

Building Effective Community- Campus Partnerships

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Confusing Terms?

- Community Engagement
- Civic Engagement
- Community-based research
- Public Service
- Outreach
- Service
- Service-learning
- Community-based learning

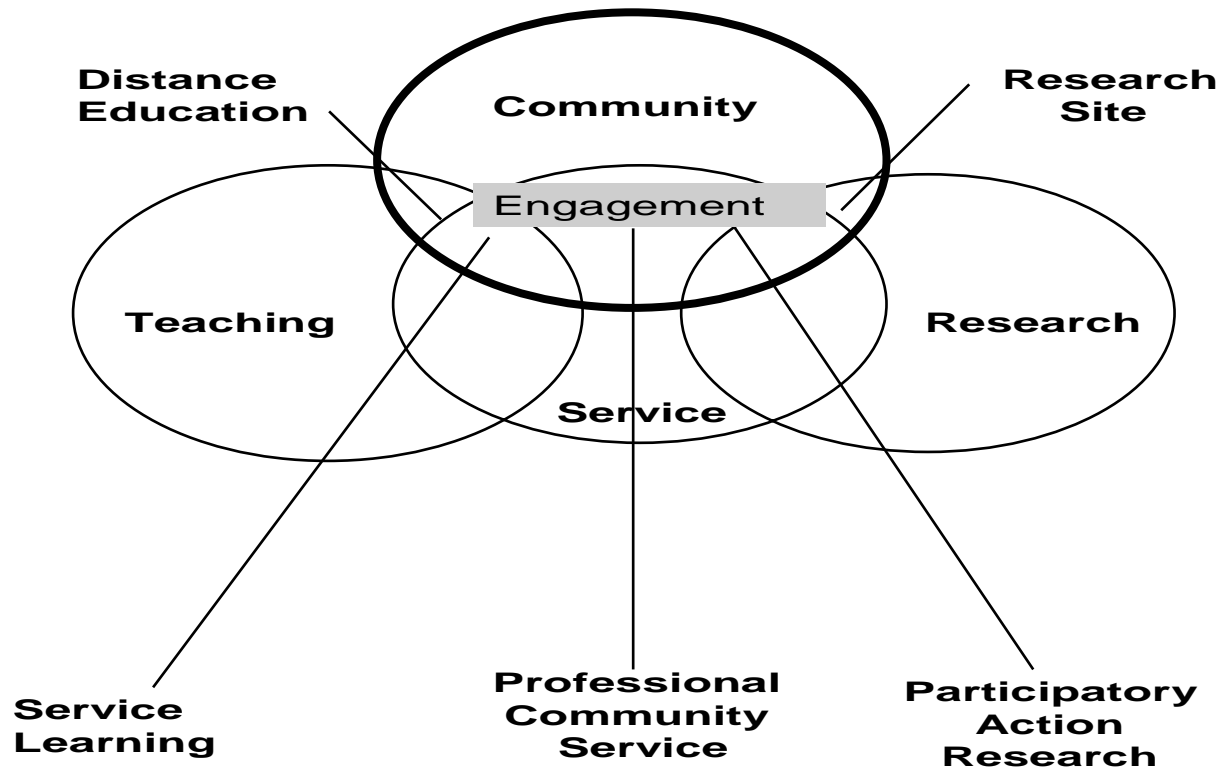
Community Engagement

Community engagement refers to the many ways an academic institution demonstrates the alignment of the teaching and research agenda of the university with community-identified interests (local, state, national, international). The work of engagement is reliant upon and distinguished by mutually-beneficial **partnerships**.

Carnegie Definition

- Community Engagement describes the collaboration between higher education institutions 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. (Carnegie Classification Project, 2005)

Engagement of Faculty Work In and With the Community



Motivation, Reputation, and Opportunity

- Incorporation of engagement into regional accreditation processes
- Federal research funding criteria
- Potential for state support (e.g., VA, KY)
- Introduction into classifications/rankings-Carnegie and US News & World Report
- International commitment to engagement
- Evidence of impact on student outcomes
- Need to demonstrate higher ed's role in public good

Academic Motivations and Benefits

- Enhance student learning; academic, social, civic
- Increase local student enrollment
- Increase relevance of programs & services
- Enrich research agenda
- Transfer knowledge
- Attract new resources for campus & community
- Link campus and community in common purpose
- Build public understanding of role of education in building “public good”

Who/What is community?

