

**Table of Contents**

<b>Introductory essay.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Institutionalizing Community Engagement.....</b>	<b>6</b>
The College Within a University as a Missing Organizational Link	
<b>A Decade of Building.....</b>	<b>36</b>
The Community-Engaged School of Health and Human Sciences at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro	
<b>Are We Engaged?.....</b>	<b>53</b>
A College-Level Inventory of Community Engagement in Weber State University's College of Arts and Humanities	
<b>Utilizing the College-Level Community Engagement Assessment Rubric.....</b>	<b>68</b>
To Identify Strengths, Weaknesses, and Opportunities for Growth in Drexel University's College of Arts and Sciences	
<b>Self-Assessment Rubric.....</b>	<b>86</b>
For the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University	
<b>Economic Engagement, Development, and Entrepreneurship.....</b>	<b>112</b>
The Role of Applied Public Service Colleges	
<b>Book Review: <i>Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing</i>.....</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>Book Review: <i>Our Towns: A 100,000-Mile Journey into the Heart of America</i>.....</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>Book Review: <i>Teaching with Compassion: An Educator's Oath to Teach from the Heart</i>...</b>	<b>138</b>

ISSN (Online) 2162-9161



# EJOURNAL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

VOLUME 8 | ISSUE 3

## **Introductory essay: eJournal of Public Affairs, Special Issue (Volume 8, Issue 3)**

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The rubric that serves as the basis for this special issue originated as a response to problems of practice in a college within a university. As a community partner once commented, what we need is less evidence-based practice and more practice-based evidence. The design of the rubric was practice-based, and the colleges that participated in a pilot study of its implementation have provided evidence of its efficacy in advancing community-engaged scholarship at the college level.

The authors of the lead article in this special issue brought their knowledge and experience in community engagement to the college-level engagement project. The process began with a conversation in Mike Middleton's office about how the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Massachusetts Boston could be more supportive of the community-engaged scholarship that many faculty in the college were either doing or interested in doing. Mike Middleton was the dean of the college. I was a faculty member in the college directing a center on the study of higher education and, through the center and my own scholarship, was deeply involved in the community-engagement movement in higher education nationally and internationally. I was also directing the Carnegie Foundation's Community Engagement Classification, focusing on institutional engagement, and had directed a national project at Campus Compact in the early 2000s focused on "the engaged department." Melissa Quan was both a doctoral student in the college's higher education program studying the impact of community engagement on communities and a seasoned practitioner directing a campus center for community engagement, working in the weeds of institutionalization every day.

The conversation was based on our experiences. Mike's own research had been community-engaged, and he had come to UMass Boston from a campus that had centralized infrastructure supporting faculty engagement but, as do many research universities, had struggled with fully institutionalizing community engagement. Mike had come into an institutional environment where, as dean, he encountered hesitation about, if not resistance to, community engagement at the same time faculty in his college were gravitating toward it. The key question he raised was, What would it mean to be an engaged college and not focus efforts solely on trying to change the institution? His question was provocative and ripe for interrogation. Melissa and I were somewhat skeptical of focusing on the engagement of a college within a university, in part because the literature (and our own work) highlighted the importance of institutionalizing community engagement at the university level or driving it into departments, closer to the core work of the faculty.

The answer to the question of what it would mean to be an engaged college emerged with the rubric. With its academic, faculty-centric focus, the dimensions and components of the rubric focus on community-engaged scholarship (engaged scholarly work across the faculty roles of research, teaching, and service). The dimensions of the rubric are grounded in the literature and resonate with the experiences of practitioners. The rubric was initially tested by colleagues who led community engagement work on their own campuses and was further refined.

This special issue includes articles by authors affiliated with three of the colleges that participated in the rubric pilot study. Mike, Melissa, and I are grateful to them for their participation, thoughtfulness, and careful inquiry into the use of the rubric. A few of the common findings across their articles include the following:

- Community-engaged scholarship in a college is core academic work, requires faculty input and buy-in, and can shape the culture of a college.

- College-level engagement requires administrative leadership from the dean but also from associate deans and department chairs.
- Focusing on the college as the unit of engagement revealed, as one campus noted “asymmetry of structure or fragmentation of efforts between the campus as a whole and the college.” Putting a spotlight on the college catalyzed a re-evaluation of university-wide engagement efforts.
- Engagement in a college is not a substitute for institutional engagement, but deeper college engagement can enhance wider institutional engagement, particularly if multiple colleges align their policies, practices, and culture with a commitment to community-engaged scholarship.
- The rubric revealed ways community engagement is evolving, or as one college noted, it “revealed that new types of issues, concerns and approaches arose.”
- One of those issues is what is often referred to as “alignment”—how college, department, and institutional engagement efforts were aligned across the campus.
- The rubric highlighted that mentoring is most effective as a college activity, focusing on disciplinary clusters within a college. The distinction here is that many institutional centers have mentoring programs, but often the mentor is from a different college than the mentee.

With the assistance and support of the editors at the *eJournal of Public Affairs*, the entire rubric is made available for public use through this special issue. Readers should refer to the rubric as they read the articles in this issue. We hope that other colleges will find it useful, implement it in ways that make sense for them, adapt it as needed for their organizational environment, and share stories and outcomes to advance the work.

The editors also want to thank the other contributors to this special issue. Jason Jolley provides an inspiring look at how the Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs at Ohio University (i.e., a school-level unit) has embraced applied public service as a form of economic engagement and, in doing so, has revised faculty reward policies to create incentives for faculty to provide applied, research-based expertise to community challenges. The editors would be pleased to see school-level units like the Voinovich School adapt and implement the college engagement rubric as a way to assess the depth and pervasiveness of their engagement efforts.

It may not seem obvious that the book review by Star Plaxton-Moore, which introduces readers to the important work of the British philosopher Miranda Fricker, is directly related to college-wide engagement. However, an exploration of epistemic injustice has direct relevance for community-engaged scholarship and scholars. Fricker’s work, *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethic of Knowing*, asks readers to examine and respond to—as does the rubric and the reward policies at the Voinovich School—the impact higher education systems have on privileging certain knowledge, what research is legitimized, and who gets to participate in the creation and spread of knowledge. Plaxton-Moore’s review highlights how Fricker’s work foregrounds identity and power in an analysis of ethics and justice countering default system processes that silence and delegitimize certain knowers and ways of knowing, creating epistemic exclusion. An epistemic justice lens asks stakeholders to strategically shape institutional cultures, structures, and practices to identify and address prejudicial exclusion of scholars from participation in the spread of knowledge through credibility discounting and epistemic marginalization.

Similarly, the Fallows' book *Our Towns: A 100,000-mile journey into the heart of America*, reviewed in this issue by Keith Morton, may not appear to be aligned with higher education community engagement. Morton's keen insights underscore the importance, related to any campus work with communities, of focusing on the assets and cultural wealth of localities if those campuses are to collaborate in small ways that can assist in producing long-term change. *Our Towns* is not about higher education but about how communities across the United States respond to local challenges and create meaningful, affirming change. Their stories make it clear that colleges and universities can play a role in improving community life. This requires humility and persistence, something perhaps not well attended to in many community engagement efforts.

It also requires deep compassion. The last of the book reviews, by Brian Obach, honors the legacy of Peter Kaufman, a dedicated teacher in the sociology department at the State University of New York at New Paltz. Kaufman's book, *Teaching with Compassion: An Educator's Oath to Teach from the Heart*, was published just months before Kauffman's untimely death. *Teaching with Compassion* is the culmination of decades of reflection on, research about, and practice of teaching and learning. Just as the Fallows, in *Our Towns*, do not minimize challenges, divisiveness, and the way larger, even global, problems are manifested locally, *Teaching with Compassion* does not minimize the struggles created by the educational system, frustrating the best efforts of dedicated teachers. Yet, in both books, communities in one and students in the other, if viewed as collaborators with knowledge, expertise, and cultural wealth, can be co-producers of vibrant democracy and deep learning. It is the role of those in higher education to help create, with unbounded compassion, what bell hooks called "radical spaces of possibility" in teaching and in communities. That may be the highest form of engagement.

Finally, the special issue editors want to thank not only the journal editors, but also the American Association of State Colleges and Universities for their partnership on the college engagement project. They also want to thank the University of Massachusetts Boston for supporting this project through a research grant.

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# EJOURNAL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

VOLUME 8 | ISSUE 3

## **Institutionalizing Community Engagement: The College Within a University as a Missing Organizational Link**

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**Abstract**

This article examines organizational change that can be implemented at the level of a college in a university in order to institutionalize community-engaged scholarship as a core value of the college. Through the development and implementation of an assessment rubric, the authors argue that college-level institutionalization of community-engaged scholarship can be evaluated as a complement to department- and institution-level efforts. Attention to college-level engagement offers new possibilities for deeper institutionalization of community-engaged scholarship.

*Keywords:* community engagement, higher education, organizational change



## Institutionalizing Community Engagement: The College Within a University as a Missing Organizational Link

Increasingly, universities are called upon to mobilize their intellectual and human capacity to address needs in their communities and beyond. While the creation of a campus-wide coordinating infrastructure designed to facilitate community engagement is critical, it is important to account for the significant variation in, and quality of, community engagement that exists across units of a university. Arguably, a college/school within a university should be developed as the locus of faculty and student engagement. Colleges or schools within a university often have their own well-developed missions and goals that embrace community engagement; can be seen as labs for trying new ideas, pathways, or strategies for engagement; and have their own natural disciplinary base within the community for engagement. Drawing on a review of the literature, the study discussed in this article examined organizational components at the college level that support community engagement and contribute to the creation of a culture of engagement in a college. Based on the literature review and the practical experiences of the authors, an organizational assessment rubric for supporting and rewarding community-engaged scholarship was designed and piloted with four colleges at four separate research universities for the purposes of self-assessment and strategic planning.

### Literature Review

While there is a wealth of literature on institutionalizing community engagement in higher education (Furco & Miller, 2009; Moore & Ward, 2010; Saltmarsh et al., 2009; Sandmann, Thornton, & Jaeger, 2009; Warnick, 2007; Weerts & Sandmann, 2008; Wergin, 2006) and, more specifically, in an academic department (Aminzade, 2004; Battistoni, 2003; Kecskes, 2006; Saltmarsh & Gelmon, 2006), little research has focused on institutionalizing community engagement in a college/school within a university (Dana & Emihovich, 2004). This study contributes to the literature on institutionalizing community engagement in a college/school at a research university.

In the context of this study, *community engagement* refers to relationships that connect the intellectual resources of the college with knowledge resources outside the college that are grounded in the qualities of reciprocity, mutual respect, shared authority, and co-creation of goals and outcomes. Such relationships are by their very nature transdisciplinary (relating to knowledge that transcends the disciplines and the college) and asset-based (relating to valid and legitimate knowledge that exists outside the college). Transdisciplinary and asset-based frameworks and approaches impact both pedagogy and scholarship. They also inform an organizational logic such that colleges need to change their policies, practices, structures, and culture in order to enact engagement and support scholars involved in community-engaged teaching, learning, and knowledge generation.

This framing of community engagement aligns with the definition provided by the Carnegie Foundation for its Community Engagement Classification:

Community engagement describes the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

The purpose of community engagement is the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good. (Brown University, n.d.)

The Carnegie Community Engagement Classification focuses on institution-wide assessment, whereas the college-level self-assessment rubric is aimed more specifically at an academic unit; therefore, there is particular emphasis on the core academic activities of teaching and learning and research, and on faculty, deans, and chairs. For many colleges, the academic culture and the incentives for faculty conveyed through that culture emphasize the importance of research and creative activity.

Drawing on the literature and current practice (Doberneck et al., 2010; Ellison & Eatman, 2008; Gurgevich et al., 2003; Hyman et al., 2002; Stanton, 2008, 2012; Tulane University, 2013), for the purposes of this project and article, we focus on a definition of *community-engaged scholarship* (CES) characterized by creative intellectual work based on a high level of professional expertise, the significance of which peers can validate and which enhances the fulfillment of the mission of the campus/college/department. Community-engaged scholarship is not considered to be synonymous with community-engaged research and can be demonstrated in teaching, research, and creative activities, as well as in service. Scholars who practice CES often do so within institutional contexts in which standards and incentives for career advancement have not kept pace with changes in knowledge production and dissemination. As a result, many campuses are reconsidering and revising reward structures to recognize new forms of scholarship, including CES (O'Meara, Eatman, & Peterson, 2015).

As with departments, colleges or schools are “where tensions arise about publicly engaged scholarship at the point of promotion and tenure. They are where all the work of promotion gets done and where the potential for real change is greatest” (Ellison & Eatman, 2008, p. v). Further, Holland (2009) pointed out that, in a large research university, it might be easier to start institutionalization with a small unit, like a college/school. Some scholars believe that a more local, place-based approach is crucial to sustaining community engagement in higher education because it can demonstrate for stakeholders the relevance of disciplinary knowledge to communities (Kecskes, 2006, Saltmarsh et al., 2009; White, 2016).

A quarter century of practice and a significant body of literature has contributed to an understanding of the kinds of infrastructure needed to advance community engagement at the institutional or campus level. We drew on that practice and literature, adapting it (1) for the unique context of a college/school within a university, and (2) to support community-engaged scholarship, not community engagement writ large. Therefore, the kind of support discussed here focuses on supporting and advancing the work of scholars (with a particular focus on faculty and graduate students), staff, administrators, and community partners involved in generating CES. Regarding faculty, the focus is on faculty scholarship and their scholarly roles in teaching and learning and in service, to extent that, for many community-engaged scholars, those faculty roles are closely interwoven and integrated. The literature also points to the need to integrate CES into graduate studies in order to prepare and socialize the next generation of community-engaged scholars (Aminzade, 2004; Ellison & Eatman, 2008; Moore & Ward, 2010; O'Meara, 2016). We

focus our attention on the academic culture of the college, namely policies related to faculty rewards, a key artifact of culture, and, more specifically, promotion and tenure.

As Tierney and Perkins (2015) observed,

the professional reward structure needs to shift. Institutions need a diversity of routes to academic excellence and some of them will pertain to being involved outside the ivory tower.... Academic work needs to have an impact in order to provide society's return on investment.... For that to happen, the reward structure and those practices that socialize faculty need to shift in a way that supports engagement rather than disdains it. (p. 186)

In 2008, Imagining America—a network of colleges, universities, and community partners dedicated to publicly engaged scholarship, particularly in the arts, humanities, and design—produced a report, *Scholarship in Public: Knowledge Creation and Tenure Policy in the Engaged University*, based on a series of structured interviews with over 30 publicly engaged scholars who included faculty, deans, department chairs, provosts, presidents, and center directors. The report outlined a set of recommendations that serve as a road map for colleges and universities interested in creating institutional, cultural, and policy change to support CES. The report's recommendations focusing on faculty rewards and academic culture include: (1) defining CES; (2) creating policy based on a continuum of scholarship that equally values traditional scholarship and CES; (3) recognizing indicators of excellence in CES, specifically interdisciplinarity, intercultural engagement, impact in multiple arenas, and integration across key areas of faculty work (i.e., teaching, research, and service); (4) recognizing a broad range of scholarly artifacts that count (i.e., beyond scholarly journal publications); (5) creating guidelines that can be used by tenure applicants and reviewers to clarify what qualifies as evidence of CES; (6) providing professional development on how to present CES in professional portfolios; (7) recognizing community partners as peers in peer review; (8) creating a pathway for junior faculty and graduate students interested in CES; and (9) creating specific guidelines for promoting community-engaged scholars to the level of full professor.

On some campuses, leaders are working with faculty to revise faculty reward policies. For example, at Syracuse University, with strong administrative leadership and faculty commitment, the faculty and administration engaged in a five-year process that led to a revision of the promotion and tenure guidelines, resulting in language that explicitly incorporates community engagement into the reward policies of the campus (Syracuse University, n.d.). Similarly, in its *Academic Plan 2011*, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-Chapel Hill) set forth the strategic priority of building engaged scholarship into the core culture of the campus and throughout all academic units through the revision of promotion and tenure policies.

The vision of CES emerging within a college/school can inspire action, but it is unlikely that such a vision alone will produce an action plan aligned with the core functions and organizational features of that college/school. In considering how to implement an actionable plan within a college/school of a university, we used our experience as university faculty and staff and as an administrator, as well as the emergent literature, to identify key structural components of a college/school that can contribute to fostering CES. We sought feedback from colleagues with expertise in CES and deep understanding of universities to identify components at similar levels of importance that are clearly distinguished from one another and that play a key

role in advancing a vision for CES within a college/school. The following sections detail a set of areas that the literature suggests are essential to institutionalizing community engagement.

### **Literature on Institutionalizing Community Engagement**

**Mission, vision, and leadership.** Developing a mission and vision for community engagement is tied directly to leadership and direction. A review of successful Carnegie Community Engagement Classification applications points to the need for more attention to the development of clear community engagement definitions and strategic plans designed specifically for engagement (Holland, 2009). Others have pointed to the importance of creating clear definitions of CES that are aligned across academic units, from departments to colleges or schools to the university as a whole (Crookes, Else, & Smith, 2015; Dana & Emihovich, 2004; Kecskes, 2006; O'Meara, Sandmann, Saltmarsh, & Giles, 2011).

Leadership support for the institutionalization of CES and the personal engagement of leaders is essential (Holland, 2009; Sandmann & Plater, 2009). Sandmann and Plater (2009) identified four stages of engaged leadership: “(1) interpreting institutional mission to reflect engagement with communities...; (2) defining specific objectives and goals to implement the mission; (3) articulating the means and priorities for taking action; and (4) manifesting commitment through personal interaction” (p. 15). Dana and Emihovich (2004) emphasized the importance and power of seizing the right moment to advance community engagement, having a clearly articulated vision, and creating rituals to mark and celebrate CES.

Community engagement can be fragile if a single, often transient, leader (e.g., president, chancellor, provost) is associated with a commitment to campus engagement. Leaders need to foster the capacity of others across the campus, including building CES into job descriptions and establishing a wider community of engagement (Moore & Ward, 2010).

**Visibility and communication.** A significant component of the foundational indicators section of the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification application requires campuses to document how community engagement is made visible through key communication functions, from campus websites to press releases to presidential addresses. Reflecting on the institutionalization of CES in the College of Education at the University of Florida, for instance, Catherine Emihovich noted that she never missed an opportunity to talk about CES in public addresses and written documents (Dana & Emihovich, 2004). This helped to catalyze conversations and raise awareness about CES. Further, a rhetoric of community engagement helps scholars feel supported even when policies are lacking (Moore & Ward, 2010). Likewise, Emihovich reflected on the value of creating cultural markers through awards and signature events to celebrate CES (Dana & Emihovich, 2004).

Other critical opportunities for increasing the visibility of CES include student recruitment, admissions materials and criteria, and faculty and staff recruitment and hiring materials such as job announcements and descriptions (Dana & Emihovich, 2004; Ellison & Eatman, 2008).

**Recognition.** Recognition for CES is an important dimension for creating a culture of engagement. We make a distinction between recognition and rewards since, as we argue, recognition cannot and should not be a substitute for rewards, and recognition is associated with making visible and celebrating CES in public ways. On the first point, there is a tendency for campuses that are working to advance community engagement to create a set of recognition

possibilities, such as annual awards, that are relatively easy to achieve and to put off or avoid revising reward policies, which is a much more difficult task. Similarly, recognition can come in the form of making CES count in annual faculty reports, which are often tied to merit pay increases. These, too, are tangible and more public forms of recognition that can complement, but are not substitutes for, faculty rewards.

While recognition can take many forms, a few of the most common and impactful can be centered within the college/school, allowing more people across a campus to be recognized. Since most faculty relationships are formed within their academic units, recognition at this level is often more personal and creates more of a culture of support for CES work within existing working relationships. Some ways this recognition can occur include funding (e.g., seed funds to catalyze and support CES; Aminzade, 2004; Dana & Emihovich, 2004; Moore & Ward, 2010); awards and celebrations for CES (Dana & Emihovich, 2004); and clear documentation of CES in annual merit reviews (O'Meara, 2016). Taken together, these forms of recognition increase the visibility of CES, bring legitimacy to the work, help foster a community of scholars, and promote equality through rewards and recognition (Crookes, Else, & Smith, 2015; Moore & Ward, 2010).

**Policies related to faculty work.** Rewards are the policies and criteria that constitute what is valued in the core academic culture of the unit, in this case a college/school. Policies are artifacts of culture and often underpin what happens organizationally behind the scenes. In crafting policies supportive of CES, college/school leadership teams should consider a set of guiding questions. For instance, what are the criteria for promotion and tenure, and do the criteria specifically articulate CES as core academic work—that is, as research and teaching, and not singly as service or outreach? Is there a culture among the faculty such that the policies are enacted in ways that value CES? Do the guidelines for promotion of faculty articulate CES across the faculty roles of research, teaching, and service? Advancing CES does not mean that all faculty will be involved in CES but that those who are doing CES or who aspire to do CES will be recognized and rewarded for their community-engaged teaching, research, and creative activities.

A review of practices at campuses nationally indicates that in order to expand and strengthen community-engaged scholarship, the work of faculty in this area must be documented, recognized, and rewarded (Ellison & Eatman, 2008). Through interviews with 20 engaged scholars at U.S. research institutions, Moore and Ward (2010) found that when institutions expressed sincere support for CES but did not value it through promotion and tenure policies, traditional scholarship was privileged. To cope, engaged scholars have positioned their work as traditional scholarship or ensured that they have had enough traditional scholarship in addition to CES in order to secure tenure (Moore & Ward, 2010).

When institutional policies are silent on engagement, they create disincentives for faculty to undertake community engagement across their faculty roles and often punish them when they do (O'Meara, 2016). Silence perpetuates what O'Meara (2016) identified as “inequality regimes” of power, privilege, and oppression in which traditional scholarship is privileged and faculty agency over their own professional pathways is severely limited. O'Meara argued that “we need interventions (institution wide and department focused) that disrupt or dismantle organizational practices that reinforce inequalities and help faculty navigate and craft meaningful careers in higher education organizations” (p.104). We would add the need for college-wide interventions. Institutions need to create what Sturm (2007) called an “architecture of inclusion,”

empowering community-engaged scholars to develop fully as professionals in the academy (O'Meara, 2016).

For example, UNC-Chapel Hill's *Academic Plan 2011* set forth the strategic priority of building engaged scholarship into the core culture of the campus and throughout all academic units:

The recommendations of the Task Force on Future Promotion and Tenure Policies and Practices ... should be adopted.... [F]aculty engagement is defined as ... scholarly, creative or pedagogical activities for the public good, directed toward persons and groups outside the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Such activities (in the form of research, teaching, and/or service) develop as collaborative interactions that respond to short and long-term societal needs.... The University should adopt an explicit policy stating that although engaged scholarship need not be a prerequisite for promotion and tenure, excellence in such scholarship will be acknowledged and rewarded. Each academic unit should review and revise its tenure and promotion criteria to include engaged scholarship and activities as appropriate for their discipline. (p. 23)

This language highlights the importance of aligning reward policies at the department, college/school, and institutional levels to build a culture of engagement.

*Scholarship in Public* emphasizes the concept of a continuum of scholarship as an organizing framework for revising promotion and tenure policies to support CES. When drafting policy language on CES, it is important to ensure that it cuts across the key areas of faculty work—teaching, research, and service—and recognizes a diverse body of possible evidence of impact (Ellison & Eatman, 2008; Holland, 2009; O'Meara et al., 2011; Saltmarsh et al., 2009). Dana and Emihovich (2004) pointed out that

the educational research community has never seriously grappled with the concept of "impact" within the practitioner community as a measure of achievement comparable to the sheer volume of output in the form of articles, monographs, and books that few practitioners may ever read. (p. 44)

Across the United States, many campuses are at some stage of reconsidering and revising their reward structures to recognize new forms of scholarship and the scholars who are producing it. This is critical, especially as new young scholars, with training, goals, and values significantly different from traditional models, begin their careers in academic institutions. Further, there is an increasing number of scholars coming into the academy, often much more diverse in every way from the faculty currently on campus and who have significant interest in emerging forms of scholarship such as digital scholarship, interdisciplinary scholarship, and CES (Dana & Emihovich, 2004; Ellison & Eatman, 2008; O'Meara et al., 2011.)

Since colleges or schools within a university have their own disciplinary expertise as well as faculty peer-review systems as part of a promotion and tenure process, instituting policies at the college/school level in explicit support of CES is critical.

**Capacity-building infrastructure for support and sustainability.** Administrative centers for community engagement play a key role in facilitating and sustaining community engagement in higher education (Quaranto & Stanley, 2016; Sandmann & Plater, 2009; Strand, Cutforth, Stoecker, Marullo, & Donohue, 2003). In their review of 56 successful Carnegie Community Engagement Classification applications, Sandmann and Plater (2009) identified

three unique models for community-engagement centers: coordinating centralized centers, diffused networked units, and hybrid coordinated units. A capacity-building structure within a college/school could serve as a centralized coordinating structure for that college/school, and it might also be connected to a network of similar centers across campus or a larger centralized center for the entire university.

Community-engagement centers play a facilitative role by mobilizing resources, building and maintaining campus-community relationships, recruiting and managing participation of faculty and students, bringing relevant expertise and resources together around projects, creating criteria and processes for undertaking and implementing research projects, creating sustainability mechanisms, and ensuring that research is directed toward social-change goals (Sandmann & Plater, 2009; Strand et al., 2003). The relationship building that goes into CES and maintaining campus-community partnerships is time-consuming, making the role of a staffed center critical to success.

Centers also facilitate essential professional development for CES scholars to increase awareness and understanding, create a community of scholars, and increase participation (Holland, 2009). O'Meara (2016) emphasized the importance of helping CES faculty "navigate and craft meaningful careers in higher education organizations" (p.104) that may privilege traditional scholarship. Centers play a role in this by providing professional development, building community, and allocating resources. Centers may also facilitate mentoring among community-engaged scholars, an important element of professional community building and sustained engagement (Ellison & Eatman, 2008; Moore & Ward, 2010).

Another aspect of infrastructure to support CES is personnel. A college/school can assess the appropriate level of fiscal support for designating a position or part of a position to facilitate CES. This may take the form of an administrative position or a faculty member with particular expertise who is released from other duties to mentor and guide this work.

No matter the form of infrastructure, it is important that the structural components of a college/school that promote CES (e.g., a center, dedicated personnel, etc.) be adequately funded. A serious systemic approach to CES involves adequate resources being designated to this effort. For example, central to capacity building is the disbursement of stipends or seed money for engaged research or course development (Aminzade, 2004). Availability of funding helps sustain projects and serves as evidence of recognition and legitimization of CES (Moore & Ward, 2010). Additionally, it is important that funding be made available for faculty and graduate students to attend CES conferences because these are non-disciplinary conferences, and most faculty will use annual faculty development funds for their attendance at disciplinary conferences.

**Assessment.** Recognizing the multiple foundational components that build and sustain a culture of community engagement—from mission and vision to curricular pathways and faculty support, and mutually beneficial campus-community partnerships—Furco and Miller (2009) emphasized the importance of assessing and benchmarking each component to track and facilitate success. The development and implementation of assessments are strengthened at the college or school level since those units have their own governance structures and cultures.

Furco and Miller (2009) identified several categories of assessment focused on institutionalization that range in complexity and serve varied purposes. Self-assessments, indicators, and checklists are internally focused and help locate where a college/school may be in the institutionalization process, while benchmarks, rubrics, and matrices are more formal

assessments that require empirical data and examine levels or stages of institutionalization. System approaches include a “battery of instruments, procedures and approaches to provide a more comprehensive assessment” (p. 50). Systems may focus on all foundational elements of institutionalization or a specific element such as service-learning or CES. Similarly, there are numerous tools for measuring community engagement practice and student-learning outcomes such as IUPUI’s Civic-Minded Graduate Scale (see <https://csl.iupui.edu/teaching-research/tools-instruments/graduate/index.html>).

As Furco and Miller (2009) highlighted, for any assessment approach to be effective, it is important to clearly define terms like *community engagement* or *community-engaged scholarship*. This may look different in different academic disciplines; therefore, clarity at the local level of a college/school is key. One cannot assess that which one cannot define. Similarly, it is important to understand the purposes of any assessment since that will inform the methods used, stakeholders involved, and timing.

**Career pathways.** Critical to the ongoing and long-term success of CES is the creation of a pipeline or pathway for faculty and student scholar-practitioners from graduate school into their careers (Aminzade, 2004; Ellison & Eatman, 2008; Gillette, 2017, 2018; Moore & Ward, 2010; O’Meara, 2016). David Scobey said, “We have to develop a picture of the successful trajectory of an academic career as a public scholar” (as cited in Ellison & Eatman, 2008, p. 21). Because scholarly trajectories often center on discipline-specific activities and expertise, having clear pictures of such trajectories within a college/school can transform a culture and provide visible, accessible models for emerging scholars. Drawing from the engaged department model, Kecskes (2006) suggested that faculty and students alike should think about what and how their disciplines can contribute to the common good. For example, students in the sociology department at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities are encouraged to “think critically about the role of sociological knowledge in the contemporary world and to reflect on how the knowledge, skills, and insights of the sociological enterprise can be used and applied in their lives and careers outside of the university” (Aminzade, 2004, para. 4). Students also receive a community scholar designation on their transcripts. Similarly, Gillette (2018) discussed the importance of a college of education as a unit of community engagement that prepares teachers who are “justice oriented, urban ‘insiders’ who would teach in their home community, act from an ethic of care, and prioritize trust and relationship building with students, families, and community members” (p. 119).

