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Partnering for Equity: Chicago Conference Issue

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 **Equity and the Urban University: Introduction to the Chicago Conference Issue**
Beatriz Gonzalez and Howard Rosing

8 **Urban Education as Racialized State Violence: What is the Role of Higher Education?**
Pauline Lipman

20 **Tackling Grand Challenges: Community Engagement and Collective Impact in Public Problem Solving**
Anne P. DePrince and Cara Marie DiEnno

40 **Alignment through Community: The Case of a Metropolitan University and the Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**
John F. Barthell, David Castillo, Liliana Rentería Mendoza, J. David Macey, and Charlotte K. Simmons

60 **Civic Leadership Education at the University of Chicago: How an Urban Research University Invested in a Program for Civic Leaders that Resulted in a Positive Impact for both the Civic Leaders and the Faculty, Staff and Students of the Institution Itself**
Joanie Friedman

73 **Achieving College Readiness through a Dual Enrollment Course: "Strategies for Success"**
Bridgette Cram and Elizabeth Béjar

84 **Urban Partnerships to Address Health Literacy in High Need Populations**
Abiola O. Keller, Amy Vuyk, and Joshua Knox

95 **Community Engagement vs. Racial Equity: Can Community Engagement Work be Racially Equitable?**
Arien B. Telles

109 **Scholar-Administrators as Change Agents**
Emily M. Janke

Equity and the Urban University: Introduction to the Chicago Conference Issue

Beatriz Gonzalez and Howard Rosing

This 2018 CUMU Annual Conference issue of *Metropolitan Universities* journal (MUJ) highlights efforts by universities and scholars seeking to engage directly with issues of equity in cities. Reflecting on the conference theme, Partnering for Equity, the City of Chicago offered arguably one of the most sobering and rich contexts for discussing the role of higher education in promoting equity. A 2017 study found the cost of lost income to Chicago's regional economy due to racial segregation exceeded $4 billion (Urban Institute, 2017, pg. IX). This same study noted an estimated 83,000 college degrees never attained because of racial segregation (Urban Institute, 2017, pg. 40). Chicago, like many urban areas, presents the most pressing opportunities and challenges for uncovering and addressing issues of equity.

As reflected in the conference presentations and speeches, one of the most important changes in higher education is the growing recognition that social change begins on and around the campus. Paulo Freire posited this view nearly 40 years ago in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, naming education a political act. To fully realize this transformative power of higher education, universities must partner across institutions and sectors to reveal and address critical issues of equity. This is the focus of the work shared at the 2018 CUMU Annual Conference.

In this Issue

The articles in this 2018 CUMU Annual Conference edition of *Metropolitan Universities* journal epitomize the work of metropolitan and urban colleges and universities in cooperating with communities to address mutual challenges and goals towards social justice. Lipman's conference keynote address sets the stage for this edition by provoking frank reflection on how higher education institutions can contribute to the development of educational policy that dismantles gross inequities based on race and class.

Tackling Grand Challenges: Community Engagement and Collective Impact in Public Problem-Solving reviews approaches to university-led grand challenge initiatives. Such initiatives have grown in presence in recent years, particularly because of the Obama Administration 2012 call to engage private and public sectors, including higher education, in joint national and global problem solving. *Tackling Grand Challenges* points to an approach that incorporates principles developed both within and outside the Academy: community-engaged scholarship, which brings meaning and relevance to learning and collective impact, and attends to essential structural issues relevant in the community. By bridging these worlds, the authors posit that grand challenge initiatives are more likely to be mutually beneficial, attuned to complexity, and thus more effective. The authors describe the example of the University of Denver, as an institution, which has used the frameworks in the implementation and organization of its interdisciplinary, publicly engaged work.

With a focused look at one partnership between a civic organization and a public university, *Alignment through Community: The Case of a Metropolitan University and the Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce* reveals how goal alignment between partners can spur greater effectiveness for both entities. This case example, based on the work of the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) and the local Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (HC), demonstrates that such alignment can lead to extramural funding, transformative learning practices, and professional growth, strengthening workforce and city development. The alignment begins with the explicit match of UCO's academic mission as a metropolitan university with the HC's purpose. The joint clarity on their shared goals strongly anchored the partnership for both parties with the necessary engagement of senior leadership, the investment of resources, and even organizational restructuring for cross-entity effectiveness. While describing what is clearly a substantive endeavor, *Alignment through Community* demonstrates the deep return on investment that such efforts have.

In examining the mutually beneficial, reciprocal relationship between a university and civic leaders, *Civic Leadership Education at the University of Chicago* reinforces the efficacy of asset-based approaches to community development. *Civic Leadership* describes not only the transformation of the University's understanding of civic education, but also of its sense of responsibility for fostering it in the city of Chicago. The mutual respect across partners as co-creators of knowledge evident in the program led to a more rigorous and authentic curriculum more likely to lead to necessary change in Chicago. This article explores the University's investment in civic studies, the concept of civic leadership from the practitioner perspective, and questions of equity and inclusion, involving all in the civic-leadership development program.

While civic education and leadership development provide an important on-campus tool for engaging students in community development, college access is and will remain a critical component of creating equity and inclusion in cities. In *Achieving College Readiness through a Dual Enrollment Course: "Strategies for Success*," Cram and Béjar outline an approach for universities to collaborate with the k-12 system and to work intentionally with students to attain the skills needed to be successful at the university. Florida International University (FIU) employed a dual enrollment course, Strategies for Success, evaluating and adjusting it over multiple years to determine its progress and impact. Through mentoring and coaching interventions, the course and program show promise toward providing the support and the needed academic and contextual foundation for low-income and underrepresented students to succeed in college.

Urban universities can also be an important resource for increasing equity in access to health knowledge. In their article, *Urban Partnerships to Address Health Literacy in High Need Populations,* Keller et al. describe how Marquette University collaborated with local nonprofits to implement and evaluate an evidence-supported health literacy program for low-income African American residents of Milwaukee. The project illustrates the role universities can play in illuminating the importance of health literacy training to improve the health and wellbeing of historically marginalized populations. The project provides evidence of a successful collaboration between a university and community-based organizations that can contribute to improving equity in health outcomes by local populations impacted by structural racism.

