Advanced Service-Learning Toolkit for Academic Leaders

2010

Resources for college and university presidents, provosts, chief academic officers, and deans who wish to deepen the civic education of their students and to increase the engagement of their institutions with their local communities.

The Engaged Campus

An engaged campus is one that is consciously committed to reinvigorating the democratic spirit and community engagement in all aspects of its campus life: students, faculty, staff and the institution itself. The call for civic engagement has been clearly articulated in several recent documents. (Presidents' Declaration, Wingspread Declaration, Civic Self Assessment). Community engagement includes service learning, which integrates community service into academic study, gives students an opportunity to improve their citizenship skills, and renews the faculty member's enthusiasm for

teaching. Service learning, however, is only one characteristic of an engaged campus. The engaged campus, like the service-learning student, recognizes that knowledge cannot be separated from the purposes to which it is directed. The engaged campus is not just located within a community, it is intimately connected to the public purposes and aspirations of community life itself. The engaged campus in unable to separate its unique responsibility for the development of knowledge, from the role of knowledge in a democratic society to form the basis for social progress and human equality.

In addition to extensive student learning through service, there are common practices that characterize an engaged campus. For presidents, this means a deep commitment to and articulation of the importance of community engagement. For faculty, this includes a scholarship of engagement to share their knowledge with and help their students learn from the community. For campuses, this means having staff whose job it is to build collaborative community relationships based on mutual respect. Finally, it is sharing with the community such physical and economic resources of the campus as space, athletic facilities, purchasing power and employment opportunities.

WHY SHOULD A CAMPUS BE ENGAGED?

American higher education has a long and rich tradition of seeking higher moral and civic purposes in its endeavors. College presidents have advocated for democratic reform, and students have challenged the injustices of society. In addition, campuses have been the sites of debate on the critical issues of the day and faculty have sought to provide students with the tools for rigorous analysis, critical reflection, and participation in the democracy. However, many in the academy are deeply concerned that these traditions are, today, threatened by both an entrenched emphasis on disciplinary divisions and an excessive focus on preparation for the workplace.

Campus Compact believes that, now more than ever, higher education is challenged to educate the leaders of tomorrow and to connect those future leaders with the world of today. There is widespread concern about the state of American democracy as voter registration continues to decline and public apathy and cynicism about political life increase among youth, even as their participation in service activities increases. We need to prepare students to succeed in a multicultural world both in America and internationally. At the same time, American communities reach out for help only to find a rapidly shrinking pool of resources. In spite of a strong economy, America has homeless people in every town, children going to bed hungry, and children whose education leaves them unprepared for work in a complex and unstable world.

It is a time in our civic life when the role of central government is declining and other sectors are being called upon to address our community needs and reinvigorate our democracy (Gardner, 1995). Higher education-its leaders, students, faculty, and staff-can be a key institutional force in this effort. Although subject to economic pressures and political agendas like all of our institutions, colleges and universities have the intellectual and professional resources to be actively engaged in addressing community issues.

There are many reasons for mobilizing the resources of higher education on behalf of society. This is part of the grand tradition of American higher education. Legislators and other stakeholders are asking about the social utility of higher education. Many campuses are located in disadvantaged communities, and all campuses are affected by the poor quality of elementary and secondary education of disadvantaged youth because it limits their access to higher education and narrows the pipeline of diverse talent that campuses seek.

The academy also has much to gain by community engagement, including the intellectual challenges of applying scholarship to the pressing issues of the day and the prospect of new interdisciplinary insights that the scholarship of engagement will bring. In addition, community engagement can be an important catalyst for the institutional change demanded by dramatic changes in the economy, advances in technology, and the increasing diversity of students attending college.

Indicators of an Engaged Campus

Any of the characteristics of wider institutional engagement, occurring in concert with other characteristics on a campus, suggests the emergence of an "engaged campus." However, it is unlikely that all characteristics will be apparent on any one campus. These characteristics should not be regarded as prescriptive; their value lies in the possibilities they suggest. They include:

1) **Mission and purpose** that explicitly articulates a commitment to the public purposes of higher education.