Organizations like Imagining America and the International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement promote academic pathways for graduate students by offering awards, scholarships for conference participation, and access to mentors and graduate student networks. The Imagining America Publicly Engaged Scholars Study (see <https://imaginingamerica.org/initiatives/engaged-scholars-study>) aims to “deepen our understanding about the career arc for publicly engaged scholarship and practice.” Preliminary findings from the study point to seven profiles of engaged scholars: (1) the scholar motivated by personal values and involvement with their local community; (2) the local artist “who uses the community as a ‘canvas’”; (3) the K-12 teacher who enters the academy and takes on an active research role; (4) the community-engaged professional, which includes center directors within higher education; (5) the “interdisciplinary” who pulls from many disciplines to enhance community-engaged work; (6) the activist who “uses the university as a platform to further pursue their activism”; and (7) the “engaged pragmatist,” who sees CES as the direction in which



higher education is moving and wants to be a step ahead. The purpose of creating these profiles is to help higher education leaders understand what motivates and draws community-engaged scholars to inform recruitment and program development.

Although the eight components of a college/school that can be instrumental in advancing CES are thoughtfully grounded in higher education literature and practice as well as in CES research, we do not intend to offer a comprehensive list here. Others may identify key components within their particular university setting. In addition, the components we have identified are not independent or mutually exclusive; they overlap in function and in practice. However, we believe that these eight areas are highly impactful for guiding college/school leaders in assessing their own level of engaged scholarship and for identifying pathways for advancing CES.

### **The Design of the Rubric**

To assist colleges or schools within universities in advancing community-engaged scholarship, we developed an assessment and planning rubric that aligns with the components of a college/school as described earlier. The rubric's purpose is to serve as a tool for self-reflection and planning as academic units try to enact practices in support of CES, encouraging them to consider their own local context, the strengths and values of their faculty, and their resources.

For the purpose of the rubric design, we used the definition of *community-engaged scholarship* outlined earlier in this article. Scholarship is community-engaged when it involves reciprocal partnerships and addresses public purposes. The rubric defines community-engaged scholarship in this way:

Community engagement in the context of this rubric refers to relationships between those in the college and those outside the college that are grounded in the qualities of reciprocity, mutual respect, shared authority, and co-creation of goals and outcomes. Such relationships are by their very nature transdisciplinary (knowledge transcending the disciplines and the college) and asset-based (valid and legitimate knowledge exists outside the college). Transdisciplinary and asset-based frameworks and approaches impact both pedagogy and scholarship. They also inform an organizational logic such that colleges will need to change their policies, practices, structures, and culture in order to enact engagement and support scholars involved in community-engaged teaching and learning and community-engaged knowledge generation.... [S]cholarship is community-engaged when it involves reciprocal partnerships and addresses public purposes. Community-engaged scholarship is characterized by creative intellectual work based on a high level of professional expertise, the significance of which can be validated by peers, and which enhances the fulfillment of the mission of the campus/college/department. Community-engaged scholarship meets the standards of research when it involves inquiry, advances knowledge, is disseminated, and is open to review and critique by relevant academic, community, or professional peers. Community-engaged research conceptualizes "community groups" as all those outside of academe and requires shared authority at all stages of the research process, from defining the research problem, choosing theoretical and methodological approaches, conducting the research, developing the final product(s), to participating in peer evaluation. Research is community-engaged when faculty, students, community-based organizations, government agencies, policy makers, and/or other actors collaborate to identify areas of inquiry, design studies and/or

creative activities, implement activities that contribute to shared learning and capacity building, disseminate findings and make recommendations or develop initiatives for change.

A number of the rubric components were adapted from O'Meara (2016) and draw significantly on research from the widely known rubric developed by Furco (2002). While Furco's rubric is grounded in research on institutionalizing service-learning, we revised and extended it to be relevant to all aspects of CES in research, teaching, and service.

The self-assessment rubric contains eight dimensions based on the literature described earlier, each of which includes a set of components representing aspects of the operationalization of the dimension. Ewell (1998) has written that in order to achieve transformative organizational change, it is necessary to work on multiple components of an institution simultaneously.

To achieve the institutionalization of community engagement into the culture of a college, there is no single intervention that will create an organizational environment where engaged scholars will thrive. Multiple actions in multiple areas need to be attended to at the same time. The rubric is designed based on a consideration of the literature and current practice. The eight rubric dimensions identify broader strategic areas, and the components within each dimension indicate activities that aimed at operationalizing the dimensions (see Table 1).

Table 1

*College-Level Self-Assessment Rubric Dimensions and Components*

DIMENSION	COMPONENTS
<b>I. Leadership and Direction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hiring criteria for dean and chairs</li> <li>• Leadership development opportunities for dean and chairs</li> <li>• Faculty council that meets regularly and advises college decision making on engagement and resources</li> <li>• Advisory Leadership Council that includes community partners, faculty, staff, and students</li> </ul>
<b>II. Mission and Vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articulation in mission and vision statements</li> <li>• Definition of community-engaged scholarship</li> <li>• Strategic planning</li> <li>• Alignment with institutional mission</li> <li>• Alignment with educational innovations</li> <li>• Alignment with accreditation</li> <li>• Alignment with complimentary strategic priorities (i.e., diversity, inclusion and equity; student success; engaged learning through high-impact practices)</li> <li>• Funding priority</li> </ul>
<b>III. Visibility and Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positioning engaged scholarship on the web, via YouTube clips, in college and department publications, and reports to executive administration</li> <li>• (faculty) Hiring—job descriptions that emphasize CES</li> <li>• (students) Recruitment and admissions criteria that are explicit about valuing community engagement</li> <li>• Membership and participation by dean, chairs, faculty, staff, and students in networks focused on advancing community engagement</li> </ul>
<b>IV. Recognition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College awards for CES</li> <li>• Engaged department award</li> <li>• Annual faculty activity report—data collected on CES</li> <li>• Annual faculty activity reports that allow faculty to get credit for mentoring for CES</li> <li>• A place for CES in official college CV form</li> <li>• Merit pay criteria that recognizes CES</li> </ul>

DIMENSION	COMPONENTS
<b>V. Rewards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CES is valued in promotion and tenure via definitions of scholarship, criteria, documentation, peer review</li> <li>• Community engagement included in evaluation criteria for term contracts for NTT faculty</li> <li>• Sabbaticals—CES encouraged for sabbaticals</li> <li>• Post-tenure review—CES and teaching and learning valued in post-tenure review criteria</li> </ul>
<b>VI. Capacity-Building Infrastructure for Support and Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative assistance—staffing to support community engagement</li> <li>• Dedicated operational budget</li> <li>• Assistance developing partnerships, memoranda of understanding with community partners</li> <li>• Faculty development programs for integrating community engagement into scholarship and teaching</li> <li>• Training for personnel review committee members on evaluating CES</li> <li>• Formal and informal mentoring programs</li> <li>• Stipends or course release for seeding engaged research or course development</li> <li>• Structured opportunities for faculty to connect with community partners</li> <li>• Writing retreats and assistance finding places to submit CES for publication</li> <li>• Assistance with grant writing to support community engagement</li> <li>• Conference support for faculty and graduate assistants (in addition to faculty development resources for disciplinary conferences)</li> <li>• Interfacing with other engagement units on campus</li> </ul>
<b>VII. Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data collected and assessed on faculty engaged scholarship</li> <li>• Data collected and assessed on community-engaged courses</li> <li>• Data collected and assessed on community engagement learning outcomes</li> <li>• Data gathered and assessed on community perceptions of partnerships</li> <li>• Measures established and data gathered and assessed on community impacts</li> <li>• Interfacing with Institutional Research to draw on campus data that will assist with assessment of community engagement (e.g., NSSE results, HERI faculty survey)</li> </ul>

DIMENSION	COMPONENTS
<b>VIII. Curricular Pathways</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community engagement in the curriculum of majors and graduate programs</li> <li>• Community engagement in college minor</li> <li>• Community engagement graduate certificate</li> <li>• Completion of a community engagement minor or graduate certificate appears on the official transcript.</li> </ul>

### Dimensions of the Rubric

#### Leadership and Direction

The literature on community engagement emphasizes the importance of leadership in supporting community engagement. At the level of the college, this means that leadership by the dean (and associate deans) and department chairs is critical. This can be achieved more quickly and reach greater depth and pervasiveness if the individuals who are hired into these positions of leadership have some background in community engagement, and that the job descriptions for hiring the dean and chairs include criteria around community engagement. Regardless of previous experience, it is be important for dean and chairs to have leadership development opportunities so that they remain current on developments in the field, on best practices, and on how to exercise leadership from the top that builds leadership from the bottom in the college. The administrative leadership in the college can be fostered by the faculty governing body, which may establish a standing committee to provide guidance for the college on advancing community engagement. The administrative leadership of the college is also in a position to model collaboration by establishing an advisory council for the college that includes among its members the deans, a representative of the chairs, faculty, staff, community partners, and students. By intentionally building community engagement into the role of leadership in the college, community engagement will not be person-dependent and will have a greater likelihood of being deepened and sustained.

#### Mission and Vision

In order for community engagement to be central to the culture of the college, it must be clearly articulated in the unit's mission and vision. In mission-driven institutions, it is difficult to advance any activity that is not clearly aligned with that mission. Further, if those in the college do not see community engagement as serving their own self-interest—in advancing the mission, improving teaching and learning, or doing more meaningful and impactful research—then it will be difficult to view community engagement as more than a peripheral activity. It is also important, more on an operational level, to develop a clear and conceptually concise definition of community engagement to convey what is, and what is not, considered community-engaged scholarly work. With a clear mission and definition in place, the goal then is to align the work of community engagement in the college with the larger institutional mission, with accreditation standards (e.g., demonstrating contributions to the public good), with other institutional innovations (e.g., improving teaching and learning), and with other institutional priorities (e.g., increasing student and faculty diversity, or increasing student persistence and graduation rates).

If community engagement is positioned at the core of the work of the college, then college and institutional fundraising for the college will be explicit about seeking grants and donors that will support the work.

### **Visibility and Communication**

When community engagement is part of the identity of the college, it is made visible both internally on campus and to external stakeholders. It is positioned in a way that tells the story of the college, in data and reports and in narratives about the work of students and faculty. It is part of the way the college expresses its values and indicates the knowledge and skills that are valued by the college when recruiting faculty. It is also part of the way the college markets itself to parents, guardians, and students, indicating what can be expected in the educational experience for students. As a way to strive toward greater excellence in community engagement, the leadership in the college shares its work with others and learns from others through national and international networks focused on community engagement in higher education.

### **Recognition**

Recognition and rewards are concrete expressions of the value of community engagement in the college. Recognition is more structural and typically easier to implement. Rewards are associated with cultural change and present greater obstacles for implementation. Recognition centers on awards and the prestige and visibility that come with them. Colleges can encourage community engagement by including it as part of annual faculty reporting and by encouraging mentoring as an activity valued by the college. Tying merit pay to community engagement also signals the importance of community engagement as faculty work valued by the college. Recognition is not a substitute for rewards but can serve as an important complement to them.

### **Rewards**

The policies and criteria that constitute the basis for faculty review and promotion are artifacts of the core academic culture of the college. The guidelines for faculty review express a common set of beliefs and values, as well as underlying assumptions, epistemic orientations, and interpretive frameworks. Often, guidelines are not explicit, allowing the culture to operate outside of codifying expectations. Yet, when there are not explicit incentives for faculty to do community engagement as part of their faculty roles, then there are disincentives. Further, when the culture of faculty work positions community engagement as work that is understood as only being included in the faculty's service role, it is not tied to faculty work generating knowledge or in teaching and learning. Reward structures that explicitly articulate community-engaged scholarship across the faculty roles create a process of fairness for faculty who identify as community-engaged scholars. The goal is to establish guidelines and a culture that recognize CES and allow community-engaged scholars to thrive and excel (not to merely survive and delay their work until after promotion). Making CES explicit in rewards policies for tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty is a matter of fairness, not an attempt to devalue the work of scholars who do not employ collaborative and participatory epistemological approaches to research, creative activity, and teaching and learning.

### **Capacity-Building Infrastructure for Support and Sustainability**

While more and more faculty coming out of graduate school and into the professoriate have had some experience with community engagement and are more experienced with collaborative knowledge generation, many faculty have not been exposed to community

engagement as part of their professional preparation or socialization in their discipline. In order to operationalize community engagement, faculty need to develop the capacity to integrate it into their core academic work. The more opportunities there are for faculty to participate in faculty development that is oriented toward their discipline, the more beneficial that professional development will be. While the campus as a whole may have a coordinating infrastructure that offers faculty development for community engagement, the college should explore whether that infrastructure is adequately meeting its needs. The closer community engagement capacity building is to the culture of the college, in areas like mentoring, training for personnel review committees on evaluating community-engaged scholarship, and grant seeking and writing support, the more these activities should be implemented in the college.

### **Assessment**

Colleges measure what they care about. If the college values community engagement, and if it models best practices of community engagement, then there will be multiple mechanisms for systematically assessing its results and outcomes. Assessment can reveal how deep and pervasive community engagement is in the college. It can demonstrate how it impacts student learning. It can help determine how community partners perceive the engagement of the college and attempt to understand what difference the college's engagement makes in the communities with which it interfaces. Assessment is an essential means of understanding impact and improving practice.

### **Curricular Pathways**

A central way that community engagement impacts the academic experience of students is through its incorporation into the curriculum. When community engagement is part of the college's identity and culture, there should be opportunities for every student to include community engagement as part of courses in their undergraduate major or graduate program. There should also be opportunities for undergraduates to complete a minor in community engagement as a way of doing more in-depth community engagement during their academic study. Similarly, graduate students across the college should be able to earn a graduate certificate in community engagement in order to deepen their knowledge and skills as engaged scholars and to enhance employment opportunities post-graduation. In all cases, there should be clear pathways through the curriculum for students at any level to pursue and deepen their community engagement through their coursework.

Finally, each dimension of college engagement intersects with, reinforces, and enhances the other. The rubric is designed to allow colleges to assess the cultures, structures, policies, and practices that can be implemented to advance community engagement as a core academic identity. College-level engagement complements individual faculty engagement, departmental engagement, and institutional engagement—and when done well can enhance all of these. As an inventory of engagement in the college, the rubric makes visible an architecture for community engagement and provides a blueprint for guiding the college in building, deepening, and sustaining community engagement.

### **Stages of Progress**

Within each dimension of the rubric, for each component, a college working group at each of the four pilot universities determined the stage of progress that best represented the college's level of engagement based on the evidence examined. The rubric provides three stages

of progress: Emerging, Developing, and Transforming, with space left for identifying evidence for their assessment. The stages of the rubric are described as follows:

- **Stage 1: Emerging.** At this stage, a college is beginning to recognize community engagement as a strategic priority and is building a college-wide constituency for the effort.
- **Stage 2: Developing.** At this stage, a college is focused on ensuring the development of its institutional capacity and the capacity of individuals to sustain the community engagement effort.
- **Stage 3: Transforming.** At this stage a college has fully institutionalized community engagement, and it has mechanisms in place to ensure progress and sustainability, continuing to assess its progress and achievements as it looks toward the future.
- **Indicators.** Evidence of change in policy, practices, structures, and culture.

For example, for the Leadership dimension and the component of “hiring criteria for deans, associate deans, and department chairs,” the working groups were instructed to identify the stage of development based on the evidence examined:

### **DIMENSION I: Leadership and Direction**

A primary feature of institutionalized community engagement in a college is long-term, sustained, consistent, and committed leadership at the administrative level, among the dean, associate deans, and department chairs.

*DIRECTIONS: For each of the components (rows), place a circle around the cell that best represents the CURRENT status of the development of intentional identification and development of leadership for community engagement. Once the current status of development has been established, then identify evidence of this status in the corresponding INDICATORS cell.*

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
1. Hiring criteria for dean, associate deans, and department chairs	There are no criteria around community engagement in the qualifications for hiring of the dean, associate deans, and chairs.	There are community engagement criteria in the qualifications for the hiring of the dean and chairs, but they are largely rhetorical and applied inconsistently.	The college has clear criteria for community engagement as a qualification for hiring of the dean and chairs and they are prioritized and applied consistently.	



### **Piloting the Rubric**

The goal of this project and the pilot was to contribute to the literature on community engagement and the advancement of community-engaged scholarship by focusing on the college as the unit of engagement. We did this by attending to the organizational elements of colleges that foster a culture of engagement, and by developing an instrument for colleges to assess the structures, policies, and practices they have in place for advancing CES.

### **Methodology**

The colleges within the four research universities chosen for the pilot could be in any academic area. Criteria for selection into the pilot were as follows:

- the campus was classified by the Carnegie Foundation as Community Engaged (indicating a third-party verification of institution-wide commitment to community engagement); and,
- the researchers had access to a campus informant, someone in a position to identify possible college units that could participate in the pilot study. There is no national dataset or record that indicates which colleges in a university are incorporating community engagement into their academic activities. Therefore, we needed a trusted informant who could assist in identifying potential colleges and establish contacts with those colleges.

Based on these criteria, four colleges were chosen for the study:

- College of Arts and Humanities at Weber State University
- College of Arts and Sciences at Rutgers University, Newark
- College of Arts and Sciences at Drexel University
- School of Health and Human Sciences at University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Colleges were invited with the expectation that they would participate in an initial virtual meeting and one virtual cohort meeting part way into the pilot. Each colleges in the pilot was asked to form a working group that would implement the assessment process. The invitation to the colleges stated that

we are asking for your participation only if it makes sense for advancing community engagement on your campus. We are not in a position to offer any financial resources to the participating colleges, so there has to be an inherent self-interest on the part of the participating colleges that this will assist them in advancing community engagement as one of their goals. What we want to learn is the effectiveness of the self-assessment rubric, how we can improve it, and what process work best in implementing it.

From January through April 2017, the colleges implemented their self-assessments using the rubric. Between April and June 2017, researchers visited each of the campuses to meet with those responsible for rubric implementation within the college. Finally, each college was asked to submit a final report and was provided a template for structured data gathering that included the following questions:

1. Who was involved in planning/decision making on implementation of the rubric?  
How were those participants chosen? What was their role?

2. What were the roles of college and university leadership (i.e., dean, associate deans, and chairs) in decision making and implementation of the project?
3. What organizational structures (e.g., committees, leadership, governance groups, etc.) were consulted during the process? How were they involved?
4. How was the rubric introduced to the college community? What expectations were established for participation in its implementation?
5. How was implementation of the rubric structured? Who played a role? What current structures or activities in the college were used? What accountability or feedback was established?
6. What was the impact of the implementation process?
7. What were some outcomes from the process?

During June 2017, we held one last virtual meeting with the entire cohort. Our aim with the pilot campuses was to gather information about the rubric and the implementation process. The goal of the pilot was to refine the rubric for dissemination to the field.

### **The College Working Group**

At two of the four colleges in the pilot, an associate dean took the lead in organizing the effort. At another college, the process was organized by a senior assistant dean, and at the other college, the process was initiated by the dean and organized by the community-engagement center director who was also a faculty member in the college. One college had faculty representatives on their team from each department in the college. At another college, a total of 12 faculty participated in two meetings that were held, but not the same faculty at both meetings. One college team included six faculty members from various disciplines and the director of the campus center for community engagement. At the other college, the working group included two faculty members, two associate deans, and the community-engagement center director, who also held faculty rank in the college.

Each working group approached the process somewhat differently, but the common pattern was to have an initial meeting, determine the data needed to address the areas in the rubric, divide the work into smaller teams, and come back with as an assessment. A final meeting was held to formulate recommendations based on the findings. For example, one college working group describe their process in this way:

The committee was initially introduced to the rubric and determined the utility of the process and rubric tool. All faculty members were in agreement that the tool has potential for a formative and substantive evaluation. The first committee meeting was scheduled for a three hour block which allowed the members to identify the data needed, determine the indicators and develop a plan to delegate the review. Two members were assigned to each dimension and independently coded the data. A final three hour working meeting reviewed each dimension and criteria. The reviewers discussed their assessment and the members asked clarifying questions or contributed to the final assessment. Additionally, the committee as a group made rubric-and [college]-specific recommendations.

### **Findings**

Implementing the rubric revealed ways in which institutional community engagement infrastructure could be better connected to college community engagement activity and faculty. There was a tendency for faculty who identified as community-engaged scholars to build

relationships with the campus community-engagement center, often participating in its activities and making use of its resources, but not connecting that work back to their college. In more than one case, this led to a recommendation that the college formalize the designation of a college liaison to the center.

Use of the rubric also revealed ways in which the college as a unit could better support faculty engagement in alignment with institutional efforts. For example, strategic efforts at the institutional level to revise faculty rewards so as to better recognize and value community engagement as legitimate scholarly work were often not reinforced or translated into college documents and processes.

In most of the colleges, deans discovered a new role, moving from being supportive to actively working with faculty to advance community engagement. Deans reported gaining a deeper understanding of the kinds of resources and supports faculty need to pursue community engagement in their research and teaching. Deans who had relied on the institutional infrastructure of the community-engagement center to advance the work of community engagement now understood the importance of a complementary role for the college to advance that agenda.

Working groups reported that the rubric revealed significant unevenness across departments in a college. This provided an opportunity for reflection on the implications of uneven quality and depth of community engagement for student learning, for junior faculty trying to read the cultural tea leaves in the college as they prepared for promotion and review, for attracting students to the college, and for faculty and staff hiring. This kind of reflective process led two of the colleges to envision explicitly a role for the college as a model for community engagement, assisting other colleges on the campus to conduct their own assessment process.

Three of the four colleges were situated in an institutional environment with a robust infrastructure for community engagement. In all of those colleges, there were a number of areas indicating that the activities of the community-engagement center were better situated in the center and not in the college. For example, it was seen as duplicative for the college to establish an advisory council of administrators, faculty, staff, community partners, and students; this was best done through the center. Additionally, for faculty development activity conducted by the center, it was best that that activity was offered through the center, but the college could do a better job of partnering with the center to help build greater faculty capacity for community engagement for college faculty. The more an issue was seen as a college issue, the greater the perceived role of the college. For example, one campus noted that “training for personnel review committee members on evaluating community engaged scholarship” was a primary issue for the college that could be done in collaboration with institution-wide training opportunities.

Two of the working groups reported that the assessment process revealed the importance of faculty mentoring within the college. Mentoring of junior faculty was an activity best done within the college and was a way of making visible and recognizing the expertise of the more senior faculty doing community engagement while at the same time providing significant and meaningful additional support for junior faculty. It was a way to reinforce and build a deeper culture of engagement in the college. As an example, one campus recommended that the college “formalize mentor roles” in order “to help mentor new faculty and to develop ourselves and leaders/experts within our respective disciplines/fields.”

It should be noted that after going through the process of using the rubric to gather data about community engagement in the college, and using that data as evidence for institutionalization of community engagement in the college, all of the colleges determined that they were in the early stages of the rubric, mostly in Stage 1, Emerging. This in itself, for most of the colleges, represented an awakening among the working group members and the deans for a renewed commitment to community engagement and targeted, strategic efforts to advance engagement in the college.

### **Readiness**

The campuses in the pilot were selected because of indications that they were already doing substantive community-engagement work. It became clear that indicators of campus-wide engagement may not filter down to college-level engagement, and it raised the question about readiness to undertake the rubric assessment. We saw “readiness” as being different from a critical assessment of whether the rubric could be a useful tool for advancing college engagement. Early in the process, colleges raised critical reflective questions related to the context of operating in the shadow of a flagship institution and what that meant in terms of “performance anxiety” and “fear of erosion of scholarly standards” as they approached the rubric. On another campus, there was initial resistance from faculty—often the faculty who were the most engaged—because of questions about how the results of the assessment were going to be used. More than one college raised questions about the relationship of this project to other structures of engagement within and outside the college. All of these were crucially self-reflective questions that the colleges used to clarify their commitment to participating in the pilot.

The issue of readiness emerged early in the recruitment process as we reached out to colleges identified by local informants as potential participants in the pilot. At one college, the dean was concerned about the amount of time the process would take, the personnel hours, and competing priorities for those personnel (e.g., accreditation processes going on that same academic year). Had the college been at a different level of readiness, the evidence gathered for accreditation might have had greater overlap with evidence gathered for engagement, and the process might not have seemed so onerous or might have been seen as mutually reinforcing. On another campus, there was a concern early on that proceeding with the rubric would exacerbate some underlying tensions that had emerged in the college related to a perception that community engagement was being driven from the top administration of the university and had not reached the faculty in a way they were embracing. There was a conversation on campus among faculty that framed the community engagement work as a zero-sum equation: If community engagement was being valued, then what I do is not going to be valued. The same college faculty thought that the dimension of faculty rewards was a problem and that they did not want to address this; doing so was moving too fast for them.

Questions of readiness also emerged for us when a college would challenge the definition we used for community engagement, indicating a lack of conceptual clarity around the term. For example, one college shared input from faculty that scientists who receive NSF grants have a “broader impact” statement, but though the researchers have to include engagement with the community in this statement, the type of engagement they propose would not fit the definition used in the rubric. This is largely correct, in that NSF’s interpretation of broader impacts focuses heavily on the dissemination of scientific knowledge to the public, not the involvement of the public in the generation of scientific knowledge. Not all public scholarship is publicly engaged

scholarship, and the rubric is aimed at community engagement, not the sharing of academic knowledge with the public per se. As another example, at one college, the faculty recognized that community engagement was inconsistent and disjointed across the college, with some departments being deeply engaged. This led to the view that the engaged department might be the more appropriate level to assess. From our perspective, engaged-department work can be an important initiative leading to deeper institutionalization of community engagement, and there are rubrics that exist for assessing such work (Kecskes, n.d.). However, the rubric was designed specifically for the college as a unit, not the department. Not all colleges, regardless of the engagement profile of the entire campus, may be ready to undertake college-level engagement.

### **Recommendations on Revising the Rubric**

For all of the colleges that participated in the pilot, there were parts of the rubric that seemed to resonate more strongly with the development of community engagement in the college than others. Overall, the colleges found that the dimensions of the rubric established a broad organizational perspective on community engagement that proved useful for thinking strategically about engagement. Again, depending on unique aspects of each college, there seemed to be dimensions that were missing. For example, one college recommended that a “co-curricular criterion be added” because the college had “several examples of co-curricular, discipline specific, opportunities” for community engagement.

There was a general perception that assessment can be controversial. Depending on the institutional culture, assessment can be viewed as something imposed by administration on the faculty to be used for punitive purposes. This can lead to resistance to assessment, and there were hints of that resistance in more than one college in the pilot. It was recommended by the cohort of colleges that shifting the terminology away from an “assessment rubric” to an “inventory” would help alleviate some of the anxiety associated with taking on such a substantive assessment effort.

It was also recommended that a more nuanced scale be developed—for example, creating a 5-point scale across the three stages of Emerging, Developing, and Transforming. The working groups thought that a more nuanced scale would better capture some of the important community engagement work in the college and refine planning efforts to advance community engagement.

It was also suggested that some components of the rubric be assessed as “not applicable.” While the component may be an important consideration for college engagement, colleges noted that it is important to recognize that some activities are and should be done by the institutional coordinating infrastructure for engagement, and that duplication of activities is not an efficient or effective strategy.

Further, colleges noted that partnerships with the community are absent from the rubric and should be incorporated to enact authentic reciprocity in the assessment process. As with all partnership work, community partners need to be brought in at the design stage. This was an oversight on our part as we put together the rubric. If community partners were putting together a rubric for institutionalizing community-engaged scholarship in a college, what components would they consider essential?

Finally, participating colleges noted that an assessment of developmental activities was missing from the rubric, such as “courses being developed,” “discussions that were occurring,” and “intentions that were being set.” Even though they had not been implemented, there were

activities going on that evidenced a trajectory toward deeper engagement. Many believed that the rubric did not capture the space between the stages of Emerging and Developing, and they believed that important activities occurred in that space. As one college participant noted, “First steps or baby steps need to be captured.” In other words, the rubric needs more nuance.

### Discussion

As societal problems become more complex, many universities have focused on community-engaged scholarship as a way to use intellectual and scholarly capacity to address those concerns. Centers for community engagement have become more common in universities, and, in some places, faculty have been encouraged to shift their scholarly work to focus on concerns within their community. Strengths of university-wide CES initiatives include the transdisciplinary nature of community problems and solutions and the considerable human capital and resources that a university can bring to the table. However, as large complex organizations, universities often struggle with campus-wide initiatives and have variable participation across academic units. With their own mission and vision, access to discipline-based community partners, and an adaptability that may elude a larger organization, colleges or schools within a university may be a powerful place to advance the work of CES. This study sought to support colleges or schools within universities to advance CES within their academic units through the use of an assessment and planning rubric.

Strong support and vision for CES has emerged from national groups such as the Carnegie Foundation and Imagining America. Many campuses have taken up this challenge and have included CES as part of their strategic plan and campus infrastructure. The colleges included in our study are parts of campuses where CES is accepted and encouraged. However, the pathway to coordinated, successful implementation of CES is often unclear. Academic leaders, both faculty and administrators, can use structured guidance on practices that support CES. The working groups from the four campuses involved in this study expressed the need for assistance with identifying next steps in their developing support for CES. All four colleges formed study teams to use the rubric to advance a structured conversation about the status of their CES and to identify next steps.