“Community” is defined by the focus, subject, goal of the proposed activity that will shape the partnership. Engaged partnerships represent an alignment of the academic strengths and goals of the institution with relevant strengths and goals of external partners where there is potential for beneficial exchange of knowledge and mutual learning.

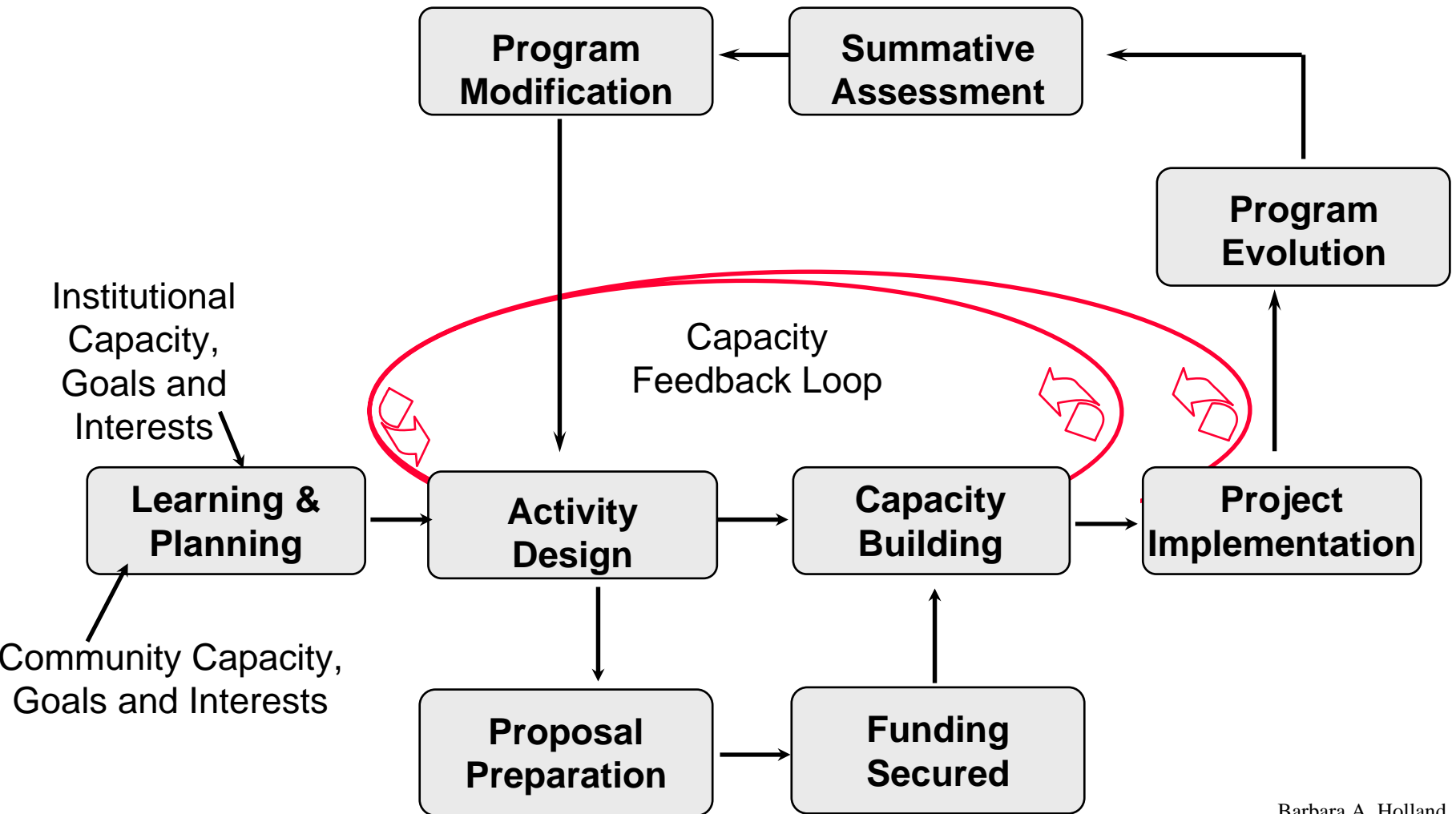
Characteristics of Effective Partnerships