2) **Administrative and academic leadership** (president, trustees, provost) that is in the forefront of institutional transformation that supports civic engagement.

3) **External resource allocation** made available for community partners to create richer learning environments for students and for community-building efforts in local neighborhoods.

4) **Disciplines, departments, and interdisciplinary work** have incorporated community-based education allowing it to penetrate all disciplines and reach the institutions academic core.

5) **Faculty roles and rewards** reflect a reconsideration of scholarship that embraces a scholarship of engagement that is incorporated into promotion and tenure guidelines and review.

6) **Internal resource allocation** is adequate for establishing, enhancing, and deepening community-based work on campus – for faculty, students, and programs that involve community partners.

7) **Community voice** that deepens the role of community partners in contributing to community-based education and shaping outcomes that benefit the community.

8) **Enabling mechanisms** in the form of visible and easily accessible structures (i.e., centers, offices) on campus to assist faculty with community-based teaching and to broker community partnerships.

9) **Faculty development** opportunities are available for faculty to retool their teaching and redesign their curricula to incorporate community-based activities and reflection on those activities within the context of the course.

10) **Integrated and complementary community service activities** that weave together student service, service-learning and other community engagement activities on campus.

11) **Forums for fostering public dialogue** are created that include multiple stakeholders in public problem-solving.

12) **Pedagogy and epistemology** incorporate a community-based, public problem-solving approach to teaching and learning.

(Hollander, Saltmarsh, and Zlotkowski, 2001; Hollander and Saltmarsh, 2000)

Assessing Current Activities

Every institution does have some level of existing activity already going on, but institutional leaders are often puzzled as to how to find out what's already happening. A survey of all faculty must be carefully designed so as to be clear in the data it seeks to collect. Especially problematic is the use of language. Different individuals and disciplines may think differently about terms such as service, applied research, community partnerships, public service, volunteerism, service learning, civic engagement, and so on.

Leaders have a big impact on campus attitudes toward civic engagement when they seek to learn more about current activities. After all, the questions you may ask tend to send messages and direct people's attention. The very act of collecting information will inspire campus discussion and raise the visibility of engagement as a campus role.

Before collecting information about engagement activities, think through what you really want to know, what the impact of the collection may be, and how it will be used. It's one thing to collect a lot of information, but it's another thing to use it as a tool to promote progress. There are many ways to collect evidence, and suggestions are given below. However, you need to be prepared to analyze the information and use to answer critical questions such as:

• What is our overall strategy for civic engagement?
• What organizational changes need to be made to fulfill our engagement mission?
• What is the alignment among our academic strengths, community needs/assets, and engagement activities?

Strategies for Learning About Current Engagement Activity

Analyzing Institutional Commitment to Service

Suggestions for Campus Assessment Activities and Data Sources

• Support campus discussion to understand and define terms and create a common language of engagement
• Look at web pages for examples of engagement activity
• Analyze internal grant applications and sabbatical reports
• Analyze external grant proposal activity and funding streams – convene faculty who have engagement projects and support them as early adopters
• Add relevant questions to student or faculty surveys
• Review campus publications, reports, self-studies for examples
• Hold focus groups across academic units
• If your institution is small enough, convene the campus as a whole and discuss current engagement activities; or hold a community day that showcases projects
• If your faculty complete annual activity reports, analyze them for evidence of engagement
• Scan the course catalog for examples of service or community-based learning
• Review course syllabi for examples of service learning
• Inventory the partners and the projects of institutes and centers
• Establish a recognition award for engagement – track the nominations
• Hold town meetings that bring faculty and community together
Ask Campus Compact or other campuses with engagement experience to visit your campus and conduct an assessment

Strategic Planning for Engagement

The changing conditions of higher education, and the increasingly complex expectations society holds for universities and colleges, demand that each campus develop specific strategic directions that focus its efforts. Even long-time traditional taxonomies of higher education, such as the Carnegie Classification System, are evolving as a reflection of increased diversity among campus missions and greater complexity of institutional roles. While mission statements and strategic plans were once viewed by many as so much public relations puffery, there are now many

examples of institutions that have used effective strategic plans and well-articulated missions as active guides for institutional transformation and increased accountability.

