phase, students have been exposed to basic content in their academic discipline and have ideally been introduced to key concepts, skills and components of a service-learning experience. The goal here is to build student capacity towards mastery of these concepts and skills through progressively raised expectations with close monitoring and support. Phase three experiences typically occur as a culminating or “capstone” experience in the curriculum and offer an opportunity for students to demonstrate proficiency in the skills and content areas they have developed through previous courses or activities. Students are responsible for defining project goals and means for achieving them and are accountable for the results and to their project partners (team members or community organizations).

It is important to note that, as with any model, this simplified progression should be used to inform, but not strictly define, course design. You may need to vary your courses, for example, based on certain skills that students bring or to account for variability in maturity or skill level. Table 4 provides some strategies for addressing variation in student level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher Level of Ability/Maturity</th>
<th>Lower Level of Ability/Maturity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assign leadership roles within the group process</td>
<td>Create mixed ability groups (for peer mentoring)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create like ability groups (to compel achievement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign leadership roles within the whole class</td>
<td>Provide opportunities for individual feedback and improvement over time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: Strategies for Addressing Variation in Student Level within a Service-Learning Course

(Please contact authors for more information on the development of this tool including detailed explanations and examples – a full-length article is in process.)

Curriculum maps and the 3-Phase Model are useful tools for identifying curriculum redesign opportunities that may not be as visible or pressing as the most obvious challenges and opportunities within the department. For example, in both RSENR and CDAE the curriculum maps revealed an uneven distribution of regularly offered service-learning courses across their respective majors. In addition, the 3-Phase Model tool allowed us to recognize that in certain majors students were not adequately prepared for their capstone service-learning experiences as there were few or no Phase 1 or Phase 2 courses offered within their majors; this helped to explain the frustration that faculty members were feeling when students did not seem to succeed. At the same time, the maps also demonstrated that certain majors were potentially “overloading” students with service-learning courses—resulting in students being enrolled in multiple service-learning courses in a single semester.

Step 5: Developing (or improving) meaningful partnerships

When your department makes an active choice to become an “engaged department,” you are committing to working with community partners throughout the curriculum. As such, it is imperative that you think about your work with partners through a new lens (arguably a lens we should all use whether in an engaged department or not). The Engaged Department Toolkit offers a very useful chapter (Chapter 5) to encourage departments to reflect on their partnerships; it includes information about best practices and a worksheet with a series of questions you might consider when revisiting your partnership practices.

In an engaged department, a relationship with a community organization may shift from a one-time, single semester, project-based relationship, to a long-term relationship based on shared interests and reciprocity. In this latter iteration, projects can more fluidly be accomplished when they arise because the partnership is already in place. Likewise, the relationship with a partnering organization may shift from a two-way partnership with a single faculty member to an institutionalized partnership with the department. As such, you eliminate the “what if I disappeared” factor – partners can rely on a continued connection because they have made that connection at an organizational level with the department (and vice versa). Figure 1 below demonstrates
how a partnership might evolve over a three-year engaged department planning process.

Figure 1: Evolving from a partnership based on a single course and single relationship to a partnership supported at a departmental level over the long-term.

You may also want to consider new ways to frame partnerships with your department. Are there specific places, topics, or issues around which you could build all of your partnerships? An issue-based partnership might include a number of community organizations and faculty members all trying to achieve change around a certain community challenge over a number of years (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: A department-wide set of partnerships revolving around a community issue (could substitute geographic area).
Consider sketching a Venn diagram of the partnerships that exist in your unit. Are they uni-directional, short-term, and based on individual relationships? Or are they more institutionalized within your unit? Once you draw a representation of your current partnerships, sketch a few examples of how you might want those partnerships to evolve? Revisit this diagram as you move forward to fill in names of specific organizations, issues, faculty members, and classes. Share the visual with members of your department.

Step 6: Providing professional development

As identified in Chapter 2, building the skills of your stakeholders to not only be engaged, but be engaged successfully, should be a priority in your initiative. Revisit Chapter 2 to read about some of the lessons learned around developing and sharing best practices. There are pros and cons to each approach. For example, providing professional development on your own campus (either with local expertise or by bringing in consultants) could help alleviate some of the stress of trying to travel other places, but it also requires resources. Attending external conferences and workshops means you don’t have to re-create the wheel, but it may require more time and commitment on the part of faculty. The best avenue might be to pursue each of these options to some extent.

