

Engaged with Carnegie: Effects of Carnegie Classification Recognition on CUMU Universities

Deborah Elwell Arfken and Susan Ritz

Abstract

This paper provides the results of a survey sent to all thirty-two CUMU institutions that have received the Carnegie recognition and specifically examines a) reasons for applying for the elective classification; b) level of pride instilled in campuses; and c) level of impact on institutional identity and culture, institutional commitment, curricular engagement, and outreach and partnerships.

Introduction

The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education has a long-established research program and an equally long interest in classifying institutions of higher education to reflect the undergraduate instructional program and the graduate scope of research. However, that model began to change after World War II and accelerated during the 1960s as normal schools and private institutions in urban and metropolitan areas evolved. In his study of the emerging metropolitan university, Lynton states, “The traditional model of the university had been forced to fit into one of only two widely recognized categories: either that of an undergraduate teaching institution or that of a research university” (Lynton 1995, xii). It was obvious to him that institutions were evolving which did not fit into those categorical boxes and further recognized the “need for more faculty to apply their professional expertise and experience to issues and problems in the public as well as the private sector. . .” (xix–xx). Early in the new twenty-first century, the Carnegie Foundation re-examined its traditional classification system. Concerned that it might not be capturing new identities for institutions whose missions included extensive professional outreach activities and applied research, it began a three-pronged study to capture data about community engagement not represented in the national data. According to Driscoll, the first phase “consisted of consultation with national leaders and a review of the current literature on community engagement” (2008, 39). The study moved to a review of ways to document the engagement, followed by the last phase of a “pilot study with fourteen institutions that had been identified as significantly engaged with their communities” (Driscoll 2008, 39). After tweaking the framework, the Carnegie Foundation formally announced the addition of an elective category of community engagement with two sections: curricular engagement and outreach and partnerships (Driscoll 2008, 39). “The creation of the elective classification sent a clear message that public engagement is neither a passing fad nor unique to a particular college or university. Rather it is highly valued and worthy of recognition in higher education,” as Beere, Votruba, and Wells state in *Becoming an Engaged Campus* (2011, 25).

In the first round of applications in 2006, 145 institutions of higher education in the United States asked to be considered for the recognition. Of these 107 were accepted, but only eighty-nine actually completed the application process. The process was formidable: there was a document-reporting form with three parts. The first part, foundational indicators, asked about the institution's identity and culture, particularly as it related to commitment to community engagement. Through these questions, the foundation urged applicants to determine whether community engagement was "institutionalized." If applicants did not feel they could adequately address this section, they were encouraged to build their engagement identity and apply at a later date. If institutional identity was clear, applicants were to proceed. In the second part, the form asked for documentation about curricular engagement and outreach and partnerships. The last part of the form provided space for "wrap-up" or additional justifications. Accompanying the form was an extensive grid for describing representative partnerships and the community impact of them. Seventy-six institutions received recognition in the first round, with sixty-two of them gaining recognition for both outreach and partnerships for a five-year period. Of the eighty-nine institutions that completed the form, 85 percent gained a level of recognition.

The application process was repeated in 2008 and 2010. Information for the next round will be available in January 2013 for the 2015 recognition. Because many institutions will need to reapply to hold the elective classification, and some institutions may seek to attain initial recognition, it is prudent to pose key questions about the value of it and the impact on the institution and its partners.

Methodology

The authors identified thirty-two universities belonging to the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU) as of July 2012 that received Carnegie recognition as a community-engaged institution in 2006, 2008, or 2010. The authors sent a seventeen-item online survey to the presidents or chancellors of these institutions. The instrument was divided into five sections, asking for responses to questions about the institution; reasons for applying for the Carnegie elective classification; and impact of the Carnegie recognition on their institutional identity and culture, institutional commitment, curricular engagement, and outreach and partnerships. The latter four sections were modeled after the Carnegie elective classification application. In these sections, respondents were asked to indicate whether they *added/developed* a new component, *enhanced/increased* a component already in place, or if they *had not applied* the component since their university gained recognition. Finally, the survey asked respondents whether the classification instilled a sense of pride at their university. The voices of the presidents/chancellors lend perspective to the importance of receiving the elective classification.

Results

Twenty-one public and two private universities, most of them from the Southeast, Northeast, and Midwest, responded to the survey (71.9 percent response rate).