Increased attention to the potential institutional role of civic engagement is often the trigger for institutional discussions about the specificity of the mission, and the clarity of strategic directions. For institutions that have been caught between the images of a research university and a teaching institution, defining and implementing the role of civic engagement often gives new clarity to both research and teaching, and results in a more integrated view of faculty work, student learning, and campus/community relationships. There is no doubt that community engagement is an important component of the scholarly work of any institution, and to fulfill this newly-understood role requires significant changes in structures, plans, and attitudes.

All organizations, roles, and functions change over time and context. If service once meant removal from society, then we argue that today such service by the faculty might be defined more as direct action, communication, and involvement with society. Rather than assume we know what is good for the citizenry, we argue that we need more engagement with society to determine needs, actions, and directions (Tierney, 1998, p. 5)

Civic engagement is not conducted in isolation from teaching and research. Effective practice of engagement draws on institutional academic strengths, and depends on integration with the institution's goals for teaching, learning, and research. Engagement requires investments in infrastructure, faculty development, and organizational change. Therefore, engagement requires strategic planning to ensure success and sustainability.

Every institution needs to make its own systematic decisions about the degree to which civic engagement is appropriate and relevant to their organizational mission and strategic directions. In addition, campuses that have made some progress in implementing engagement activities often wonder, "what will help move us forward to a greater level of engagement?" And, every campus needs to assess its performance in the area of engagement and plan for improvements and changes.

Key Questions:

How do you get a Campus Thinking about Civic Engagement?

Even if the campus does not yet have a clear consensus on its mission, or the mission review process is not complete, there is much that can be done to promote campus discussion about the role of civic engagement and to promote engagement activities.

A multi-dimensional approach is best because different members of the campus community will have different motivations or concerns about engagement or will respond to different kinds of incentives and rewards.

Motivations

In promoting campus attention to civic engagement, it helps to understand what motivates people, faculty in particular, to involve themselves in scholarly work related to civic engagement.

- *Personal values* – This is the right thing to do….it connects my personal and professional values.

- *Disciplinary Culture/Standards* – Engagement makes sense for my discipline (social work, etc.)

- *Incentives* – I'm interested, but I need assistance, support, time

- *Evidence* – I want to be convinced that this will have positive impacts on student learning, on research productivity, or on community conditions

- *Rewards* – This work is valid within formal and informal reward systems

- *Reputation/Prestige* – This work can bring respect to the individual, department or campus through new grants, a positive public image, donor support, peer recognition, etc.

What is the Role of Mission in Planning for Civic Engagement?

Mission statements are often dismissed as flowery pieces of public relations puffery, but when they are developed through institutional self-assessment and reflection, they can represent a graphic and specific consensus on the primary purposes and directions of an institution. In the past, most institutions had missions that sounded alike, but in practice they performed very differently. As pressures for accountability and performance assessment have increased, attention to the specificity of a mission statement – the visible, summative statement of the purposes and aims of a campus – has increased.

Traditionally, a mission consisted of some combination of the components of faculty work – teaching, research, and service. The flaw in most of those traditional missions is that they focused only on faculty work, and did not reflect consideration of the elements of student learning, societal expectations, or institutional relationships to the external environment. Exploration of mission is an excellent tool for inspiring campus discussions on the role of civic engagement, its relationship to other academic work, and the campus/community connection. The development of campus consensus on mission can inspire a higher sense of purpose, morale and motivation. In part this happens because the exploration builds new relationships, increases access to information and promotes shared responsibility. More importantly, campus concurrence with a specific and comprehensive mission eliminates competing ideas and focuses effort more effectively.

