

Community partnerships have always been a part of higher education. Most, if not all, higher education administrators can point to numerous community-engaged projects and initiatives on their campuses. However, despite their long-standing presence in higher education, community engagement activities have held only marginal status within the academy. In many cases, higher education institutions do not have an intentional community engagement agenda; rather, the presence of community engagement is the result of specific projects championed by individual personnel or initiatives promoted by particular campus units.

Additionally, community-engaged work may be viewed to have limited relevance for the broader institution because it is highly associated with the work of specific disciplines (for example, professional degree programmes), personnel with certain titles or responsibilities (for example, 'professors of the practice' or clinical faculty) or in-the-moment situations (for example, mobilizing institutional resources to assist restoration efforts following a local natural disaster) (O'Meara et al., 2005; Marrero et al., 2013). And while individual community engagement projects and activities can endure for years on a campus and in essence become sustained practices that receive ongoing institutional support, such efforts do not always reach the stricter threshold of institutionalization. The institutionalization of community engagement requires an intentional agenda for more deeply embedding the work into the institution's academic culture and everyday practice.

Unlike more marginalized practices that are episodic, isolated, at risk and lack status, institutionalized practices are widespread, legitimized, expected, supported and resilient to changes at the institution (Kramer, 2000). The concept of institutionalization goes beyond the notion of programme sustainability to suggest a deeper acceptance and valuing of a practice across the institution. Tenure, publishing, awarding of academic credit for courses, and lecturing are just some of the practices in higher education that can

be considered institutionalized. Albeit not without controversy, they enjoy widespread adoption, are legitimized by the institutional power structures, are expected practices that are widely supported by key stakeholders and remain relatively unchanged despite shifts in institutional leadership, funding and focus. Institutionalized practices are the default practices to which institutions revert when innovations and other new initiatives fail (Trowler, 2008). For community engagement to move from the margins to become a fully institutionalized practice, it needs to find deep grounding within the institutional culture and operational values structure (Lazarus et al., 2008; Sandmann, 2008).

Studies of higher education have identified a set of components that, when fully in place, further the institutionalization of community engagement on campuses. These institutionalization components are organized within five dimensions: philosophy and mission, faculty involvement and support, student involvement and support, community partnerships and institutional support (Table IV.6.3.1).

Through the operationalization of these components, the institutionalization of community engagement moves through three stages of development (*critical mass-building, quality-building and sustained institutionalization*), each of which is estimated to occur over a five-to seven-year period (Bell et al., 2000). While these components are universal in their application to community-engaged work, the ways in which each is operationalized at an institution will be influenced a campus's unique and idiosyncratic culture (Kezar and Eckel, 2002). Study findings suggest that it takes 15–20 years to progress through these three stages and to achieve the full institutionalization of community engagement (Letven et al., 2001; Sandmann et al., 2009; Furco, 2010).

For the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, in the USA, it has been a 13-year strategic and concerted effort to advance and institutionalize community engagement that has moved the institution into the *sustained institutionalization* phase of its community engagement agenda. With over 50,000

graduate and undergraduate students enrolled across 17 schools and colleges and over 300 academic programmes, this comprehensive, public research university is a good example of how a strategic focus on implementing the institutionalization components presented in Table IV.6.3.1 has helped to advanced community engagement across the three stages of development, moving it away from the margins and closer into the mainstream.

While this over 150-year-old university has had a long tradition of supporting and conducting community-partnered work, the community engagement efforts had become somewhat marginalized over the years as the university's research profile grew substantially. In 2001, the university launched a campaign to transform it in ways that would reinvigorate the institution's public engagement mission (*institutionalization components 2 and 3*). This campaign focused on instituting a contemporary approach to public and community engagement that would: (1) focus on making community engagement as integral to research and teaching as it was to the university's public service/outreach mission; (2) be integrated more intentionally and fully with academic programming; (3) become part of everyone's work, not just the work of those who work in traditional outreach units and programmes; (4) emphasize mutually beneficial partnerships acknowledging the assets and knowledge in the community; (5) focus on working 'with' the community and not just doing 'to', 'for' or 'in' the community; and (6) move from supporting discrete, independent, time-limited projects to supporting multifaceted, interdisciplinary 'partnerships' addressing grand challenges and broad societal issues (for example, poverty, health, education, and so on) (*institutionalization components 6, 10, 14 and 15*).