Although all four colleges were on supportive campuses with identifiable institutional supports, the teams confirmed a need for expertise and guidance around their reflection and planning. The presence of existing support and a readiness to engage with the work of CES seem to be important precursors to successful use of the assessment and planning rubric. It seems that reflection and planning at the college/school level may depend on prior work and commitment to the initiative. In this case, colleges or schools that have debated and embraced CES, provided some infrastructure, including knowledgeable colleagues, and have taken prior action, seemed capable of reflecting on the current status of CES. Purposefully, we did not include colleges that were in the beginning stages of embracing CES. The usefulness of an assessment and planning tool to an academic unit still debating whether to advance CES, struggling to define CES for themselves, and having little existing infrastructure to support CES may be limited. Future work with colleges at the beginning stages of CES will provide insight into the type of support these academic units need as they take up the work of CES.

The campuses that did participate found the rubric useful in planning their next steps for CES. To underscore the importance of reflection on this process, each of the campus teams that participated expressed surprise with areas in which they were still at the beginning stages of CES

implementation, despite strong existing support and activity. The reflection process allowed them to build greater capacity through strengthening relationships based on common purpose and through underscoring the need for mentorship for faculty who are committed to CES but for whom CES was not a part of their academic training. Overall, this study confirmed the need for a reflection tool within academic units as a way to refine and focus practices in support of a common goal.

Our study also indicates the importance of developing models for shared leadership within academic institutions to advance priorities. Several of the deans of participating campuses indicated their support for CES but also their reliance on existing institutional infrastructure for advancing this work. Campus teams representing various departments and faculty or administrative roles were in a strong position to make recommendations for advancing CES. The deans played a leadership role in making this work possible through their support; however, the need for engaging others as leaders with critical expertise and perspectives was clear in the work on the four campuses.

An important impetus for our study was the unevenness of participation in CES across campuses that have been held up as models for CES. Our goal was to create a reflection and planning tool for academic units within universities to advance their CES within their disciplines. An unexpected finding was that the unevenness in participation also exists across departments within colleges or schools. It is unclear whether the process we asked the campus groups to engage in will address this unevenness or whether diverse levels of implementation are a part of any initiative since universities and their colleges or schools are large complex organizations.

As a result of our work on four campuses and further refinement of the reflection and planning rubric, we encourage more colleges/schools to engage in self-assessment and purposeful planning, even when their campuses are considered highly engaged. Further research could be conducted examining the use of the rubric across multiple colleges at a single university. In fact, one of the colleges participating in the pilot study did so with the intent of becoming a model for the other colleges at the university so as to eventually have all colleges become deeply engaged. Further research could also examine the implications of creating communities of practice made up of colleges implementing the rubric both within a single university and across universities. Additionally, our pilot study raises interesting questions about infrastructure for community engagement that could be explored further: How should an institution-wide coordinating infrastructure interface with colleges to advance community-engaged scholarship, and to what extent, given their core academic focus, should colleges establish internal infrastructure to support CES?

In order to encourage use of the rubric for both practice and for research, the rubric is made publicly available for use by colleges within a university in this issue of the *eJournal of Public Affairs*. We recommend campuses use the findings from the study to adapt the rubric to their own organizational context.

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# EJOURNAL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

VOLUME 8 | ISSUE 3

## **A Decade of Building the Community-Engaged School of Health and Human Sciences at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro**

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### **Abstract**

This case example illustrates key opportunities, processes, and outcomes of nearly a decade of intentional efforts to build and support community-engaged faculty culture and institutionalization in the School of Health and Human Sciences at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNC Greensboro). Situated within a university-wide, faculty-led movement to institutionalize support for community engagement in the school through policy and practice, the authors describe the motivation of faculty and administrative leadership to integrate support for community engagement across teaching, research, and service roles in the health and human sciences unit at UNC Greensboro. The authors present critical moments of opportunity that were leveraged by faculty and administrative leadership to integrate community engagement into visioning and planning documents, faculty rewards and awards, curricular programming, and transdisciplinary scholarly work through community-engaged partnerships. Using information collected through faculty focus groups and document analysis, and as part of a multi-institutional research program sponsored by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and the New England Resource Center for Higher Education, the authors describe key outcomes of efforts to institutionalize community engagement at the school level and highlight areas in which community engagement has been integrated into the school's strategic plan. Of special importance are areas related to tenure and non-tenure-track faculty recruitment, faculty promotion and tenure policies, faculty grants and awards programs, and school-level strategic planning. The authors also describe various decisions regarding where to locate specific activities, efforts, and resources, whether at the department, school, or university-wide level.

*Keywords:* community-engaged school, health and human sciences, case study, institutionalization

Describing how and why the School of Health and Human Sciences (HHS) at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNC Greensboro) has become a national leader in supporting community engagement at the school level is like trying to describe a river—constantly flowing, dynamic, and ever-adapting to various internal and external forces. How does one describe the headwaters, the place where the river starts, before confluences emerge via tributary streams, groundwater runoff, or rain? What characteristics of the water does one describe—the water’s color and translucence, its chemistry, the way it reflects in the sunlight or ripples when the wind blows? Or does one describe the life within it, the biodiversity, individual organisms, or the webs of life? Then there are the endogenous life forms, creatures that have remained a feature of the river for an entire lifetime and those that have come and gone at different points, each leaving an indelible impression on the total ecosystem.

The challenge of describing any ecosystem, whether a river or a school within a university, is that there are many elements that have contributed to its character and vibrancy and pointing to some elements will necessarily leave out others. This article presents the many elements that have shaped the development of a community-engaged school, from the perspective of a team of faculty and administrators who are diverse in their roles, experiences, and efforts to institutionalize community engagement within and across HHS. The co-authors provide different perspectives on HHS’s emergence as a community-engaged school: an administrator of a university-wide institute for community engagement, tenure- and non-tenure-track faculty, a long-term dean, and the current interim dean. We hope our articulation of developing a community-engaged school will be useful to other schools and institutions, particularly those that may be developing new strategic plans or who wish to fully review their structures and processes to support community engagement. Our experience suggests that there are institutional transitions that can lead to more meaningful transformations in not only policies, but also practice and faculty culture. To that end, we share key moments and movements that occurred within HHS as well as within UNC Greensboro more broadly.

The School of Health and Human Sciences is one of six schools and colleges within UNC Greensboro, an urban metropolitan campus located within the center of the state and enrolling more than 20,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Two thirds of the 790 full-time faculty are tenured or tenure-track. The university is one of approximately 50 that have been classified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as both a “doctoral university with higher-research activity” (sometimes referred to as “R2”) and a “community engagement” institution. Established in 1891 as a university for women called the State Normal and Industrial School, the university went through several name changes (i.e., State Normal and Industrial College, North Carolina College for Women, Woman’s College of the University of North Carolina) and became one of the first three institutions of higher education to make up what is today known as the 16-campus University of North Carolina System (along with UNC-Chapel Hill and North Carolina State University), admitted students of color in 1956, and admitted men in 1964. Today, it is a minority-serving institution with half of its students identifying as ethnic minorities. It is the most diverse of the UNC system’s campuses. Throughout its entire history, the single word “service” has remained the university’s motto.

### **Confluences: Key Moments Toward Engagement**

The headwaters of the School of Health and Human Sciences were formed in 2009, when HHS became the newest school on campus as the result of strategic restructuring of two schools that were ultimately closed. In the restructuring, many (but not all) departments of the two

previous schools were brought together. This realignment necessitated the development of new leadership, new plans and policies, and a new faculty culture for the new school. In this way, the reorganization provided a transitional moment of opportunity that allowed many community-engaged faculty and administrators, in various ways, to articulate and integrate support for community-engaged teaching and scholarship throughout the school, and in school-level policies and practices. While the individuals who acted as change agents were critical to the development of community engagement, it is important to recognize the momentum that had already been generated at the university level for community engagement and that was carried into the development of HHS. The university context helped provide important motivation for faculty efforts to build HHS as an engaged school. In the following sections, we briefly describe key activities and initiatives that motivated and supported community engagement.

### **University Strategic Planning Process**

In 2009, when HHS was coming into being, the campus community was engaged in a deeply participatory and expansive effort to write a strategic plan for the university. During this time, a number of faculty champions from within departments that would ultimately comprise HHS, as well as others, were involved in integrating community engagement into the plan. One indicator of this work was the university's revised mission statement: "The University of North Carolina at Greensboro will redefine the public research university for the 21<sup>st</sup> century as an inclusive, collaborative, and responsive institution making a difference in the lives of students and the communities it serves" (UNC Greensboro, 2019). Faculty discussions focused on the importance of addressing the public purpose and mission of UNC Greensboro through a variety of activities, including but not limited to research, creative activities, and teaching.

Beyond the mission, support for community-engaged scholarship (CES) was a stated goal of the strategic plan: "UNCG will promote an inclusive culture of engaged scholarship, civic responsibility, and community service" (UNC Greensboro, 2012, Goal 4.3). The plan described the expectation that UNC Greensboro become a leader in engaged scholarship and local community service, and described different metrics, including establishing a common language operationalizing the terms *engaged scholarship*, *civic engagement*, and *community service*. It also called for the collaborative creation of an initiative to increase faculty understanding of and leadership and capacity for engaged scholarship, civic engagement, and community service. Importantly, the plan established the goal that CES would be recognized in promotion and tenure policies and practices "as a legitimate form of scholarship."

### **Community-Engaged Scholarship Advanced in and by the Office of Research**

The new school also benefited from increased institutional support offered by the Office of Research and Economic Development. In 2010, the vice chancellor for research and economic development (which was renamed as the Office of Research and Engagement in 2017) established the new position of special assistant for community engagement. This new position was established as an outcome of Goal 4.3 of the university strategic plan for the purpose of: (1) developing infrastructure to provide the resources, programs, processes, and support needed to achieve excellent and integrated community engagement across UNC Greensboro and beyond; and (2) creating a systematic, university-wide data collection strategy and website to improve communication about the various ways the university and community colleagues are connected (UNC Greensboro, 2012).

The HHS dean and several HHS faculty served on an advisory committee established by

the special assistant in 2011 to help develop a strategic plan for supporting CES. The committee included 30 faculty, staff, administrators, students, and community partners. Over the course of a year, the dean and others participated in eight meetings, including a daylong, off-campus retreat that addressed key questions, including: What are the key indicators of excellence in community-university engagement, and what goals should UNC Greensboro and its community partners set for achieving excellence in community engagement in the next five years? As a result of participating in the strategic planning process for excellence in community engagement at the institutional level, the dean and several HHS faculty became increasingly involved in goal setting to support community engagement across the school and became more knowledgeable of the issues that can interfere with community engagement.

### **National Speaker Series**

Many HHS faculty and administrators were invited to attend talks and meetings with national community engagement scholars to learn more about how to recognize and reward community-engaged scholarship in promotion and tenure policies (Amy Driscoll), community-engaged teaching (Patti Clayton), community-engaged departments (John Saltmarsh), and the value of community engagement for student learning and as an institutional strategy (George Mehaffy). These speakers were brought to campus through a joint effort of the special assistant for community engagement, the provost, vice chancellor for research, and chair of the faculty senate, as well as the directors of the office of leadership and service-learning, the teaching and learning center, and the undergraduate research office (see Janke & Clayton, 2012). Bringing together diverse sponsors in planning meetings helped to establish the interconnection of community engagement to various institutional priorities and to maintain buy-in from key institutional leaders.

In 2013, the chancellor and provost supported the decision of the vice chancellor for research to name the special assistant for community engagement as the founding director of the Institute for Community and Economic Engagement and associate professor of Peace and Conflict Studies, a department housed in HHS. Hence, faculty and administrative leadership in HHS received timely support and expert consultation through their participation in many working groups, committees, advisory boards, and guest speaker talks and workshops.

### **University Discussions About Promotion and Tenure Policies**

Concurrent with conversations about university strategic planning, a core group of faculty had been advocating for the recognition of community engagement in promotion and tenure guidelines. After a year of discussions by the faculty senate committee and in various faculty forums, the faculty voted in spring 2010 to include recognition of *community-engaged teaching*, *community-engaged research and creative activity*, and *community-engaged service* in the promotion and tenure guidelines. Faculty from all schools, including HHS, served on the ad hoc committee and later on school/college and department committees to align policies with the university policy recognizing CES across faculty roles. For further discussion of UNC Greensboro's process to support promotion and tenure guideline changes, and themes revealed as a result of a weeklong dialogue initiative with over 100 faculty and administrative leaders, see Janke, Holland, and Medlin (2016).

### **Building a Community-Engaged School**

In this section, we describe key moments of opportunity and processes that were



leveraged to intentionally integrate support for community engagement into HHS policy, practice, and culture. We describe how the opportunity to establish a new school was supported by timely and targeted professional development provided by a university-level office that supports the institutionalization of community engagement.

### ***Grassroots Faculty Engagement in HHS***

Undoubtedly, activity and advocacy for community engagement by community-engaged scholars at the university level helped generate policies and practices that could be further refined and developed as HHS established its own plan, policies, and practices. The new school included a number of faculty who identified as community-engaged scholars and who had worked in various ways to support the institutionalization of community engagement. Some of these faculty helped establish the service-learning office nearly a decade earlier, while others had advocated for community-engaged scholarship as chairs and members of department- and school-level promotion and tenure committees. Still others held faculty and administrative leadership roles in the university strategic planning process, as well as the university-wide promotion and tenure committee that successfully introduced CES into university promotion and tenure guidelines in 2010. Finally, other faculty, particularly in public health education, nutrition, human development and family studies, social work, community and therapeutic recreation, and peace and conflict studies, were active scholars teaching service-learning courses and conducting community-based research projects that included undergraduate and graduate students. In this way, the new school was filled with faculty, including department chairs, who were already committed to doing and advocating for CES. These faculty recognized and created opportunities to support the growth of CES in the development of the new school.

### **Engagement Academy for University Leaders**

During the summer of the university-wide community engagement advisory committee's work, the HHS dean was invited to attend a three-day Engagement Academy for University Leaders in Roanoke, Virginia. She, along with the special assistant for community engagement, the associate vice chancellor for student affairs, and the associate vice chancellor for economic development, were selected by the provost and vice chancellor for research and economic development to attend the meeting.

Acceptance into the Engagement Academy required that teams of administrators work before, during, and after the summer meeting to assess the level of institutionalization of community engagement at the university, and to develop an improvement plan for any identified areas. In the months leading up to the meeting, the provost, the vice chancellor for research and economic development, and the four attendees completed readings assigned by the Engagement Academy leaders (Drs. Lorilee Sandmann and Barbara Holland) and completed the Holland (1997) matrix of institutionalization of community engagement. In its assessment of institutionalization across UNC Greensboro broadly, the team identified HHS as a unit where ideas for community engagement could be integrated into policies and practices. It was determined that the Academy would be useful for the dean and the school since they were developing a number of plans and policies.

Ultimately, the Academy led to the development of a plan to advance community engagement within the new School of Health and Human Sciences, which opened July 1, 2011. The near-term goal of the plan was for HHS to adopt policies and practices that would serve as a model for a comprehensive, integrated, and cross-unit collaboration to support and sustain

community engagement as it relates to faculty scholarship, student learning and development, and community impact. The longer-term goal was to “change the culture at UNCG such that community engagement is a valued, legitimate, and celebrated form of faculty scholarship and student learning” (UNC Greensboro, 2011).

Key strategic areas identified by the team at the Engagement Academy—which were ultimately adopted by the faculty in the HHS strategic plan—included: the establishment of an annual community engagement award for faculty; the appointment of a faculty member as part-time director of the HHS Office of Community-Engaged Scholarship; purposeful inclusion of community representatives on the HHS Board of Visitors, as well as intentional focus on community engagement as a recurring theme presented by the faculty and through student work showcased at each meeting; and the inclusion of the term *community engagement* throughout communications and marketing materials, including websites, pamphlets, the strategic plan, and coffee mugs distributed to faculty and staff.

### **Opportunity to Establish New School and Department Governance Policies**

During the inaugural year of HHS, a faculty governance committee was tasked with developing promotion and tenure policies for the new unit, and a separate committee of faculty, department chairs, and associate deans was appointed to develop the first three-year HHS strategic plan. The dean’s office encouraged departments to create their own department-level promotion and tenure policies because many did not have them since they had used their previous school’s policy. Department chairs and faculty agreed largely that having departmental guidelines and examples would benefit faculty to clarify what scholarship looks like in their respective disciplines and contexts.

### **Taking Stock: Progress Toward Institutionalization Goals**

In 2016, HHS was invited to participate in a pilot study to examine what institutionalization of community engagement looks like at the unit level. This provided an opportunity for the unit to take stock of its efforts to institutionalize and build a culture supportive of community engagement. The study was led by John Saltmarsh and Michael Middleton and was sponsored by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and the New England Resource Center for Higher Education.

The HHS self-study was conducted by a small working group of faculty and administrators at the request of the HHS dean. The working group included two faculty members (one academic professional track (APT) associate professor, who was a full-time, non-tenure-track faculty member, and one tenure-track assistant professor), two associate deans (Research and Academic Administration), and the director of the Institute for Community and Economic Engagement (who previously served as the special assistant for community engagement, and who was also a tenured associate professor in Peace and Conflict Studies within the unit).

The self-assessment rubric provided to pilot study participants contains eight dimensions, each of which includes a set of components that characterize the dimension. Within each component were three possible “stages” of development, from “emerging” (Stage 1) to “developing” (Stage 2) to “transforming” (Stage 3; see the college engagement pilot rubric included in this special issue).

To determine which stage best characterized HHS for each component, committee

members provided evidence of programs, policies, and activities. Working group members using existing data, such as school policy and program documents, completed many of the components of the rubric. However, other questions required additional information and input from faculty, which were collected through focus groups. The working group also met with department chairs all together to gain their perspectives on the school's progress within component areas. Finally, the working group met with the HHS Research Advisory Committee and three focus groups of HHS faculty to solicit their views on the ways community-engaged work is valued and supported and ways to improve the recognition and support of this work. The intention was to ensure a comprehensive and representative view of the extent to which HHS has integrated support for community engagement across its policies and practices.

### **Findings**

Participation in the self-assessment study was useful as it provided a systematic way to examine the school's progress toward its goals to integrate support for community engagement across the unit. It also provided an opportunity to gather faculty and administrative leadership together in focus groups to discuss their experiences and perceptions of support for community engagement. The following section details evidence of transformation for the purpose of illustrating how one unit that has been effectively "transformed" by community engagement. We also share key insights learned about the importance of these institutional components residing at the school level specifically.

### **Leadership and Direction**

A primary feature of institutionalized community engagement in a college is long-term, sustained, consistent, and committed leadership at the administrative level, among the dean, associate deans, and department chairs. It is important for academic deans to support community engagement since they lead strategic planning and resource allocation; they are also the final evaluators at the unit level for faculty hiring, reappointment, promotion, and, tenure. Deans provide unit leadership, support department chairs, and can inspire faculty, staff, and students about the value of community engagement and help instill a culture in an academic unit. For example, the HHS dean brought in outside speakers to help faculty implement best practices in community-engaged scholarship at the same time it was being included in promotion and tenure documents. She also highlighted research by faculty in school newsletters and presentations to the HHS Board of Visitors and even had it printed on HHS-branded giveaway mugs. At many university-wide events with donors, alumni, and other administrators, the HHS dean was careful to discuss community engagement as a hallmark of "the new school." The message was clear: Community engagement was special and positive. If activities are valued at the top by a trusted administrator and supported by actions as well as words, they often find their way into the life of a school.

We further illustrate the success of these efforts in the following sections, demonstrating that community engagement is enacted through all forms of faculty work. These include the enactment of community engagement through: funded and unfunded research; integration into courses for students and professional development programs for faculty, students, staff, and community partners; partnerships initiated by groups and organizations that are external to the university and by teams of faculty and staff from that are inter-, multi-, and trans-disciplinary; and the words and actions of department chairs, associate deans, and deans who, along with faculty and staff, shape policies and culture to make community engagement a valued,

legitimate, and supported way of serving institutional priorities.

### **Mission and Vision**

Using the assessment tool, the team determined that the HHS mission and vision statements are aligned with community engagement, as described in the HHS strategic plan. In October 2011, Dean Hooper established a committee to create a strategic plan for the realigned school. The committee, comprising experienced faculty members, department chairs, and associate deans representing the school's nine departments and programs, was charged with creating vision, mission, and values statements, and developing primary goals and strategies. The integration of community engagement into the school's vision, mission, and values statements adopted for the 2012 plan continue to serve the school in 2019:

#### **Vision Statement:**

The School of HHS aims to inspire and equip people and transform institutions to work in ways that make the world better, safer, healthier, and more humane and just.

#### **Mission Statement:**

The School of HHS, through teaching, scholarship, community engagement and service, prepares new generations of professionals, leaders, scholars, and entrepreneurs to enhance the quality of life of individuals, families, and communities.

#### **Values Statement:**

As a community of scholars, the School of HHS values:

- Improved health, well-being, and quality of life for populations, communities, and individuals worldwide
- Care and respect for communities, with a focus on sustainability
- An academic environment in which diversity, inclusiveness, and respect for all is encouraged and celebrated
- Equitable partnerships when engaging with individuals, communities, and institutions in service and research
- Ethical principles applied to teaching, research, and community engagement
- A dynamic intellectual community that embraces interdisciplinary collaboration, creativity of thought, and innovativeness of practice (HHS, 2019).

Further, the initial 2012 plan expressed support for community engagement as a goal: "Support and expand community partnerships and scholarship within and beyond the university that transform the health, development, inclusion, and quality of life of all citizens, especially those from underserved, diverse, and vulnerable populations" (Personal communication, 2012). According to the plan's stated objectives, HHS would (1) maintain and enhance community partnerships and outreach, and (2) support and expand collaborative, community-engaged scholarship that transforms the health, development, inclusion, and quality of life of all citizens.

### **Community Engagement as a Form of Multi-, Inter-, and Transdisciplinary Scholarship**

Faculty shared that, for the most part, departmental colleagues now view community-engaged scholarship as just another form of scholarly work. Community engagement is viewed as an approach through which scholars and students address key societal and community-identified priorities, particularly as they are connected to health and wellness, vibrant communities, and global connections (key focus areas of the UNC Greensboro strategic plan). It has become ingrained in the culture of the school. In the words of one faculty member, “It is part of our surroundings, like air!”

In the 2015-2018 HHS strategic plan, community engagement was removed as a separate category and integrated intentionally as one approach among others needed for interprofessional, interdisciplinary, and experiential education, scholarship, and practice. The intention was to describe goals and activities that could include community engagement, while not excluding other forms of scholarly approaches. For example, within the goal of supporting faculty development, the plan included the following strategic activities:

- Support differential work assignments that optimize faculty productivity in teaching, research, service, and community engagement
- Provide opportunities for faculty to learn new research methods and approaches
- Allocate dollars to fund interdisciplinary teams to apply new methods to research
- Identify strategic hires that would enhance interdisciplinary collaborations and result in highly productive research teams
- Develop a database of faculty expertise in research and teaching methodologies (which lists community engagement)
- Link faculty members with community organizations in the North Carolina Piedmont Triad and beyond, including those affiliated with the HHS Board of Visitors
- At least two faculty “pitch” community engagement projects to the Board of Visitors each semester. (HHS, 2015)

### **Visibility and Communication**

A primary feature of institutionalized community engagement in a school or college is the messaging that is created and shared about the work of the unit, what it values, how those values are put into practice, and how the scholarly identities of faculty and students are embodied in their activities. Expressions of support for community engagement are infused into communication materials and outlets developed for the new school. These include prominent messages and photos of CES and teaching on the school website, the HHS strategic plan pamphlet (distributed to faculty, alumni, donors and others), HHS publications and Board of Visitors presentations, and HHS-branded items (e.g., coffee mugs).

Community engagement is also featured in the faculty recruitment, selection, and hiring process. Because the individual departments comprising HHS are so diverse, there is no single HHS boilerplate description of community engagement that is included in all job descriptions. Instead, individual search committees prepare specific job descriptions, position announcements, and advertisements that describe the value and variety of community-engaged teaching and scholarship, and the opportunities and resources for new faculty to do this work. Anecdotally, candidates whom we have recently hired, as well as others we interviewed, have commented that they view efforts to support community engagement as attractive aspects of being a faculty

member at UNC Greensboro. These efforts also provide a competitive advantage for UNC Greensboro when recruiting and hiring faculty.

The job descriptions posted by a number of departments express interest in faculty who will pursue community-engaged research agendas. For example, the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies includes the following in their job posting for a tenure-track assistant professor:

A successful candidate must be willing to lead the development and growth of initiatives that enact the mission of the department to help address the “wicked problems” of our times which require not only interdisciplinary theory and practice, or praxis, but also a deep understanding of the role of conflict in effecting and sustaining healthy relationships and vibrant communities. These initiatives are expected to leverage synergies among teaching, scholarship, and community engagement. (Personal communication, 2017)

Community engagement is expressed as an approach through which inter- and transdisciplinary scholarship can be executed so that theory is applied to practice and practice is applied to theory (i.e., praxis). The expressed value of CES is reiterated during on-campus interviews as several departments require candidates to meet with the director of the Institute for Community and Economic Engagement. The intention is to signal to potential candidates the opportunities for, and importance of, CES as a legitimate and valued form of scholarship, and to gauge candidates’ understanding of and expertise in this area.

### **Recognitions**

A primary feature of institutionalized community-engaged scholarship in a college is making that scholarship visible and celebrating its success in public ways. The importance of community engagement is represented in annual faculty reporting, asking about community engagement activities in the document. Additionally, the dean established an annual HHS Community Engaged Scholarship Award, which recognizes and rewards (with \$1,000) a member of the HHS faculty who demonstrates excellence in scholarly engagement with a community partner. The award requires that community engagement benefit the university and a community partner, while demonstrating a clear connection to departmental, school, or university mission. This award is given annually at the year-end HHS faculty symposium, alongside the presentation of other awards for excellence in teaching, research, and service.

### **Rewards**

A primary feature of institutionalized community-engaged scholarship in a school is that it is valued through formal reward structures, with explicit policies and criteria, valuing CES in the core academic culture of the unit. Recognition for community-engaged research, community-engaged teaching, and community-engaged service are explicitly recognized in the HHS promotion and tenure policy for tenure-track faculty, mirroring the university-wide policy adopted in 2010. Further, the HHS policy begins with a statement on the “Centrality of Scholarship in Faculty Roles and Responsibilities,” which states that scholarship is characterized by original intellectual work that results in the creation, synthesis, dissemination, and/or application of knowledge. It is based on a high level of professional expertise, and its significance can be validated by peers.

Avenues of scholarship include research, creative works and *community engagement*. Within each of these avenues, scholarship can be achieved by a variety of methods, in a variety of contexts, and in pursuit of a variety of purposes; it can enhance or revise

disciplinary knowledge, have an *impact on various populations or organizations*, or offer new theoretical insights. Because of the breadth of scholarly activity and its conduct, the path of any scholarly agenda will vary according to the nature of its questions and the means of their pursuit” (emphasis added to indicate explicit support for community-engaged scholarship; HHS, 2015, pp. 2-3).

Since 2012, all departments have either developed their own policies that integrate community-engagement or have chosen to use the HHS policy. It is important to note that recognition for community-engaged teaching is also articulated in the academic professional track faculty reappointment and promotion policies.

Approximately one third of faculty teaching in HHS are APT faculty. Most APT faculty have multi-year contracts, and some have worked at the university for decades. Typically, APT faculty have primary responsibility for teaching and advising students, although many also supervise, direct, or administer a program. As stated in the Promotion and Evaluation Policy for APT faculty, “most of these assignments are carried out in connection with the professional preparation of students in all of the disciplines represented in HHS where application of theory to practice is an integral ingredient of the curriculum” (HHS, 2019, p.1). As such, many APT faculty have participated by supervising community-focused internships and service-learning courses.

While an APT position is non-tenure-track, it allows for promotion from instructor to assistant to associate to full professor ranks, through a promotion process similar to that for tenure-track faculty. Therefore, APT faculty may be rewarded for participating in community engagement efforts through their service, scholarship, and/or teaching. In 2012, the APT faculty governance body reviewed its policy and included explicit support for community-engaged teaching. Found in *The Academic Professional Track: Policies, Guidelines, and Procedures*, the policy stated:

Participating in Community Engaged Teaching: Developing and delivering community-based instruction, such as service-learning experiences, on-site courses, clinical experiences, professional internships, and collaborative programs; developing and delivering off-campus teaching activities such as study-abroad courses and experiences, international instruction, and distance education courses; and developing and delivering instruction to communities and other constituencies. (HHS, 2019, p. 4)

Recognition for community-engaged teaching is particularly important as APT faculty supervise many internship and practicum programs that occur through community partnerships. The purpose of the APT was to have some consistency for departments that rely on non-tenure-track faculty, providing stability for the faculty and the department. The expectations are different from tenure-track faculty in that their roles vary depending on the expectations of the department. APT faculty make valuable contributions in a variety of areas depending on the expectations set forth. APT faculty may focus on administering a program. For example, in Human Development and Family Studies, there are five APT faculty, but each has different roles. Two of the faculty direct and supervise students during the professional experience (i.e., internship and student teaching), while another faculty member directs the childcare facility on campus. Typically, APT faculty have a heavy teaching schedule, but some are unable to teach or have limited teaching due to their responsibilities. Furthermore, APT faculty may also participate in traditional and nontraditional scholarship. However, the APT faculty do not carry the weight

of “publish or perish,” which is expected of tenure-track faculty. Additionally, many APT faculty have received local, regional, and national recognition in their respective fields.