In *Community Engagement vs. Racial Equity: Can Community Engagement Work be Racially Equitable?* Telles offers a striking picture of the lack of attention to racial equity within community engagement in higher education. She argues that for institutions to be truly transformative in their urban settings, they should explicitly incorporate racial equity as a component within engagement initiatives. Furthermore, the gap in literature in relation to racial equity in higher education community engagement provides an opportunity for scholars to engage in empirical research regarding racial equity in relation to organizational structures, staffing and programs. Echoing sentiments from Pauline Lipman’s conference keynote, Telles concludes, “failing to address issues of racial equity within higher education community engagement initiatives may facilitate transforming into engaged institutions that continue to operate as racially exclusionary spaces.”

We close this issue with reflections by Emily Janke, the inaugural recipient of the Barbara A. Holland Scholar-Administrator Award. In *Scholar-Administrators as Change Agents*, Janke explores the definition of scholar-administrator and how it looks in practice. She argues that through the integration of scholarship with administration, one can both ask and answer critical questions facing our institutions and communities. This in turn enhances our understanding of how to change institutional practices to fully realize the transformative power of higher education for our students and their families and our communities. Because of this, Janke calls the field to “better recognize, prepare and support scholar-administrators so that they can do what they do so well: serve as key change agents in and of higher education, and to lead boldly into a yet-to-be defined future.”

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Author Information

*Beatriz Gonzalez, Ph.D.
Chief Diversity Officer & Vice Provost
University of La Verne
Office of Diversity and Inclusivity
Founders Hall
Room 106
La Verne, CA 91750
Telephone: (909) 448-4512
Email: bgonzalez@laverne.edu

Dr. Gonzalez is Chief Diversity Officer & Vice Provost at University of La Verne. Gonzalez came to the University of La Verne in August 2013 as associate provost for faculty affairs. She was appointed to her current titles in April 2016, broadening her responsibilities to include retention of students, faculty, and staff with a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Howard Rosing, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Irwin W. Stearns Center for Community-Based Service Learning
DePaul University
2233 N. Kenmore Avenue
Chicago, IL 60614
Telephone: (773) 325-7457
Email: hrosing@depaul.edu

Dr. Rosing is the Executive Director of the Steans Center where he oversees the work of Academic Service Learning and the Egan Office for Urban Education and Community Partnerships and supports DePaul's partnership with the Asset-Based Community Development Institute housed at the Center. He works with faculty to develop scholarship on service-learning and community-based research as pedagogies. Dr. Rosing also serves as a faculty member in Community Service Studies and an affiliate faculty member in Geography, Sustainable Urban Development (MASUD) and Community Psychology and co-directs MASUD. He has taught and developed numerous service learning courses including Community Food Systems and Geography, Food and Justice, which serve as required courses in DePaul's Minor in Food Studies. Dr. Rosing is a cultural anthropologist whose research focuses on urban food access, economic restructuring, community food systems, and food justice movements in Chicago and the Dominican Republic.

*Corresponding author

Urban Education as Racialized State Violence: What is the Role of Higher Education?

Pauline Lipman

Abstract

This address was given as the plenary presentation to the 24th Annual Conference of the Coalition for Urban and Metropolitan Universities, Chicago, Illinois, October 23, 2018

Keywords: displacement; community; minorities; neoliberalism; school closures; privatization; protest

Good morning. Thank you so much to all the conference organizers for inviting me to a dialogue with you. I know that CUMU has a place-based mission and that the theme of this conference is partnering with community organizations and institutions for equity. That's exactly what I want to talk about today.

Displacement is an issue I will focus on today, so I want to begin by recognizing the space we are in and acknowledging the native peoples whose land we are on. Forward to 2018, we should note that this opulent hotel we are meeting in, located on Chicago's Gold Coast, in a global city, was a few weeks ago a site of a city-wide strike by primarily Black, Brown, Asian, immigrant, and women hotel workers for the simple justice of year-round health insurance. These low-wage service workers live the effects of globalized displacement and the flexibilization of labor that is a cornerstone of the neoliberal restructuring of the labor force, even as they find it increasingly impossible to live in the city. Another act of displacement. Our universities are also complicit. They employ increasing numbers of part-time, contingent academic labor, PhDs who work out of their cars and often live near the poverty line, without a stable place of employment. In my talk today I want to draw connections between what geographer Ruth Wilson Gilmore calls these "disparate spaces" connected by restructuring of the urban economy and urban space, neoliberalization of public education, the politics of race, the resistance of grassroots social movements, and ultimately our universities.

I want to locate myself in this story also. I am a professor of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago. I teach young people who are going to be Chicago Public School (CPS) teachers and graduate students who study urban education. I am the parent of a CPS graduate and I have been involved in organizing for education justice in the city for over 20 years. I study the relationship of urban education policy and the political economy of cities and the politics of race. So I am deeply committed to the issues I am going to talk about. As an activist scholar, I claim what feminist philosopher Sandra Harding (2015) calls the "situated objectivity" of engagement in the social processes I study. I have seen first-hand the lived experience of CPS policies. While I draw on research on urban education and my own extensive ethnographic data, my analysis privileges perspectives of the Black and Latinx families, students, and their teachers that I organize with. Their experiences, histories, insights, and desires are central to understand the dialectics of the racialized neoliberal restructuring of public education and emerging alternatives.

School Closings and Black Disposability

On May 22, 2013, Chicago's mayor-appointed school Board voted to close 49 neighborhood elementary schools and one high school—the most school closures at one time ever in the U.S. The mayor justified the mass closures on grounds of a fiscal "crisis" that required public austerity. The closures impacted 133 schools in total, including designated "receiving schools," and approximately 47,000 students. The Board's decision followed seven intense months of protest in which literally thousands of parents, students, teachers, and community members testified at public hearings, marched, picketed, sat in, held press conferences and vigils, organized a three-day march across the city, and more to stop their schools from being closed. The 50 closings were on top of over 10 years of previous drastic school actions in which the Board had closed, phased out, consolidated, or turned around 105 neighborhood public schools.

In 2013, the Board promised it would close no more schools for five years. Yet, less than a year later, they turned over Dvorak, McNair, and Gresham elementary schools—all in Black communities—to a non-profit management organization, dismissing all staff and destabilizing the schools. Then, in April 2018, five years after the 2013 mass closings, the Board voted to phase out and close four more high schools in the African American Englewood section of Chicago and one primarily Black elementary school on the near South side.

School closings in working class communities of color in Chicago are part of a national pattern. In 2014, the Journey 4 Justice Alliance reported that, in recent years, Detroit, New York, and Chicago had all closed more than 100 public schools. Columbus, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Houston, Philadelphia, Washington DC, Kansas City, Milwaukee, and Baltimore each closed more than 25. The District of Columbia closed 39 since 2008. In each case, Black and Brown students were primarily affected.