Over the next few years, this 21st-century approach to 'public engagement' would be discussed and vetted across the campus, with the goal of securing input and buy-in from as broad-based a constituency as possible (*components 7, 11, 15, 20 and 21*). In 2002, a campus-wide Council on Public Engage-

TABLE IV.6.3.1

Dimensions and components that promote the institutionalization of community engagement in higher education

Dimension	Components
Philosophy and mission	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clear definitions and purposes for community-engaged work 2. A long-term vision and strategic plan for community engagement 3. Direct ties to the institutional mission 4. Seen as a strategy (rather than a 'programme') to accomplish institutional goals
Faculty involvement and support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Clarity and awareness among faculty regarding the principles of engaged scholarship 6. Faculty involvement in engaged teaching and research 7. Influential, well-respected faculty members who champion community-engaged teaching and research 8. Faculty incentives and rewards that support and recognize high-quality community-engaged work (for example, promotion, tenure and so on)
Student involvement and support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Institution-wide mechanisms that promote student awareness of community engagement opportunities 10. Availability of community engagement opportunities for students from across the institution 11. Encouragement of students to serve as advocates and ambassadors for institutionalizing community engagement at the institution 12. Formal mechanisms (for example, catalogued lists of service-learning courses, transcript notations, and so on) that encourage and reward students to participate in community engagement
Community partnerships	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Community awareness of the institution's goals for community engagement and the full range of engagement opportunities at the institution 14. Mutual understanding between community circles and the institution regarding the goals, purposes, promise and limitations of the institution's engagement work 15. Community agency representatives are welcomed and encouraged to serve as leaders, advocates and ambassadors for institutionalizing community engagement at the institution
Institutional support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. The presence of a coordinating unit that assists various constituencies in engagement programming and institutionalization efforts 17. A unit that makes institutional policies supporting the advancement of community engagement 18. The institution houses and funds an appropriate number of permanent staff and/or faculty members with appropriate titles who understand community engagement 19. Community-engaged work supported primarily by hard dollars from the institution 20. Explicit and implicit support for institutionalizing community engagement provided by administrators and other campus leaders 21. Academic departments (faculties) value and fund community engagement opportunities as part of the core academic programme 22. Ongoing, systematic effort in place to account for the number, quality and impact of community-engaged activities

ment was established (*component 17*), and in 2004, a formal university-wide definition for public engagement was adopted (*component 1*).¹ In 2006, a university-wide Office for Public Engagement was established to provide senior leadership (through an Associate Vice-president for Public Engagement) on policy issues concerning the aforementioned goals and the work to secure the university's status as fully engaged.

At the time, the university had in operation over one thousand community partnership activities that were organized and implemented through more than 200 units, offices and centres within and across collegiate units

(*components 16, 18 and 19*). What the university lacked was a strategic plan and key initiatives to harness and systematize the university's broad-based engagement programming.

In 2007, the university revised its promotion and tenure guidelines to support faculty engaged scholarship (*components 8 and 20*). And in 2008, the Office for Public Engagement developed a Ten-Point Plan for Advancing and Institutionalizing Public Engagement (*components 2 and 4*). This plan sought to enhance the university's capacity to conduct high-quality community engagement in ways that would ensure the success of the university's public engagement campaign (goals mentioned

above). Intentionally designed to advance many of the institutionalization components identified in Table IV.6.3.1, the Ten-Point Plan focuses on: (1) enhancing the scholarly value of community engagement; (2) strengthening the university's capacity to measure the scale, scope and impact of its engagement work; (3) building systems that provide more articulated and advanced opportunities for students' community engagement; (4) securing mutually beneficial, reciprocal partnerships with participating community members; (5) cultivating the leadership and capacity of the professionals on campus who lead engaged programmes and units; (6) raising the visibility and value of community-engaged activities; (7) securing better internal alignment of the many engagement initiatives; (8) integrating public and community engagement practices into key university-wide priorities (for example, internationalizing the curriculum, enhancing interdisciplinary research, and so on); (9) connecting with and learning from national and international community engagement-focused associations and networks; and (10) leveraging available extramural support, resources and funding for community engagement initiatives. Since its inception, the plan has served as a road map for making strategic investments in the institutional structures, activities and support mechanisms that can best ensure the fulfillment of the university's public engagement goals.

This strategic approach to advancing community-engaged work has begun to pay off. The institutionalization work that has grown out of the early engagement work and the Ten-Point Plan has helped to:

- increase the number of faculty at the university who conduct community-engaged scholarship (*component 6*);
- further embed community engagement practices into the academic programmes of 21 academic units that have been designated as 'engaged departments' (*component 21*);
- strengthen the institution's capacity to measure the scope and impacts of the university's community engagement practices (*component 22*);
- move the institution from a focus on community-based 'projects' to community 'partnerships' (*component 13*);

- cultivate engagement efforts that both honour the knowledge within the community and focus on working 'with' community rather than doing 'to' or working 'in' the community (*components 14 and 15*);
- raise the visibility and strengthen the scholarly legitimacy of public and community engagement across the institution (*components 5 and 19*).

Today, more faculty members than ever are reporting their community-engaged research and community-engaged teaching work in their scholarly portfolios. The university now awards the President's Award for Community-Engaged Scholarship, which goes to one faculty member whose body of work exemplifies the principles of community-engaged scholarship. The number of undergraduate and graduate students involved in community-engaged experiences continues to grow. Student demand for community-engaged experiences continues to rise. The University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, was one of only a handful of research universities in the USA to receive the Carnegie Community Engagement Designation in 2006 (an elective classification given by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching). And in 2011, the university received its largest single-institution research grant in the history of the university (\$51 million); this was a grant from the US National Institutes of Health to increase community involvement in the research process and the efficiency and speed with which the results of clinical trials translate into new treatments, cures and improved health outcomes. Among the reasons the research grant was awarded was the university's strategic and deep commitment to reciprocal community partners that advance the university's capacity to conduct rigorous scientific research of significance that provides tangible benefits to society.