Remember that professional development opportunities can also be a great venue for continued planning; if you sprinkle these opportunities throughout your time frame you are creating formal “touch points” to continue important conversations about the initiative (and perhaps avoiding the “too many meeting” fatigue if meetings were planned for only this purpose).

Lastly, professional development opportunities don’t have to focus only on events and trainings. Consider creating mentoring relationships between experienced engaged faculty members and those newer to the effort; or set up a system for sharing and consulting on each other’s syllabi. These more fluid interactions can also help to maintain momentum if they are well-facilitated by a designated support person.

As members of the St. Michael’s College Applied Linguistics department noted, “As in all learning, once is not enough. Teachers need both time to process new ideas and support from more knowledgeable colleagues to bring them forward” (Year 1 Narrative).

Step 7: Addressing resistance (by demonstrating success)

Resistance to change can plague many curriculum revision efforts (or any change process for that matter!). It is important that you anticipate, and do not ignore or dismiss, pockets of resistance within the department. Your survey (or other similar
efforts) to determine current activities and attitudes will help you to have a good idea of where resistance may emerge. There are two ways to see resistance: first, you can begin to recognize that not everyone will be “on board” with the effort and that, in fact, that is not the end of the world. Some of the participants in the NNE initiative expressed learning that not all classes will be good candidates for engagement and not all faculty members need be fully engaged. They shifted their effort to be inclusive, but not required, and they made efforts to appreciate the role that these other faculty members played to complement engagement. In the RSENR at UVM, the engaged department initiative eventually came to focus on the core curriculum in the School; this focus allowed the group to hone in on an achievable goal based on a commonly shared interest in improving the core. They knew that all students would take these courses and therefore be exposed to at least this baseline level of engagement in order to prepare for senior-level work. This meant that not all faculty were required to personally adjust their teaching.

That said, resistors (if multiple or powerful) can have a heavy impact on a change movement. The second way to think about resistors is to envision what will help convince them to consider your vision. If external data and theory, and vision-based conversation are not enough, consider how you can demonstrate success in your own home base or help them see that the initiative will address a concern that they share. You may also want to consider the language you are using – is it familiar to your colleagues, appropriate to your discipline? Or could it be alienating or devaluing certain perspectives? For example, are you identifying service-learning as an “innovative” pedagogy and therefore inferring that other approaches are not innovative? Is the term “service-learning” itself somehow alienating or confining the conversation? Are you talking about “reflection” but not defining it well? Consider jotting down a list of the words you are using (your “lexicon”) and think about how they might be interpreted by your community.

Our approach in RSENR and CDAE sought to circumvent this resistance by building trust and momentum in the Engaged Department process from the onset. Both units had pre-existing challenges related to service-learning in their curricula prior to beginning the Engaged Department Initiative. By listening to faculty, student, partner, and administrator concerns about these challenges, we are able to identify the “low-hanging fruit”—courses that everyone felt needed improvements. As these micro-level revisions were made to individual courses within the curriculum, unit stakeholders become more open to broader, more macro-level discussions about curriculum revisions.

Example: The “Low Hanging Fruit”
A CDAE faculty member was finding himself continually frustrated and disappointed after several semesters of integrating service-learning into his sophomore/junior-level course. Students were failing to identify and contact community partners until much too late into the semester. Once they finally did
establish a “partnership,” the projects were often either inappropriate in terms of scope for the course or too undefined for the deliverables to be of high enough quality to meet the partner’s needs. The students didn’t yet have the skills and experience necessary for working on projects independently of the class.

The curriculum map for the major showed that there were no entry-level (Phase I) courses within the major prior to this course; there were no venues in which students would have been introduced to those skills in a more structured learning environment. This information helped clarify the problem and lead toward the identification of solutions (pre-identified community partners and projects, in-class time to work on projects, structured project-management reporting tools, a teaching assistant trained in project management, and planned check-ins with community organizations).

The revisions made to this individual course were welcomed by the faculty, students, and community partners: projects were better defined and more successfully accomplished; students and partners anecdotally reported a more positive service-learning experience; and the faculty member, who was on the verge of removing service-learning from the course due to frustration, has renewed his commitment to the pedagogy. In turn, the faculty member has shared his story with others who teach in his major and they are pursuing a more strategic approach to crafting courses across the curriculum as a team. This case has also been a powerful example to share with departmental leadership and other units.