### **Capacity-Building Infrastructure for Support and Sustainability**

A primary feature of institutionalized community engaged scholarship in a college is the establishment of a capacity-building infrastructure that supports and sustains CES. During the initial launch of HHS, the dean appointed Bob Wineburg, the Jefferson Pilot Excellence Professor, as HHS Director of Community Engagement. Wineburg’s first charge was to obtain a data-driven picture of HHS engagement using a community engagement survey. The survey, which yielded an astounding 83% response rate, revealed what engagement looks like in terms of duration, faculty status, outcomes, challenges, and needs. Analysis of the results showed that HHS faculty, on average, have four organizational affiliations through which they conduct collaborative research with partners, work with students on organizationally based research projects and other student assignments, guide organizations in governance, such as serving as a board member, and/or participate in advocacy roles that promote and enhance the work of their partner agencies. An important finding of this study was the demonstration of HHS faculty engagement with external and local communities through a variety of faculty and scholarly roles.

Importantly, the study showed that community engagement is relevant to nearly all faculty, not just those who identify as community-engaged scholars. This finding motivated later efforts within HHS and the Institute for Community and Economic Engagement to track community-university partnerships more comprehensively across the university in the databases they developed and maintain. These databases are used to help connect and convene faculty members for teaching and research activities that address community-identified priorities through a community-engaged approach.

The director position lasted only several years as the dean’s office worked to integrate support for and recognition of community-engaged scholarship into associated deans’ offices, most notably the HHS Office of Research. The school has intentionally focused on fostering and rewarding multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary teaching and research. For example, the HHS Office of Research encourages scholarship across and beyond disciplinary boundaries through its funding, tracking, and professional development efforts. The office provides internal funding mechanisms and strategically offers higher funding amounts for research projects that involve faculty from more than one discipline. It developed a database to track faculty members’ areas of scholarly activity and research methods/approaches for the purpose of helping to identify and convene potential collaborators for various funded and non-funded research opportunities. Community-engaged scholarship is one strategy among others identified in the database. The office also provides professional development workshops and speakers on topics that encourage community-engaged as well as multi, inter-, and transdisciplinary scholarship. Concurrent with the closing of the HHS Community Engagement Office, the Institute for Community and Economic Engagement was established in the Office of Research and Economic Development (now the Office of Research and Engagement) as a way to support CES across the campus. The HHS associate dean for research regularly posts additional opportunities offered by the Institute for Community and Economic Engagement to the school-wide listserv.

### **Assessment**

The systematic collection and evaluation of data to better understand the extent, quality, and impact of community engagement activities—what might be termed the institutionalized



community-engaged scholarship in a school or college—has become a routine aspect of HHS culture. As described earlier, the HHS director of community engagement initially developed a survey as a way to understand the number and scope of community connections and partnerships HHS faculty had developed. In 2013, the Institute for Community and Economic Engagement led a university-wide process of tracking UNC Greensboro's connections to and collaborations with external communities by embedding into existing systems—and, where necessary, creating new systems to measure and assess the broad range of community-engaged activities, programs, and initiatives. The purpose of this centralized effort is to track improvements in programs, curricula, and partnerships. In an effort to do a better job of communicating community engagement stories and, where appropriate, connecting faculty, staff, and community partners around shared community-identified priorities and passions, UNC Greensboro designed the Collaboratory®, a publicly searchable, web-based database that was licensed to TreeTop Commons in 2013. Collaboratory helps the university, including HHS, understand who, what, where, and how faculty, staff, students and community partners are working together to align strengths with priorities for shared learning and mutual benefit. Thus, tracking community engagement became the responsibility of the centralized Office of Research and Engagement, rather than individual units.

### **Curricular Pathways**

Critical to the institutionalization of community engagement in a school like HHS are processes for developing clear curricular pathways so that all students have the opportunity to learn about and practice community engagement and master clearly articulated civic-learning outcomes. Integrating community engagement in curricular structures and pathways, although an ongoing process, was emphasized even before the creation of HHS in 2009. Initially devised and taught by a social work professor, HHS now offers a unit-level graduate course entitled Professional Grant Writing for Health and Human Service Organizations in the Community. This course was initially co-taught with a community partner and provided a model for both external and internal university partnerships. Now a collaborative unit-level course aimed at teaching grant-writing skills and developing joint funding opportunities with community partners, this course has been widely subscribed by students in public health education and social work, and has not only strengthened community-university partnerships, but also conveyed critical skills in doing community work to HHS students. Taught with a community-engaged lens, this course exemplifies unit-level commitment to CES.

At the department level, many departments in HHS have shown their commitment to community engagement by integrating field work and community-engaged practica into their undergraduate and graduate capstone courses. Peace and Conflict Studies, for example, has developed their PCS 690: Integrative Colloquium course as a means for students to apply the theories they have learned in developing praxis toward conflict transformation in local community settings. Social Work, Human Development and Family Studies, Public Health Education and Community and Therapeutic Recreation have also all integrated community engagement experiences into their capstone internship and field research courses. These department-level courses help develop a reciprocal relationship with the outside community and support the HHS unit-level course mentioned previously.

These examples of developing curricular pathways for community engagement represent an important vector for developing unit-wide acceptance of community-engaged scholarship. HHS's commitment to the development of HHS-prefix, or school-wide, courses has allowed

faculty to develop curriculum that is not “owned” by any one department and could be used to reinforce the importance of scholarship that impacts the community rather than simply studying it. Clear community-engaged curriculum models partnership with community partners and teaches students and faculty the value of collaborative relationships. At the unit level, HHS is certainly moving into the transforming category of community-engaged curriculum. Although more remains to be done to strengthen community engaged curricular pathways, much has already been accomplished.

### **Conclusion**

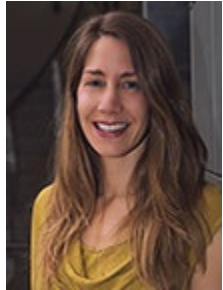
Our case example of the School of Health and Human Sciences at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro illustrates some of the key opportunities, processes, and outcomes of nearly a decade of intentional efforts to build and support community-engaged faculty culture and institutionalization. It is an example of the ways larger university initiatives, such as strategic planning, can help create a sense of momentum for community engagement that can be actualized within a school, as well as through the creation of offices and staff housed centrally in a research office. It is an example of opportunism, how an opportunity to develop new policies and a school identity can be harnessed to contribute to the growth of support for community engagement. It is an example of elevating, recognizing, and rewarding the important contributions of non-tenure-track faculty as community-engaged scholars. Finally, it is an example of the importance of engaging all levels of leadership—where the grassroots movement and executive leadership are joined together by key champions and change agents who enact the policies and programs to develop new paths and norms for engagement.

The opportunity to revisit progress through involvement in a self-study demonstrated that efforts to continue to support and encourage community engagement must continue. As HHS has arguably become a leader in community engagement within the university in terms of the ways support has been institutionalized and adopted as part of the school’s culture, it is important to foster conversation and transformation across other units. The self-study also raised important questions and insights about what kinds of support should be provided by the school, and what might be more usefully integrated into the structures and efforts of a central, university-wide office, such as the Institute for Community and Economic Engagement. Lastly, the process of the self-study revealed that new types of issues, concerns, and opportunities arise, even as cultures and systems are developed to support engagement. For example, HHS faculty are increasingly working collaboratively in large teams or consortia of faculty and community-based partners to address community-identified priorities through teaching and scholarship. Such large-scale initiatives of collective commitment are important; yet, they are quite different from the more individualistic faculty partnerships of the past regarding how they are supported. Ultimately, community engagement requires continued stewardship and self-study as the people and processes continue to evolve and transform.

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# EJOURNAL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

VOLUME 8 | ISSUE 3

## **Are We Engaged? A College-Level Inventory of Community Engagement in Weber State University's College of Arts and Humanities**

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### **Abstract**

In the study discussed in this article, a group of six faculty members from Weber State University's Telitha E. Lindquist College of Arts and Humanities tested and applied the Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University as part of a pilot program. Based on this application of the rubric, the group found that the college tended toward the "Emerging" stage (i.e., Stage 1) for most items, indicating a need to continue developing programs and practices that center on community engagement (CE) within the college. The primary finding from this activity was that CE is fragmented in the college, within its constituent departments, and at the university level. This fragmentation limits the effectiveness of community-engaged learning, teaching, and scholarship. The authors discuss the group's findings and interpretations of the rubric elements and offer recommendations for future use of the engaged college rubric.

*Keywords:* community-engaged learning, community-engaged scholarship, high-impact practices, high-impact educational experiences, CE, CES, CEL, arts, humanities, pilot project, rubric

Community engagement (CE) among higher education institutions remains a topic of particular interest for scholars, with a variety of focuses and outcomes presented in the current literature (e.g., Saltmarsh et al., 2009; Sandmann, Thornton, & Jaeger, 2009). Despite this interest, there is a veritable dearth of scholarly examination of CE at the college level, as the vast majority of the literature centers on the institutional (i.e., university) unit (Saltmarsh, Middleton, & Quan, 2019, in this issue).

One may speculate as to the various causes of this lack of focus on college-level CE. Eckel, Green, Hill, and Mallon (1999) offered a possible explanation by noting that small entities within a university (e.g., a single college) may not have enough influence to affect overall institutional change. According to this view, a college-level focus may be too granular in the larger institutional landscape. Yet, Jaeger, Jameson, and Clayton (2012) made the important argument that lasting change within an institution “will be sustainable only if it is pervasive throughout the institution’s colleges and departments” (p. 152), suggesting the necessity of granular levels of focus. With this view as a basis, we maintain that an analysis of college-level participation in CE offers an essential piece in the overall portrait of institutional practices.

Colleges and departments within institutions of higher education should align with university-level initiatives because the degree of college-level adherence to these initiatives provides a vital index for the coherence and permeation of the university vision. The Telitha E. Lindquist College of Arts and Humanities at Weber State University (WSU) employed Saltmarsh and Middleton’s Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University (see Saltmarsh, Middleton, & Quan, 2019) to better understand the extent of community-engaged practices during the 2016-2017 academic year. The goal was to elaborate upon the ways that the college unit can help establish and support institutional-level policies and efforts for enhanced community-engaged learning and scholarship.

### Literature Review

Before discussing how a college can serve as a focal point for community engagement, it is important to establish some context. *Community-engaged scholarship* (CES) appears to be an accepted label, with sufficient scope for identifying the diverse ways universities and constitutive colleges approach work that is focused on engaging the learning of a campus within surrounding communities. CES emerged from service-learning, which Bringle and Clayton (2012) defined as

a course or competency-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in mutually identified service activities that benefit the community, and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility. (pp. 114-115)

Yet, the term *service-learning* does not fully encompass the goals of CES, which Saltmarsh, Middleton, and Quan (2019) defined as “creative intellectual work based on a high level of professional expertise, the significance of which peers can validate, and which enhances the fulfillment of the mission of the campus/college/departments” (p. 3). CES, then, offers a more complete understanding of what may be considered acceptable in community-engaged work among university faculty and students.

CES involves an array of collaborative projects that combine elements of teaching, service, and research, and that focus centrally “on the collaborative development and application of



scholarly knowledge to address pressing social issues” (da Cruz, 2018, p. 149). On a micro level (e.g., in a single class or a single publication), CES may focus on a particular community-related issue (see Warren & Mapp, 2011). Arguably, however, CES may also be integrated into larger academic units, including a college or the entire university.

### **Background**

Like many institutions, WSU has largely been driven by initiatives at the university level. In fact, WSU has a rich history of community engagement, especially since the June 2007 creation of the Center for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL), formerly known as the Community Involvement Center. Relying on a strategic partnership between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, CCEL provides both curricular and co-curricular CE opportunities for campus constituents through various long-standing partnerships with vital local community organizations. The main mission of CCEL is to engage students, faculty, and staff members in service, democratic engagement, and community research that promotes civic participation, builds community capacity, and enhances the educational process. In the 2017-2018 academic year, 4,611 WSU students collectively contributed over 106,043 curricular and co-curricular hours of service.

Three pillars comprise CCEL at WSU: direct service, civic engagement, and community research. Based on the level and quality of involvement in these three domains, WSU has been listed each year since the inception of the award on The President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. Additionally, since 2012, WSU has served as a lead institution in NASPA’s Lead Initiative for Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement. Further, WSU was awarded the Carnegie Foundation’s Community Engagement Classification for the first time in 2008, with the university maintaining this ranking ever since. The Carnegie Classification acknowledges and classifies universities according to their CE efforts and is “the leading framework for recognizing and describing institutional diversity in U.S. higher education” (Carnegie Classification, n.d.).

WSU has continuously focused on improving CE in general. That said, a culture of CE does not permeate the Lindquist College—let alone other colleges at the university. Some programs, and certainly individual professors, are more engaged than others, and those that are engaged are not necessarily representative of their departments or the college. Thus, while WSU meets the qualifications of an engaged institution per the Carnegie Classification, we cannot claim that our college reflects the university’s same level of engagement.

The former director of CCEL, Dr. Brenda Kowalewski, was appointed to a new position of associate provost of high-impact programs and faculty development in 2016. In this capacity, Kowalewski convened an engagement subcommittee whose purpose centered on establishing high-impact educational experiences (HIEEs) both inside and outside the classroom. HIEEs provide students with foundational and transferable skills to become productive, engaged, and responsible global citizens. Many high-impact practices are characterized by deep levels of student engagement in learning and not just community engagement; thus, CE becomes a distinct practice that seeks to involve community partnerships but that is also synonymous with an array of other high-impact learning practices and approaches. During the 2019-2020 academic year, the work of the subcommittee will move across campus, with a group of faculty and staff willing to pilot the HIEE taxonomy. The goals for this academic year are to identify where HIEEs already exist and where they could expand, and then to provide feedback to the engagement subcommittee.

Given the geographical location of WSU, the area most impacted by university

engagement initiatives is the campus home city of Ogden, Utah. Ogden, a large metropolitan region located approximately 40 miles north of Salt Lake City, provides a diverse social and cultural environment for student service-learning projects and for university-community partnerships and developments. With a population of just under 100,000, Ogden is Utah's seventh largest city. In 2018, the median household income for Ogden City was \$46,845; yet, the greater Ogden-Clearfield metropolitan area median income was \$72,112 for the same year (Demographics, 2019). The Diversity Index of Ogden City is 70.3%, registering the city region as both working-class in economic standing and highly diverse ethnically and racially. These same indexes shift to reflect more affluence and less diversity in other outlying areas.

As a testament to its commitment to the communities of Ogden, WSU recently opened the Community Education Center in inner-city Ogden, with the express purpose of benefitting underserved populations by providing services such as an early childhood school headed by the Department of Child and Family Studies and the Ogden Civic Action Network (Ogden CAN). Formed in 2016, Ogden CAN is a coalition of anchor institutions dedicated to improving education, housing, and health in the east central neighborhood of Ogden.

Despite this commitment, the demographics of Ogden City are not currently reflected in WSU's student demographics: Hispanics comprise 11% of the WSU student population; Asian and Pacific Islanders, 2.3%; and African Americans, 1.5%. It should be noted that WSU attracts students from beyond the Ogden City area (see Appendix); students from multiple counties throughout Utah attend. As a comprehensive public institution with a dual mission that integrates learning, scholarship, and community, WSU aims to provide access to all who wish to pursue higher education. The imbalance in community and campus diversity was a primary impetus for the review of the Lindquist College using the engaged college rubric. The goal is to establish and maintain a symbiotic relationship of service and learning within and for the community. Thus, an assessment regarding levels of college engagement was seen as a potential means for expanding WSU's service mission.

### **Objective**

As the previously described context shows, WSU's commitment to community-engaged practices is indisputable. However, the degree to which colleges directly contribute to or become deeply committed to this vision has remained questionable. With the view that the college is a vital unit of analysis, we sought to better understand the college's engagement activities and culture. Based on WSU's long-standing commitment to community-engaged learning, a group of faculty within the Lindquist College assessed the college's level of engagement in the triumvirate of teaching, scholarship, and service. To do so, we utilized Saltmarsh and Middleton's college-level engagement rubric (see Saltmarsh, Middleton, & Quan, 2019). Additionally, we sought to explore new avenues of community engagement that might be practically implemented at the college level based on our review of rubric indicators.

### **Methodology**

In 2016, as chair of the Rubric Working Group ("the group"), then-Associate Dean Becky Jo Gesteland gathered faculty from each of the five departments within the college who were known as leaders in and/or advocates for community-engaged practices. Because Gesteland was familiar with most of the faculty in the college, she simply asked available and interested faculty to join the group, which would meet regularly throughout the year. The resulting group—the authors of this article—included the following faculty: Isabel Asensio, professor of Spanish;

Christy Call, assistant professor of English; Becky Jo Gesteland, professor of English and associate dean; Alexander L. Lancaster, assistant professor of communication; Amanda Sowerby, professor of dance; Kathleen “K” Stevenson, professor of visual art and design. The group met eight times between October 2016 and February 2017, with their collaborative efforts focused primarily on annotating the rubric and rating the college in each of the rubric areas.

The rubric provided a yardstick for evaluating the college across eight dimensions, including leadership and direction; mission and vision; visibility and communication; recognition; rewards; capacity-building infrastructure for support and sustainability; assessment; and curricular pathways (see Saltmarsh et al., 2019). According to the rubric, a college may stand at one of three stages: Stage 1, “Emerging”; Stage 2, “Developing”; or Stage 3, “Transforming.” The group examined all eight dimensions from the rubric to assess the college’s structures, policies, and practices for community-engaged work.

Because the group comprised junior and senior faculty from each of the five departments, there was a strong basis of knowledge for the levels of engaged practices occurring across the college as a whole. We conducted the examination through large group meetings, with all six group members in attendance, and worked systematically through the rubric. When we did not know how to answer one of the indicators, we researched the college website or contacted someone who knew. The group examined each indicator by asking whether or not it applied to the college as a whole or only to individual departments or programs within the college. For example, when analyzing the indicator “Alignment with Accreditation” in the category of Mission and Vision, we discovered that dance, an area within the Department of Performing Arts, requires Community Education, while other areas do not. Going forward, the group will drill deeper into majors within areas and departments.

In addition, since several participants from the college are involved in the pilot group of the university’s HIEE rollout project, the group plans to debrief with the participants at the end of the academic year and collate their results with the ones from the college rubric implementation project. This meeting, facilitated by the associate dean, should help determine next steps for the college and the university, and better define responsibilities assigned to various entities such as programs/areas, departments, colleges, universities, CCEL, etc.

### **Results and Discussion**

With few exceptions, the college generally ranked at Stage 1, “Emerging.” However, the college did rank at a Stage 2, or “Developing,” in 10 of the 48 rubric components. In many cases, group members found that departmental or university policies, resources, and/or practices existed to indicate Stage 2 or 3 performance if the unit of analysis was university-wide efforts. Because CCEL provides so many resources and opportunities, the college is not structured to offer or support many of these initiatives. This finding aligns with the work of Jaeger et al. (2012), who, as mentioned earlier, argued that lasting change bridging campus and community efforts for high-impact teaching and scholarship can only be sustainable if it is implemented and supported throughout the institution, at the level of colleges and departments. This proves to be a critical challenge for WSU, even with its celebrated history of community-engaged work. Thus, the asymmetry of structure, or the fragmentation of efforts, between the campus as a whole and the college as a unit, limits the overall effectiveness of community-engaged learning, teaching, and scholarship.

The group also analyzed the following aspects of CEL work in the college in order to create

a set of recommendations for lasting improvement of community-engaged practices.

### **Faculty Annual Reports at the College Level**

One recommendation for incentivizing CEL work among faculty involves recognizing and rewarding such work in the annual reports that faculty submit. Last year, the college added a section in its report template to include recognition of high-impact practices. The following is an excerpt of language taken from the revised report template:

Please describe any teaching, scholarship, and/or service that involved high-impact experiences. The Engagement Subcommittee defines high-impact experiences as involving “student participation in curricular and co-curricular learning activities occurring on a regular basis that are intentionally designed to foster active and integrative learning and student engagement by utilizing multiple impact amplifiers not typically found within an academic setting.”

A review of the results of this effort after the first year of implementation revealed a lack of consensus regarding participation. Several faculty members were uncertain about what “counts” as a high-impact practice (HIP) and claimed that certain practices did not align with the university definition. Others did not list any HIPs, even though we knew they frequently provided such experiences for students. This feature in the annual report will take more time to become recognized and understood.

### **Faculty Training and Mentoring at the University Level**

Another recommendation from the working group involved creating a community of practice (CoP) focused on community-engaged learning that would be specific to the college. Last year, at the university level, CCEL and the Teaching and Learning Forum created a series of CoPs, two of which focused on CEL (designated 1.0 and 2.0). In its first year, the CoPs for CEL attracted a fair number of faculty participants, though not enough to run two separate groups. The combined cohort included 12 faculty from accounting and taxation, communication, foreign languages, health promotion and human performance, interior design, nursing, social work, and teacher education. The CoP aimed to provide interested faculty with a space to explore community engagement pedagogies, student reflection design, reciprocal partnership building, community research models, and community project design, among other topics. This CoP also gave members the opportunity to network with community partners in the form of field trips to different sites.

The CoP was assessed at the end of the experience. Overall, participants thought that it was a positive and instructive experience. However, they also noted a few limitations or challenges. The first challenge related to identifying and structuring varied CEL “proficiencies.” Faculty participants in the CoP had different expectations and needs based on their different stages of training and experience. Some had never taught a CEL course and needed guidance on pedagogy implementation and course design; others had been doing community-engaged work for years in their classrooms and were more in need of innovative applications and/or new ways to motivate students. Identifying and meeting different levels of proficiency would optimally require more resources in the form of group facilitators.

This point leads to a second challenge: mentorship. Pairing junior faculty with more CEL-experienced faculty, whether within the same department or college, is a noted best practice in the literature, and this would be an ideal project for the Lindquist College. One of the challenges in training faculty in CEL pedagogies, of course, is the lack of incentives and/or compensation,

whether for new or experienced faculty. Faculty mentors as well as participants interested in CEL pedagogies confront an obvious time investment in rethinking their instructional approaches, so incentives might generate an increased sense that their efforts are recognized and appreciated. It might also result in higher numbers of participation within a CoP as well as improved retention rates.

Ideally, CCEL will continue to provide general training and professional development for faculty interested in CEL or community-based research. Perhaps each college could create a CoP 2.0 for each disciplinary area.

### **Other Considerations and Concerns at the University Level and Statewide**

Several major changes are impacting the work that the college and university aim to complete:

1. The university contract with OrgSync (WeberSync) expired, and, at the end of August 2018, the campus switched to a mobile app (Weber Connect). This new app has a steep learning curve and fewer capabilities, at least currently. For instance, it does not allow for form creation and submission, so the CEL designation application process needed a new home. Fortunately, the chair of the CCEL Curriculum Committee worked with the university curriculum chair to create a CEL designation form in the university curriculum system, Curriculog. The shift to Curriculog represents a form of institutionalization that promises greater buy-in, as department chairs and deans will now be part of the process; although not part of the official CEL designation process, they will be part of the review timeline and thus know who is doing what. This transparency should improve HIEE efforts across campus.
2. The executive director of CCEL left WSU in mid-August 2018, and Associate Dean Gesteland was appointed interim director. In April 2019, she was appointed executive director. Meanwhile, Professor Sowerby has been appointed associate director and Professor Asensio has been appointed chair of foreign languages. These changes have assured a relatively seamless transition for continued work on the project.
3. The funding for Utah Campus Compact was not renewed by the state legislature, necessitating a regrouping of faculty engagement institutes, among other requirements. While institutions of higher education in Utah explore ways to move forward, the conversations of this “next steps” group afford many opportunities to connect and revise the mission of Weber State University.

### **Recommendations**

The group’s self-assessment indicated that the college is not as engaged as we initially thought. Although the college includes strong individual programs and strong faculty leaders, these programs and people are primarily supported through CCEL. In order to sponsor college-wide initiatives that support engaged learning and that lead to improved structures, policies, and practices, the group proposes several immediate revisions, near-future changes, and long-term strategic shifts.

#### **Immediate Revisions**

1. Update the annual faculty report form with the new definition of high impact educational experiences and provide examples of some of these practices from the

college.

2. Use the Engagement Subcommittee's HIEE taxonomy to evaluate educational practices in the college.

### **Near-Future Changes**

1. Collaborate with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to create a pre/post survey for students about their HIEEs.
2. Survey community partners, in collaboration with CCEL.
3. Revise the college tenure document to include HIEEs in all three areas: teaching, scholarship, and service.

### **Long-Term Strategic Shifts**

1. Include high-impact practices in new faculty job descriptions (Dimensions I and III).
2. Designate a point person in each department who serves as a faculty mentor and who can track CEL and other high-impact work.
3. Create a college-level academic emphasis or certificate.
4. Provide professional development support for faculty who incorporate HIEEs in their teaching.

The group recognizes that these recommendations are part of what needs to be a much larger process at various levels within the university. Indeed, our recommendations apply to the college but also involve “multiple actions in multiple areas” to achieve a truly transformative shift (Saltmarsh et al., 2019). These multiple points of change are especially important to achieve buy-in, since the Engaged Subcommittee discovered that some faculty were not ready; they perceived “community engagement work as a zero-sum equation—if community engagement was being valued, then what I do is not going to be valued.” As the university moves forward with the implementation of the HIEE definition and self-evaluation tool, and as individual faculty members, departments, and college begin piloting the tool, the hope is that everyone can find a place for HIEE in their curriculum. Many of the recommendations are beyond the committee's or even the college's control; however, the general movement of the university promises the future incentivization of HIEE and thus CEL work.

### **Conclusion**

The Lindquist College of Arts and Humanities at Weber State University served as a testing area for the engaged college rubric, which led to the committee's enhanced understanding of the areas in which the college can be an exemplar for the university. Although the college ranked at the “Emerging” level in most areas, the experience with the rubric allowed the committee to develop recommendations that, if implemented, may lead to closer alignment with the university mission of “access, community, and learning.” Specifically, WSU's goals align naturally with the work of community engagement; it is simply a matter of articulating this alignment more carefully. For instance, community engagement (1) facilitates the ability of members of our community to interface with students, faculty, and staff; (2) builds a shared learning community between the institution and northern Utah entities; and (3) fosters a joint learning initiative among students and their community partners. In the present study, the use of the engaged college rubric facilitated a

college-wide discussion on what improvements can be made to increase community engagement in teaching, scholarship, and service areas.

That said, the committee encountered some limitations with the study. First, the committee's conclusions were based on specific descriptors within the rubric. Throughout the process, the committee had to frequently remind members that the rubric was to be applied at the college level, not the university or departmental level. In doing so, the committee had to decide whether activities at the departmental level, though not directly at the college level, counted as a college effort. In the interest of caution, the committee decided that only descriptors of actions that applied specifically at the college level would be counted for advancing beyond the "Emerging" stage. As a result, the committee may have been overly restrictive in its consideration of the college's level, according to the rubric. A second limitation involved the experimental nature of the rubric itself. Because the rubric was in beta testing and had not yet been released, it is possible that a final version of the rubric may include updated descriptors. Thus, future research conducted with the engaged college rubric should continue to refine and replicate the present study.

As the college moves forward with the implementation of CEL practices in coursework, data will be collected to identify any potential increases in retention numbers in programs and thereby to determine whether to more fully embrace these methods. These data may be persuasive in encouraging other colleges on campus to begin exploring the rubric, clarify the value of CEL practices to retain students, and increase the depth of knowledge they gain in the process. The university roll-out of the HIEE initiative should assist in data-gathering efforts, since more entities (the Provost's Office, the Office of Institutional Research, the Center for Community Engaged Learning, and the Lindquist College) will now conduct assessments of how community engagement—and other high-impact practices—affects student success.

Without the commitment of the college, it is difficult for university initiatives to reach all levels, especially front-line areas that perhaps have the most influence in determining student experience. Coupled with departments, the college is a critical site for faculty to engage in discussions and reflections about the way their teaching and scholarship connect to the community. Therefore, the engaged college rubric project serves as an example of how faculty members must often work cooperatively to assess CE involvement and then implement feasible, practical changes that increase the value of engaged work.