Puerto Rico is the latest case in point. In April 2018, the governor of Puerto Rico seized on the devastation and displacement caused by Hurricane Maria to announce plans to close more than 300 out of 1,100 public schools on the Island and to open up Puerto Rico to charter schools and private school vouchers for the first time, even as teachers and parents came together to clean, repair, and reopen their schools. Shortly after the hurricane, Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos, an advocate of charters and vouchers, flew to the Island to strategize with Puerto Rican officials. It was a déjà vu moment, calling up the specter of pushing through school closings and privatization in New Orleans in 2005 after Hurricane Katrina. School closings are the new "normal" response to "natural" disasters and urban fiscal "crises."

The main target of these policies is Black communities where economic strangulation is exacerbated by urban austerity measures to dismantle public housing, public health clinics, schools, and other public services. As Black studies professor Rose Brewer (2012) points out, this is a form of neoliberal urban crisis management rooted in Black disposability and oriented to capital accumulation. Public disinvestment is coupled with intensified policing, incarceration, and police violence against Black children, men, and women. Along with lack of affordable housing and living wage jobs, these policies are driving African Americans out of the city, but they have also sparked a new wave of militant organizing, demonstrated by the movement that forced the trial and conviction of the police officer who murdered Black teenager Laquan Macdonald in Chicago.

I want to talk about these dialectics centered on public education and pose some questions about implications for our work in urban universities. My focus is Chicago, but the same urban political economic and racial dynamics play out in other U.S. cities, albeit in varied ways.

Accumulation by Dispossession

Privatization of education in the U.S., and globally, typifies the neoliberal strategy of "accumulation by dispossession." That is, private appropriation of public goods and institutions—"the commons"—from public housing, to the Amazon rain forest, to public water systems, to the human genome—and their commodification for profit. Neoliberal policies over the past thirty years have transformed public education into a lucrative global industry. The U.S. education market alone (Zion Market Research) was valued at about $1.35 trillion in 2017.

Markets in charter schools, education services, curriculum, on-line classes, teacher training operations, testing, tutoring services, branded university satellites, for-profit colleges, and more are hot investment opportunities. Speculative investment in charter school bonds and charter school real estate is the subject of investor webinars and bond trader and hedge fund newsletters. This process has been facilitated by political administrations on both sides of the aisle and shaped by billionaire venture philanthropists, exemplified by the Walton Family, Melinda and Bill Gates, and Eli Broad Foundations and Facebook CEO Mark Zucker, who have benefited from the extraordinary upward redistribution of wealth over the past three decades. Capitalizing on neoliberal policies to disinvest in urban public schools, they leverage their enormous wealth to promote education markets, business management of schools, the technology-driven education standards and testing industries, and retooling schooling for human capital development. In a colonial model, they decide what is best for working class students of color.

Chicago School Closings

Closing public schools is a key policy lever to facilitate marketization of public education. In Chicago, since 2001, 170 neighborhood public schools were closed, phased out, consolidated, co-located, or handed over to private "turnaround" managers. Schools with more than 99 percent students of color (what the Chicago Teachers Union calls "Apartheid schools") have been the principle target. In the 2013 closings, 79 percent of the students affected were Black although 40.5 percent of the students in the district are Black. Most of the other affected students were Latinx. Due to school closings, some Black areas of the city have few neighborhood public schools left. Many were closed for low enrollment, even as CPS authorized and funded 131 charter schools, mostly enrolling Black and Brown students. At the same time, CPS's budget has disproportionately benefitted selective enrollment and specialty schools in primarily white, upper-middle class and gentrified areas.

This racialized pattern is repeated nationally. Over 80 percent of the students affected by Philadelphia's closure of 23 schools in 2013 were Black, though the school district student population was 58 percent Black. Just four percent of students affected were white. Washington D.C.'s closure of 15 schools in 2013 affected about 2,700 students; just two (less than 0.01 percent) were white, although white students make up nine percent of the D.C. public school population. Of the total affected students, 93 percent were Black although 72 percent of the students in the district are Black. Detroit, with a student population that is 82 percent Black, closed more than 100 schools since 2005. In each of these cities, there is an associated expansion of charter schools.

Yet, there is little evidence that closing schools improves education. The vast majority of students do not experience improved academic performance. A study of Chicago's 2013 mass closings by the Consortium on Chicago Research found "academic outcomes were neutral at best, and negative in some instances." Nor is there evidence that charter schools overall improve education.

Root Shock

Public officials justify closing schools with a narrative of "failure" and "underutilization." But this narrative washes out the complexity of schools rooted in communities and erases histories of structural racism and public policies and private investment decisions that have gotten them to this point. The official narrative negates the pain, loss, and dislocation that children experience when their schools are closed. It disregards parents' fears for the increased risks to children forced to travel long distances, cross dangerous streets, or go out of their neighborhoods. Closing a school breaks the web of sustaining human connections that coalesce there, producing trauma that Professor of Urban Policy and Public Health, Mindy Fullilove, calls "root shock"— "the traumatic stress of the loss of [one's] lifeworld" whose effects last for decades.

The interviews our team of activists and scholars at the Collaborative for Equity and Justice in Education did with parents affected by Chicago's 2013 school closings captured this trauma. One parent said, "…the kids were grieving. It was just like somebody had died and it had. The school died". Many described their schools as like "family" and their closure as a blow to the community. Our interviews with Black and Latinx parents revealed that many were deeply involved in their schools as volunteer teaching assistants, coaches, school monitors, unofficial community liaisons, elected local school council representatives, and more. Some anchored school programs. They had intimate knowledge of the interplay of their school's strengths and weaknesses, perspectives on how to improve it, and broad, humanistic visions of the education they wanted. The school closing process itself dehumanized the parents and their children who were excluded from decision-making and whose deep knowledge and insight were disregarded and dismissed.

Neoliberal Urbanism and Education Policy

Taking a wider view, we cannot fully understand the forces driving these policies and their implications without considering the spatial, economic, and racial logics of neoliberal urban development. Animated by global economic competitiveness and urban entrepreneurship, urban governance regimes make development decisions to satisfy capital markets, real estate developers, and elite consumers. Their neoliberal strategies prioritize downtown development, gentrification, privatization of public goods, outsourcing of union labor, and subsidies to capital, pushing aside whatever stands in the way, including public housing, public schools, and the people who live there. The result is deeply intertwined political, economic, and spatial urban dichotomies along lines of class, race, and ethnicity. These contrasting realities are on display in Chicago, a city centered on global business services, tourism, and real estate development. A city of luxury zones and hardship zones, tax breaks for corporations and the wealthy and poverty and near-poverty wages for immigrants, women and people of color who work for them.