**Step 8: Celebrating success**

At this point, you may realize that creating curricular change is by no means an easy feat to accomplish. You may encounter skeptics, be constrained by limited resources, or run into institutional barriers that hinder your progress. This makes celebrating success, no matter the size, all the more important. Whether it is completing objectives on your action plan or, a perhaps more difficult measure, achieving a stronger sense of your unit’s identity and commitment to engagement, celebrating success along the way will build momentum for the change process.

Success can be celebrated in a number of ways—both formally and informally. More formal and academic celebrations could take the shape of sharing your accomplishments through conference presentations, posters, and journal articles; this not only builds confidence in your work among colleagues, but improves your unit’s reputation beyond your campus. Nominating key contributing faculty or staff members from the participating unit for campus-based or regional/national awards is another way that success can be recognized. For example, a well-established long-term partnership
between a CDAE faculty member and his community partner that engages students in community-based research through service-learning received the 2010 Vermont Campus Compact Award for an Exemplary Campus-Community Partnership.

Informal celebrations can also occur regularly throughout the process; small gatherings such as colleague lunches or department meetings can provide an opportunity for updates on progress and reflection on achievement. Over a brown bag lunch at the year-end meeting of the Executive Committee of the RSENR Engaged Department Initiative, members reviewed the current action plan and reflected on progress made thus far. Momentum from this reflective processing led to more action planning for the next year. You may also want to tell the story of your success to others on-campus and in the community through press releases, special interest articles, or simple memorandum-based updates (to the administration, for example!).

The key to this step is to be sure to remember to intentionally create the time and space for celebration to happen; too often we get so bogged down in the details or challenges that we forget to do so.

**Step 9: Sustaining the change**

An Engaged Department Initiative represents an effort to move a unit toward an identified vision. When you achieve that vision, or get close to it, how will you sustain it for the long-term? In many ways, the initiative’s focus on culture change, and creating a shared value of engagement, helps to ensure that the work will continue because faculty buy-in has been established. But you will still need to identify leadership and resources to continue the initiative beyond an initial push. As you go about your initial effort, think about ways you can institutionalize your progress. Consider the following:

- What resources already exist on your campus to which you could connect your initiative? Is there a centralized civic engagement office with which you can form a relationship? Can you plug your projects and relationships into their existing frameworks to ensure long-term support and attention? At UVM, both engaged departments intentionally connected their work to the programs of the UVM Office of Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning (CUPS). Rather than creating their own trainings they simply made an effort to get more faculty involved in CUPS trainings – ensuring that at least one faculty member per year participated in the Faculty Fellows for Service-Learning Program, for example. They participated in existing initiatives such as the course designation process, the Service-Learning Teaching Assistant program, and in CUPS evaluations (such as a bi-annual community partner feedback questionnaire). While these programs were always available, the Engaged Department Initiative enabled the units to participate more strategically. By plugging into this more
institutionalized system, they help to address sustainability.

- How can you build leadership within the unit? The more faculty members who are trained in service-learning or have taken part in Engaged Department Conversations, the more potential leaders you have to continue the initiative. Consider being very intentional about how faculty members are involved and perhaps creating a plan for evolving leadership. Do you have faculty members who are engaged but not taking leadership? If so, what incremental steps could you take to guide them toward leadership? Can you invite them to give feedback on course syllabi, ask them to share their experiences in a faculty meeting, invite them to host a workshop? As you foster the leadership of these up and coming engaged scholars, you start to build the future of the movement.

- Are you telling your story? As mentioned above, celebrating success is an important component of an Engaged Department Initiative. It is also a tool for attracting attention and leveraging resources. Remember to collect your stories and your data. Keep these things on hand. A small “win” can lead toward a rationale for more resources, or serve as a great story to tell a funder.

- Have you made the leap to engaged scholarship? And are faculty members being rewarded for it? If faculty can pursue research and publications informed by and focused on their engaged teaching and research, they can achieve their professional goals while also achieving the department’s vision of engagement. As noted earlier, the NNE Engaged Department Initiative included a second phase focused on the faculty rewards system. Think about your departmental and campus rewards structures – do they support engaged scholarship? If not, what can you do to help scholars meet existing expectations through engaged scholarship; and, what can you do to explore potential changes to the guidelines?