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## Appendix: Student Characteristics Fast Facts from the Report Gallery



### Fast Facts

Student Characteristics - Fall 3rd Week

Select Year:  
2018-2019

**Total Enrollment**

**28,247**

#### Class Level

	Count	%
Concurrent	9,333	33%
Freshmen	6,221	22%
Sophomores	3,625	13%
Juniors	3,235	11%
Seniors	5,051	18%
Graduate	782	3%



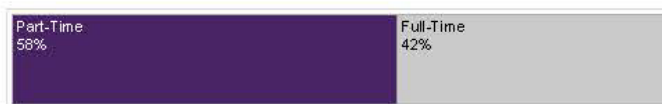
#### Gender

	Count	%
Female	15,614	55%
Male	12,633	45%



#### Full-Time/Part-Time

	Count	%
Full-Time	11,774	42%
Part-Time	16,473	58%



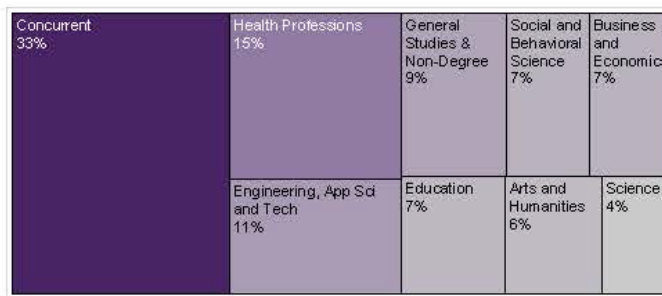
#### Ethnicity

	Count	%
African American	412	1.5%
Asian and Pacific Islander	657	2.3%
Caucasian	21,131	74.8%
Hispanic	3,121	11.0%
International	348	1.2%
Native American	130	0.5%
Two or More	904	3.2%
Other and Unknown	1,544	5.5%



#### College

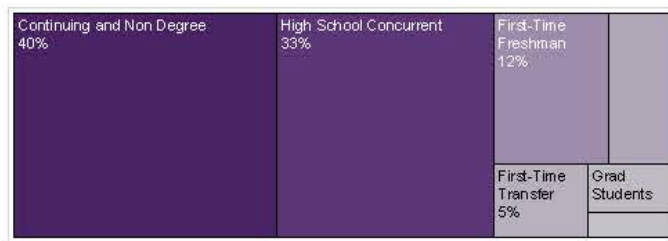
	Count	%
Arts and Humanities	1,744	6%
Business and Economics	2,046	7%
Concurrent	9,333	33%
Education	1,867	7%
Engineering, App Sci and ..	2,990	11%
General Studies & Non-De..	2,626	9%
Health Professions	4,359	15%
Science	1,230	4%
Social and Behavioral Scie..	2,052	7%



## ARE WE ENGAGED?

### Status

	Count	%
High School Concurrent	9,333	33%
High School Early College	406	1%
First-Time Freshman	3,317	12%
First-Time Transfer	1,323	5%
Readmit	1,818	6%
Continuing and Non Degree	11,269	40%
Grad Students	781	3%



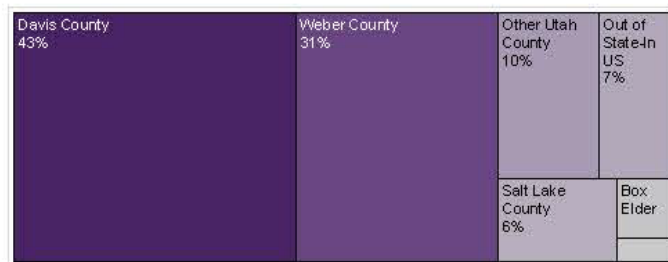
### Residency

	Count	%
Residents	26,217	93%
Nonresidents	2,030	7%



### Counties

	Count	%
Weber County	8,651	31%
Davis County	12,121	43%
Box Elder County	561	2%
Salt Lake County	1,708	6%
Other Utah County	2,887	10%
Out of State-In US	2,092	7%
Out of State-Out of US	227	1%



### Representation

Utah Counties	29
States Represented	50
Territories	1
Foreign Countries	59
Veterans	623

## Authors



Dr. Becky Jo Gesteland is the Executive Director of the Center for Community Engaged Learning and a professor of English at Weber State University. She teaches classes in professional & technical writing and American literature. Her research and writing focus on community-engaged learning, content management (specifically XML), and the personal essay.



Dr. Christy Call is an assistant professor of English at Weber State University. Her research highlights emergent ethical issues in literature from the standpoint of relations in a more-than-human world. Additionally, she directs the English Teaching program, which has centralized community engagement through education, public service, and research.



Alexander L. Lancaster (Ph.D., West Virginia University, 2015) is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication at Weber State University. He serves as the basic course director for the department, as well as the faculty co-advisor of the Community Research Team, part of the Center for Community Engaged Learning. His primary areas of research interest are persuasion and professional communication.



Kathleen "K" Stevenson (MFA, University of Notre Dame, 1999) is a professor of art in the Department of Visual Art and Design at Weber State University, and director of printmaking. She has been involved with community engagement for the past decade, bridging the creative arts, education and community in many of its forms, including the establishment of the Beverley T. Sorenson Arts Learning Endowment at WSU in 2013.



Amanda Sowerby is Associate Dean and Professor of Dance within the Lindquist College of Arts and Humanities at Weber State University. Her creative research focuses on dance as a creative tool for transformation within public and non-profit educational environments.



Dr. Isabel Asensio is professor of Spanish and chair of the Department of Foreign Languages at Weber State University. She serves as faculty adviser for several student clubs and organizations, such as the Hispanic Honor Society and MEChA. Her research focuses on women and gender issues in literature, Translation Studies, and Community Interpreting.



# EJOURNAL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

VOLUME 8 | ISSUE 3

## **Utilizing the College-Level Community Engagement Assessment Rubric to Identify Strengths, Weaknesses, and Opportunities for Growth in Drexel University's College of Arts and Sciences**

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### **Abstract**

Drexel University's College of Arts and Sciences (CoAS), one of the institution's largest colleges, has intentionally aimed to grow and deepen its commitment to civic engagement over the last decade. CoAS has demonstrated a significant commitment to community engagement by making it a funding priority and creating a leadership position to support engagement. Because of the varying levels and formats of the college's civic-engagement efforts, a process of assessment was needed. To channel assessment efforts, a faculty working group adopted Saltmarsh and Middleton's pilot assessment rubric. A group of seven engaged faculty from across the college and the executive director of the Lindy Center for Civic Engagement analyzed campus websites, press releases, and presidential addresses. The group also examined additional indicators associated with policies, practices, structures, communication, and culture in the form of mission and vision statements, faculty and staff job descriptions, strategic plans, student recruitment materials, tenure and teaching faculty reviews, faculty contracts, operational budgets, and course learning objectives. These data allowed for formative and substantive evaluation of the college's civic engagement and scholarship. A final white paper was presented to both the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the senior vice provost of University and Community Partnerships. Moving forward, this pilot will allow faculty and administrators to strategically address multiple dimensions of engagement at the collegiate and institutional loci.

*Keywords:* college-level engagement, civic engagement, anchor institution, engaged scholarship, community-based learning

Drexel University is a private urban research institution located in West Philadelphia. Deeply committed to civic engagement, Drexel defines its institutional commitment to the broader community within three dimensions: public service, academic integration, and institutional investment. Drexel utilizes the term *civic engagement* to encompass all institutional and individual collaborations and commitments with the community. Civic engagement across each of Drexel's 15 schools and colleges is demonstrated at varying levels and in various formats, all tied to each school's and college's priorities and resources. The College of Arts and Sciences (CoAS), one of Drexel's largest colleges, has intentionally aimed to grow and deepen its commitment to civic engagement over the last decade. Leadership in the college determined that an assessment process was needed to assure quality growth and because of the varying levels and formats of the college's efforts toward civic engagement.

This article aims both to describe CoAS's self-study process and to provide a case study for institutions interested in utilizing the college-level assessment rubric created by Saltmarsh and Middleton (see Saltmarsh, Middleton, & Quan, 2019, in this issue). This assessment was led by six CoAS faculty and one administrator and examined eight dimensions of college-level commitment and engagement. Set within the context of Drexel University's history and current leadership, this article seeks to highlight the pathway of increased civic engagement across CoAS so it may serve as a reference for other institutions interested in conducting a similar self-assessment. While the university's history, climate, location, and demographics should be considered as parts of the foundation of and rationale for the self-assessment, the process itself is transferrable.

### **The Rationale for College-Level Assessment of Community Engagement**

Drexel's history of cooperative education, experiential pedagogy, and civic commitments comprised the foundation of the university's 21<sup>st</sup>-century efforts to increase community engagement and CoAS's evolution into a modern-day liberal arts institution. The authors relied on this history as well as university leaders and strategic plans to create a self-assessment. Drexel is a unique cooperative-education university that deeply values experiential learning. Leadership at the president and dean levels identified civic engagement as a primary institutional focus, further supporting the need for such an assessment.

### **Cooperative and Experiential Learning**

In 1919, in the aftermath of World War I, Drexel University created its now-hallmark cooperative education (co-op) program. Hollis Godfrey, Drexel's president at the time, instituted co-op for engineering majors to demonstrate the value of education to the United States and offer students an opportunity to understand the relevance and challenges of their disciplines (Dilworth & Knowles, 2017). By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Drexel's original motive for co-op education had evolved, becoming a form of progressive education inspired by John Dewey and others who advocated "learning by doing" (Dilworth & Knowles, 2017, p. 267). Today, the institution's "commitment to country" and civic duty, disciplinary knowledge, and practice endure under the leadership of its current president, John Fry, and the current CoAS dean, Donna Murasko.

Co-op and experiential education represent the cornerstone of a Drexel University education and are highlighted in the most recent strategic vision. The 2012-2017 strategic plan reiterates the following university mission:

Drexel University fulfills our founder's vision of preparing each new generation of students

for productive professional and civic lives while also focusing our collective expertise on solving society's greatest problems. Drexel is an academically comprehensive and globally engaged urban research university, dedicated to advancing knowledge and society and to providing every student with a valuable, rigorous, experiential, technology-infused education, enriched by the nation's premier co-operative education program.

Under this mission, President Fry's leadership and the university's dedication to experiential learning and civic responsibility presented an ideal opportunity to explore how such a vision, with its unique pedagogy and strategic approaches, could inform Drexel's course offerings (Rickards, 2015).

### **Institutional Leadership and Commitment**

In 2010, John Fry was appointed Drexel University's 14<sup>th</sup> president. In his first public address to the university, President Fry shared his dynamic and integrated vision for an enhanced focus on civic engagement at Drexel. Three interconnected concepts defined this engagement: student and employee volunteerism; academic integration of community-based research, teaching, and clinical practice; and institutionally supported neighborhood investments. Each of these concepts has served to further define and shape Drexel's pervasive commitment to civic engagement.

President Fry's appointment led directly to enhanced institutionalization of and institutional support for civic engagement across the university. For example, the Office of University-Community Partnerships was founded early in his tenure, and Senior Vice Provost Lucy Kerman was recruited to lead the university's civic engagement work. University-Community Partnerships now serves as the umbrella organization for multiple centers and initiatives, including the Lindy Center for Civic Engagement and the Dornsife Center for Neighborhood Partnerships.

The Lindy Center for Civic Engagement plays a coordinating role in the academic integration space by providing resources and coordination for community-based learning (CBL) across the institution. These resources include a biannual three-day CBL workshop for faculty who wish to incorporate community engagement into their classrooms. To date, 72 full-time Drexel faculty and 14 staff members have participated in the training, in addition to 12 faculty from institutions throughout the region, including the University of Pennsylvania, LaSalle University, Juniata College, the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, and Delaware Valley University. The workshop provides faculty with background on the history of community engagement in institutions of higher education, active learning pedagogy, and the CBL experience so that they may begin their own course development with a solid foundation in engaged scholarship.

To further support and recognize faculty who commit to integrating the community into their teaching, research, and/or clinical practice, the Lindy Center presents two annual awards. The Dr. Mark L. Greenberg Distinguished Faculty Award for Community-Based Learning recognizes a faculty member who is deeply committed to improving the public good on the local, national, or global level through CBL. The Dr. Donna M. Murasko Distinguished Faculty Award for Innovation in Civic Engagement is presented to a faculty member who has incorporated the value of civic engagement into their teaching, research, or clinical practice, or other academic pursuit or activity in new and innovative ways. Both awards are presented at Drexel's annual faculty recognition dinner and come with a \$500 honorarium.



Drexel has further demonstrated its commitment to civic engagement through its attainment of the Carnegie Foundation's Community Engagement Classification. The university first obtained this elective classification in 2008 and was reclassified in 2015. The classification process requires applicants to submit significant evidence regarding the institutionalization of community engagement throughout the university. Drexel is one of only 361 institutions of higher education nationwide to currently hold this classification.

### **College of Arts and Sciences Leadership and Engagement**

Historically, Drexel University did not always recognize the value of a liberal arts education. Its commitment to engineering education often overshadowed the value of the liberal arts. However, under her leadership and strategic vision, Dean Murasko worked to transform CoAS into a destination college, a model for a modern liberal arts institution. The 2012-2017 strategic plan includes a goal to "draw on the insights of diverse fields and perspectives and meet the evolving demands of today's fast-paced and global professional environments." Students meet this objective when they "possess the depth of knowledge acquired through experiential learning, promoting a quicker 'start-up' in the work world." The strategic plan process included several stakeholder focus groups, including students, alumni, and employers. Dean Murasko reported that students involved in the process were clear about one thing: "They want to make an impact on the world and they want to make it sooner rather than later" (D. Muraski, personal communication, April 20, 2018). She went on to state that "community-based learning became an opportunity to show our students how their discipline has an impact today" (D. Muraski, personal communication, April 20, 2018). While CBL is not explicitly identified in the strategic plan, the commitment to such engagement is reflected in the CoAS's creation of leadership positions, teaching policies, and commitment to financial resources.

In a moment in 2011 that solidified her commitment to the college's civic engagement, Dean Murasko visited a CBL course inside a local correctional facility that brought Drexel students and incarcerated men together as classmates. She reflected on this experience:

I remember going to the first [CBL class] graduation for the course in the prison. And that was where I knew we were doing exactly the right thing. The inmate said that he had always thought of him being in prison was just his problem. He never thought of it as a larger context, but he now had an ability to put ... what was happening into a larger context. Our student, who was getting a bachelor's and a master's at the same time, said, "I have taken 230 credits to graduate, and three have changed my life. These three credits showed me how everything I was planning on doing now has a reason for me to do it and gives me more energy to go do it." (D. Murasko, personal communication, April 19, 2018)

This experience with the CBL course deepened Dean Murasko's commitment to the development of a dedicated leadership role in CoAS, and in 2012 she created the new position of senior assistant dean for community engagement. As a result, CoAS has led the university in its commitment to CBL and has become an early supporter and adopter of CIVC-101, the university-wide civic engagement course for all first-year students.

Multiple community-engaged programs have developed as a result of CBL courses in the college. These programs represent a commitment to continuing and sustaining a program or partnership typically initiated from a single CBL course. The ability to transform CBL courses into community-engaged programs demonstrates the value Drexel places on creating space and resources for long-term faculty engagement. Seven independent programs have been created by

CoAS faculty in the departments of communications, criminology, science, and English and philosophy as a result of a CBL course or community partnership: Drexel Edits, Writers Room, UConnect, Story Medicine, Hospice Journaling, Connections in STEM, and Inside-Out Prison Exchange. These independent programs engage students and faculty in coursework, co-ops, and co-curricular learning.

Drexel Edits is an academic program created by a faculty member in the Department of Communications and represents one example of a CBL course that evolved into a community-engaged program. In spring 2010, communications teaching professor Lawrence Souder offered a graduate course in technical editing in which he wanted to include a real-world experiential component. He brokered working relationships with small local nonprofit organizations so that each student could work with an actual client and edit a real document, and that the nonprofit partner could get competent editing under the supervision of a professional editor and teacher. At the end of the course, some students decided to continue working on a pro-bono basis with their nonprofit partners. Souder saw the potential for creating wider and more efficient access to these editing services. He proposed Drexel Edits, a clearinghouse to formalize the mechanism of partnering students with local nonprofits, thereby contributing to the university's newly adopted mission to become "the most civically engaged university in the United States." This program evidences Dean Murasko's commitment to this work at the college level. Drexel Edits is not only a civically engaged program, but it also represents a culture of civically engaged work. The dean's support required more than a vision; its sustainability also depends on the university's financial commitment.

### **Funding and Sustainability**

CoAS has demonstrated a significant commitment to community engagement by making it a funding priority and creating a leadership position to support engagement. To date, the CoAS dean has committed to funding 10 CBL courses per term and has outlined a process that ensures equity across all departments. Additionally, the dean also funds community-engaged programs. Moreover, the leadership position of senior assistant dean for community engagement was created to support faculty in identifying, developing, and offering academic community-engagement opportunities. This position has been pivotal in bridging faculty members' disciplines and pedagogy with the Lindy Center for Civic Engagement. Together, the academic position and civic engagement office offer faculty a breadth and depth of support previously unseen.

CoAS's commitment to community engagement has increased under the leadership of Dean Murasko and President Fry. In many ways, prior to 2012, CoAS did not have the resources to implement and promote its commitment to community engagement. In the last six years, however, the college has evolved with support from the Lindy Center into a model within the university for leading community-engaged pedagogy and course opportunities.

After five years of committing time, energy, and finances to community engagement, CoAS decided it needed to assess the results of these strategic investments and evaluate the impacts and opportunities arising from them. Moreover, committing to a self-assessment signaled that community engagement had evolved into a college hallmark. Thus, CoAS needed to assess this work and its stakeholders, and adjust its strengths and weaknesses accordingly.

### **The Process for College-Level Assessment of Community Engagement**

To channel the assessment efforts, we adopted a rubric that became a tool for examining

the college as the locus of engagement. While the institution and college are closely aligned in their value of community engagement, colleges have autonomy and unique identities within the university and beyond in their respective disciplines. This process allowed the assessment committee to examine the breadth and depth of community-engagement work in the college. The design of the rubric led the committee through a process of exploring the macro and micro points of engagement. Moreover, the process led the committee to think about the context of the college within the institution's larger footprint and how CoAS might serve as an institutional model for other colleges and schools at Drexel.

To begin the assessment process, the senior assistant dean for community engagement invited a key administrator and CoAS faculty across disciplines who were actively involved in this work to participate in the rubric committee. Fifty percent of the departments were represented, including mathematics, psychology, criminology and justice studies, communications, biology, and English and philosophy. The following departments were not represented: history and politics, chemistry, physics, and sociology. Each faculty member on the rubric committee had taught a CBL course and created a program as an extension of that course.

The committee was initially introduced to the rubric and reached a common understanding about definitions of terms for the sake of conceiving the rubric's dimensions and operationalizing the stages of development for each dimension. The committee then acknowledged the utility of the rubric and the process for using it. All faculty members agreed that the tool had potential for formative and substantive evaluations.

Following a review of Saltmarsh and Middleton's (see Saltmarsh, Middleton, & Quan, 2019) rubric, faculty examinations found evidence of engagement across the college. Indicators were identified in CoAS policies, practices, structures, communication, and culture in the form of mission and vision statements, faculty and staff job descriptions, strategic plans, student recruitment materials, tenure and teaching faculty reviews, faculty contracts, operational budgets, and course learning objectives.

The first committee meeting was scheduled for a three-hour block, which allowed members to identify the data needed, determine the indicators, and develop a plan for delegating the review. Two members were assigned to each dimension and independently coded the data. A final three-hour working meeting was held to review each dimension and its criteria. The reviewers discussed their assessments, and the members asked clarifying questions or contributed to the final assessment. Additionally, the committee as a group made rubric- and university-specific recommendations.

During the rubric evaluation process, the committee agreed that support from department heads was necessary. An associated survey of department chairs was developed, and the results indicated favorable attitudes toward faculty members' community-based learning and engagement activities within CoAS. Faculty in the Department of History and Politics, for example, hoped to expand their program with community organizations interested in the histories of their own neighborhoods. Faculty in modern languages valued community engagement for the opportunities it offered their students to interact with native speakers in their own cultures and circumstances. Some faculty even found direct benefits to their own work as scholars: Community engagement offered them ways to foster undergraduate research and test their theories in the real world.

Beyond these more anecdotal indicators, the application of the rubric allowed the committee to take a more objective deep dive into its practice and process of community

engagement and scholarship. As a result of the process, the committee authored a white paper and shared it with college-level and provost leadership in an effort to create a roadmap for strategic plans. A summary of the recommendations resulted from committee's scoring on the rubric appears in the Appendix.

### **Outcomes and Lessons Learned from College-Level Assessment of Community Engagement**

In this section, we provide a mix of quantitative and qualitative data drawn from the perspectives of senior-level leaders in CoAS (e.g., the dean serving from 2003 until her recent retirement in 2018) and the broader university (e.g., the senior vice provost of university and community partnerships) about CoAS's engagement levels, investment, outcomes achieved, missed opportunities, and future goals related to the institutionalization of community engagement within the college. The following qualitative comments were derived from semi-structured interviews with these leaders, as well as our own perspectives as current faculty members in CoAS. The questions were developed by the rubric committee and grounded in the rubric's quantitative content. Data from the interviews were analyzed to produce the emergent themes discussed in the following sections.

#### **Question 1: "What were the results from your efforts at college-level engagement?"**

**Finding meaning in today's world.** One of the primary objectives achieved through CoAS's commitment to community engagement is that students have the opportunity to participate in real-world, hands-on learning activities through their enrollment and participation in CBL classes. These types of courses, perhaps more than others, help students connect coursework to the philosophy of a liberal arts education, which is to prepare students to make an impact on the world, including right after college. As the dean noted, CBL courses provide the opportunity for "taking the discipline and showing what it can do today" (D. Muraski, personal communication, April 20, 2018). Additionally, faculty reported that this work has reenergized their scholarship and connected them with the world outside academia. To date, 48 CoAS faculty have completed a three-day CBL workshop organized by the Lindy Center. CoAS faculty represent 68% of all trained CBL faculty across the university. A small percentage of faculty go on to develop a CBL class, though most reported anecdotally the benefits of reconnecting to scholarship outside the university through community engagement.

**Reciprocal benefits.** The dean commented that one of the perceived advantages of CBL courses is the reciprocal nature of their benefits and positive impacts on community members and partners who participate in these courses, as well as Drexel students and faculty. When CBL courses are thoughtfully planned and taught well, the material and activities are interactive, and each group of stakeholders derives significant value from participating in the course. One community student, enrolled in a course as a non-credit-bearing student, reflected on the best part of their CBL experience, stating, "Open communication and the comments and views of other participants. I feel that all individuals have more in common than we believe." Meanwhile, a Drexel student commented, "This was one of the most meaningful courses I have taken at Drexel and it has given me a lasting understanding and tools to use after class ends."

**Invigorating faculty.** The dean and assessment committee found that CBL courses can be useful for invigorating (or reinvigorating) faculty members. In fact, within CoAS, the number of faculty who want to teach CBL courses exceeds available financial resources. CBL courses are typically much smaller in size and require transportation and additional resources. There are many

returns on this investment, and faculty development is one that is often overlooked. For example, the dean commented, “[Faculty] take their discipline and see it using a different lens. They look at their discipline differently, they give their discipline to their students differently, and I have to limit the faculty who want to do these courses because they’re not inexpensive” (D. Muraski, personal communication, April 20, 2018).

**Community engagement through research and curricular-adjacent efforts.** Although CBL is a key community-engagement initiative in CoAS, the dean and faculty also underscored that there are many examples of research-based (e.g., university-public school partnerships) and curricular-adjacent community-engagement efforts (e.g., Writer’s Workshop) occurring across various departments and among faculty members within CoAS. There are opportunities for faculty to engage in any number of dimensions that interest them, and CoAS has created strong entry points of engagement for them.

**Missed opportunities.** There was a sense among the dean and the assessment committee that even though CBL courses and CoAS’s commitment to community engagement were well-received among faculty and students, there was less awareness of these efforts and associated outcomes among alumni, donors, and others outside the university. Respondents felt that CoAS and the larger university were not as agile and successful at promoting the benefits and impacts of CBL courses. This finding represented a missed opportunity to seek potential funding for current or future CBL courses, as well as marketing to incoming and current students. In addition, although several select CBL courses or programs were known within the university’s upper-level administration, there was less awareness at that level about the success of many other CBL courses.

## **Question 2: “What did we learn from the process?”**

**Resource allocations and logistical considerations.** One lesson the dean learned was to be aware of and proactive about problem solving around resource allocation and logistical issues, such as potential costs, class sizes, time needed to prepare and implement a CBL course, and transportation needs. The dean also noted that when initiating relationships with partners, it is important to explain the university’s and the community’s missions. In other words, when faculty members and representatives approach potential community partners, they need to be clear about the dual concept of discipline and community. As noted previously, there are more faculty interested in teaching CBL courses than there are available financial resources. Therefore, the dean and assessment committee learned about the importance of providing faculty with training and guidance before they propose a CBL course to ensure its feasibility prior to development.

**Pedagogical lessons.** The dean and assessment committee noted that another important lesson learned was the need to have well-defined learning objectives for CBL courses that are both discipline-specific and related to the community group participating in the course. Participants felt that courses needed to be designed to demonstrate how the discipline can positively impact the community. CBL courses are only designated as such after three criteria have been met: (a) The course engages with the community, (b) the course has a reflective analysis, and (c) community engagement is linked to academic learning outcomes. For example, Story Medicine, a creative fiction course, articulates traditional learning objectives for a writing course in addition to articulating the following outcomes that should result from the community partner relationship:

- use introductory fiction writing techniques;

- critique peer work objectively using learned techniques and standards;
- adapt basic fiction writing pedagogy to a broadcast format;
- engage CHOP patients with imaginative activities;
- adapt, act, and react to changeable circumstances; and,
- serve CHOP with effectiveness and sensitivity.

The importance of adding additional assessment questions and/or measures to assess comprehensively the impact and value of each CBL course represents another important lesson learned over time. Historically, the university has evaluated CBL courses using the same standardized course evaluation forms used for non-CBL courses. The strength of this approach is the ability to compare standardized data for CBL courses relative to non-CBL courses. The drawback to this approach is data and perspectives about how CBL courses impact student learning around academic, civic, and social outcomes may be missing. In addition, the standardized course evaluation form does not capture community outcomes or perspectives on faculty engagement in the course. The dean and assessment committee felt that each course's assessment metrics should identify outcome targets specific to the course's learning objectives and context.

**Question 3: “How has attention to college-level engagement impacted wider institutionalization of community engagement?”**

**Matching college mission to community engagement to promote sustainability.** Broadly speaking, Drexel University has a strong institutional commitment to community engagement. However, the senior vice provost did comment that upper-level administration should not dictate to individual colleges how they should engage in the community because such directives would not be authentic. The senior vice provost noted the differences in academic mission for each college and school, and maintained that efforts around community engagement should reflect those missions:

If it works for you, it works for your teaching and research, then you will sustain it and it can become a confederation of these different legitimate authentic approaches that are mission-specific for each faculty. Then the university's civic engagement will be sustainable. But if we simply tell you this is what you've got to do, you'll do it once and then you'll change. When I look at the Dornsife Center, I look at how we can match what the faculty want to do for their teaching and research with what the community is asking for so that we can have a sustainable product.

**Question 4: “What are leadership considerations in the future?”**

**Resource positions related to community engagement.** It was clear from discussions with the dean and the assessment committee that the logistical and oversight responsibilities necessary to successfully run CBL courses require dedicated time and effort from one or more

CoAS faculty members. Therefore, the most recent but not current dean is pushing for an endowed position of senior assistant dean for community engagement in the CoAS. The dean has made clear that she wants her legacy to be the college's continued community involvement.

**Budgetary implications.** Drexel University has adopted a responsibility center management (RCM) model of budgeting, under which revenue-generating units are wholly responsible for managing their own revenues and expenditures. Given the higher costs associated with CBL courses, there is concern at the dean and senior vice provost levels that these costs will present challenges to the continued viability of CBL courses. The dean and the assessment committee suggested that one way to protect CBL courses is to make them requirements in the curriculum. Another opportunity is to use CBL courses as a way of branding the college "to being a first choice for the politically active, socially engaged, entrepreneurial humanist, scientist" (Murasko, 2012). The current president of Drexel University, John Fry, has committed Drexel to becoming "the most civically engaged university in the United States." Therefore, the assessment committee felt that the tradition of civic and community engagement will continue under the current leadership.

**Data needs.** Although some data on incoming students and graduating seniors has demonstrated that civic engagement is important, the dean and assessment committee are aware that they need to ask more specific questions about the value of CBL courses for students, instructors of record, and community partners. If the data are positive, they will strengthen arguments to continue teaching CBL courses, even in the financial context of RCM budget models. This article has spurred ongoing discussions about how to design and implement a more comprehensive assessment system for CBL courses to better capture student and community partners' learning around academic, civic, and social outcomes. This rubric process and subsequent white paper will be reviewed by the university's civic engagement faculty committee, members of which are charged with introducing the rubric tool to their college. CoAS has served as a model of community engagement and can now serve as a model for self-assessment. The design of the rubric allows for college autonomy and recognizes that this work often comes from both an institutional mandate and individual faculty and programs at the college level. The rubric will be distributed and collected through the Lindy Center for Civic Engagement, the central organization leader on campus. The ability to standardize the data-collection tool across colleges will allow Drexel to present the unique impact each college has on the university's wider commitment to community engagement.

### Conclusion

The goal of participating in the rubric pilot and publication of this article is twofold: We want to contribute to the literature on community engagement, and we want to advance community-engaged scholarship by focusing on the college as a unit of engagement. Saltmarsh and Middleton (see Saltmarsh, Middleton, & Quan, 2019) did this by attending to the organizational elements of colleges that foster a culture of engagement and by developing an assessment instrument for colleges to assess the structures, policies, and practices in place for advancing community-engaged scholarship. Moreover, the rubric process has served as a mechanism for this faculty cohort to stop "doing" and intentionally reflect on the growth of engaged scholarship. We wanted to practice precisely what we ask of our students in our CBL courses and partnerships. This process afforded the authors an opportunity to pause, assess, and reflect on the practice and process of community engagement and scholarship. The results will allow Drexel to strategically address multiple dimensions of engagement at the collegiate and

institutional levels. The dean, department heads, and engaged faculty can use the results of this self-assessment to continue growing community engagement and articulating its value to the college. This rubric will serve as both a tool and an opportunity to deepen campus-wide engagement.