Gentrification, rooted in real estate development and speculation on property values, is a pivotal sector of this neoliberal urban economy. This is a process in which the built environment is selectively junked, abandoned, destroyed, and reconstructed to create "a new locational grid" for capital accumulation, to paraphrase urban policy scholar Rachel Weber. Before communities can be new sites of capital accumulation, they have to be devalued, prepared for development, and reimagined as places of value. Their "regeneration" is made possible by dispersing the people who live there, erasing the community identities they have constructed, and replacing them with new, sanitized images. In the *New Political Economy of Urban Education*, I argue that education policy is integral to this differential valuation of city spaces. In gentrifying areas, CPS closes and then rebrands neighborhood schools as specialty schools to attract real estate investment and the consumers of new middle class housing. In white middle and upper-middle class areas, CPS expands selective enrollment schools and enhances the resources and curriculum of existing neighborhood schools. At the same time, divesting in public schools in low-income Black and Latinx communities, and replacing them with charter schools, signals further state abandonment of areas of the city not yet ripe for profitable reinvestment.

As geographer Laura Pulido (2016) points out, white supremacy is integral to processes of devaluation and re-valuation of urban space and urban schools:

> The devaluation of Black (and other nonwhite) bodies has been a central feature of global capitalism for centuries and creates a landscape of differential value which can be harnessed in diverse ways to facilitate the accumulation of more power and profit than would otherwise be possible.

Since 2000, a quarter million African Americans have left Chicago; most who left since 2010 were low-income and young. In 2000, Black students were 52 percent of CPS's population; today they are 37 percent. Of the roughly 170 schools closed, 88 percent of the students affected were Black. In 2013, CPS closed one quarter of all the predominantly Black schools in the city in a single year. Many were anchors in communities that experienced economic impoverishment, public and private disinvestment, dismantling of public housing, and home foreclosures. Some had served generations of families. Closed, abandoned school buildings and the churn of new charter schools further destabilizes these communities, readying them for future development, minus the people who live there.

In what the Chicago Teachers Union (2012) calls an "apartheid" school district, race and class disparities in resources and curriculum are stark. The CTU documents that schools in Black and

Latinx low-income communities disproportionately lack music and art teachers, updated science labs, school nurses, adequate counselors and libraries. Abandonment of Black community resources is linked to the expendability of Black labor in an economy of outsourced production, automation, and low-wage service work. Black students are more likely to be subject to racialized policing and containment than to economic and social opportunity.

As Ta Nahisi Coates demonstrates in relation to Chicago's North Lawndale community, these racial inequities rest on historically state-sanctioned housing segregation and discrimination that robbed communities of color of wealth and resources while the state facilitated wealth accumulation by whites. Similarly, the Journey 4 Justice Alliance documents that many closed schools that served low-income, working class Black, Latinx, and other students of color in Washington D.C., Chicago, Detroit, New York, Philadelphia, and elsewhere had a history of inequitable resources and lack of investment. For example, in 2012, the Chicago Board of Education voted to phase out Dyett High School after years of disinvestment and destabilization. This was despite parent and community organizing to bring in resources and programs, the school's accelerated rates of college going, and a nationally recognized restorative justice program. By 2012, there were no Advanced Placement classes, only a rudimentary schedule of science and math classes, and students took art online. College preparatory and mentoring programs initiated by teachers and community members were lost when CPS refused to continue funding them. Dyett High School student, Walter Flowers, summarized, "It just feels like they don't care as much as we want them to. It's been heartbreaking. CPS just turned its back on us…." In December 2011, CPS's Chief Operating Officer admitted that CPS did not intend to invest in schools that would be closed in the next 5–10 years.

These policies represent what Jodi Melamed calls the "state-finance-racial violence nexus," the integral relationship of political/economic governance with racial violence that enables accumulation by dispossession. Melamed argues, "It has become increasingly plain that accumulation for financial asset-owning classes requires violence toward others and seeks to expropriate for capital the entire field of social provision (land, work, education, health)."

Another Education is Possible

More than any other education policy, school closings have generated organized grassroots resistance and community-union coalitions, led by people of color. Not willing to simply defend public schools as they are, parents and teachers want something more. Over the past 10 years, they have developed a critical analysis of the intersection of racism and privatization and formulated programs for racial justice, sustainable neighborhood schools, and self-determination.

Examples are growing:

- the national Journey for Justice Alliance's report, *An Equitable and Just School System Now;*
- The Chicago Teachers Union programs, *The Schools Chicago Students Deserve* and *A Just Chicago;*
- The Milwaukee community-labor coalition, Schools and Communities United, proposal *Fulfill the Promise: The schools and Communities our Children Deserve;*

- The Alliance to Reclaim our Schools *Education Justice is Racial Justice* platform; and
- The education platform of the Movement for Black Lives.

In our research, parents voiced their desire for a rich, challenging, humane curriculum, a holistic education centered on children's development, not testing and competition. They want respectful, culturally relevant public schools that are centers of community where young people develop academically, and as thoughtful, caring and just humans. Their vision dwarfs the impoverished, instrumental conception of schools as aggregate test scores, bodies with future job skills, and obedient subjects.

I want to share two concrete examples of school transformation rooted in community struggles and parents' educational vision. The first is the campaign that culminated in a 34-day hunger strike in 2015 to re-open Dyett High School in Chicago's historic African American Bronzeville neighborhood. Despite community proposals to revitalize Dyett and plans to create a network of aligned Bronzeville elementary schools, in 2012 CPS voted to phase out the high school over the protests of parents and students. Over three years, a persistent grassroots campaign forced CPS to agree to reopen Dyett as a neighborhood high school and to issue a call for proposals for the school's focus and vision. In community meetings large and small, students, parents and community members forged a vision for the school they wanted for their community. Together with community organizations, teachers, and university partners, they formed the Coalition to Revitalize Dyett to co-develop and write a comprehensive 53-page proposal for the Dyett High School of Global Leadership and Green Technology, based on the community vision.