Ellen Earle Chaffee (1998) says that poor mission statements tend to merely describe "what we do." Effective mission statements, those that can serve as guide posts for institutional decision-making, also articulate "who we serve" and the expected benefits or outcomes of their organizational activities. The mission statement says what the institution intends to accomplish, what markets or populations it serves, and reflects the philosophical premises or organizational values that will guide its actions (Rowley, Lujan and Dolence, 1997).

Basically, most institutions confuse vision (the future) with mission (purpose, actions, outcomes). Here are some ways to think about analyzing or developing missions, and

preparing to explore and refine a mission, with special attention to exploring the role of civic engagement.

Does your mission need to be reviewed?

• How long has it been since the campus reviewed the mission? Has there been turnover in leadership?
• Is the mission statement used in budgeting or other decision-making?
• Does the campus community discuss competing visions for the future?
• Can anyone in your external community or region say what your mission is?
• Does the current statement say anything about your organizational values, your constituents, or expected outcomes?
• Does it explain why your campus is unique and different from other institutions?

What should be in a mission statement?

• Overall purpose, and historic roots of an institution
• General goals
• Constituent groups and stakeholders
• General programs and services
• Unique traits that distinguish the campus from others
• Philosophical foundation
• Expected outcomes that link programs and services to constituents

Before you review the mission, understand the real condition of your institution:

• Who makes up our campus community?
• What do we do best? What are we known for? What do we want to be known for? How do we know?
• What are our academic strengths? How committed are we to engagement?
• What are the features of our external environment? What does our region expect from us? Ask them!
• Whom do we serve? Who will we serve in the future?
• What is the alignment of our academic strengths with the issues of our region?
• How do our students characterize their learning experience? What do others find in our graduates that reflects our distinctiveness?

• What are our limitations? What do we not do well?
• Do we hold competing visions for our future? If so, what are they? How might they be reconciled?
• What are our shared values?

How can we Learn What Engagement Activities are Already Happening on our Campus?

Every institution does have some level of existing activity already going on, but institutional leaders are often puzzled as to how to find out what's already happening. A survey of all faculty must be carefully designed so as to be clear in the data it seeks to collect. Especially problematic is the use of language. Different individuals and disciplines may think differently about terms such as service, applied research, community partnerships, public service, volunteerism, service learning, civic engagement, and so on.

Leaders have a big impact on campus attitudes toward civic engagement when they seek to learn more about current activities. After all, the questions you may ask tend to send messages and direct people's attention. The very act of collecting information will inspire campus discussion and raise the visibility of engagement as a campus role.

Before collecting information about engagement activities, think through what you really want to know, what the impact of the collection may be, and how it will be used. It's one thing to collect a lot of information, but it's another thing to use it as a tool to promote progress. There are many ways to collect evidence, and suggestions are given below. However, you need to be prepared to analyze the information and use to answer critical questions such as:

• What is our overall strategy for civic engagement?
• What organizational changes need to be made to fulfill our engagement mission?
• What is the alignment among our academic strengths, community needs/assets, and engagement activities?

STRATEGIES FOR LEARNING ABOUT CURRENT ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

Formal Assessment Tools
Here are links to articles and instruments that can be used in a campus assessment of current levels of activity, future goals for engagement and level of commitment, and to identify areas where change may be needed.