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## Appendix: Summary of Recommendations

### **Dimension 1: Leadership**

1. All CoAS leadership-level job postings should include language in support of community engagement.
2. Associate deans and other CoAS leadership should be invited to attend the community-based learning training.
3. CoAS should formalize a community engagement faculty advisory board within CoAS.

### **Dimension 2: Mission and Vision**

4. The next CoAS strategic plan should include explicit language in support of community engagement and CES.
5. Community engagement should be acknowledged as a high-impact practice and retention tool.

### **Dimension 3: Visibility and Communication**

6. CoAS community engagement committee should work with the CoAS communications team to continue to develop and refine marketing efforts to position CoAS as a community engagement leader at Drexel.
7. Department heads should ensure that language be incorporated into faculty and staff job descriptions about CoAS's commitment to community engagement. This includes information about incorporating community engagement into teaching, research, and service.
8. Drexel University's employee volunteer program, "Dragon Volunteer," should also be included as a way to engage, especially staff.

9. The prevalence of community engagement examples in student recruitment materials should be increased.

**Dimension 4: Recognition**

10. CoAS should work with the Lindy Center to lead Drexel in the development of a meaningful process for an engaged department designation.
11. Community-engaged scholarship should be clearly defined and recognized in tenure and teaching faculty reviews.

**Dimension 5: Rewards**

12. Community-engaged scholarship should be formally recognized in tenure and promotion.
13. Policy documents should be defined in such a way that they include engaged scholarly work across the faculty roles.
14. Explicit criteria for community engagement in teaching, in research and creative activity, and in service should be created.
15. Criteria in the areas of research and creative activity should acknowledge that not all community-engaged scholarship will appear in peer-reviewed journals.
16. CoAS should continue to reflect CES in faculty contracts when appropriate.

**Dimension 6: Capacity-Building Infrastructure for Support and Sustainability**

17. CoAS should clarify that the process for requesting funds may be uniform or formalized with a clear operational budget.
18. The college should continue training/development, perhaps tied to UWP writing workshops/retreats so it builds toward publications and scholarship circles.
19. CoAS should formalize mentor roles of other CE faculty to help mentor new faculty and to develop faculty as leaders/experts within their respective disciplines/fields.

20. Writing retreats and assistance finding places to submit CES for publication should be developed.

**Dimension 7: Assessment**

21. Associate deans for research should utilize COEUS to collect community-engaged research.
22. Data are collected and assessed on community-based courses.
23. Community impact and partner impact should not occur at the collegiate level; rather, UCP should manage this assessment aspect.
24. CoAS should begin to measure one aspect of CBL courses by measuring whether the community engagement aspect of the course enhances the learning objectives.

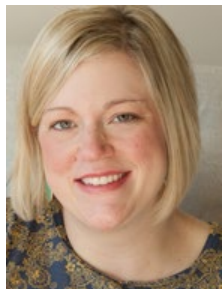
**Dimension 8: Curricular Pathways**

25. CoAS should develop an engaged department approach to highlight the level of community engagement.
26. The college should consider co-curricular student opportunities in community engagement assessment.

## Authors



Cyndi Rickards comes to higher education with over a decade of experience in the criminal justice field as an administrator of an alternative school. Her graduate research explored racial disparities in urban juvenile drug use patterns. More recently, her research has examined the emergence of 21st-century skills as a result of democratic engagement within community-based learning courses. Rickards currently an Associate Teaching Faculty member of Criminology and Justice Studies at Drexel University, College where she develops and teaches community-based learning. She regularly teaches courses within the Philadelphia Prison System and brings together Drexel students and incarcerated students for and Inside-Out course. In 2010 she facilitated the development of Side-by-Side, an evolution of the Inside-Out International Prison Exchange program, which brings college and community students together in partnership in class experiences.



Dr. Jennifer Johnson Kebea has 15 years of experience in higher education, holding past positions in enrollment management, institutional advancement, educational consulting, and academic affairs. For the last decade, she has been part of Drexel University's expanding efforts around civic engagement. Currently, Dr. Kebea serves as Executive Director of the Lindy Center for Civic Engagement, where she leads a dynamic team and oversees the development of four core civic priorities including community-based learning, civic leadership, public service, and community partnerships. Dr. Kebea's research interests revolve around a university's dual role to serve as both a civic educator and as an anchor institution, and how universities engage students in anchor strategy. Dr. Kebea is also affiliated faculty with Drexel University's School of Education and Goodwin College of Professional Studies.



Dr. Brian Daly is the Interim Department Head for the Department of Psychology at Drexel University. He is a licensed psychologist specializing in child and adolescent psychology. Dr. Daly's areas of interest in research include prevention and resiliency in urban youth; school mental health promotion; evidence-based psychosocial interventions for youth; clinical and health psychology; assessment and treatment of children with chronic illness; assessment of trauma in youth; and adolescent risk behaviors. Dr. Daly's areas of clinical interest include the assessment and delivery of evidence-based psychosocial interventions for children with chronic illness, emotional, behavioral, or social problems, or learning issues.



Lawrence Souder earned his PhD in the rhetoric of science from Temple University after working for a number of years as a technical writer and editor for IBM and ADP. His research is focused on the ethics of communications among scientists and between scientists and the public. He is also the founding director of [Drexel Edits](#), a center that offers pro-bono editing services to nonprofit organizations in the neighborhoods bordering Drexel University. He teaches graduate courses in communication ethics, technical and science writing and editing, and nonprofit communication for the master's and undergraduate programs in the department.

ISSN (Online) 2162-9161



# EJOURNAL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

VOLUME 8 | ISSUE 3

## **Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University**

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### Background

Increasingly, universities are called upon to mobilize their intellectual and human capacity to address needs in their communities and beyond. In addition to the creation of a campus-wide coordinating infrastructure and strategic approach, it is important to account for the significant variation in, and quality of, community engagement that exists across academic units at a university. The unit of a college/school within a university should be developed as the locus of faculty and student engagement, and the proximity of engagement efforts to an academic unit emphasizes the importance of community engagement through teaching and learning and in faculty scholarship. Colleges/schools within a university often have their own well-developed missions and goals embracing community engagement; can be seen as hubs for innovation, pathways, or strategies for engagement; and have their own natural disciplinary base within the community for engagement.

Based upon a review of the literature on community engagement in higher education, organizational change, and the scholarship of engagement, this organizational assessment rubric is designed to be used by the unit of a college to examine structures, policies, and practices, with the goal of advancing community engagement within the college for the purposes of self-assessment and strategic planning.

### Key definitions

In the context of this rubric, *community engagement* refers to relationships between those in the college and those outside the college that are grounded in the qualities of reciprocity, mutual respect, shared authority, and co-creation of goals and outcomes. Such relationships are by their very nature transdisciplinary (i.e., related to knowledge transcending the disciplines and the college) and asset-based (i.e., related to valid and legitimate knowledge that exists outside the college). Transdisciplinary and asset-based frameworks and approaches impact both pedagogy and scholarship. They also inform an organizational logic that colleges will need to change their policies, practices, structures, and culture in order to enact engagement and support scholars involved in community-engaged teaching and learning and community-engaged knowledge generation.

This framing of community engagement aligns with the definition provided by the Carnegie Foundation for their Community Engagement Classification:

*Community engagement describes the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.*

*The purpose of community engagement is the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good.*

The Carnegie Community Engagement Classification is intended to provide institution-wide assessment, whereas this college self-assessment rubric is aimed more specifically at an academic unit. Therefore, there is particular emphasis on the core academic activities of teaching and learning and scholarship. For many colleges, the academic culture, and the incentives for faculty conveyed through that culture, emphasizes the importance of scholarship and creative activity. Therefore, to guide the use of the rubric, scholarship is community-engaged when it involves reciprocal partnerships and addresses public purposes. Community-engaged scholarship (CES) is characterized by creative intellectual work based on a high level of professional expertise, the significance of which can be validated by peers and which enhances the fulfillment of the mission of the campus/college/department. CES meets the standards of research when it involves inquiry,



advances knowledge, is disseminated, and is open to review and critique by relevant academic, community, and/or professional peers. Community-engaged research conceptualizes “community groups” as all those outside of academe and requires shared authority at all stages of the research process, from defining the research problem, choosing theoretical and methodological approaches, conducting the research, developing the final product(s), to participating in peer evaluation. Research is community-engaged when faculty, students, community-based organizations, government agencies, policymakers, and/or other actors collaborate to identify areas of inquiry, design studies and/or creative activities, implement activities that contribute to shared learning and capacity building, disseminate findings, and make recommendations or develop initiatives for change.

The rubric provides three stages of progress—Emerging, Developing, and Transforming—with space left for identifying evidence for their assessment. The stages of the rubric are described as follows:

**Stage 1: Emerging.** At this stage, a college is beginning to recognize community engagement as a strategic priority and is building a college-wide constituency for the effort.

**Stage 2: Developing.** At this stage a college is focused on ensuring the development of its institutional capacity and the capacity of individuals to sustain the community-engagement effort.

**Stage 3: Transforming.** At this stage a college has fully institutionalized community engagement into its fabric, and it has mechanisms in place to ensure progress and sustainability, continuing to assess its progress and achievements as it looks toward the future.

**Indicators.** Evidence of change in policy, practices, structures, and culture.

**Components of the rubric<sup>1</sup>**

The self-assessment rubric contains eight dimensions, each of which includes a set of components that characterize the dimension. The eight dimensions of the rubric and their respective components are listed here.

<b>DIMENSION</b>		<b>COMPONENTS</b>
<b>I.</b>	<b>Leadership and Direction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hiring criteria for dean and chairs</li><li>• Leadership development opportunities for dean and chairs</li><li>• Faculty council that meets regularly and advises college decision making on engagement and resources</li><li>• Advisory Leadership Council that includes community partners, faculty, staff, and students</li></ul>
<b>II.</b>	<b>Mission and Vision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Articulation in mission and vision statements</li><li>• Definition of community-engaged scholarship (CES)</li><li>• Strategic planning</li><li>• Alignment with institutional mission</li><li>• Alignment with educational innovations</li><li>• Alignment with accreditation</li><li>• Alignment with complimentary strategic priorities (i.e., diversity, inclusion and equity; student success; engaged learning through high-impact practices)</li><li>• Funding priority</li></ul>

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<sup>1</sup> A number of the rubric components have been adapted from O'Meara, K. A. (2016). Legitimacy, agency, and inequality: Organizational practices for full participation of community-engaged faculty. In M. Post, E. Ward, N. Longo, & J. Saltmarsh (Eds.), *Publicly engaged scholars: Next generation engagement and the future of higher education* (96-110). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

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DIMENSION	COMPONENTS
<b>III. Visibility and Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positioning engaged scholarship on the web, via YouTube clips, in college and department publications, and reports to executive administration</li> <li>• (faculty) Hiring—job descriptions that emphasize CES</li> <li>• (students) Recruitment and admissions criteria that are explicit about valuing community engagement</li> <li>• Membership and participation by dean, chairs, faculty, staff, and students in networks focused on advancing community engagement</li> </ul>
<b>IV. Recognition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• College awards for CES</li> <li>• Engaged department award</li> <li>• Annual faculty activity report—data collected on CES</li> <li>• Annual faculty activity reports that allow faculty to get credit for mentoring for CES</li> <li>• A place for CES in official college CV form</li> <li>• Merit pay criteria that recognizes CES</li> </ul>
<b>V. Rewards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CES is valued in promotion and tenure via definitions of scholarship, criteria, documentation, peer review</li> <li>• Community engagement included in evaluation criteria for term contracts for NTT faculty</li> <li>• Sabbaticals—CES encouraged for sabbaticals</li> <li>• Post-tenure review—CES and teaching and learning valued in post-tenure review criteria</li> </ul>

DIMENSION	COMPONENTS
<b>VI. Capacity-Building Infrastructure for Support and Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative assistance—staffing to support community engagement</li> <li>• Dedicated operational budget</li> <li>• Assistance developing partnerships, memoranda of understanding with community partners</li> <li>• Faculty development programs for integrating community engagement into scholarship and teaching</li> <li>• Training for personnel review committee members on evaluating CES</li> <li>• Formal and informal mentoring programs</li> <li>• Stipends or course release for seeding engaged research or course development</li> <li>• Structured opportunities for faculty to connect with community partners</li> <li>• Writing retreats and assistance finding places to submit CES for publication</li> <li>• Assistance with grant writing to support community engagement</li> <li>• Conference support for faculty and graduate assistants (in addition to faculty development resources for disciplinary conferences)</li> <li>• Interfacing with other engagement units on campus</li> </ul>

DIMENSION	COMPONENTS
<b>VII. Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data collected and assessed on faculty engaged scholarship</li><li>• Data collected and assessed on community-engaged courses</li><li>• Data collected and assessed on community engagement learning outcomes</li><li>• Data gathered and assessed on community perceptions of partnerships</li><li>• Measures established and data gathered and assessed on community impacts</li><li>• Interfacing with Institutional Research to draw on campus data that will assist with assessment of community engagement (e.g., NSSE results, HERI faculty survey)</li></ul>
<b>VIII. Curricular Pathways</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community engagement in the curriculum of majors and graduate programs</li><li>• Community engagement in college minor</li><li>• Community engagement graduate certificate</li><li>• Completion of a community engagement minor or graduate certificate appears on the official transcript.</li></ul>

**DIMENSION I: Leadership and Direction**

A primary feature of institutionalized community engagement in a college is long-term, sustained, consistent, and committed leadership at the administrative level, among the dean, associate deans, and department chairs.

*DIRECTIONS: For each of the components (rows), place a circle around the cell that best represents the CURRENT status of the development of intentional identification and development of leadership for community engagement. Once the current status of development has been established, then identify evidence of this status in the corresponding INDICATORS cell.*

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
1. Hiring criteria for dean, associate deans, and department chairs	There are no criteria around community engagement in the qualification for hiring of the dean, associate deans, and chairs.	There are community engagement criteria in the qualifications for the hiring of the dean and chairs, but they are largely rhetorical and applied inconsistently.	The college has clear criteria for community engagement as a qualification for hiring of the dean and chairs and they are prioritized and applied consistently.	
2. Leadership development opportunities for dean, associate deans, and department chairs	There are no opportunities for the dean, chairs, program directors, or center directors to participate in professional development leadership for advancing community engagement.	There are sporadic, inconsistent, and poorly coordinated opportunities for the dean, chairs, program directors, or center directors to participate in professional development leadership for advancing community engagement.	The college offers ongoing and coordinated opportunities for the dean, chairs, program directors, or center directors to participate in professional development leadership for advancing community engagement.	
3. Faculty council that meets regularly and advises college decision making on engagement and resources	The governing body of the college is not attuned to its role in advancing community engagement as a priority of the college.	The governing body of the college is reactive to opportunities for and challenges to integrating community engagement instead of demonstrating leadership for advancing it.	The governing body of the college provides leadership for coordination and integration of policies, structures, and guidance for practices that advance community engagement across the college.	

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**Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University**

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COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
4. Advisory Leadership Council that includes community partners, faculty, staff, and students	There is not an advisory body that brings together multiple stakeholder perspectives with the goal of advancing community engagement in the college.	There is an advisory body in the college that has limited ability to advance community engagement because it does not include community partners and/or student voice, perspective, and representation.	The college has a visible and active advisory body representing all stakeholder groups invested in the success of community engagement across the college.	

**DIMENSION II: Mission and Vision**

A primary feature of institutionalized community engagement in a college is a clear articulation of the importance and centrality of community engagement in the mission and vision of the college.

*DIRECTIONS: For each of the components (rows), place a circle around the cell that best represents the CURRENT status of the development of intentional identification and development of leadership for community engagement. Once the current status of development has been established, then identify evidence of this status in the corresponding INDICATORS cell.*

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
1. Articulation in mission and vision statements	Community engagement does not appear in the mission and/or vision statements of the college.	Community engagement appears in the mission and/or vision statements of the college, but it is framed in ways that do not reinvigorate the work of the college or advance high-quality community engagement.	Community engagement is clearly framed in both the mission and vision statement of the college such that there is not ambiguity as to its place as a commitment of the college.	
2. Definition of community-engaged scholarship	The college has not adopted a single, operative definition of community engagement to guide policy or practice.	The college has adopted a definition of community engagement that is vague, creates confusion, and does not provide guidance for policy and practice.	The college has undertaken an inclusive process for arriving at a widely accepted and clearly understood definition of community engagement that guides the way that policies, structures, and practices are operationalized in the college.	
3. Strategic planning	There has not been a strategic planning process in the college to identify community engagement as a college priority.	The strategic plan of the college has not clearly set forth community engagement as a priority and/or has not provided a framework for how community engagement advances the mission of the college.	The strategic plan of the college clearly and unambiguously prioritizes community engagement as one of the ways in which the college fulfills its mission.	



**Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University**

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
4. Alignment with institutional mission	In the event that the campus mission includes community engagement, the college mission does not connect to it or align with it.	In the event that the campus mission includes community engagement, the college mission suggests complementarity but does not provide a framing for how the college helps fulfill the campus mission.	The college mission and campus mission are closely aligned in ways that reinforce a commitment to operationalizing community engagement as a way to advance institutional mission.	
5. Alignment with educational innovations	As the college undertakes innovation in teaching, research, creative activity, service, and other institutional commitments, there is not consideration of how community engagement can contribute to those innovations.	As the college undertakes innovations in policies, structures, and practices, the ways in which community engagement can serve as a catalyst for deepening innovation is typically an afterthought.	Educational innovations are examined through the lens of community engagement so as to understand synergies and to maximize the ways community engagement can deepen innovation.	
6. Alignment with accreditation	Program accreditation and processes do not account for community engagement practices, and assessment for accreditation does not systematically capture community engagement data.	Accreditation processes align inconsistently with community engagement commitments, and there is some alignment of assessment data for community engagement and for accreditation.	The college integrates the systematic assessment of community engagement with the data collected for accreditation so that accountability and quality improvement are maximized.	

**Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University**

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
7. Alignment with complementary strategic priorities (i.e., diversity, inclusion, and equity; student success; engaged learning through high-impact practices)	The college is pursuing multiple strategic priorities but is not explicit in examining the connections between them.	The college recognizes that community engagement has some relation to commitments to diversity and to achieving student success goals but has not operationalized the connections.	The college has made specific connections related to policies, structures, and practices that support community engagement and the ways in which they advance diversity, inclusion and equity goals, student success goals, and/or improved student learning goals.	
8. Funding priority	Support for community engagement is not reflected in the operational budget of the college or in fundraising priorities.	There is inconsistent and uncoordinated funding for community engagement through operational monies in the college and inconsistent and uncoordinated efforts at fundraising for community engagement.	The operational budget of the college reflects clear and targeted funding for community engagement on an ongoing, reliable basis, and community engagement is a fundraising priority for the college.	

**DIMENSION III: Visibility and Communication**

A primary feature of institutionalized community engagement in a college is the messaging that is created and shared about the work of the college, what it values, how those values are put into practice, and how the scholarly identities of faculty and students are embodied in their activities.

*DIRECTIONS: For each of the components (rows), place a circle around the cell that best represents the CURRENT status of the development of intentional identification and development of leadership for community engagement. Once the current status of development has been established, then identify evidence of this status in the corresponding INDICATORS cell.*

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
1. Positioning engaged scholarship on the web, via YouTube clips, in college and department publications, and reports to executive administration	There is little if any public communication about the importance of community engagement or the sharing of examples of community engagement activities carried out throughout the college.	Communication about community engagement is inconsistent and intermittent, creating mixed messages about its importance to the college.	Community engagement can be found in all modes of communication by the college, and there is a clear message about what community engagement is, what it looks like in practice, and how it helps the college fulfill its mission.	
2. (Faculty) Hiring: Job descriptions that emphasize community-engaged scholarship	There is nothing in the job descriptions for faculty that references or signals to potential applicants that community engagement is valued by the college.	Job descriptions for faculty hires reference community engagement but do not signal that it is priority for the college.	Job descriptions for faculty hires make it clear that community engagement is a core part of the institutional identity of the college and that faculty scholarly work that is shaped by community engagement will be valued by the college.	

**Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University**

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
3. (Staff) Hiring: Job descriptions that emphasize community engagement	There is nothing in the job descriptions for staff that references or signals to potential applicants that community engagement is valued by the college.	Job descriptions for staff hires reference community engagement but do not signal that it is priority for the college.	Job descriptions for staff hires make it clear that experience with and knowledge of community engagement is valued and that community engagement is a core part of the institutional identity of the college.	
4. (Students) Recruitment and admissions criteria that are explicit about valuing community engagement	There are no references to community engagement in the marketing and recruitment materials used for student admissions.	Admissions materials make vague and inconsistent references to community engagement, do not make it clear that it is part of academic programs, and do not signal that it is a defining feature of the college.	Recruitment and admissions materials consistently make it clear that community engagement is a part of the core academic offerings of the college and that opportunities for community engagement are available to all students.	
5. Membership and participation by dean, chairs, faculty, staff, and students in networks focused on advancing community engagement	The college is not known among peers for community engagement, in part because the college is not represented within national and international networks and is not demonstrating leadership in academic associations.	Presence at and representation in national and international networks and associations is not consistent or coordinated.	The college is well represented by different stakeholders among a range of associations and networks, establishing a presence and visibility that both highlights the community engagement of the college and allows for participation in leadership opportunities nationally and internationally.	

**DIMENSION IV: Recognition**

A primary feature of institutionalized community-engaged scholarship in a college is making CES visible and celebrating its success in public ways.

*DIRECTIONS: For each of the components (rows), place a circle around the cell that best represents the CURRENT status of the development of intentional identification and development of leadership for community engagement. Once the current status of development has been established, then identify evidence of this status in the corresponding INDICATORS cell.*

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
1. College awards for CES	There is no college award for CES.	There is public recognition for CES at annual events in the college, but there are no clear criteria for the recognition and no consistency in upholding CES as a college priority.	The college has a set of annual awards for CES that recognize faculty, community partners, and students; there are clear award criteria for exemplary CES; the awards are made consistently and are given visibility to signal CES as a college priority.	
2. Engaged department award	There is no award for a department within the college that recognizes CES as a department priority.	Some departments are periodically recognized for a commitment of the faculty and chair to CES, but there is no award, no clear criteria for the recognition, and no consistency in upholding CES as a departmental priority.	The college has an annual award for departments in the college that enact exemplary CES; there are clear award criteria for departmental CES; the awards are made consistently and are given visibility to signal CES as a college priority.	
3. Annual faculty activity report—data collected on CES	The annual faculty activity report does not have an area that allows faculty to claim their CES as part of their teaching, research, and service roles.	The annual faculty activity report identifies CES as an area of faculty activity, but there is not a clear way for faculty to report on CES as part of their teaching, research, and service roles.	The annual faculty activity report identifies CES as an area of faculty activity, and there is a clear way for faculty to report on CES as part of their teaching, research, and service roles.	

**Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University**

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
4. Annual faculty activity report – faculty get credit for mentoring for CES	The annual faculty activity report does not identify a faculty service role for mentoring of junior faculty.	The annual faculty activity report does not specifically identify a faculty service role for mentoring of junior faculty for CES.	The annual faculty activity report specifically allows for faculty to claim, as part of their service role, the mentoring of junior faculty in undertaking CES and framing a scholarly identity based on CES.	
5. A place for CES in the official college CV form	The official CV template provided by the college is not structured in a way that recognizes CES as a distinct activity.	The official CV template provided by the college recognizes CES as a distinct activity only in the faculty service role.	The official CV template provided by the college recognizes CES as a distinct activity across the faculty roles and within scholarship, and is structured with sections for peer-reviewed CES and technical reports and other scholarly artifacts that are CES.	
6. Merit pay criteria that recognize CES	There is no merit pay criteria that recognize CES.	Merit pay is intermittently awarded for CES, and there are not clear criteria for what constitutes meritorious CES.	Merit pay is consistently awarded for CES; there are clear criteria for what constitutes meritorious CES.	

**DIMENSION V: Rewards**

A primary feature of institutionalized community-engaged scholarship in a college is that it is rewarded through formal reward structures, with explicit policies and criteria, valuing CES in the core academic culture of the college.

*DIRECTIONS: For each of the components (rows), place a circle around the cell that best represents the CURRENT status of the development of intentional identification and development of leadership for community engagement. Once the current status of development has been established, then identify evidence of this status in the corresponding INDICATORS cell.*

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
1. CES is valued in promotion and tenure via definitions of scholarship, criteria, documentation, peer review	The faculty reward policies are silent on CES.	The faculty reward policies include community engagement, but the only place that community engagement is recognized is in the faculty service role.	CES is clearly defined in the policies documents in such a way that they include engaged scholarly work across the faculty roles; there are explicit criteria for community engagement in teaching, in research and creative activity, and in service; there are criteria in the areas of research and creative activity that acknowledge that not all CES will appear in peer-reviewed journals, and that community expertise may constitute reconsideration of who is a peer.	

**Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University**

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
2. Community engagement included in evaluation criteria for term contracts for NTT faculty	NTT faculty contracts are silent on CES.	NTT faculty contracts encourage but do not require or compensate for faculty community engagement through teaching or for the scholarship of teaching and learning on community-engaged pedagogical practices.	NTT faculty contracts explicitly compensate faculty for community-engaged pedagogical practices recognizing the time commitment needed for establishing and maintaining community partnerships, for curriculum redesign for community-engaged teaching and learning, and for improving practice through the scholarship of teaching and learning.	
3. CES encouraged for sabbaticals	Sabbatical policies are silent on CES.	Sabbatical policies refer to the possibilities of CES as a plan of study but do not make clear the importance of developing a sabbatical plan that aligns with the priorities of the college and can advance CES as a college goal.	Sabbatical policies encourage faculty to undertake CES at different levels—to build capacity for CES, to develop a CES approach to research and/or teaching, to advance existing CES research and/or teaching—in ways that align with the goals of the college and advance the priorities of the college.	



**Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University**

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
4. CES and teaching and learning are valued in post-tenure review criteria	Post-tenure review policies are silent on CES.	Post-tenure review policies include community engagement, but the only place that community engagement is recognized is in the faculty service role.	Post-tenure review policies offer opportunities for faculty to revitalize their scholarship by undertaking CES. CES is clearly defined in the post-tenure review policies documents in such a way that they include engaged scholarly work across the faculty roles; there are explicit criteria for community engagement in teaching, in research and creative activity, and in service; there are criteria in the areas of research and creative activity that acknowledge that not all CES will appear in peer-reviewed journals, and that community expertise may constitute reconsideration of who is a peer.	

## Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University

### DIMENSION VI: Capacity-Building Infrastructure for Support and Sustainability

A primary feature of institutionalized community-engaged scholarship in a college is the establishment of a capacity-building infrastructure that supports and sustains CES.

*DIRECTIONS: For each of the components (rows), place a circle around the cell that best represents the CURRENT status of the development of intentional identification and development of leadership for community engagement. Once the current status of development has been established, then identify evidence of this status in the corresponding INDICATORS cell.*

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
1. Administrative assistance—staffing to support community engagement	No staffing dedicated to CES.	Inadequate staff support for supporting CES.	Adequate staff support with dedicated responsibilities for supporting CES.	
2. Dedicated operational budget	No operational budget for supporting CES.	Inadequate operational budget, or soft money (unsustainable grant money) supporting CES.	Adequate operational budget dedicated to supporting CES.	
3. Assistance developing partnerships, memoranda of understanding with community partners	No assistance in developing community partnerships, and no resources for faculty or community partners in formalizing relationships.	Inadequate assistance in developing community partnerships, and inadequate resources for faculty or community partners in formalizing relationships.	Appropriate levels of assistance in developing community partnerships, and resources for faculty or community partners in formalizing relationships.	
4. Faculty and staff development programs for integrating community engagement into scholarship and teaching	No faculty and staff development for CES.	Inadequate and intermittent faculty and staff development opportunities for advancing CES.	Ongoing, robust faculty and staff development opportunities for advancing CES.	
5. Training for personnel review committee members on evaluating CES	No training for personnel review committees on how to fairly evaluate CES.	Inadequate and intermittent training for personnel review committees on how to fairly evaluate CES.	Ongoing training for personnel review committees on how to fairly evaluate CES.	

**Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University**

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
6. Formal and informal mentoring programs	No mentoring programs for supporting junior faculty in building a scholarly profile around CES.	Inadequate and ad hoc mentoring programs for supporting junior faculty in building a scholarly profile around CES.	Ongoing and structured mentoring programs for supporting junior faculty in building a scholarly profile around CES.	
7. Stipends or course release for seeding engaged research or course development	No funding to facilitate faculty experimentation with CES.	Inadequate and unreliable funding to facilitate faculty experimentation with CES.	Ongoing, substantial funding to facilitate faculty experimentation with CES.	
8. Structured opportunities for faculty to connect with community partners	No structured opportunities for faculty and community partners to connect.	Few opportunities for faculty and community partners to connect.	Ongoing, structured opportunities for faculty and community partners to connect.	
9. Writing retreats and assistance finding places to submit CES for publication	No writing retreats and assistance finding places to submit CES for publication.	Little support for assisting faculty and graduate students with submitting CES for publication.	Ongoing writing retreats and assistance for faculty and graduate students for finding places to submit CES for publication.	
10. Assistance with grant writing to support community engagement	No assistance provided for grant writing to support community engagement.	Little if any assistance provided for grant writing to support community engagement.	Ongoing and adequate assistance provided for grant writing to support community engagement	

**Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University**

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
11. Conference support for faculty, staff, and graduate assistants (in addition to faculty development resources for disciplinary conferences)	No support for faculty, staff, and graduate assistants to present at or attend CE conferences that are typically non-disciplinary conferences (funding support in addition to faculty development resources for disciplinary conferences).	Intermittent and unreliable support for faculty, staff, and graduate assistants to present at or attend CE conferences that are typically non-disciplinary conferences (funding support in addition to faculty development resources for disciplinary conferences).	Ongoing support for faculty, staff, and graduate assistants to present at or attend CE conferences that are typically non-disciplinary conferences (funding support in addition to faculty development resources for disciplinary conferences)	
12. Interfacing with other engagement units on campus	Little or no coordination between CES activities in the college and CES offices and programs across campus.	Poor coordination between CES activities in the college and CES offices and programs across campus.	Strong coordination between CES activities in the college and CES offices and programs across campus.	

**DIMENSION VII: Assessment**

A primary feature of institutionalized community-engaged scholarship in a college is the systematic collection and evaluation of data to better understand the extent, quality, and impact of community-engagement activities.

*DIRECTIONS: For each of the components (rows), place a circle around the cell that best represents the CURRENT status of the development of intentional identification and development of leadership for community engagement. Once the current status of development has been established, then identify evidence of this status in the corresponding INDICATORS cell.*

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
1. Data collected and assessed on faculty engaged scholarship	There are no mechanisms in place to gather data on the CES of faculty in the college.	There are some data collected about the CES by faculty, but the data collection is not systematic and the data are not analyzed.	Mechanisms, such as annual faculty reports, are structured to gather data on CES on an ongoing basis, the results of which are analyzed and shared across the college.	
2. Data collected and assessed on community-engaged courses	There are no mechanisms in place to gather data on the number of community-engaged courses offered by the college, the number of students enrolled in those courses, what departments are offering community-engaged courses, or the number of faculty who are teaching those courses.	There are some data collected about community-engaged course offerings, but the data collection is not systematic and the data are not analyzed.	On an ongoing basis, the college gathers data on the number of community-engaged courses offered by the college, the number of students enrolled in those courses, what departments are offering community-engaged courses, and the number of faculty who are teaching those courses, and analyzes and reports that data to the college and publicly.	

**Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University**

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
3. Data collected and assessed on community engagement learning outcomes	There are no articulated learning outcomes associated with community engagement in the curriculum.	Community engagement learning outcomes are not well articulated, are often stated as goals rather than measurable outcomes, and are assessed as learning outcomes for the college.	All community engagement courses offered through the college have a consistent set of learning outcomes such that the college can measure and report on the community engagement learning by students across the college.	
4. Data gathered and assessed on community perceptions of partnerships	There are no mechanisms in place to gather community partner perceptions of the community engagement by the college.	There are periodic and inconsistent efforts to gather community partner perceptions of the community engagement activities of the college, and the results are not widely shared or used for quality improvement.	The college regularly gathers, analyzes, and shares—with the college and with the community partners—data on the community partner perceptions of community engagement by the college.	
5. Measures established and data gathered and assessed on community impacts	There are no data gathered about the impact on the community of community engagement activities by the college.	Some impact data are gathered, but they are based on measures that have little relevance for the community partners, and/or they are not shared and/or used for quality improvement.	Measures of community impact have been established cooperatively between the college and community partners; data based on those measures are consistently gathered and analyzed and shared across the college and with community partners.	

### Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University

COMPONENT	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
6. Interfacing with Institutional Research to draw on campus data that will assist with assessment of community engagement (e.g., NSSE results, HERI faculty survey)	College data on community engagement are not analyzed in relation to other community engagement data collected by the campus.	There are intermittent and inconsistent efforts to understand college-level data in relation to institution-level data on community engagement.	The college works closely with Institutional Research to mine institutional data that will provide a deeper understanding of the community engagement data collected at the college level.	

#### DIMENSION VIII: Curricular Pathways

A primary feature of institutionalized community engagement in a college is having community engagement integrated in curricular structures and pathways so that all students have the opportunity to learn about and practice community engagement and master clearly articulated civic-learning outcomes.

*DIRECTIONS: For each of the components (rows), place a circle around the cell that best represents the CURRENT status of the development of intentional identification and development of leadership for community engagement. Once the current status of development has been established, then identify evidence of this status in the corresponding INDICATORS cell.*

COMPONENTS	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
1. Community engagement in the curriculum of majors and graduate programs	Community engagement is not part of the curriculum in degree programs.	Community engagement is sometimes integrated into the curriculum of certain courses, but it is based on faculty interests and not program commitments. Community engagement is integrated into some programs but not across the college.	Community engagement is integrated into all of the degree programs in the college, making it available to all students and making it a curricular signature of the college.	

**Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Community Engagement at the Level of the College Within a University**

COMPONENTS	STAGE 1 <i>Emerging</i>	STAGE 2 <i>Developing</i>	STAGE 3 <i>Transforming</i>	INDICATORS
2. Community engagement in college minor	There is no minor in community engagement.	If there is faculty support, students are able to independently construct a minor in community engagement.	There is a minor in community engagement in the college that is available to all students in the college, across departments.	
3. Community engagement graduate certificate	There is no community engagement graduate certificate.	Graduate students can independently seek out CE courses and present their coursework on their CV.	There is an established community engagement graduate certificate that is available to all graduate students across the college and is structured so that courses in the certificate can count as electives in the various graduate programs.	
4. Completion of a community engagement minor or graduate certificate appears on the official transcript.	The official transcript does not record a community engagement minor or graduate certificate.	There are efforts underway to work with the registrar to have the official transcript record a community engagement minor or graduate certificate.	The official transcript records a community engagement minor or graduate certificate.	





# EJOURNAL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

VOLUME 8 | ISSUE 3

## **Economic Engagement, Development, and Entrepreneurship: The Role of Applied Public Service Colleges**

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Ohio University

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### **Abstract**

This article investigates the unique role of applied public service colleges in engaging with communities through economic development and entrepreneurship-related activities. Schools of public administration, affairs, and service are often distinctively tasked with being public facing, connecting and working with outside agencies, nonprofits, and other stakeholders. Using a case study of Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs, which employs a public-private partnership model to find solutions to challenges facing communities, the economy, and the environment, the authors discuss the emerging engagement role of these schools using a typology of strategies brought forth by the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities. The authors outline seven specific programs run by the Voinovich School and discuss the activities, services, and intensity of each. As opposed to other forms of civic or community engagement, this article focuses primarily on economic engagement, such as technical assistance, business development, and related activities that drive regional and rural economic growth. Having a deeper comprehension of how such programs operate to enhance engagement and interaction between academics and outside stakeholders can be an important aspect of growing similar connections in other schools to further pursue regional connectivity and development.

*Keywords:* engagement, economic development, entrepreneurship, public affairs, universities

This article describes how institutions of higher education pursue university-related economic and civic engagement, as well as the emergent role of these institutions as leaders in creating rural entrepreneurial ecosystems. Against this background, we review the economic engagement, development, and entrepreneurial activities of Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs. In particular, many of these activities are unique to U.S. schools of public administration, affairs, and service (Irvin, 2005; Knott, 2019; Koliba, 2007). We also offer suggestions for how schools with unique public-service missions can overcome structural barriers present in universities to better engage with communities, especially in rural areas.

### **Economic Development, Engagement, and Entrepreneurship**

The combination of university-based economic development and civic engagement is an emergent issue in the academic literature (e.g., Bond & Patterson, 2005; Bozic & Dunlap, 2013; Franklin, 2009; Hart & Northmore, 2011; Irvin, 2005; Koliba, 2007; Morrison, Barrett, & Fadden, 2019; O'Mara, 2012; Talebzadehhosseini et al., 2019; Winter, Wiseman, & Muirhead, 2006) and, more importantly, a salient practice among many institutions of higher education (Klein & Woodell, 2015). Categorizing how universities engage in economic development has largely been driven by the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU) and its partner organization, the University Economic Development Association (UEDA).<sup>1</sup> In 2015, APLU and UEDA published a seminal document, *Higher Education Engagement in Economic Development: Foundations of Strategy and Practice*, with contributions from approximately 50 higher education leaders (Klein & Woodell, 2015). Among other contributions, this work defines "university economic development and engagement," "provides a common set of principles," and "present(s) a taxonomy of programs" (Klein & Woodell, 2015, p. 3).

In their noteworthy report, APLU and UEDA stated,

In higher education, economic development means proactive institutional engagement, with partners and stakeholders, in sustainable growth of the competitive capacities that contribute to the advancement of society through the realization of individual, firm, community, and regional-to-global economic and social potential. (Klein & Woodell, 2015, p. 4)

The activities of universities are categorized into three central practices: talent, innovation, and place. Talent covers lifelong learning provided by universities, innovation targets research and entrepreneurship, and place focuses on the connection to the communities served by universities (Klein & Woodell, 2015). These three activities have been brought into practice, such as through APLU's Commission on Economic and Community Engagement (CECE) and its establishment of the Innovation and Economic Prosperity (IEP) Universities Program, which recognizes university economic engagement in the areas of talent, innovation, and place (APLU, 2019). To date, 60 institutions of higher education, including Ohio University, have earned this IEP designation (APLU, 2019). APLU, in partnership with UEDA, has extended IEP designation to private research universities and community colleges, which are typically ineligible for APLU membership (UEDA, 2019).

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<sup>1</sup> Disclosure: The first author, G. Jason Jolley, serves on the University Economic Development Association's Board of Directors.

Talebzadehhosseini et al. (2019) recently published an article examining the strategies used by universities to enhance their economic engagement. The authors reviewed 55 APLU IEP self-studies and identified six specific strategies that emerged (Talebzadehhosseini et al., 2019):

1. forming mutually beneficial partnerships with industry;
2. developing collaboration networks with relevant communities;
3. building an innovation culture;
4. supporting researchers in bringing new technologies to market;
5. promoting transfer of new technologies to industry; and,
6. encouraging entrepreneurial activities. (p. 1)

While the literature on university economic engagement remains relatively nascent, a robust literature exists around innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystems. Yet, much of this latter research focuses on densely populated urban areas (e.g., Feldman, 2014; Harper-Anderson, 2018). More recently, researchers have explored rural entrepreneurial ecosystems (Jolley & Pittaway, 2019), often with a focus on the role universities and even community colleges (e.g., Corbin & Thomas, 2019) play in supporting such ecosystems through entrepreneurial training (Lyons, Lyons, & Jolley, 2019), collaboration (Morrison et al., 2019), inclusion of underrepresented communities (O'Brien, Cooney, & Blenker, 2019), reducing wealth inequality (Lyons, Miller, & Mann, 2018), and providing public venture capital (Jolley, Uzuegbunam, & Glazer, 2018). Moreover, the federal government has recognized the importance of entrepreneurship to rural areas. For instance, in 2018, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) released a series of research reports on entrepreneurial ecosystems in Appalachia (ARC, 2019).

### **Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs**

Ohio University's Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs engages in nearly all of the six economic engagement activities identified by Talebzadehhosseini et al. (2019), with the exception of tech transfer. Since 2012, the Voinovich School has generated nearly \$2.5 billion in economic activity for the region and state, in part by leveraging a \$1.25 million Appalachian New Economy Partnership (ANEP) state appropriation. The Voinovich School offers two academic degrees: the Master of Public Administration (MPA) and the Master of Science in Environmental Studies (MSES). However, the primary mission of the Voinovich School is to serve as "a catalyst for regional, state and national collective impact in the areas of entrepreneurship, energy and the environment, and public and social engagement policy areas" (Ohio University, 2019, para. 1). The Voinovich School works to provide applied, research-based solutions to challenges existing in communities, leveraging partnerships with nonprofit organizations, government, and the private sector to create public value. Overall, the Voinovich School is active with a wide range of stakeholders, and uses nationally recognized research strengths to conduct objective and meaningful research that improves lives and can inform future business and policy decisions.

The Voinovich School achieves this distinct mission through an engaged faculty system modeled after the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) School of Government, where faculty hold 12-month, rather than nine-month, appointments. While traditional public affairs schools focus on research, teaching, and service, the Voinovich School prioritizes public service, engagement, and sponsored research to the benefit of Appalachian Ohio and the State of

Ohio. Nine tenured/tenure-track faculty, four non-tenure-track faculty, a handful of executives-in-residence, and approximately 80 professional staff work on a host of issues, often in partnership with government, nonprofit, and private partners.

We believe that public service college faculty and staff, particularly through applied centers and engaged activities, have an important role in providing objective research on practical issues that affect citizens. As an example, state-level governmental agencies in the United States often look to academics for neutral and specialized knowledge on economic development and public policy issues. Freidson (2001) claimed that specialized knowledge is a requisite for administrative actions conducted by the state. Independent specialists, such as university experts, are vital to civil service in the consultation, guidance, and services they may provide. These experts are also important in the way they provide a body of knowledge and skill that is grasped by a limited number of people.

The following sections of this article focus specifically on the role of the Voinovich School's independent experts in economic engagement and entrepreneurship activities. Among others, these include TechGROWTH Ohio, the Center for Entrepreneurship, and the U.S. Economic Development Administration University Center.

### **TechGROWTH Ohio**

TechGROWTH Ohio is a \$52 million public-private partnership composed of the Ohio Third Frontier program, Ohio University, and the private investment community. It is one of the regional entrepreneurial signature programs funded by the Ohio Third Frontier program to provide business expertise, services, and investments for tech-based startups and university spin-outs in 19 counties in Southeastern Ohio. As one of the premier programs of the Voinovich School, TechGROWTH Ohio is part of an entrepreneurial ecosystem that includes programs supporting university and regional technology commercialization and small-business incubation. (TechGROWTH Ohio, 2019).

Figure 1 displays the leverage and impact of TechGROWTH Ohio's activities. TechGROWTH alone has generated over a half billion dollars in economic activity and leveraged \$23 for every \$1 in state money. One example of TechGROWTH Ohio's success is Stirling Ultracold, which manufactures and sells the world's most energy-efficient ultra-cold freezers. The company employs 100 people, with 70 of these employees in rural southeastern Ohio.

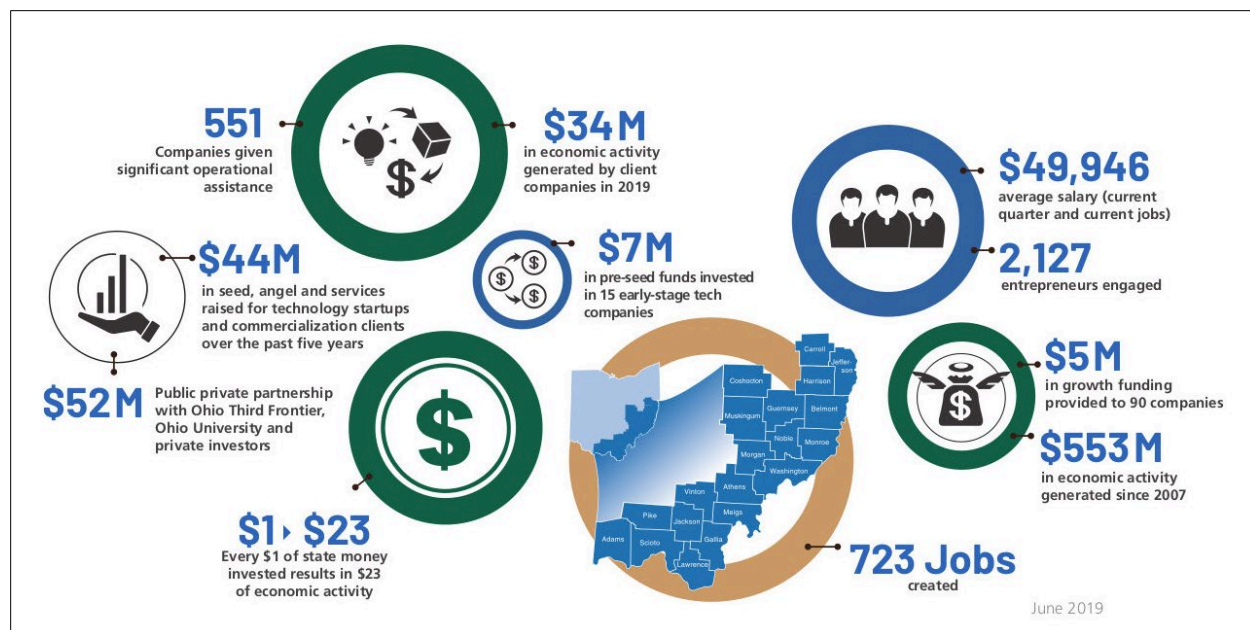


Figure 1. TechGROWTH Ohio's impact (TechGROWTH, 2019).

### Center for Entrepreneurship

To our knowledge, the Voinovich School is one of the few public affairs schools in the United States to host a center for entrepreneurship. The Ohio University Center for Entrepreneurship is a partnership between the College of Business and the Voinovich School. It focuses on entrepreneurial education, business assistance, and investment capital for entrepreneurs and businesses. It sparks critical and creative thinking, applied experientially to solve problems and find solutions in the private and public markets.

### Social Enterprise Ecosystem (SEE) and LIGHTS Regional Innovation Network

The ARC provided funding to the Voinovich School and to other partners at Ohio University to create two programs, one to serve social ventures—Social Enterprise Ecosystem (SEE)—and one to assist communities with makerspaces and incubators—LIGHTS. The SEE and LIGHTS programs provide no-cost services and access to capital for entrepreneurs and small businesses in the social sector and early-stage product development. The two programs partner with five local foundations and 10 Innovation Gateways in a three-state, 30-county footprint, and have aided over 300 clients, created over 150 new jobs, and helped clients leverage over \$13 million in investment, grants, and revenue over a two-and-a-half year period. LIGHTS is continuing under a prime grantee arrangement with Shawnee State University on a new initiative in the recovery sector.

A prime example of success is New Resource Solutions (NRS), an early stage “fintech” social enterprise connecting solar energy developers and investors to enable third-party-owned solar installations for small-to-medium-sized projects previously deemed below threshold for investor-owned solar projects. The Voinovich School's SEE has helped the company raise \$775,000 in seed capital to launch and acquire its first major project: a \$1.6 million solar roof installation on a rural school district's middle and high school building generating over 70% of the

building's energy needs and saving the district \$20,000 annually in energy costs. NRS enables solar power installations for public-service buildings, nonprofits, community organizations, and others that cannot afford solar systems by unlocking small-scale projects for impact investors.

### **U.S. Economic Development Administration University Center**

The Voinovich School's economic development portfolio includes the Rural Universities Consortium's U.S. Economic Development Administration University Center, in partnership with Bowling Green State University. In this 24-year partnership, Bowling Green State University serves 27 Northwest Ohio counties, while the Voinovich School serves 32 counties in Appalachian Ohio. Historically, the University Center has provided business assistance services to clients, market studies, economic development strategic plans, and economic impact studies for communities.

### **BOBCAT Network**

Leveraging \$400,000 in state-funded ANEP dollars, the Voinovich School partnered with the Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission (OVRDC) to secure \$1.6 million in EDA funding to create the Building Opportunities Beyond Coal Accelerating Transition (BOBCAT) Network to assist the OVRDC region with coal-fired power plant closures. These closures created \$8.5 million in tax loss to the local community and over 1,100 lost jobs (Jolley, Khalaf, Michaud, & Sandler, 2019). This ongoing project is working to support economic recovery, Opportunity Zone investments, and brownfield redevelopment in the region.

### **Small Business Development Center**

The Voinovich School also hosts a Small Business Development Center (SBDC), which provides a full range of business consulting services for existing and new small businesses. In the 2019 fiscal year, the Ohio University SBDC worked with over 700 distinct clients and helped create over 70 new businesses and over 300 new jobs. In addition, the SBDC assisted small businesses in obtaining nearly \$10 million in capital and increasing sales by more than \$9 million. In 2018, the SBDC was recognized as the SBDC of the year in a six-state region. The Ohio University SBDC assists clients in 12 southeastern Ohio counties.

### **Procurement and Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)**

The Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) provides government procurement expertise to assist businesses with their pursuit of government contracts at federal, state, and local levels. The Ohio University PTAC covers 55 of Ohio's 88 counties. Last year, PTAC clients received 110,218 awards from 202 different agencies, totaling \$896 million in contract dollars.

These selected activities demonstrate an array of entrepreneurial, economic, and business development services. In Table 1, we utilize Talebzadehhosseini et al.'s (2019) typology of economic engagement activities to estimate the intensity of activities and services for each of these forms of engagement. As evidenced here, the Voinovich School is less focused on traditional technology-related activities, such as tech transfer, since these are not housed in the school. Yet, the other forms of engagement are well covered, including TechGROWTH Ohio's focus on technology start-ups.

Table 1

*Voinovich School Activities By Economic Engagement Typology (Talebzadehhosseini et al. 2019)*

Engagement Type	Program Name						
	TechGROWTH Ohio	Center for Entrepreneurship	SEE/LIGHTS Network	EDA University Center	BOBCAT Network	SBDC	PTAC
<i>Forming mutually beneficial partnerships with industry</i>	√√√	√	√√√	√	√	√√√	√√√
<i>Developing collaboration networks with relevant communities</i>	√√√	√	√√√	√√√	√√√	√√√	√
<i>Building an innovation culture</i>	√√√	√√√	√√√	√√√	√√√	√√√	√√√
<i>Supporting researchers in bringing new technologies to market</i>	√√	√√	√	√	√	√	√
<i>Promoting transfer of new technologies to industry</i>	√√	√	√	√	√	√	√
<i>Encouraging entrepreneurial activities</i>	√√√	√√√	√√√	√√	√√	√√√	√√√

Note. √ = a lower intensity for activities and services; √√ = a medium intensity; √√√ = highest intensity.



### **Public Service Colleges and Economic Engagement**

As an illustrative case study, the Voinovich School's success in economic engagement, research, and convening is a direct result of the school's deliberate focus on serving the region and state. While more traditional public affairs schools may discourage non-tenured faculty from engagement in favor of focusing on publishing, the Voinovich School's promotion and tenure guidelines reflect its distinct mission. Faculty are expected to engage the region and state in their particular area of expertise, whether it be workforce research, healthcare, or energy development. Engagement, impact, and interaction between university and outside stakeholders are favored and valued over traditional academic publishing.

Further, while Ohio University distinguishes faculty (by rank and otherwise) from non-faculty, these distinctions are less relevant at the Voinovich School. Faculty and professional staff work actively in partnership to support the engaged mission of the Voinovich School. Professional staff often lead projects for which they hold the most expertise or experience. Faculty can play secondary or supportive roles, such as in data analysis. In a time when the political system and other key institutions may be clouded by rhetoric, engaged and objective university researchers can offer information to mitigate competing interests as part of their public service mission (Rich, 2013).

Public affairs, administration, and service schools operating like the Voinovich School and similar peer institutions like the UNC School of Government can make significant impacts in the area of economic engagement. Yet, this requires a reimagining and repositioning away from "publish or perish" narratives or a strict focus on traditional academic exercises. Instead, it requires reconfiguring the tenure and promotion system toward engagement and impact.

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# EJOURNAL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

VOLUME 8 | ISSUE 3

## **Book Review: Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing, by Miranda Fricker**

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*Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*, by Miranda Fricker. New York: Oxford University Press. August 2007. ISBN: 9780198237907. 192 pages.

Since November 2018, my colleagues and I at the Leo T. McCarthy Center for Public Service and the Common Good at the University of San Francisco have been working with a few long-time community partners to update our professional development curriculum. Our efforts led recently to the launch of the Community Partner Co-Educator Fellowship, a series of six 2-hour workshops designed to deepen nonprofit staff members' understanding of community-engaged learning and to develop practices for cultivating reciprocal partnerships and fostering students' civic learning. As we moved through the program design process, we were committed to integrating community voices into this fellowship, but we struggled to find publications that emanated purely from community expertise. Though community partners have participated in some qualitative studies, their voices are often shared by researchers as short quotes to illustrate overarching themes (Bacon, 2002; Blouin & Perry, 2009; Cronley, Madden, & Davis, 2015; Sandy, 2007; Sandy & Holland, 2006; Tinkler, Tinkler, Hausman, & Tufo-Strouse, 2014; Worrall, 2007). In fact, we could only find one peer-reviewed article authored by a community partner (Reyes, 2016). Is it truly the case that so few resources reflect the perspectives of those community-based wisdom-holders meant to be collaborators in the work of community-engaged learning?

Knowing that peer-reviewed journals were designed as competitive outlets for scholars to share their knowledge in a rigidly defined written format, we asked: What other resources might be more accessible for community partner voices to permeate the field of community engagement? At the McCarthy Center, our strategy for including community partner voices has involved inviting (and compensating) partners as guest lecturers, panelists, committee members, and contributors to outreach and orientation media. However, while we have found a way to invite these voices into our institution, it seems that the broader field still fails to honor the reciprocal exchange of knowledge needed to create new knowledge with community partners.

This particular gap in the community engagement literature highlights myriad questions that I have wrestled with in my 14 years as a community engagement professional, and I know many others are asking and attempting to answer similar questions. Indeed, I believe it is our responsibility as community engagement scholars and practitioners to explore such questions as:

- If we look to the literature on community engagement, whose voices shape the field, and whose voices are missing or on the margin?
- How is knowledge actually exchanged across campus-community boundaries, and how is that knowledge used and valued?
- To what extent are community partners positioned as co-educators of students and collaborators in scholarship and research?
- In what ways are students' various learning styles, strengths, and limitations accommodated in community-engaged courses, and how are they encouraged to demonstrate learning beyond the creation of traditional work products?
- How are faculty recognized and rewarded for teaching and scholarship that emanate from a commitment to creating community change?

I have found the framework of "epistemic in/justice"—described in Miranda Fricker's *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing*—to be useful in analyzing these big, complex questions about the limitations and aspirations of higher education community engagement. I have

had the privilege of working with colleagues from institutions across the United States and with our community partners to apply and adapt this framework in professional development venues and in the literature. (To learn more about this ongoing project, please visit <https://epistemicjusticeiarslce2018.wordpress.com/>.) Indeed, I see this book review as one more opportunity to enliven and extend critical conversations about higher education community engagement.

In order to situate an examination of community engagement in light of the epistemic in/justice framework, I think it is helpful to briefly zoom out to acknowledge the higher education context. Higher education originated as a bastion for the production and dissemination of elite knowledge for the primary benefit of wealthy White men. Though today's colleges and universities have become far more accessible for students and faculty across diverse genders, races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic statuses, the legacy of elitism and exclusion within higher education continues to shape what knowledge is valued, shared, and celebrated. Looking to the discipline of philosophy as an example, one finds that, as of 2015, only 13% of authors of articles in the top five philosophy journals were women (Schwitzgebel, 2015), and between 2003 and 2012, only .32% of authors featured in the top 15 philosophy journals identified as Black (Bright, 2016). Further, as of 2014, women made up only 10% of the 267 most cited contemporary authors in the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, and only 3% of cited authors identified as people of color (Schwitzgebel, 2014). These statistics indicate a lack of diversity in the epistemological content of higher education texts, even as faculty and student demographics have become more diverse. To be fair, this problem pervades most academic disciplines. Scholars have argued that underrepresentation of women and people of color in top-tier publications is due to myriad factors, including implicit bias and stereotype threat (Saul, 2013). Implicit bias shapes how scholars and editors select publications to be featured, and stereotype threat prevents people from underrepresented groups from pursuing particular career paths and practices that are not traditionally seen as inclusive.

The previous publication and citation statistics illustrate that identity-based bias blocks collective access to valuable knowledge because certain groups of people are left out of the academic conversation. However, given that the central mission of academia is to produce and disseminate knowledge, scholars and practitioners have an obligation to take issues of epistemic exclusion seriously and seek proactive approaches to ensuring equity and inclusion of diverse forms of knowledge. Moreover, because exclusion of certain types of knowledge is based on dominant conceptions of which types of knowledge are valuable, and because these conceptions are inextricably linked to aspects of scholars' identities, the imperative to address this injustice is also an ethical one. How does one attend to the epistemic and ethical harms that have been baked into higher education since its inception?

Enter Fricker's work on epistemic injustice, which focuses on the manifestation of injustice in two everyday human practices: conveying knowledge and making sense of experience. From this starting point, Fricker diagnoses how identity-based power and prejudice harm individuals in their capacities as knowers, and keep them from accessing essential truths about human experience. She then offers practical approaches for building individuals' capacity to be more just in their epistemic interactions with others, and in their cultivation and stewardship of collective knowledge.