The vision expressed the intergenerational wisdom and educational vision of a working class Black community. Through dialogue and analysis, parents and young people distilled critiques of the inequitable and oppressive schooling Black children are subjected to, and unfolded their dreams into a farsighted, community-rooted, humanizing, research-based, educational proposal focused on "environmental sustainability and leadership for peace and justice." It built on experience of youth and parent organizing, critical Freirian pedagogy, educational research, and historical practices of Black education. The proposal was endorsed by several past presidents of the American Educational Research Association. It began:

> Our philosophy of education is to prepare young people to deeply understand and study their social and physical reality so they can enter the global stage of history as actors in transforming their world….Education should value and build on the young people of Bronzeville, their culture, languages, experiences, history, wisdom, and elders to enable them to know who they are, where they come from, where they are going, and to love their community and themselves.
>
> The model is a school who cares for children and youth as whole people, wraps around them both supports and challenges they need in order to develop. As in a village, it treats them with respect and dignity, and demands excellence and commitment to even a greater good than their own individual success. This is a model that nurtures leadership; it teaches perseverance, expects the best, and supports solidarity.… (Dyett RFP, 2015)

This philosophy infused the proposed curriculum, pedagogy, school culture and organization, approach to school discipline and relationships, physical structure of the building, involvement of parents and community, national and global connections—even as the proposal followed required CPS guidelines.

When it became clear CPS was violating its own process and would reject the community proposal, 12 parents, grandparents, teachers, and supporters launched a 34-day hunger strike that drew national and international attention and support from across Chicago. The hunger strike exposed the link between school closings and anti-Black state violence. Protesters against the police murder of a Rekia Boyd, a Black woman in Chicago, made that connection explicit when they marched, at night, from a protest at the police station to the Dyett strike. After 34 days, the hunger strikers were forced to end the hunger strike when, as grandmother Irene Robinson said, it was evident that "Rahm Emanuel [Chicago mayor] would rather let us die." Nonetheless, the campaign succeeded in forcing CPS to re-open Dyett as a neighborhood public high school, though without the proposal's focus. And the struggle for the full community vision continues.

The second example is the national campaign for Sustainable Community Schools, a forward-looking alternative to school closings and privatization. The campaign calls for transforming neighborhood schools into sustainable public schools with engaging culturally relevant curriculum, high quality teaching—not high stakes testing—wrap-around supports, restorative justice, and transformational parent and community engagement. In Chicago, a coalition of the Chicago Teachers Union (2018) and community organizations, building on the vision for a revitalized Dyett High School, won 20 Sustainable Community (see also CPS, 2018) Schools in the 2016 teachers' union contract. Their principles grow out of the Dyett High School proposal:

- Racial justice and equity;
- Transparency and trusting relationships;
- Self-determination and self-governance;
- Building on community strengths and community wisdom;
- Shared leadership and collaboration;
- Reflective learning culture; and
- Whole Child approach to education.

The Dyett proposal and organizing for Sustainable Community schools provide counter narratives and demonstrate concrete alternatives to the deeply inequitable economic, political, spatial, racialized landscape of the city. They imagine schools as life-affirming, identity-affirming spaces, incubators of critical thought and action rooted in community and relationships of solidarity and humanization. They exemplify a strategy of fighting for schools as part of fighting for sustainable urban working class communities.

The Dyett hunger strike demonstrated how far the state is willing to go to prevent working class Black parents from exercising agency to control their destiny, how little regard it has for Black life, and how critical schools are to the racialized neoliberal plan for the city. It also demonstrated that fierce contests over urban education embody the struggle for place and self-determination for Black and other communities of color. Hunger striker, grandmother, and life-long Bronzeville resident, April Stogner, explained, "This is our community. It has been taken hostage and it is time to let it go. This is ours. We are going to fight for it…" (See also Ewing, 2019).

What is the Role of Universities?

So what role do universities play and what role should they play? U.S. universities are contradictory institutions. On the one hand, they were set up as elitist, exclusionary, white institutions-- supports for racial capitalism. The neoliberal university's growth strategy, its financial and management policies, its allocation of resources are shaped by logics of business. Entrepreneurship, corporate funding, market competition, increased tuition revenues, cost-cutting through subcontracting to private services, and public private partnerships in which profit taking by private investors and companies is part of the equation. These are the normalized strategies of universities across the U.S.

The new multimillion-dollar classroom and dorm building going up at University of Illinois at Chicago, across from my office, for example, is a public-private venture, at least partly aimed at attracting high tuition-paying out-of-state and international students and marketing. Meanwhile, there are fewer Black students as the University (a publicly funded urban institution) markets itself to out-of-state and international students and CPS continues to fail to educate Black students, and the dystopian realities of neoliberal urbanism come to roost in our classrooms. My working class students preparing to be teachers are stressed out by debt, working full time jobs, living undocumented, family evictions, police violence, and low-wages.

Some of our universities are key actors in gentrification and displacement. UIC is a key player in the gentrification of the nearby Mexican working class community of Pilsen. Its partnerships with developers facilitated the construction of University Village, a middle and upper-income mega gentrification complex on the site of a former public housing project and historic Black community. The university's role as gentrifier is mirrored by the University of Pennsylvania in West Philadelphia, Columbia University in Harlem, Temple University in North Philadelphia, and more.

Moreover, some of our universities are complicit in the disinvestment and privatization of education, which I have described. University representatives sit on public policy-making boards that devise and legitimate processes of dispossession and marketization. They partner with charter-school chains, Teach for America, and other sectors of the education privatization industry. They comply with, even help design, neoliberal school district policies, and fail to oppose, and sometimes benefit from, policies that devastate communities they purport to serve. Over vociferous protests of parents and teachers, DePaul University got $50 million in public Tax Increment Finance (TIF) dollars to fund its new stadium while CPS budgets were slashed as austerity measures. These are public funds that rightfully belong to schools.

Yet universities are also spaces for community collaborative research, critical scholarship and debate, and student organizing. University partnerships with community organizations and projects are the focus of this conference's workshops. An example is the Dyett proposal: UIC College of Education faculty collaborated with parents, community organizations, students, and teachers to write the proposal, and the Dean of the College of Education endorsed it.