- Joint exploration of goals and interests
- Creation of a mutually rewarding agenda
- Emphasis on positive consequences for each partner
- Identification of opportunities for early successes
- Focus on **knowledge exchange, shared learning, and capacity-building**
- Attention to communication
- Commitment to continuous evaluation of the partnership itself, as well as outcomes
- Celebration

CCPH Partnership Principles

- Mission, values, goals, outcomes
- Trust, respect, commitment
- Focus: strengths, assets, areas for improvement
- Balanced power, shared resources
- Clear, open communication
- Roles, norms, processes (mutually designed)
- Feedback for continuous improvement
- Shared credit for accomplishments
- Investment of time needed to develop and evolve

University/Community Partnerships



Learning is the Connection

- Learning:
 - About each other's capacity
 - About each other's goals and expectations
 - To enhance student learning
 - To exchange expertise
 - To share control and direction
 - Through evaluation and documentation
 - To experiment; to fail; to try again – To Trust!

It's the Relationship!

“If you're just going to do an event, and another event and a project, a project, a project it doesn't feel like you're connecting the dots. You're not growing anything. I think you only get sustainability when you're building relationships and there's a certain humanity to the whole thing.”

Partnership Types

- Service relationship – fixed time, fixed task
- Exchange relationship – exchange info for mutual benefit, specific project
- Cooperative relationship – joint planning and shared responsibilities, long-term, multiple projects
- System and Transformative relationship – shared decision-making/operations/evaluation intended to transform each organization

Integrating Community into Research

- Community-based research presents opportunities to move from research “on” community to research “with” partners with intent of mutual learning and benefit
- Some questions may best be addressed by using methods of community-based participatory research (CBPR)
- Recognize and involve community partners and residents as “knowers” not subjects

Partnerships Can Enhance Research Quality

- Lived community experience blended with academic expertise
- Objectivity enhanced by exploration of diverse interpretations and explanations
- Builds trust and confidence in researcher intentions; improves data depth and quality
- Sense-making of data as well as formal analysis
- Increases likelihood that research will be useful to community as well as academia

(Jordan, Gust, and Scheman, 2005)

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

□ Better science

Community Contribution

University Contribution

Community strengths

1. Access to data and populations
2. Practice-oriented questions
3. Knowledge of community populations
4. Knowledge of local processes

Institute return on investment /value added

1. Better quality and availability of data
2. Better questions, reflecting science and practice
3. Better methods, better applied to specific populations
4. Integration of science with practice, making science more useful, practice more effective

University strengths

1. Technical capacity to manage data
2. Theory-oriented questions
3. Knowledge of research design, data analysis
4. Knowledge of global practices, theories, literatures

Recent Research on Community-Campus Partnerships

What do experienced community partners think about partnerships with higher education institutions?

- 1) Identify community partner perspectives regarding the characteristics of effective partnerships; and
- 2) Document community motivations, benefits and impacts of partnering with higher education institutions.

Community Voices Across California

- **8 diverse higher education campuses that are members of California Campus Compact**
- **99 established or “nurturing stage”* Community partners selected from current partnerships**
- **Large, highly controlled focus group study on partner perspectives; used community-based research strategies in analysis**

*Dorado, S. & Giles, D.E. (2004). Service-learning partnerships: Paths of engagement. *Michigan journal of community service learning*. Fall, 25-37.

How do partners describe effective partnership characteristics?