• "**Implementing Service Learning in Higher Education**", by Robert G. Bringle and Julie A. Hatcher

• "**Analyzing Institutional Commitment to Service: A Model of Key Organizational Factors**", by Barbara Holland

Suggestions for Campus Assessment Activities and Data Sources

- Support campus discussion to understand and define terms and create a common language of engagement

- Look at web pages for examples of engagement activity

- Analyze internal grant applications and sabbatical reports

- Analyze external grant proposal activity and funding streams – convene faculty who have engagement projects and support them as early adopters

- Add relevant questions to student or faculty surveys

- Review campus publications, reports, self-studies for examples

- Hold focus groups across academic units

- If your institution is small enough, convene the campus as a whole and discuss current engagement activities; or hold a community day that showcases projects

- If your faculty complete annual activity reports, analyze them for evidence of engagement

- Scan the course catalog for examples of service or community-based learning

- Review course syllabi for examples of service learning

- Inventory the partners and the projects of institutes and centers

- Establish a recognition award for engagement – track the nominations

- Hold town meetings that bring faculty and community together

Ask Campus Compact or other campuses with engagement experience to visit your campus and conduct an assessment

Faculty Development

Creating faculty reward and evaluation systems that take faculty community based work into account is a critical step in moving a campus toward engagement.

- [Annual Review of Faculty Performance – Southern Arkansas University](#)
- [Effective Faculty Evaluation – Kansas State University](#)
- [Evaluating Service – University of Utah](#)
- [Faculty Activity Reports on Service – Kennesaw State University](#)
- [Faculty Evaluation System – Elon College](#)
- [Faculty Guide for Relating Public Service to Promotion & Teunure – University of Illinois](#)
- [Faculty Manual – College of Charleston](#)
- [Interim Criteria for Promotion & Tenure – CSU Monterey Bay](#)
- [Promotion and Tenure Documents – Golden Gate University](#)
- [Promotion and Tenure Documents – Middle Tennessee State](#)
- [Promotion and Tenure Documents – Nicholls State University](#)
- [Promotion and Tenure Documents – Sam Houston State](#)
- [Public Service Rank – University of Georgia](#)
- [Report of Task Force on Faculty Reward System – UC San Diego](#)
- [Report on Faculty Roles and Rewards – University of Memphis](#)
- [Service Dossier Recommendations – Queens College](#)

- [The Wisconsin Idea](#)
- [UC Davis Report on Service](#)

Specific Change Strategies

Recognition

Every institution has individuals and programs that are already engaged in extending the university into the community; however, the level of awareness about these activities varies. As a campus explores enhancement or expansion of engagement activities, a good first step is to recognize, highlight, and reward the work that is already happening.

• Invite engaged faculty to present seminars and workshops to their colleagues
• Support their attendance at regional and national conferences about engagement
• Provide stipends to support new or expanded projects
• Highlight engaged faculty and their projects in campus publications
• Establish an annual award for faculty achievement in civic engagement
• Add notations to student transcripts to indicate service learning courses

Promote Learning

Change in academic organizations is enhanced by a focus on learning. Those not yet committed to civic engagement can learn much from the literature, research, and examples of good practice.

• Distribute literature on the role of civic engagement
• Invite scholars of civic engagement to speak on campus
• Fund opportunities for faculty leaders to attend national conferences that will include attention to civic engagement. This may include disciplinary meetings because many academic societies (American Political Science Association for one example) are now interested in issues of community-based learning, service learning, and faculty engagement in applied and community-based research.
• Support faculty visits to other campuses that have made progress or been recognized

for engagement
• Create a faculty leadership group to plan development activities, events, and discussions

Walk the Talk – Demonstrate the Importance of Engagement

• Add language regarding civic engagement to job announcements and to hiring criteria
• Highlight support for engagement in budget priorities and allocations
• Ask departments to report regularly on engagement activities and publish the reports
• Collect data on civic engagement outcomes and share the analysis
• Promote faculty involvement in preparing grant proposals for extramural funding for engagement
• Make support for civic engagement a priority in donor cultivation/gift solicitation
• Create web links on campus pages that link to external organizations
• Establish scholarships for student involvement

Promote Discussion

• Sponsor events, symposia, forums on democracy, public culture, citizenship, or on community-based issues
• Bring community representatives into campus events and campus discussions. Expand the role of external advisory groups
• Challenge faculty to explore the role of civic learning in the curriculum
• Fund faculty to conduct research and to collect data on community needs, assets, and conditions
• Ask for departments to produce strategic plans regarding civic engagement.
Need questions for discussion that would guide any department's exploration of engagement?
• Convene existing research/service centers and institutes and promote integrated planning and collaboration

Provide Incentives

Some of the greatest barriers to expanded campus involvement in engagement activity are opportunity, time, resources, assistance, and training.