- Can you support a staff member, or part of a staff member, for the long run? As identified in the NNE Initiative, staff support for engagement is essential. Can you find a way for one person to take a lead role in supporting the engaged curriculum you have created through this movement? If not within your own department, can you buy-out a portion of a staff person from a central office? At UVM, progress toward this goal has been incremental. We have moved from graduate student fellowships, to AmeriCorps VISTA positions, to positions funded by soft money. Each step has moved us one step closer to institutionalization of staff support. Look at other programs on your campus for inspiration and models – are there discipline-specific career advisors, for example, or academic or student support personal dedicated to certain units? How can you replicate such a model around engagement?
Sustainability should be a topic of conversation from the beginning of an Engaged Department Initiative. At UVM, we have found that resources can be re-allocated, shifted, or newly identified as long as there is a shared commitment to the value of this work. You might be surprised at what becomes available once you have demonstrated the importance of the movement.

**Conclusion**

The tools and strategies presented in this guide, based on the stories and testimony of many involved players, are meant to help build your toolbox as you embark on an Engaged Department Initiative within your own unit. We hope that the collective voices of these stakeholders help to identify strategies that will be impactful in other units and serve as an updated resource to the Engaged Department Movement. In the end, the culture of your own unit will determine which strategies you take with you, and which you might determine are not going to be useful. Paying close attention to your own setting will serve you best. We hope you will share your own story as your work develops, and we look forward to future toolkits that build upon our work and the efforts that have come before us.

Good luck!
References:


Appendix A: Participating Units in the Northern New England Engaged Department Initiative

Bates College - French Department
Castleton State College – Sociology Program
Keene State College - Integrative Studies Program
Lewiston Auburn College of USM – General Education
Maine College of Art – First and Second Year Seminar Program
Maine College of Art – Majors Integration Team
New England College - General Education Curriculum
Plymouth State University – Art Education Program
Plymouth State University – Environmental Science and Policy
Saint Anselm College – Core Curriculum: Humanities, Philosophy & Theology
Saint Joseph’s College – Communications Department
Saint Joseph’s College – Sociology and Criminal Justice
Saint Michael’s College – Applied Linguistics Department
Saint Michaels’ College – Peace and Justice Minor
Unity College – Experiential and Environmental Education
Unity College – Interdisciplinary Core
University of Maine at Machias – Behavioral Sciences & Community Studies
University of Maine at Presque Isle – Criminal Justice Program
University of Vermont – Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources
Appendix B: Learning Outcomes in the RSENR

Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources
The University of Vermont
Undergraduate Student Outcomes from Collaborative Learning

This document describes our aspirations for collaborative learning at the undergraduate level in the Rubenstein School of the Environment and Natural Resources. These “Collaborative Learning Outcomes” were endorsed by the RSENR faculty via surveys administered at a faculty meeting and via e-mail in spring 2009. They were additionally endorsed by RSENR community partners and students via focus groups in fall 2009.

Collaborative Learning is an umbrella term used to describe the many approaches to student-centered learning. These approaches can include one or a combination of problem-based learning, community-based learning, and service-learning, and can take place in academic courses, internships, campus/community service or combined therein. Collaborative learning takes on many forms but overall it requires interdependence between and among partners involved in reaching a common goal. These partners may include students only, or any combination of students, faculty and/or community partners.

Undergraduate Learning Outcomes

The following list of learning outcomes from collaborative learning for RSENR undergraduate students was developed by the Engaged Department Initiative ‘Outcomes Subcommittee’ and is loosely based on AAC & U’s “Essential Learning Outcomes for the 21st Century.” The outcomes are group together in the following skill categories: reciprocity, applied analysis and synthesis, problem solving, communication, group work, individual development and healthy relationships.

STUDENTS SHOULD IDEALLY DEMONSTRATE THE FOLLOWING SKILLS:
(Assessment contingent upon program and student capacities)

A. Reciprocity: Student will be able to effectively engage with community partners in a mutually beneficial capacity

1. By identifying partnership outcomes that meet their needs as well as the needs of the community partner (or public good).
2. By demonstrating the ability to apply and translate relevant information between academic and community partners.