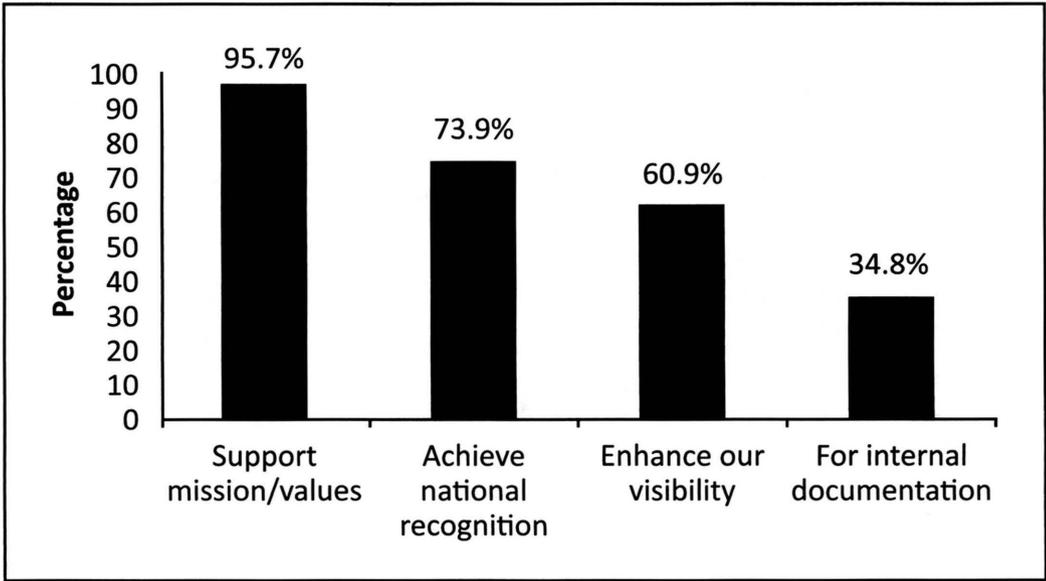
Predominantly, these responses represent large institutions of more than 12,000 students (73.9 percent) and most were doctoral-level universities (91.3 percent).

Date of Carnegie Classification, Categories of Classification, and Plans for Renewal

The Carnegie Foundation conducted a pilot study in 2006 for a limited number of institutions whose endeavors indicated they were well engaged with the community. Our study showed that 47.8 percent of the CUMU universities who responded to our survey gained the community-engaged classification in 2006. The 2008 round, which gained considerable publicity from the earlier granting of the elective classification, attracted another large number of applicants. Our survey indicates that 30.4 percent of the CUMU respondents were granted classification in this year. The most recent opportunity to gain the elective classification occurred in 2010. By this time, 78 percent of the CUMU institutions in our study had already received the status. In 2010, another 21.7 percent of the CUMU institutions gained the recognition. Surprisingly, most of the CUMU institutions that received recognition (82.6 percent) did so in both categories: curricular engagement and outreach and partnerships.

Further, 96 percent of the CUMU institutions indicated they plan to reapply to renew their classification when the guidelines become available in January 2013. According to information on the Carnegie Web site (<http://Carnegie.org>), institutions that gained recognition in the early years of 2006 and 2008 will be expected to show the award's impact on their respective campuses, the further integration of community engagement into the curriculum and the culture, and the systematic assessment of this impact.

Reasons for Applying for the Elective Classification



CUMU respondents indicated their institutions sought Carnegie recognition because it supports the mission of their universities and their values. They also realized gaining the classification would bring national recognition and enhance the institution’s visibility in their city and local region. A handful of respondents also acknowledged that the process would provide internal documentation for their campus.

Impact of the Classification on Institutional Identity and Culture

Because many of the universities indicated they applied for the Carnegie classification since it aligned with their existing mission and values, it is not surprising that the impact *enhanced* or *increased* major components of the institutions’ identity and culture—particularly community engagement in the mission statement, vision statement, and institutional marketing materials. Executive leadership viewed the Carnegie designation as a promotional priority. The majority of universities reported enhancing or adding formal recognition of engagement through awards and celebrations on their campuses.

Assessment was not a strong area of reported impact. Though half of the respondents indicated they are improving mechanisms for systematic assessment of community perceptions of institutional engagement, and are aggregating and using this data, it is notable that one in four to one in five *had not applied* these components since receiving recognition.