• Create campus infrastructure to support faculty involvement in engagement
• Invest in faculty development regarding civic engagement

• Provide small, competitive internal grants to support faculty experimentation with engagement.
• Involve faculty in making award decisions.
• Send faculty and students and community partners to conferences
• Seek major grants/gifts for engagement
• Add engagement goals to criteria for sabbaticals, summer study support, etc.
• Create exchange opportunities between the campus and external organizations
• Establish faculty fellowships or graduate assistantships around engagement goals

Measuring and Counting Civic Engagement

In March of 2001, Campus compact brought together a diverse group of college presidents, academic administrators, faculty, foundation leaders and classification experts to examine the prospects for altering accreditation, classification or ranking systems to recognize campus civic engagement and service learning efforts.

Major findings:

• Individual campuses with extensive commitment to civic engagement and service-learning are urged to seek an assessment of their civic engagement/service-learning efforts as part of the accreditation process. In this way, campuses can high light their efforts and get a comprehensive picture of them as part of a process they have to do anyway.

• Campus Compact is urged to document current civic engagement and service learning efforts in a divers set of their current membership. The Compact should use the Indictors of An Engaged Campus to frame this effort. This information is needed to build a body of evidence from which accreditation, classification and ranking measures can be constructed.

A full summary of the proceedings and advice to Campus Compact are available below, as are helpful background papers prepared for this meeting.

- **Exploring The Challenge Of Documenting And Measuring Civic Engagement Endeavors**

- **Framing The Measures: A Technical Background Paper On Institutional Classification Systems, Data Sets, And Miscellaneous Assessments In Higher Education**
- **Summary Advice Of Campus Compact Advanced Institute On Institutional Classification For Service And Civic Engagement In Higher Education**
- **Summary Comments From Campus Compact "Advanced Institute" On Civic Engagement**

List of Participants:

Name	Organization/Affiliation
Betty Overton Adkins	Kellogg Foundation
Richard Battistoni	Providence College
Victor Borden	Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis
Cathy Burack	New England Resource Center for Higher Education
Barbara Cambridge	American Association for Higher Education
David Cox	University of Memphis
Russ Edgerton	Pew Forum on Undergraduate Learning
Thomas Ehrlich	Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
Richard Ekman	Council of Independent Colleges
Daniel Fallon	Carnegie Corp of New York
Francille Firebaugh	Cornell University
Jim Flemming	Boston College
Michelle Gilliard	Council of Independent Colleges
Barbara Holland	HUD Office of University Partnerships
Elaine Ikeda	California Campus Compact
Mark Langseth	Minnesota Campus Compact
Sam Larson	Applied Research
Gail McClure	The Kellogg Foundation
Alex McCormick	Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
MichaelMcPherson	Macalester College
Yolanda Moses	American Association for Higher Education
Brian Murphy	San Francisco Urban Institute
Caryn McTighe Musil	Association of American Colleges and Universities
William Plater	Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis
Judith Ramaley	University of Vermont

Jessica Shedd	The Institute for Higher Education Policy
Charles Strain	DePaul University
Tobi Walker	Pew Charitable Trusts
Jane Wellman	The Institute for Higher Education Policy
Blenda Wilson	Nellie Mae
Peter Young	Indiana Campus Compact
Robert Zemsky	University of Pennsylvania
Elizabeth Hollander	Campus Compact
John Saltmarsh	Campus Compact
Amy Umstadter	Campus Compact
Edward Zlotkowski	Campus Compact