This grant and all of the aforementioned accomplishments have helped to further spread community-engaged work across the institution. They have deepened the legitimization of high-quality community-engaged scholarship as a scholarly pursuit. They have helped community engagement to become an expectation in various collegiate units (for example, the College of Food, Agriculture

and National Resources Sciences, in which the entire undergraduate curriculum is being redesigned to embed experiential, community-based and interdisciplinary learning opportunities across all departments). In assessing the current status of community engagement at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, many of the elements (for example, widespread, legitimized, expected, supported and resilient) that characterize true institutionalization are now present.

While much progress has been made at the university in advancing community engagement along the institutionalization continuum, there are still issues that need to be addressed. Within some academic units, junior faculty members remain unsure of whether their community-engaged scholarship will be accepted by their influential peers. The quality of community-engaged courses (for example, service-learning, internships, and so on) offered across the institution is uneven, and the standards of quality need to be more fully and broadly understood and practised. The large, decentralized and entrepreneurial nature of the campus sparks many new community engagement efforts and initiatives, but this sometimes occurs at the expense of community members' capacities. The institution continues to work to find the right balance between expanding engagement opportunities while simultaneously strengthening the internal alignment and efficiencies of the existing engagement work. Finally, measurement of the impacts of community engagement on students, faculty, the institution and the community continues to be elusive given the many potential outcomes that might be measured. The university has made a concerted effort to develop a campus-wide public engagement metric framework that prioritizes engagement metrics according to broader university goals and priorities. But the operationalization of this engagement metrics framework remains slow to develop as broad institutional buy-in and support for the priorities still need to be garnered.

As the university approaches its 14th year of concentrated work to advance the public engagement agenda, it is taking stock of how best to sustain the energy and enthusiasm for a further advancement of community-engaged

work. Reform fatigue is legendary in higher education; indeed, too few educational reform efforts have had staying power (Levine, 1980; Curry, 1992). In looking to the future, the key issue for the campus will be to stay the course in its commitment to further the institutionalization of public engagement. Success will lie in the university's focus on promoting public engagement as an important 'strategy' to accomplish broad institutional goals (for example, doing more interdisciplinary work, improving student learning and on-time graduation, internationalizing the curriculum, deepening the societal impact of faculty research, improving town-gown relationships, and so on).

Ultimately, the goal is *not* to do community engagement, but rather to use community engagement as one valued vehicle to advance institutional priorities. As the institution continues to evolve and the institutional priorities shift over time, the goals of and purposes for community engagement will need to be adjusted accordingly. Given the strong foundation for public engagement that the university has built over recent years, there is much hope and continued enthusiasm across the institution that community-engaged research, teaching and outreach will continue grow and thrive as the University of Minnesota enters its next phase of work.

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NOTE

- 1 At the University of Minnesota, public engagement is 'the partnership of 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.'

IV.6.4

Networks on community–university engagement in North America

Canadian Alliance for Community Service-Learning (CACSL)

SECRETARIAT: Ottawa (Canada).

INSTITUTION: n/a.

WEBSITE: <http://www.communityservicelearning.ca/en/> (accessed 6 March 2013).

MEMBERS: 35 (2010/2011 financially supporting members).

CACSL is a national alliance established to support the active participation of students, educators and communities in community service-learning (CSL) by providing resources and support to CSL practitioners in the post-secondary and non-profit sectors supporting local, regional, national and international networks of individuals and organizations involved in CSL practice and research; investigating, celebrating, promoting and strengthening promising community-centered CSL practices that contribute to positive social change; advocating for CSL in Canadian post-secondary institutions as a complement to existing teaching, learning and research; and advocating for the integration of CSL into planning and practices within organizations in Canada's non-profit sector, as a complement to their own existing strategies to educate on social issues, implement programmes and manage resources (text taken from http://www.communityservicelearning.ca/en/about_vision.htm [accessed 6 March 2013]).

Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service

SECRETARIAT: Medford, MA (USA).

INSTITUTION: Tufts University.

WEBSITE: <http://activecitizen.tufts.edu/> (accessed 2 October 2013).

MEMBERS: n/a.

The Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service is a national leader in civic education, whose model and research are setting the standard for higher education's role in civic engagement. Serving every student at Tufts University, Tisch College prepares young people to be lifelong active citizens and creates an enduring culture of active citizenship.

The Tisch College Model is that Tisch College is a catalyst for active citizenship at Tufts and is the only university-wide programme of its kind. By continuously developing and introducing new active citizenship programming in collaboration with Tufts schools, departments and student groups, Tisch College builds a culture of active citizenship throughout the university. This entrepreneurial approach grows the university's capacity for engagement, and allows the college to reach every student at all of Tufts' schools.