But how do we push back against the neoliberal university itself? How do we build community partnerships outside the university that also hold the university accountable for its role in school closings and gentrification of the neighborhoods where our community partners work and live? What can we do to make the university pay living wages to its workers, who live in the communities we partner with and whose children attend public schools? How can we use community collaborations to organize for open admissions and free tuition to open up the university to the working class communities it excludes, but who fund it? How can we pressure the university to refuse contracts with education privatizers, to stop gentrifying and displacing Black and other communities of color as students fought to do historically at Columbia University? How do we pressure the university to open up its space and deploy its skills, material resources, prestige, and public voice to challenge injustices in the city and beyond? If the university is actually complicit in education policy as anti-Black violence, how do we do our work to contest that? How do we stand with struggles for what Henri Lefebvre termed “the right to the city”? Those are the questions we need to grapple with and the challenges we all face.

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Author Information

Pauline Lipman, Ph.D.
Professor of Educational Policy Studies
Room 1404 ETMSW
University of Illinois at Chicago
1040 W. Harrison St. (M/C 147)
Chicago, IL 60607
Telephone: (312) 413-4413
Email: plipman@uic.edu

Pauline Lipman is professor of Educational Policy Studies and director of the Collaborative for Equity and Justice in Education. Her teaching, research, and activism grow out of her commitment to social justice and liberation. Her interdisciplinary research focuses on race and class inequality in education, globalization, and political economy of urban education, particularly the inter-relationship of education policy, urban restructuring, and the politics of race. Pauline is a member of the leadership body of Teachers for Social Justice – Chicago and is active in coalitions of teachers and community organizations. She is a co-director of the Data and Democracy Project. She has co-led various collaborations with community organizations to produce policy reports that bring to light educational injustices and community-driven programs to transform urban schools.

Tackling Grand Challenges: Community Engagement and Collective Impact in Public Problem Solving

Anne P. DePrince and Cara Marie DiEnno

Abstract

In recent years, grand challenge initiatives have emerged nationally with the goal of addressing large, multidisciplinary public problems. The advent of university-led grand challenge initiatives offers an important opportunity to reflect on how institutions of higher education design, implement, and orient externally relevant activities at a time of public skepticism. With a focus on public problem solving, grand challenge initiatives offer a way to re-engage the public's imagination and faith in higher education, depending on what these initiatives reflect about institutional values, practices, and work. We use this reflection opportunity to review early approaches to university-led grand challenge initiatives. We then propose that two frameworks should merge explicitly into grand challenge initiatives to guide public problem solving: community engagement and collective impact. Finally, we offer the establishment of a grand challenge initiative at the University of Denver (DU) as an example of the integration of community engagement and collective impact frameworks into the organization and implementation of institution-wide, publicly-engaged work.

Keywords: university-community; collaboration; multidisciplinary; institutional structure

Introduction

In recent years, institutions of higher education have faced questions about their value, relevance, and contributions to the public, as opposed to private, good. At the same time, urban-serving institutions continue to navigate their "especially complex and intimate relationship" with their local communities and the challenges facing diverse communities (Ramaley & McNair, 2018, p. 4). Against this backdrop, the higher education landscape has seen the emergence of grand challenge initiatives that have the stated goal of addressing large, multidisciplinary public problems. The emergence of grand challenge initiatives offers an important opportunity to reflect on how institutions of higher education generally, and urban institutions specifically, design, implement, and orient externally relevant activities at a time of public skepticism. With a focus on public problem solving, grand challenge initiatives offer a way to re-engage the public's imagination and faith in higher education, depending on what these initiatives reflect about institutional values, practices, and work. We use this reflection opportunity to review early approaches to university-led grand challenge initiatives in an urban context. We then propose that two frameworks should merge explicitly into grand challenge initiatives to guide public problem solving: community engagement and collective impact. Finally, we offer the establishment of a grand challenge initiative at the University of Denver (DU) as an example of the integration of community engagement and collective impact frameworks into the organization and implementation of institution-wide, publicly-engaged work.

Emergence of University-Led Grand Challenge Initiatives

In 2012, the Obama Administration launched efforts to encourage government, companies, foundations, philanthropists, and universities to pursue grand challenges. It defined these challenges as “ambitious but achievable goals that harness science, technology, and innovation to solve important national or global problems and that have the potential to capture the public’s imagination” (Office of Science and Technology Policy, 2013; Dorgelo & Kalil, 2012). The Obama Administration’s call built on work emerging through foundations, such as the Gates Foundation, as well as academic disciplinary organizations, such as the National Academy for Engineering Grand Challenges (http://www.engineeringchallenges.org). Since then, other academic disciplines (e.g., Berndtson et al., 2007), disciplinary organizations (e.g., Uehara et al., 2013), and individual institutions (Popowitz & Dorgelo, 2018) have either called for or launched grand challenge initiatives.

In 2017, The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) convened nearly 20 higher education institutions from North America to share practices related to establishing university-led grand challenge initiatives. A report from this assembly (Popowitz & Dorgelo, 2018) provides the most comprehensive look to date at the early framing of university-led grand challenge initiatives, which includes both public and private institutions who summarize their work with varying degrees of emphasis on faculty research, student, and communities. For example, Carnegie Mellon University’s program “is designed to provide winning groups of faculty with targeted support to build research capability” while Georgia Institute of Technology’s program entails “a living and learning community with over 100 freshmen…living together” who will “explore solutions in student-led teams over the course of their undergraduate degree” (p. 5). Some descriptions include collaboration across students, staff, and faculty, such as the University of Texas at Austin, for whom “Bridging Barriers is a campus-wide, researcher-driven Grand Challenge initiative” (p. 5). UCLA’s description of their grand challenge initiative emphasizes connecting “hundreds of faculty, students, community members, and leading experts across many fields to solve society’s toughest problems” (p. 6).

The report is the basis for establishing a community of practice, which provides a structure for universities to share practices and co-learn as grand challenge programs come into operation nationally. Building on the Obama administration language, the report defined grand challenges as “moonshots” and a “'North Star for cross-sector and multidisciplinary collaboration” (p. 2). The report shared the optimism that university-led grand challenge programs were “rallying research communities to contribute to solving a major societal challenge; attracting new investment and resources; demonstrating value of university research; and engaging students, partners, the broader community, and the public” (p. i). Higher education consultants have reinforced the potential for grand challenge initiatives to seed collaboration that will help position institutions in an increasingly difficult research-funding environment (e.g., Lund, Barnhart, Goodell, & Winslow, 2017).