- Convergence in content with lists created by higher education (Holland, 2005)
- The language used to describe characteristics is different. Bacon, (2002) writes that “differences in language may reveal underlying differences in the group’s values, goals, or beliefs.” (p. 35)

Bacon, N. (2002). Differences in faculty and community partners’ theories of learning. *Michigan journal of service-learning*. Fall, 34-44.

Holland, B (2005). Reflections on Community-Campus Partnerships: What has been learned? What are the next challenges? In P. Pasque et al (Eds.) *Higher Education Collaboratives for Community Engagement & Improvement*. (pp. 10-17). Ann Arbor: National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good

Comparison List of Characteristics

Community Partners

1. Relationships are Foundational
2. Communication
3. Understanding one another's organizations (Mutual goals)
4. Planning, training, orientation, preparation
5. Shared leadership, accountability
6. Access to and support of higher education
7. Constant evaluation and reflection.
8. Focus on students, placement fit

Higher Education

1. Explore and expand separate and common goals and interests
2. Understand capacity, resources and expectations of all partners
3. Evidence of mutual benefit through careful planning and shared benefit
4. For partnerships to be sustained, the relationship itself is the partnership activity
5. Shared control of directions
6. Continuous assessment of partnership process and outcomes

(adapted from Holland, 2005, in Higher Education Collaborations or Community Engagement and Improvement)

Partner Motivations

- “Our common ground is a profound commitment to students”
 - Academic learning goals
 - Community issues and connections
 - Non-profit sector
 - Policy and stakeholders
 - Develop an activist spirit
- Deep understanding of institution’s goals
- Value the relationship

Partner Benefits

- Client outcomes improve through interactions with students and faculty
- Enhanced organizational capacity
- Personal and staff learning
- Access to expertise
- Leverage resources
- Identify future employees and volunteers
- Build new networks and social capital

Partner Ideas for Improvement

- **Partnerships are personal relationships**
- **Faculty must be directly involved**
- **Partners want direct involvement in planning and goal-setting**
- **Offer recognition and celebration of our role**
- **Concern about “fairness”...who gets to be a partner – how are choices made?**
- **Tracking hours is seen as meaningless**
- **Partners want involvement in evaluation and feedback**
- **Academic calendar is a challenge!**

Structural Implications for Higher Education Practice

More help is needed in providing equitable access to higher education and helping partners navigate the system, particularly since opportunities are often decentralized. They would like universities to provide additional communication infrastructure to help them gain greater access.

- *“Partnerships need a face and a heart. The university is a huge, complex and in some cases self-invested system. It has a lot of old dragons in it and it has some wonderful bright stars in it. But the face and the heart help us to navigate that.”*

-- Community Partner

More Structural Implications

Are partnership or engagement offices a help or are they gatekeepers?

- Infrastructure is important for NEW partners
- Advanced partners may see office as a way to screen off faculty. These partners take their role seriously and seek opportunities for co-planning

Seeking to Build a Commons

1. Value relationships.

2. Hold conversations regularly about partnership process and outcomes.

Convene partners. Celebrate.

3. Involve Faculty Directly!!!! Joint planning, share syllabi, face-to-face pre-semester meetings and orientations for professors

4. Consider ways the academic institution can help build social capital. Design group projects/larger scale community projects; focus on issues

5. Balance relationships and fairness and access through campus infrastructure

6. Develop other accountability options in place of tracking hours.

New Possibilities through Conversation

Drink more coffee!

“This is the beginning of community-building and making things change in our community. Unless there is a growing body of people vested in that idea, we’re not going anywhere. Maybe when they get that job in marketing they’ll use a little bit of their time and talent to make this a better place to live in. That is, for me, what I want them to come away with. It is real hard to get there in a short period of time, but we hope the students will come away with something immediate, and a longer-term goal is that the community will become a better place.”

“Partnerships, at any level, have to be seen first and foremost as moral frames within which individuals meet, work, and establish common purposes, not as pragmatic political treaties.”

Hugh Sockett, 1998

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