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* This document was developed with input from Rubenstein School staff, faculty, students, alumni and community partners with the leadership of the RSENR Engaged Department Initiative Committee.
3. By using professional skills that include punctuality, effective presentation, clear verbal and written communication, respectful listening, taking initiative and offering constructive feedback when appropriate.

B. **Applied Analysis and Synthesis:** Student will be able to apply analysis and synthesis of information from diverse fields of knowledge to real-world problems

   1. By efficiently identifying information relevant to the question or problem through knowledge of scientific fields, literature, experiences and other valid sources
   2. By applying knowledge from a broad range of fields
   3. By demonstrating mastery of appropriate synthesis and analytical tools and skills
   4. By preparing and presenting information in products that employ appropriate scientific or user-friendly format.

C. **Problem Solving:** Student will be able to demonstrating flexible and effective problem-solving strategies

   1. By demonstrating the capacity to precisely and clearly identify problems and their proximate and root causes
   2. By developing and applying analytical frameworks to further understand the problem and possible solutions.
   3. By bringing multiple perspectives to bear on identifying, analyzing and comparing options for most effectively addressing the problem in a given context
   4. By using adaptive learning tools to refine understanding of the problem and relevant actions and identify necessary actions
   5. By translating ideas into plans and plans into actions based on clear roles, expectations and target outcomes.

D. **Communication:** Student will be able to communicate effectively with a wide range of audiences

   1. By identifying and employing the appropriate communication strategies in any situation.
   2. By employing an appropriate mix of text, graphics, figures, and other media to meet audience needs and expectations.
   3. By organizing thoughts/arguments logically.
   4. By demonstrating listening skills and responsiveness.

E. **Group Work:** Student will be able to work effectively in groups and successfully manage team projects

   1. By applying principles of project management (e.g. time management, workplans, roles, delegation) and performing increasingly more complex tasks with less detailed instructions
   2. By understanding group dynamics and decision making, including principles for collaboration and compromise, meeting facilitation techniques, and governance
   3. By giving and receiving feedback effectively
   4. By demonstrating accountability for individual responsibilities within a group project or partnership
   5. By understanding and using meetings and group decision-making techniques to successfully complete group projects.
F. **Individual Development:** Student will be able to pursue self-directed personal and professional development

1. By establishing a personal direction and orientation in one's life that takes into account personal, ethical, or religious values, future relationship/family plans, and vocational and educational objectives.
2. By developing the capacity to deal well with ambiguity and to monitor and control their behavior in ways that allow them to attain personal goals and fulfill responsibilities.
3. By demonstrating an ability to structure their lives and to manipulate their environment in ways that allow them to satisfy daily needs and meet responsibilities without extensive direction or support from others.
4. By demonstrating an ability to advocate for themselves as well as an awareness of ones personal limits and areas for growth.

G. **Healthy Relationships:** Student will be able to develop, sustain and make use of healthy interpersonal relationships

1. By establishing, cultivating and effectively drawing on campus and community networks to achieve personal and professional goals.
2. By respecting, accepting and seeking to include those of different backgrounds, beliefs, cultures, races, gender, lifestyles, and appearances.
3. By demonstrating an awareness of their own “culture,” including academic culture, and how it might influence assumptions and interactions with others.
4. By participating effectively as a global and a local citizen, with an awareness of place and historical context.
Appendix C: A 3-Phase Model for Service-Learning Curriculum (Page 1)

Service-Learning in the Curriculum: A Three-Phase Developmental Model

Service-learning courses and partnerships can be more successful for all stakeholders if they are designed to align with and build student capacity over time.

By understanding student development and considering the skills and knowledge levels of the students with whom you will be working, you can design a project that:
- Aligns expectations with competencies;
- Offers the appropriate balance of challenge and support;
- Builds student skills to progressively prepare them for the next level;
- Results in more positive and reciprocal relationships with partners.

Consider designing your service-learning course or program to align with the following three phases.

Phase I: Exposure
Phase II: Capacity Building
Phase III: Responsibility

(See reverse for details on each phase.)

While this model is helpful in designing service-learning courses that stand alone, it is also meant to spur conversation within a given academic unit or progressive curriculum. The more we build our students’ capacity, the higher they can achieve in the long run. If we do not pay attention to building that capacity, we risk potential disappointment for everyone involved.