As highlighted in the UCLA report, grand challenge initiatives are not the first nor only efforts by universities to leverage research for impact, which means that universities can learn from existing approaches and frameworks. The UCLA report referenced High Integrity Basic and Responsive Research (HIBAR) championed by the Association of Public and Land-Grant

Universities as a relevant approach to grand challenge initiatives. The report also cited existing frameworks to guide institutions in determining the scope and focus of grand challenge programs, such as the use of a SMART goals framework, an acronym for Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic and relevant, and Time-bounded. In addition, advice about establishing and implementing university-led grand challenge initiatives has focused on key institutional factors, such as the importance of structures and staffing to support the initiative as well as robust communication and long-term engagement of constituencies such as faculty, staff, students, administrators, and communities (Lund, 2017; Popowitz & Dorgelo, 2018).

Important questions about implementation have also emerged, such as how grand challenge initiatives can ensure faculty are able participate while also keeping their own individual or pre-existing programs of research moving forward (Lund, 2017). The UCLA report highlighted questions about how and when communities should attempt any grand challenge initiative development and implementation (Popowitz & Dorgelo, 2018). In addition to these core questions, we see an opportunity to ask what the design and implementation of grand challenge initiatives reveal about our institutional values and practices, particularly in light of trying to re-engage communities in the vision and mission of higher education. With these questions in mind, as well as the potential of grand challenge initiatives for public problem solving, we propose that two frames should be central to the design and implementation of grand challenge initiatives: community engagement and collective impact. We turn first to defining collective impact. Secondly, we discuss collective impact and community engagement in the higher education context. Lastly, we provide an example of how the University of Denver has applied these frameworks to the development and early implementation of its grand challenges initiative.

The Collective Impact Framework

Collective impact emerged as a framework in the nonprofit sector in light of observations that community-level change seemed more likely to occur when organizations worked together towards a shared agenda rather than in isolation (Kania & Kramer, 2011). In the seminal article published in the *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Kania and Kramer (2011) described the climate of social change as one that prioritized the creation of independent solutions, where an organization's value related to its ability to demonstrate unique impact. As an alternative, they proposed the term collective impact to refer to the commitment of actors from different sectors to a common agenda to solve a specific social problem.

Collective impact efforts are, according to researchers, "different from traditional collaboration in that they are designed to drive sustainable change in entire systems" (Bender, 2017, para. 1). To accomplish system-wide or community-level change, Kania and Kramer (2011) proposed that five conditions are essential: (a) a common agenda; (b) shared measurement; (c) mutually reinforcing activities; (d) continuous communication; and (e) backbone support. A common agenda allows for a shared understanding of the problem to take shape. This, in turn, provides the clarity to prioritize strategies that are not only results-focused and measurable with an agreed-upon set of tools, but are also of mutual benefit to those involved. Continuous communication supports the overall collaborative process as does having an entity responsible for providing logistical and infrastructure support to the collaborative group. With these conditions in place, the collective impact framework suggests that diverse entities can work towards shared goals while still maintaining their individual organizational identities and missions.

Since Kania & Kramer's (2011) article, many collaborative groups have embraced the term and endeavored to use the approach to move the needle on important, so-called wicked problems in their communities. In fact, Cabaj & Weaver (2016) have described the current atmosphere of collective impact as at a fever pitch. Not surprisingly, the swift growth and uptake of the collective impact model has ushered in important critiques as well. Authors have argued, for example, that collective impact omits attention to a rich body of evidence in the existing literature about coalition building. Furthermore, it has yet to demonstrate grounding in evidence-based practice; Moreover, it pays little attention to issues of equity and diversity. In addition it focuses on engaging the most powerful rather than the most impacted stakeholders, which undercuts building relationships, trust, and leadership among communities (Arias & Brady, 2015; Christens & Inzeo, 2015; Flood, Minkler, Lavery, Estrada, & Falbe, 2015; Le, 2015; LeChasseur, 2016; McAfee, Blackwell, & Bell, 2015; Williams & Marxer, 2014; Wolff, 2016).

Several responses, however, have emerged to these critiques. Kania and Kramer (2016) have emphasized the importance of treating the model as a framework, not a prescriptive recipe. Furthermore, the Tamarack Institute has proposed Collective Impact 3.0 (Cabaj & Weaver, 2016), which maintains many of the same principles as the original collective impact framework while encouraging-practitioners to refocus efforts away from a management paradigm and toward a movement-building paradigm. Moreover, a recent research report released in March 2018 provided the most methodologically rigorous study of collective impact completed to date (Spark Policy Institute & ORS Impact, 2018). The cross-site study included 25 collective impact initiatives, eight of which were included for deeper analysis. The study found that collective impact contributed to measurable population change at all eight sites.

Integrating Collective Impact and Community Engagement Frameworks

Many important commonalities exist between the collective impact framework and the structures of higher education institutions generally. For example, the structure of institutions of higher education lead to units that each have their own disciplinary approaches and cultures, which holds many similarities to working across sectors. While these units share a common institution-wide mission, the day-to-day practices of their work turn on the accomplishments of individual departments, divisions, and colleges in the ways the institution rewards faculty, chairs, deans, and other such administrators. Looking within departments, faculty have been historically incentivized to emphasize independent achievement, for example, through tenure and promotion processes, and incremental progress in research, such as through funding expectations to build one grant proposal on the specific findings of the previous grant.

As urban institutions of higher education begin to explore their role in collective impact initiatives (see *Metropolitan Universities* journal issue dedicated to this topic; November 2017, Volume 28, Number 4), they are also exploring how to more meaningfully participate in and impact their communities, including through community-engaged methods. In a comparison of land-grant institutions and urban institutions (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008), findings revealed that urban institutions develop a stronger embeddedness within their communities. Holland (2002) has called this being “not just in the city, but ‘of the city’” (p. 3). This leads to an engagement agenda that is more fully realized across the campus at urban research universities. This is, in part, due to the use of intentional engagement language as a piece of institutional branding, the porous boundaries of partnerships that support engagement, the alignment of engagement with the teaching and research roles of faculty, and stronger leadership support for engagement along with leaders who view community partners as stakeholders and learning partners (Weerts & Sandmann, 2008).