Components of Institutional Identity and Culture	Percent Enhanced/ Increased	Percent Added/ Developed	Percent Have NOT Applied
Community engagement in our mission statement	95.7	0	4.3
Community engagement in our vision statement	87.0	4.3	8.7
Emphasis on community engagement in institutional marketing materials	82.6	8.7	8.7
Explicit promotion of community engagement as a priority by executive leadership	78.3	13.0	8.7
Formal recognition of community engagement through campus-wide awards and celebrations	65.2	21.7	13.0

Mechanisms for systematic assessment of community perceptions of institutional engagement with the community	56.5	17.4	26.1
Aggregation and use of systematic assessment data	52.1	26.1	21.7

Impact of Classification on Institutional Commitment

The impact of the classification upon the institutional commitment aligns with the universities' strategic plans: not only is there a high degree of commitment to community engagement in these plans; but it also appears in students' leadership roles, budgetary allocations, external funding, and the community voice in planning. As metropolitan and urban institutions, these institutions have long staked their values on community engagement. Subsequent to the Carnegie recognition, however, a number of universities have strengthened their commitment by *enhancing/increasing* or *adding/developing* campus-wide coordinating infrastructure, such as a center, to support and advance community engagement.

Other areas, however, were not so strongly affected, with nearly one-third to three-quarters of respondents indicating that they *have not applied* these components. These aspects include forming a faculty governance committee with responsibilities for community engagement; noting community engagement on student transcripts, co-curricular transcripts, or in an e-portfolio; establishing institutional policies for promotion and tenure to reward the scholarship of community engagement; revising search/recruitment policies to encourage hiring faculty with expertise and commitment to engagement; and employing systematic assessment across campus to measure the impact of engagement.

Components of Institutional Commitment	Percent Enhanced/ Increased	Percent Added/ Developed	Percent Have NOT Applied
Incorporation of community engagement into the strategic plan	87.0	8.7	4.3
Students' leadership role in community engagement	87.0	13.0	0
Budgetary allocations dedicated to supporting institutional engagement with the community	78.3	17.4	4.3
External funding dedicated to supporting institutional engagement with the community	78.3	4.3	17.4

Community “voice” or role in institutional or departmental planning for community engagement	73.9	8.7	17.4
Funding for professional development pertaining to engagement	69.6	4.3	26.1
Campus-wide coordinating infrastructure (center, office, etc.) to support and advance community engagement	65.2	26.1	8.7
Systematic campus-wide assessment mechanisms to measure the impact of institutional engagement	56.5	13.0	30.4
Search/recruitment policies to encourage the hiring of faculty with expertise and commitment to community engagement	56.5	13.0	30.4
Fundraising directed toward community engagement	52.5	8.7	39.1
Institutional policies for promotion and tenure to reward scholarship of community engagement	34.8	17.4	47.8
Community engagement noted on student transcripts	34.8	8.7	56.5
Community engagement noted on co-curricular transcripts or in e-Portfolio	31.8	22.7	45.5
Faculty governance committee with responsibilities for community engagement	18.2	9.1	72.7

Impact of Classification on Curricular Engagement

Reflecting on two to six years of living with the Carnegie recognition, the respondents analyzed the impact of the classification on curricular engagement. The three highest responses indicated that universities have *enhanced or increased* the integration of community engagement into students’ leadership, internships and cooperative experiences, and faculty scholarship. Other strong components that have been *enhanced/increased* or *added/developed* are a definition of service learning and a subsequent process of identifying service learning courses, campus-wide learning outcomes for students’ curricular engagement with the community, and integration of community engagement into student research. A noticeably high number of institutions indicated that they *have not integrated* community engagement into study abroad opportunities, established departmental/disciplinary learning outcomes for students’ curricular engagement with the community, nor integrated community engagement into the undergraduate curriculum campus-wide.

Components of Curricular Engagement	Percent Enhanced/ Increased	Percent Added/ Developed	Percent Have NOT Applied
Community engagement integrated into student leadership	78.3	8.7	13.0
Community engagement integrated into internships/co-ops	78.3	4.3	17.4
Faculty scholarship associated with curricular engagement achievements	77.3	13.6	9.1
Institutional definition of service learning	69.6	21.7	8.7
Community engagement integrated into the undergraduate curriculum campus-wide	69.6	8.7	21.7
Institutional (campus-wide) learning outcomes for students' curricular engagement with the community	60.9	21.7	17.4
Community engagement integrated into student research	60.9	21.7	17.4
Institutional process for identifying service learning courses	56.5	21.7	21.7
Departmental/disciplinary learning outcomes for students' curricular engagement with the community	52.2	17.4	30.4
Community engagement integrated into study abroad	43.5	17.4	39.1

