



Sustaining and Building Upon Community-Campus Partnerships

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Community Connections: Partners for Learning and Service Program
Medical University of South Carolina

Sarena D. Seifer
sarena@u.washington.edu
www.ccph.info



Our goals this morning

- Examine the principles and characteristics of successful community-campus partnerships
- Explore diverse community-campus partnerships within the Community Connections program
- Discuss and envision the future of community-campus partnerships within the Community Connections program and strategies for realizing that vision



Community-Campus Partnerships: Why Now?

Communities face complex challenges and need to draw on all institutions as assets

Public expectations of accountability and value, corporate citizenship, graduates

Gap between research and practice, teaching and practice

Disengagement in civic participation and democracy



Definition: Service-Learning

“Service-learning is a structured learning experience that combines community service with preparation and reflection. Students engaged in service-learning provide community service in response to community-identified concerns and learn about the context in which service is provided, the connection between their service and their academic coursework, and their roles as citizens.”

Seifer 1998



Definition:

Community-Based Participatory Research

“A collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings. CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community, has the aim of combining knowledge with action and achieving social change to improve health outcomes and eliminate health disparities.”

WK Kellogg Foundation Community Health Scholars Program



Principles of Partnership

- Partners have agreed upon mission, values, goals and measurable outcomes for the partnership
- The relationship between partners is characterized by mutual trust, respect, genuineness, and commitment
- The partnership builds upon identified strengths and assets, and addresses needs
- Power is balanced among partners and resources are shared

<http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/principles.html#principles>



Principles of Partnership

- There is clear, open and accessible communication between partners
- Roles, norms and processes for the partnership are established with the input and agreement of all partners
- There is feedback to, among and from all stakeholders in the partnerships
- Partners share the credit for accomplishments
- Partnerships take time to develop and evolve



Characteristics of Successful Partnerships

- Trusting relationships
- Equitable processes and procedures
- Diverse partners
- Leadership
- All partners benefit
- Supportive reward structures
- Science enhanced by community involvement
- Balancing process and action
- Ongoing partner development
- Sustainable impact
- Collaborative dissemination
- Ongoing assessment, improvement and celebration

Examining Community-Institutional Partnerships for Prevention Research. Report of Findings and Recommendations. Seattle: Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, 2004.



Findings: Community-Campus Partnerships

Stronger relationships associated with:

- joint planning
- partners offered specific and active roles
- genuine sense of reciprocity
- student preparation and orientation
- single point of contact
- consistent, accessible communication

*Gelmon SG et al Health Professions Schools in Service to the Nation
Program Final Evaluation Report*



Group Discussion

- How would you describe your partnership?
 - Who is involved?
 - How was the relationship initiated?
 - Do the principles and characteristics of partnership apply, and how?
- How do you define a successful community-campus partnership?
- What have been the benefits of these partnerships to the community? to students? to you as a faculty member?
- What challenges have arisen?
 - How have you addressed them?



Community Connections Impact & Outcomes

- Student knowledge, skills & attitudes
- Access to health and social services
- Improved health outcomes
- Community capacity building
- Community partner satisfaction
- Faculty satisfaction
- Faculty new directions in scholarship
- Dissemination in academic community
- Campus dialogue initiated



Findings: Institutional Capacity

Clear definition of service-learning
Link to mission and strategic goals
Supportive leadership at all levels
Effective institutional structures and policy
Investment in faculty development
Integration of SL into existing courses
Long-term community relationships
Ongoing assessment and improvement

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Where are partnerships going in next 10 years?

- More coordinated & strategic, linking SL, CBPR, broad-based coalitions, etc.
- Inter-disciplinary & inter-professional
- CBOs as centers of learning, discovery & engagement
- CBO-initiated partnerships
- Multi-CBOs & multi-institutional partnerships
- Partnership intermediary organizations
- Partnerships as a global phenomenon



Critical issues for sustainability

- Document & disseminate outcomes
- Balance coordinating & linking efforts with entrepreneurial spirit
- Find & pursue connections between the dots
- Supportive policies at multiple levels
- Communities and campuses view as mission critical
- Address key underlying power issues
- Infrastructure support
- Engage funding agencies



Group Discussion

- What are the opportunities to build upon your partnership, within and across partnerships?
 - Expanding to new sites
 - Becoming interdisciplinary
 - Incorporating CBPR
 - Funding
 - Capacity building among community partners
 - Convening community partner committee