Though the concept of identity-based oppression is neither new in academe nor uniquely theorized in philosophy, Fricker's analysis of identity-based oppression as having both ethical and

intellectual dimensions warrants attention because it offers fresh insight into the multifaceted and cumulative nature of harms committed in daily communication and meaning-making. Drawing upon the work of critical social theorists, philosophers, and scholars, including Iris Marion Young (1992), Fricker posits that epistemic injustice is one facet of the status quo of identity-based domination and highlights many examples of how it plays out in casual social situations as well as high-stakes contexts like courtrooms and classrooms. In essence, epistemic injustice manifests as the exclusion of people with marginalized identities from (1) being heard and understood by others in interpersonal communications (i.e., testimonial injustice), and (2) contributing to broader and deeper social understandings of the human experience (i.e., hermeneutical injustice).

Fricker introduces testimonial injustice in the first chapter of *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* and elaborates on the nature and manifestations of the concept in Chapters 2 and 6. Testimonial injustice occurs interpersonally when the hearer/receiver of knowledge allows identity prejudice to undermine the credibility of the speaker/knowledge-holder. The result is a dysfunction in knowledge dissemination that leads simultaneously to three types of harm. Epistemic harm results when important knowledge is not integrated into the hearer's understanding, meaning untruth is perpetuated to the detriment of both the immediate discussion parties and potentially others to whom they transmit knowledge. Ethical harm results when the knower's knowledge is devalued and, because knowledge transmission is an essential aspect of what it means to be human, their humanity is degraded. The cumulative effect can be a growing sense of self-doubt that inhibits the knower's participation in social interactions. Practical harm results from dysfunctional knowledge transmission that shapes actions and events to exclude, censure, or dismiss the knower. As an example of this harm, Fricker highlights the instance of an individual's self-defense testimonial not being believed by a judge or jury, resulting in jail time.

In the context of a service-learning course, practical harm might manifest in the experiences of low-income students who must prioritize paid work over service activities connected to their course in order to maintain financial stability. When the student approaches their instructor to express concern about schedule conflicts and articulate the need to maximize paid work hours, the instructor may dismiss these concerns as the student not having their priorities straight or as if they are trying to get out of course assignments. Instead of validating the student's assessment of their own situation and working with them to come up with alternative ways to fulfill the community-engaged component of the course, the instructor adopts a hard line, forcing the student to choose between a passing grade and financial stability. While this may happen in interpersonal interactions within discreet service-learning classrooms, scholars have also pointed to this as a systemic issue related to service-learning not being designed to include and accommodate low-income students (Butin, 2006; Cruz, 1990; Mitchell, 2014), thereby exemplifying hermeneutical injustice.

Fricker describes hermeneutical injustice in the culminating chapter of the book (Chapter 7). Whereas testimonial injustice plays out at the interpersonal level, hermeneutical injustice occurs at the systemic level through identity-based marginalization, keeping whole groups of knowers from participating in shaping social understandings of the human experience. Society excludes groups either because the knowledge they hold does not comport with the dominant worldview—and therefore cannot be understood using existing cognitive frames—or because marginalized peoples' methods of expressing certain kinds of knowledge are not accepted as legitimate by the dominant culture. Fricker uses the example of how women were historically confined to their households, limited to discussing what was deemed polite or appropriate and



labeled as non-rational, emotionally-driven beings in an effort to prevent them from generating a collective understanding of their experiences of gender-based oppression and acting against it. Experiences of post-partum depression or domestic violence were common and consequential, but they were not identified or addressed until somewhat recently in human history because of systems and structures excluding women as valid knowledge producers and disseminators. Similar to the impacts of testimonial injustice, the harms of hermeneutical injustice have implications for emotional and psychological well-being, but also for social and economic status. Because of the systemic nature of hermeneutical injustice, the harms impact entire identity-based groups.

Extrapolating this phenomenon to the experiences of faculty in higher education highlights how community-engaged scholarship continues to be marginalized in high-stakes tenure and promotion review processes. Though not necessarily defined as an identity-based group, many community-engaged scholars are faculty of color and women (Evans, Taylor, Dunlap, & Miller, 2009; Sturm, Eatman, Saltmarsh, & Bush, 2011). These scholars have professional commitments, engage in pedagogical practices, and disseminate scholarly products that emanate from engagement with community (e.g., teaching service-learning courses, conducting community-based participatory research, etc.). Their scholarly work is grounded in transdisciplinary conceptions of knowledge (i.e., knowledge that transcends disciplines and the campus) and is characterized by asset-based qualities of reciprocity, mutual respect, shared authority, and co-creation of goals and outcomes. This orientation to knowledge and scholarship leaves them occupying the margins of what is traditionally accepted in terms of teaching, research, and service. Thus, there is a high likelihood that their faculty peers (who do not do community-engaged teaching and research) may misunderstand, distrust, or devalue the work products and narratives they present in their dossiers. It is common for community-engaged scholarship to be deemed less rigorous and less valuable than traditional positivist approaches, which prioritize pure research methodologies and the discovery of new knowledge (Eatman et al., 2018). One reason for the persistence of this problem is the gap in knowledge about how to properly define and assess high-quality community-engaged scholarship. Though guidelines and standards exist (Jordan et al., 2009), they have not been widely adopted across colleges and universities. Therefore, faculty members who “communicate” with the world through community-engaged practices may find themselves to be misunderstood within the dominant cognitive constructs of what constitutes high-quality faculty performance and therefore not selected for tenure or promotion.

Fricker also illuminates examples of what is possible when typically marginalized knowers are heard and understood by those in power. In Chapters 3 and 4, she places the onus on individuals to cultivate a practice of reflection and analysis when taking on the role of knowledge-receivers, such that they can intentionally subvert their prejudicial tendencies from impeding epistemic and ethical connections to knowledge-givers. Doing this facilitates testimonial justice, which occurs when knowledge is communicated interpersonally, unfettered by identity-based bias, in a way that affirms the credibility (and by extension the humanity) of the knower and builds the understanding of the knowledge-receiver. In Chapter 5, Fricker discusses the genealogy of testimonial injustice, referencing foundational philosophical theories and concepts to situate her framework in the broader field. In particular, she describes the “state of nature,” as imagined by Williams (2002) and Craig (1990), as the condition for the inevitable emergence of identity-based prejudice (a precursor to testimonial injustice). She also highlights virtues of truth, accuracy, and sincerity as necessary for humans to be able to overcome identity-based prejudice in order to effectively pool knowledge necessary for human survival.

As an antidote to hermeneutic injustice, Fricker, at the end of Chapter 7, provides only a brushstroke of her vision of hermeneutical justice. Individuals enact hermeneutical justice as a corrective virtue by displaying context-sensitive judgment in their interactions, recognizing that their lack of understanding in response to another's testimony may be a result of systems of knowledge that delegitimize certain ways of knowing, and not a deficiency within the speaker, and potentially taking responsibility for seeking additional evidence in support of the speaker's testimony. Writ large, hermeneutical justice occurs when society holds space for and values diverse ways of making sense of the human experience.

Considering the frequency and scale of interpersonal knowledge exchange in society, *Epistemic Injustice* has significant ramifications for transforming identity-based oppression. Fricker offers a coherent theory for a very particular, but common, human experience of identity-based injustice and a useful prescription for correcting it. Fricker is not the first or only scholar to name and describe the phenomenon of power relations inhibiting particular people's opportunities to participate fully in society and how to address it. Indeed, she references a number of scholars in other fields who have offered theoretical frameworks for exposing and interrogating unjust actions and systems. Rather, Fricker's framework is a worthy addition to the myriad bodies of theory that transcend purely disciplinary and scholarly application to help individuals analyze and ultimately dismantle oppression in practice. In making the case that exchanges of knowledge are fundamental to what it means to be human and to be part of society, and then connecting the inhibition of knowledge exchange to intellectual, ethical, and practical harms, Fricker makes a strong argument for why all people should care about and bear responsibility for creating a more epistemically just world. Further, Fricker fosters optimism that change is possible by suggesting how one might grow one's capacities for being a more virtuous knowledge-receiver and ultimately galvanize others to elevate this practice to the level of hermeneutical transformation.

As someone who does not have a scholarly background in philosophy but who is immersed in the culture of academia, I found this book to be compelling and accessible. Fricker offers clear and well-reasoned definitions of complex concepts and illustrates them with multiple practical examples. Further, she explicitly renders the relationships between the theoretical components of her argument into a comprehensive framework. I admit that I struggled somewhat with the chapters on the "Genealogy of Testimonial Injustice" and "Original Significances" because of my lack of familiarity with foundational philosophical canons, but I was still able to glean the essential arguments from both chapters.

For readers operating in a higher education context, where the creation, synthesis, application, and dissemination of knowledge are core functions, and where dominant cultural norms shape everything from student admissions to faculty tenure and review policies, Fricker's text provides both an ethical imperative and a framework for how we, as professionals within that context, might transform our institutions to be more epistemically just. If we mean to be virtuous in our individual dealings as professionals and participate in virtuous institutions, then we would do well to reflect upon the following questions in light of Fricker's theory and act in accordance with her prescriptions: How can we create space for students, faculty, and staff to demonstrate and disseminate knowledge in diverse ways? How can we design courses that benefit from the diversity of epistemic traditions? How can we provide faculty development opportunities that build capacity to enact epistemic justice in teaching, advising, research, and service? What skills and information do students need to prepare to engage ethically across epistemic differences in the higher education context and beyond? To what extent are the voices of diverse staff, faculty, and students able to

guide institutional agendas and priorities? What institutional values and virtues are likely to foster epistemic justice in how policies and practices are designed and implemented?

Zeroing in on the practice of community engagement in higher education, implementation of an epistemically just framework becomes even more imperative because of the relational nature of the work (both at the interpersonal and institutional levels) and its focus on employing knowledge to address contemporary social and environmental problems. If we as community-engaged scholars and practitioners believe that the condition of epistemic injustice is the status quo, as Fricker asserts, then it follows that we are likely to cause harm by conducting business as usual. By drawing exclusively on existing bodies of academically legitimate knowledge to guide our understandings of justice issues, and by employing traditional positivist and extractivist methods to guide community interventions, we might easily reinforce neo-colonial dynamics between “town and gown.” On the other hand, community engagement holds great potential as an incubator for higher education’s burgeoning efforts to diversify its epistemological universe. Under the rubric of community engagement, pedagogical frames are rooted in a desire to democratize the exchange of knowledge in and out of the classroom, and research methodologies are participatory, oriented toward addressing community-identified problems.

Given this, our call to action as community-engaged scholars and practitioners is to strive for greater alignment between the aspirational vision for community engagement and practice. What changes are needed for community engagement processes, practices, and policies to reflect equitable participation of diverse constituencies? How can the outcomes of this work achieve epistemic justice by perpetuating more nuanced understandings of both universal and unique aspects of the human condition? What commitment can we make to demonstrate humility, intellectual curiosity, and empathy in our daily interactions? In which situations might we abdicate our roles as experts when working with community in order to amplify voices of expertise and wisdom not traditionally legitimized in academia? How might we create space for students to grapple with their own limitations and aspirations as they navigate community-engaged experiences? How do we infuse the virtue of epistemic justice into the culture of our community-engaged departments and centers? I suggest boldly that, armed with frameworks like Fricker’s, we draw closer to answering these questions and achieving a more epistemically just vision for our work.

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# EJOURNAL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

VOLUME 8 | ISSUE 3

## **Book Review: Our Towns: A 100,000-Mile Journey into the Heart of America, by James Fallows and Deborah Fallows**

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*Our Towns: A 100,000-Mile Journey into the Heart of America*, by James Fallows and Deborah Fallows. New York: Pantheon Books. May 2018. ISBN: 9781101871843. 432 pages.

When I first started reading James and Deborah Fallows' *Our Towns: A 100,000-Mile Journey into the Heart of America*, I was expecting a mash-up of something like William Least Heat Moon's *Blue Highways* and Frances Moore Lappe's *Rediscovering America's Values*—that is, a travelogue of stories of ordinary people doing extraordinary public work in ordinary places across the United States. I could feel my resistance to the book's "look on the positive side" approach since, these days, I often have my guard up against what I perceive as the political and cultural erosion of hard-won public policies affecting people and places I care about. The title's cute nod to Thornton Wilder's 1938 play about Grover's Corners only fanned my skepticism. As it turns out, I was partially right, but I was mostly wrong.

*Our Towns* is a travelogue, and it does tell a series of positive, place-based stories, gathered by this husband and wife team over four years of flying all over the United States. More than this, though, it is a book that offers a deliberate, grounded, and thoughtful counterpoint to the strident national narrative of an increasingly polarized, angry, and alienated citizenry.

The authors do mention Least Heat Moon as one of their inspirations, along with Tocqueville, Dickens, Twain, and other close observers of the "American experiment" at various points in time; indeed, they make clear the company they want to keep. They also focus on the positive—on possibility. Like John McKnight, with his stories of asset-based community development, they describe again and again the creative ways people identify, organize, and put to work their limited resources in challenging contexts to serve a public good. Describing the various ways towns and cities reinvent themselves after experiencing economic and demographic crises, the Fallows make a case for the power of place, the value of community, and "local patriotism." In addition, they describe the consistent and central roles of public institutions, such as schools, libraries, and community colleges, in this reinvention.

The narrative structure of the book grows out of the authors' descriptions of flying together across the United States in a small plane piloted by James. Their flights provide some chronological structure and a sense of the nation's immense, diverse geographic spaces. Flying in a small, low-altitude plane also offers a metaphor for the focal length they adopt for observing the towns they visit—high enough to see wholes, systems, and to search for patterns, and close-in enough to recognize granular detail and explore how it fit into or revealed something worth knowing about the patterns and systems.

The Fallows are explicit in their introduction about what this choice of perspective revealed in sum:

By the end of the journey, we felt sure of something we had suspected at the beginning: an important part of the face of modern America has slipped from people's view, in a way that makes a big and destructive difference in the country's public life.

What they find in "our towns" is a vibrant and effective, if messy, public culture that stands in vivid counterpoint to the polarization, anger, and alienation of national discourse:

The point that comes back to us is the starkness of the contrast: on the one hand, the flattened terms—"angry," "resentful," "hopeless"—the language the media and politicians use to describe America in general; and on the other hand, the engaged, changing realities people understand about the places where they actually live.



As a cultural historian, I am skeptical of studies that want to focus only on the positive. I worry that telling half the story is a form of fantasy, or an invitation to minimize the persistent shadows of American history, such as racism, economic exploitation, and environmental degradation. This runs the risk of making the suffering experienced in parallel with the positive seem normal and acceptable. By the book's end, though, the Fallows had won me over. They succeed in focusing on the positive without romanticizing it or ignoring the complicated and sometimes intractable social realities of the places they observe. For example, they cite historian Paul Starr in summarizing their perspective on the tension between democracy and economic inequality: "Democracy, [Starr] argues, finally depends on and is defined by the ability of political power to control strictly economic forces. Otherwise you're talking about a nationwide corporation, not a country."

I think of *Our Town* as a wonderful book for introducing students and community members—in high school civics courses, in "community engaged" courses at colleges, in local voluntary associations, in public leadership roles—to possibility and to a strong case that locates, explains, and validates the many small efforts in which they are involved. While partisanship and ideology matter, they are often peripheral to the solutions local communities pursue. As the Fallows observe, most communities that are losing population, emptying out and aging, welcome refugees and migrants, regardless of how they vote in national elections. Most communities are willing to take risks on bond issues that can finance public infrastructure—regardless of whether they are red or blue in national polls. Most community leaders, including those who run private companies, want to replace economies dependent on low-wage jobs with economies that provide a solid middle-class livelihood or better. Most recognize the importance of arts, crafts, and communal creativity as a lever for positive change. Most are pragmatic about histories of racism and oppression, and wish there were more accessible processes for remedying these legacies.

The book closes with a list of "10½ Signs of Civic Success" comprising a pattern common across the 29 or so places the Fallows describe at length. Many of these signs will be familiar to readers who work in place-making, community development, or civil society organizations. Community building, they argue, is not a recipe nor is it brought into being by doing certain things in a particular order. Community, the Fallows suggest, is a systems effect that people in particular places experience as the social, economic, educational, personal, and public dimensions of their lives come into closer alignment. All of the stories the Fallows tell are about successes that come after years-long heavy lifts by civic associations, local governments, educators, and leaders from the nonprofit and for-profit sectors.

*Our Town* is hopeful and sometimes inspiring, and it promises to be useful as a way to open up conversations with neighbors we might otherwise see as part of the problem, or not see at all. The greatest potential the Fallows point to, I think, is the power of what systems theorists call "connectivity," finding ways to link otherwise disconnected pieces of a system so that the sum of the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. "There are a lot of more positive narratives out there—but they're lonely and disconnected," they write in closing. "It would make a difference to join them together, as a chorus that has a melody."

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Keith Morton is Professor and Chair of Public and Community Service Studies, and Director of the Feinstein Institute for Public Service at Providence College. He has worked in the areas of community development, community service, and community theory for more than 30 years. His teaching, scholarship, and community work focus on how we learn from experience, on service and nonviolence as practices of community building, and on the historic and present meanings of community and service in people's lives. Much of his work is grounded in the Smith Hill neighborhood of Providence. He recently wrote

*Getting Out: Youth Gangs, Violence and Positive Change* (2019) published by the University of Massachusetts Press.



# EJOURNAL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

VOLUME 8 | ISSUE 3

## **Book Review: Teaching with Compassion: An Educator's Oath to Teach from the Heart, by Peter Kaufman and Janine Schipper**

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*Teaching with Compassion: An Educator's Oath to Teach from the Heart*, by Peter Kaufman and Janine Schipper. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. July 2018. ISBN: 978-1-4758-3655-4. 170 pages. Paperback: \$28.00.

This is not a conventional book review. I was good friends with one of the authors of the book, Peter Kaufman, until he passed away last November, a few months after the book's release. I try to provide an objective assessment of the book itself, but more than that, I offer some insight into Peter's life and commitment to the ideals embodied in those pages.

I have known hundreds if not thousands of educators in my lifetime, but it is no exaggeration to say that I have never known anyone more committed to the craft of teaching than Peter Kaufman. It absorbed him. As a professor of sociology at the State University of New York at New Paltz, he strived constantly to improve his own classes, but much of the rest of his professional and personal life was dedicated to the educational enterprise. He attended conferences on teaching, ran workshops on pedagogy, and served on the editorial board of *Teaching Sociology*. Increasingly, education became the center of his scholarship.

He lived this commitment to teaching literally until his death, using his disease and the mortal threat it posed as stimulation for some of his most profound sociological insights. He was prolific in his final months. Given the time he had left and the slow pace of academic publishing, he shunned traditional forums and instead dedicated himself to blogging and Twitter. He found the instantaneous nature of these outlets satisfying and essential given his condition. They also reflected his daring and willingness to make himself vulnerable. He acknowledged that some of the ideas he shared were undeveloped, but this was consistent with his philosophy of learning as a process. Knowledge is not simply established, disseminated, memorized, and repeated. Rather, ideas, half-baked or fully formed, are to be shared, reflected upon, and discussed, and through that exchange true learning takes place.

Peter's willingness to do this while enduring a terminal illness embodied the compassion he espoused. As a portent of his coming struggles, he wrote in *Teaching with Compassion*, "Indeed, adversity, rather than being an obstacle to finding a pathway to compassion, can be a valuable portal" (pp. 27-28). When faced with extreme adversity in the form of a fatal illness, Peter was not going to pass up this learning opportunity or ignore his ability to share with people perspectives that most have not engaged. His "microburst essays" posted on Twitter include a number of sociologically informed reflections on death and dying (and on life and living).

Even before his illness, he was a regular blogger for Norton's Everyday Sociology forum. One of his last blog posts, "A Sociology of My Death," written just two months before his passing, was shared thousands of times and was read around the world. Just weeks before he died, Peter gave a public interview in a packed auditorium on the SUNY New Paltz campus in which he reflected candidly on all that he was experiencing. He imparted wisdom derived from his experience, but he did not deny the anger and resentment that perhaps inevitably come with the randomness of disease and the prospect of an early death, especially for one who was a lifelong athlete and deeply committed to personal health. Peter was 51 when a genetically derived form of lung cancer took his life, having never once taken a puff of a cigarette or a drag from a joint.

Peter's blogs and tweets comprise a valuable archive of his thinking and are a testament to his commitment as an educator. Yet, he also published many articles on the subject of teaching, and *Teaching with Compassion* is the culmination of decades of reflection and research on how education is best carried out. Central to his conclusions is the idea that learning cannot take place, understanding cannot develop, and knowledge cannot be created without compassion.

Peter and his co-author, Janine Schipper, cite three foundations for the ideas put forth in the book: sociology, critical pedagogy, and Buddhism. They use a sociological perspective to analyze both the structural constraints imposed upon educators and the social conditions under which students live. They acknowledge that, presently, many state and federal policies tend to favor the rote memorization of material dictated in standardized tests and narrow assessment protocols. This presents significant institutional barriers to fully implementing the approach they advocate.

Sociology is also integral to their philosophy in that it allows educators to recognize the importance of the conditions under which students are living and learning. It provides a lens through which to view the world from the perspective of others, and thus better understand how they experience the classroom. This also feeds into the role of critical pedagogy, a teaching approach advocated by theorists such as Paulo Freire. In accordance with this approach, students are not to be seen as empty vessels into which teachers deposit knowledge—the “banking model” common under the standardized-test regimes that now characterize much public education. Critical pedagogy requires that educators recognize that students themselves have unique experiences and ideas to share, and that they must be active agents in knowledge creation and in their own education.

Buddhism is the third pillar upon which *Teaching with Compassion* rests. Buddhism came to play an increasingly large role in Peter’s evolution as a pedagogue. The authors cite a UNESCO study of education around the world which, in its quest to identify what universally characterizes effective teachers, found one common denominator: love. Threats, fear, competition, intimidation, and humiliation—the way many students experience contemporary education—are antithetical to the educational enterprise. Compassion, love, mutual support, and humility—these inspire an entirely different attitude and an openness to learning. According to the authors, they are the core requirements of effective education.

Born of these three elements, this pedagogical philosophy is shared throughout *Teaching with Compassion*, but the book is much more than an explication of learning theory. It is also full of practical lessons and exercises that allow the reader to see how theory is put into practice. Each chapter addresses central tenets of what the authors synthesize into the “Teaching with Compassion Oath.” Much like the Hippocratic Oath taken by medical doctors, Peter and his co-author recommend that educators have their own oath, one in which “the emotional, social, and intellectual well-being of students is [our] main priority and [our] actions as educator[s] shall reflect that goal.” Following an introductory chapter on the nature of compassion and what it means to teach with compassion, the eight chapters of the book elaborate on the eight elements of the oath.

Many of the principles included in the oath are not unfamiliar: Follow the Golden Rule, exercise humility, listen to others. These are practices with which educators are familiar and that they may even claim to embrace. But for most, critical self-reflection would reveal that they do not practice these ways as often as they could. The authors are honest about this and about their own personal struggles to consistently adhere to these principles.

At times, all educators succumb to the negative emotions—frustration, anger, defensiveness—that arise in the face of challenging situations in the classroom. The authors characterize this as suffering: “When we are angry a part of us suffers, and we look for relief from this suffering. Some find relief by blaming others for their suffering. Some seek relief by releasing their anger onto another” (p. 32). Needless to say, blaming students for their failure to learn is not optimal for advancing learning. When adopted as a general perspective, this can drive teachers to

embrace misguided conceptions of their role and the purpose of educational institutions as a whole. It can reinforce the idea that the education system is designed solely to impart skills for careers and to sort students into their respective roles based on innate capabilities. Within that framework, the job of educators is to train and test in order to identify those less capable and then channel them into jobs suited to their abilities. In this context, students who fail or who disrupt meticulously planned class lessons are the problem. Thus, teachers are doing a difficult job effectively when they weed out the failures and trouble makers.

This is a tempting, somewhat satisfying, and all too common perspective among educators at all levels. Peter was troubled by colleagues who complained about the problems with “students today,” often characterizing an entire generation based on a few frustrating anecdotes and using such experiences to justify becoming more demanding and rigid in the classroom. He wrote about this in an article he published on the toxic effects of denigrating students. Yet, the authors of *Teaching with Compassion* are not naïve about the constraints that educators face. Overcrowded classrooms, a lack of resources, high-stakes testing mandates, and underprepared students who endure problems in their home lives are all real challenges that can lead to frustration and steer educators toward conventional banking techniques or, worse, drive them away from the field of education altogether. Peter was close with many K-12 teachers, including his partner, Leigh, who have seen their roles transformed from educators into implementers of training centered on state-mandated tests. Many of the best teachers have been lost to this misguided trend.

The structural constraints imposed through educational institutions must be addressed at the policy level. Many teachers and even entire schools have resisted the confining mandates imposed by policymakers and elected officials. But even operating under these constraints does not require total surrender to the bank-and-test regimen. A compassionate approach still affords K-12 teachers an opportunity to nurture students even while carrying out mandated lesson plans. Also, most faculty at the college level still have a fair amount of latitude to utilize methods that can inspire students. Above all, *Teaching with Compassion* provides educators an opportunity to reflect on these issues, to consider their goals, and to think about what approach would best foster the educational outcomes they really value. One chapter, “Learn from Adversity,” describes a number of reflective exercises that re-conceptualize the challenges educators face and redirects frustration into compassion.

While some of the book includes Buddhist-inspired reflective practices for educators, other parts focus on classroom techniques. Given the principles of critical pedagogy, most of the techniques described in the book involve collaborative learning. For example, the second chapter, “Practice Beginner’s Mind,” is based upon the notion espoused by Freire that teachers can learn from their students. This perspective is fused with Buddhist philosophy. The authors quote the Zen Buddhist monk Shunryu Suzuki, who wrote, “In the beginner’s mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert’s mind there are few.” Educators teach best when they do not seek to dominate the minds of their students but instead open their own minds to the possibility of learning as a shared enterprise.

To demonstrate this point and to empower students in their own knowledge, the authors describe an exercise whereby students are asked to first list things they want to learn, then to list things they could teach others. These need not be related to the class material and can include anything from how to play guitar to learning a language or how to swim. These lists are shared, and students and, importantly, the instructor write their names under the topics they would like to learn. The exercise is designed to demonstrate that everyone is capable of being both a learner and a teacher, including the instructor for the class. It empowers students in their own knowledge

while helping to reignite the intellectual curiosity that is often extinguished over the course of years in an education system in which students are simply told what they must learn. It also provides a glimpse into the lives of students outside the classroom, a familiarity that the authors consider vital to the development of a learning community, one in which everyone embraces the “beginner’s mind” and opens themselves to learning.

The book includes several more reflection and classroom exercises that impart other elements of the Oath of Compassion. Each chapter ends with questions for further contemplation. None is designed to provide definitive answers but to provoke more questions and reflection in a spirit of compassion. In the Internet age of multitasking and instantaneous data, this book would be a success if readers simply used the opportunity to contemplate their role as educators, regardless of how it might change their teaching strategies. In all likelihood, though, it will shape its readers, the way they think, and the way they approach the classroom.

I began the book somewhat skeptically. I am wary of any hint of religious authority. (Peter always insisted that, for him at least, Buddhism was a philosophy, not a religion.) This skepticism was coupled by the fact that I teach in a public college that has witnessed years of funding cuts and an ever-growing assessment mandate that would seem to render new enlightened pedagogical approaches all but impossible. It is an ongoing struggle to simply maintain reasonable class sizes and to defend academic freedom. Taking several days worth of class time for students to simply get to know one another can appear unrealistic in this context.

I personally may not be willing to go as far as the authors suggest. Community-building exercises inevitably require that something be taken away, and I have not yet completely abandoned traditional notions of covering all the “core” content in a class. But the ideas in *Teaching with Compassion* challenge me. How much of that core material will students remember a few years or even a few months on? How is their learning experience affected if I do not even learn all of their names by the end of the semester? Would a focus on a more limited quantity of material take on deeper meaning and develop their knowledge more if it is considered among a community of learners who know and care for one another? If so, what is the balance that must be struck between taking the time to foster these sentiments and traditional expectations of what students are “supposed” to derive from a class?

These are questions I have not yet answered for myself, and while not entirely new to me, *Teaching with Compassion* has provided new angles for me to think deeply about these issues. At the same time, it offers practical guidance for how to enact compassionate teaching in the classroom and exercises with which one can experiment. Educators would be wise to try some of the exercises included in the book to see for themselves what effect it can have on their classrooms. Certainly all teachers could benefit from reflecting on the basic values the authors espouse and thinking about how they can better demonstrate compassion for their students and others.

In conclusion, I will describe one of my favorite exercises included in the book. Noting that much emphasis is placed on how people differ and the divisions and boundaries this can create, the authors developed “The Similarities Project,” an exercise that instead asks students to consider what they have in common. In an iterative process, students in groups of two are asked to come up with a list of 10 things that they have in common. This can include anything from being students to liking pizza or using social media. Then each pair joins with another, and there they collectively identify what all four found in common and then go on to identify 10 more things. This group then joins with the next and carries out the same process until the entire class is brought together to reflect on the many things that unite them. In an age of extreme division, taking the time to recognize our common humanity is invaluable, and the effect can be transformative.

The authors provide an example of the long list of commonalities that can be generated through this exercise. The last item on the list hit me hard: “We will all eventually die.” Peter Kaufman’s death came too early, but not so soon that he did not have time to share some valuable wisdom. It was a privilege to be his colleague and his friend. The thousands of students who had him as a teacher or who read his work are similarly fortunate. With the publication of *Teaching with Compassion* there is the potential for thousands if not millions more to benefit from Peter’s legacy.



### Author



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