Impact of Classification on Outreach and Partnerships

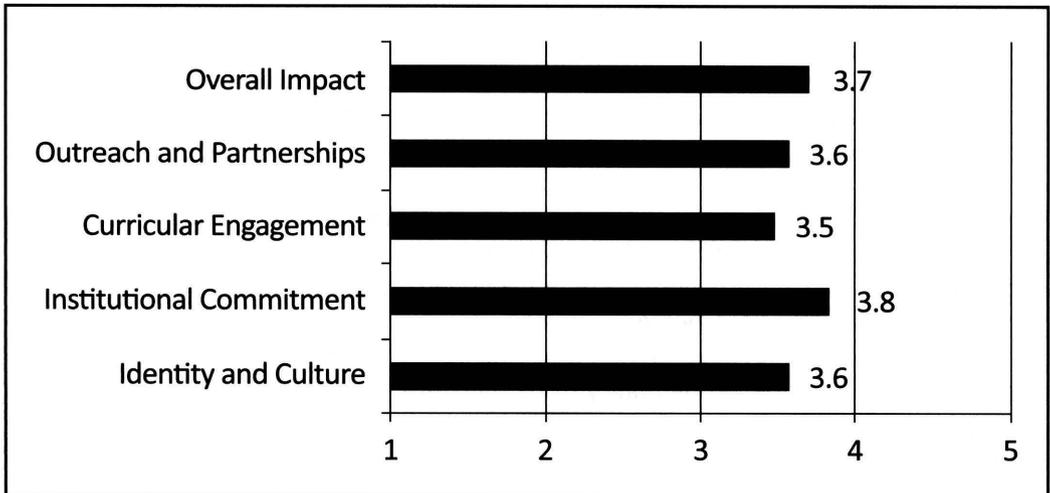
An examination of outreach and partnership components revealed a high percentage of responding institutions have *enhanced or increased* the mutuality and reciprocity of community partnerships by the campus and by its departments. While two-thirds of respondents also indicated they have *enhanced/increased* their institutional resources for outreach to the community and alignment of faculty scholarship with outreach and partnership activities—one in five *have not applied* these components. Further, perhaps sparked by the intensity of the Carnegie application process and its challenge for documentation, some institutions have *added or developed* their mechanisms for systematic feedback and assessment to community partners and the institution itself; but again, many institutions have not focused on assessment since their recognition.

Regarding the impact on outreach programs, the majority of responding universities indicated that they *enhanced/increased* or *added/developed* their community tutoring, non-credit, training, and “other” outreach programs. Other specified outreach programs were not so affected—professional development centers, evaluation support, learning centers, and extension programs—with nearly one-third to half of the respondents indicating they *have not applied* these components since receiving classification. It could be that not all responding universities have specific needs for these various outreach programs in their communities; or perhaps they are handling these needs in different ways.

Components of Outreach and Partnerships	Percent Enhanced/ Increased	Percent Added/ Developed	Percent Have NOT Applied
Mutuality and reciprocity of community partnerships by institution and/or departments	87.0	13.0	0
Community tutoring	86.4	4.5	9.1
Other outreach programs	82.6	8.7	8.7
Community non-credit programs	72.7	4.5	22.7
Community training programs	69.6	8.7	21.7
Institutional resources for outreach to the community	65.2	13.0	21.7
Alignment of faculty scholarship with outreach and partnership activities	65.2	13.0	21.7
Mechanisms for systematic feedback and assessment to community partners and the institution	60.9	17.4	21.7
Community professional development centers	59.1	9.1	31.8
Community evaluation support	52.4	19.0	28.6
Community learning centers	40.9	4.5	54.5
Community extension programs	40.9	9.1	50.0

Level of Impact from the Carnegie Classification

Overall, what level of impact did the Carnegie recognition have on the participating CUMU universities? The respondents assessed the score at 3.7 (high moderate to very good impact) on a 5.0-point scale, with the highest score at 3.8 for effect on institutional commitment and the lowest score at 3.5 for curricular engagement.