This model is based on student development research and its links to course design—See related CUPS handout “Service-Learning and Student Development.”

Appendix B: A 3-Phase Model for Service-Learning Curriculum (Page 2)

**PHASE I: EXPOSURE**

Courses typically offered to first or second year students, or any student who has never been introduced to service-learning pedagogy. Often take place early within an academic career and/or major and serve as a foundation for future, more complex experiences.

Goals: introduction/exposure to service-learning and course content; initial skill development (teamwork, project management, interacting with community); introduction to reflection as academic practice; building cultural and interpersonal competencies.

Instructor Role: Primary Manager - defines project (in collaboration with community partner), carefully controls student interaction with partners, provides close guidance throughout the process, outlines clear processes and expectations.

Project Description: clearly defined, concrete, small in scale, time limited, often happen within the classroom; rather than in the field. Can also be "hypothetical" (not considered service-learning, but preparation for service-learning).

Connection to Academic Content: content is primary focus, project explicitly connected.

**EXAMPLES:**
- Entry level service-learning: event support; one-day service projects; survey or information gathering (with intentional reflection and connection to course content);
- Exposure to community: interviews; basic "mapping" exercises; event attendance; organizational profiles.

**PHASE II: CAPACITY BUILDING**

Courses typically in the sophomore or junior year - students are moving more deeply into their discipline and are beginning to master concepts and skills that can be effectively applied in community-based settings. Ideally, students would have experienced a Phase 1 course.

Goals: building student capacity, raising expectations, increasing student responsibility for outcomes; practicing personal/professional skills introduced in earlier courses; progressing to higher-levels of critical thinking through reflection.

Instructor Role: Facilitator - continue to provide structure (tools, timelines, and reporting) but raise expectations for students to self-manage within this structure; select partners and establish agreed-upon outcomes, but welcome student participation and input in the process.

Project Description: major component of the course (a unit or major project); may focus on an extended relationship with an organization (an enhanced internship or field-based experience); expectations are defined, but students take leadership in deciding how to meet them.

Connection to Academic Content: explicit, but challenges students to find additional connections, synergies, and critiques. Balance between focus on content and application.

**EXAMPLES:**
- "Deliverables" such as public relations materials, web content, exhibits, etc.
- Educational Outreach/Programming - students teach what they are learning to others;
- Second-level survey work - students play a role in designing and analyzing surveys;
- Consultation - students work with an agency to provide advice on planning, proposals, etc.;
- Agency "placements" - students work regularly in internship-like placements.

**PHASE III: RESPONSIBILITY**

Courses often designed as capstone or culminating experiences that take place during the final semesters of college experience, and could also be connected to student theses. Students at this level should have already been exposed to Phase 1 and 2 service-learning.

Goals: skill mastery, professional development, student accountability/responsibility for outcomes, independent decision-making, effective group work, problem-solving; mastering higher levels of critical thinking through reflection.

Instructor Role: "Coach" - empowerment with support; provide suggestions/tools for structure, ongoing consultation, but raise expectations for students to follow-through and seek resources on their own. Keep "in touch" with projects and partners to monitor progress.

Project Description: developed collaboratively between partners and students, with faculty input; require students to take high-level responsibility for defining, understanding, and working to address an issue; often span an entire semester or year; could focus on "deliverables," programs, initiatives, or ongoing professional roles within an organization.

Connection to Academic Content: students are demonstrating knowledge of content through projects. While content is still delivered, it may be driven by topics that support projects and related to transitions to professional roles.

**EXAMPLES:**
- Capstone courses - students work in groups or individually to define and complete projects with community partners based on proposals/interests from the organizations;
- Deliverables that move beyond a small-scale project to a larger implementation (media campaign, curriculum development, web site development, components of strategic plan, etc.);
- Service-learning enhanced internships (meeting clear community need; focused reflection);
- Undergraduate community-based research;
- Student leadership in service-learning programs at the Phase 1 or Phase 2 level (such as teaching assistant programs, coordination of international service-learning projects, etc.)
About the Authors

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Kate Westdijk, M.S. is a Program Coordinator in the CUPS Office and a former graduate and VISTA staff member of the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources. Kate wrote the original Engaged Department proposal for this department, conducted masters level research on faculty perspectives in the unit, and now advises this department as well as others in the Engaged Department Process.