1 = No impact, 2 = Little impact, 3 = Moderate impact, 4 = Very good impact, 5 = Strong impact

Receiving recognition as a Carnegie community-engaged institution affirms many institutions. As one institution commented, “The classification affirms our roots as an urban university created to prepare individuals to address the critical health and social issues at various times in history.” Another institution’s respondent said, “It has demonstrated to our community that we value partnerships, and it has been a real catalyst for interdisciplinary efforts to partner with the community to address real community-identified needs. It affirms the many who are involved in community-engaged scholarship.” Accompanying the affirmation is a sense of pride: “It has brought pride to our university and was highlighted on the university’s web page and is included in the president’s welcome to prospective faculty, staff and students.” One university said, “The national recognition gives us more pride and confidence.” Another replied, “It’s a published point of pride—something that is distinctive about our institution.” Several responses acknowledged that the Carnegie recognition is widely disseminated in descriptive materials about the university and “touted” by the chancellor and senior administrators who see it as “an honor that is used as an introduction to who we are as a university.”

Conclusion: Anticipating the Carnegie Renewal Application

The Carnegie Foundation has announced deadlines for applying for initial application and for renewal of the elective classification. As with the first three cycles, there will be a registration of intent to apply (May 1, 2013), followed by the release of applications (September 9, 2013), and the final deadline of April 15, 2014. Results will be announced in January 2015.

For those institutions that gained approval most recently in 2010, no application is needed—these institutions will retain their classification until 2020. Institutions that gained classification in 2006 and 2008 will need to reapply, although the process will be abbreviated. Campuses seeking initial recognition will need to complete the new application form.

What can the CUMU/ Carnegie universities anticipate in the re-application process? As Driscoll noted in her 2008 article, a pattern of immature practices regarding community engagement was noticeable in the applications for the 2006 and 2008 applicants. These are precisely the practices the Foundation hopes now to find more mature and capable of documentation: assessment of community perceptions of engagement; reciprocity and mutuality of partnerships; faculty rewards for community engagement roles, scholarship, and achievements; and alignment with other campus priorities and initiatives (Carnegie Foundation, 2012).

There are challenging and intense questions that all CUMU/Carnegie institutions will need to examine before reapplying. Indeed, some of the questions reach to the heart and soul of the university and its collective leadership (Saltmarsh and Hartley 2011, 108). They involve the following four major topics which can be accessed at the Carnegie Foundation website (http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/descriptions/community_engagement.php):

- *Assessment Practices.* How are we as institutions tracking and recording data about engagement? How do we assess the impact of community engagement on all involved? Are we identifying and assessing student learning outcomes in our courses? Do we provide systematic, on-going feedback to our partnerships?
- *Partnership Practices.* How do we make sure partnerships are two-way relationships? Again, how do we provide systematic, on-going feedback?
- *Faculty Rewards.* Have we institutionalized the scholarship of engagement? Do we promote and reward the scholarship of engagement more thoroughly than in just campus-based and discipline-based consultation, professional service, and volunteerism? Does our campus reward the *scholarship* rather than just the experience of community engagement?
- *Alignment.* How is community engagement aligned with our other campus priorities and initiatives to provide significant impact? How are we integrating community engagement into our “collaborative internal practices”?

According to the findings of our survey, some universities are focusing on these areas and strengthening their commitment to engagement through the various application components outlined previously. While most participating universities demonstrated movement toward alignment of campus priorities to community engagement, many still need to develop systematic assessment mechanisms and to aggregate and use data

to inform their engagement practices. Some universities are enhancing faculty rewards and partnership practices, although many admit there is work to do. Further integration of community engagement into the curriculum and culture, and systematic assessment of this impact, will help ensure success in the 2015 application renewal process.

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Author Information

Dr. Deborah Elwell Arfken is director of university planning and professor of political science, public administration, and nonprofit management at The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. She chaired the committee in 2008 that prepared the successful UTC application to the Carnegie Foundation to receive the elective classification in both categories.

Dr. Susan F. Ritz is assistant director of strategic planning for assessment at The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. She leads the assessment efforts of various institutional projects and programs.

Deborah Elwell Arfken, EdD
Director, University Planning, and Professor, Political Science, Public Administration,
and Nonprofit Management
104A Founders Hall; Dept. 5605
The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
615 McCallie Avenue
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37403-2598
E-mail: Deborah-Arfken@utc.edu
Telephone: 423-425-5369
Fax: 423-756-5559

Susan F. Ritz, PhD
Assistant Director of Strategic Planning for Assessment, University Planning
104B Founders Hall; Dept. 5605
The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
615 McCallie Avenue
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37403-2598
E-mail: Susan-Ritz@utc.edu
Telephone: 423-425-5817
Fax: 423-756-5559