Community engagement, then, is a method of research, creative work, teaching, and learning that emphasizes university-community partnerships characterized by mutual benefit and reciprocity. Over the last two decades, community-engaged methods have evolved in terms of their rigorous application to research, creative work, and teaching as well as their role in universities. The widely used definition of community engagement, advanced by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, is “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” (Driscoll, 2008, p. 39). The emphasis on mutual benefit and reciprocity calls upon institutions of higher education to embrace an approach that allows diverse ways to generate knowledge as well as application of such work to the betterment of society. Shields (2015) argues that urban institutions should explore the primary function of their engagement efforts, whether they emphasize a more transactional and reputational focus or a truly mutually beneficial and social transformative one: “simply offering community service project or an infusion of development funds does not necessarily fulfill this moral function of social transformation. It does not automatically or inherently attend to the socio-cultural, political, or economic needs and ideologies of community in which the institution is embedded” (p. 227).

The complexity of society’s most pressing problems and the inherent need to approach solution generation from a multidisciplinary lens has led scholars to call upon institutions to make community engagement more central to the core of university work (Fitzgerald, Bruns, Sonka, Furco, & Swanson, 2012). Fitzgerald et al. argue that shifting from product to impact will improve the societal relevance of higher education. Such a shift requires commitment to transformational change not only deeply within an institution, but also in the way a university engages with the broader community. Ramaley (2002) underscores the importance of a clear and compelling model that institutions may use to guide actions at every turn when seeking such transformational change. Sandmann and Plater (2009) claim that “community engagement will endure only when the belief, the commitment, and the actions are so pervasive – so habitual – that their withdrawal would be painful.” (p. 23).

We propose that combining collective impact and community-engaged frameworks offers a powerful method to achieve transformational change that elevates the public purpose of universities while re-committing to such a purpose. Guided by collective impact and community-engaged methods, universities have the potential to shift from isolated impacts focused on individual scholars or projects to multidisciplinary work that tackles wicked problems in collaboration *with* communities. The focus on work done *with* communities is vitally important. By merging lessons learned in the field of community engagement, there is the possibility to address the critiques of collective impact related to diversity and equity. The practice of community engagement, especially in urban settings, continues to evolve in ways that help universities reflect the diversity of the cities in which they reside (Bringle, Hatcher, Hamilton & Young, 2002). It strives to employ a practice of full participation where "institutions are rooted in and accountable to multiple communities" (Strum, Eatman, Saltmarsh, & Bush, 2011, p. 4), and explore their role in social transformation, especially as it relates to addressing the marginalization of individuals in their community (Shields, 2015).

A key charge for urban institutions is to consider what ethical community engagement looks like, applying "principles of mutuality, reciprocity, social justice equity, self-determination, and collective efficacy" (Murtadha, 2016, p. 8). As community engagement can help address the challenges of collective impact, collective impact can in turn strengthen university effort to work toward larger scale community change. Bender (2017) argues that collective impact approaches applied to university-community partnerships can (a) reinforce institutional mission, (b) focus and strengthen institutional community engagement efforts, and (c) facilitate community-based research. Ultimately, Bender contends that by engaging in collective impact efforts, higher education institutions can "better serve their own students, improve campus-community engagement efforts, and ultimately strengthen the communities in which they operate" (para. 13).

While Bender and articles in the *Metropolitan Universities Journal* issue highlighted the role that urban institutions can play in multi-sector collective impact initiatives in communities, no one to our knowledge has considered how to adapt and apply the concepts and processes of collective impact to the internal function of a university. In other words, because universities are composed of different units, divisions, departments, centers, institutes, and more, with different missions and visions, they function like a conglomerate of multiple organizations all working under the same set of operational goals, typically outlined in university-wide strategic planning efforts. The collective impact framework's focus on multi-sector collaboration is ripe for helping institutions of higher education think about how to align and leverage institutional structures across diverse units and disciplines. This allows a shift from fragmented activities, though they may be of a high quality, to a collective form of action that can lead to deep and durable impact (Cabaj & Weaver, 2016).

Important to the application of the collective impact framework to higher education is infrastructure in terms of what Kania and Kramer (2011) conceptualized as backbone support, or Cabaj and Weaver (2016) as containers for change. Both conceptualizations point to the importance of a structure within the loosely coupled system of higher education that can span, convene, and support broad collaboration. The backbone support entity should bring together skills necessary to coordinate and communicate across constituents. Backbone organization staff stand apart from the participating groups and provide support such as planning, managing and supporting the initiative through facilitation, communication, data collection and reporting, and other logistical and administrative functions (Kania & Kramer, 2011). As Kania and Kramer (2011) point out, "The expectation that collaboration can occur without a supporting infrastructure is one of the most frequent reasons why it fails" (p. 40). Further, Wolff (2016) note that backbone organizations need not lead the effort themselves. Rather, they must possess the skills to cultivate leaders among those involved. The individuals driving the collective impact process must be able to create spaces where authentic dialogue is encouraged and supported and space for criticism, debate, and negotiation is embraced (Hoey, Colasanti, Pirog, & Fink Shapiro, 2017). Those best suited to apply the collective impact model may be what Bolman & Gallos (2011) refer to as academics leading from the middle. While those who lead from the middle face challenges and pressures in navigating sometimes conflicting cultures and value systems, there is also much that can potentially facilitate dialogue and bring divergent audiences together for a common purpose.

We propose that the centers or offices on campus that support the application of community-engaged methods can serve this backbone role. In a study of 147 campuses who have received Carnegie Community Engagement classification, Welch and Saltmarsh (2013) found that an important theme for engagement offices was their role in relationship building and the critical need they fill in not only supporting, but also influencing institution-wide initiatives. Indeed, offices supporting community-engaged work (e.g., from service learning to community-engaged research and creative work) are often designed and situated to span disciplines and departments, positioning them to facilitate collective impact in a dynamic way across the campus that resonates within the specific economic and social context of the institution. Engagement centers are typically already working to provide programming and resources to support faculty who then lead classes, research, and other change efforts. The collective impact framework provides a way to think strategically about the structure and resource support for these offices, so that they can in turn support deepening the collaborative potential and future impact of public good work. Further, engagement centers prepare campus constituents to work reciprocally with communities and community-based organizations by ensuring that work serves community-identified needs. This helps to address some of the recent critiques of collective impact expressed by numerous authors about whose voices are elevated in collective impact processes (e.g., Wolff, 2016).

The application of a collective impact framework across campus via engagement offices can focus on structuring existing work in such a way that disparate efforts align to a single set of goals measured in the same way rather than developing new programs or offices. In other words, institutions need not create wholly anew research agendas or classes. Rather, they ideally create structures to learn from and with one another and to coordinate efforts to support a broad set of shared aspirations. This coordination may lead to collaboration, but it may be just as likely to lead to harmonizing work and drawing connections across research agendas, programs, and other initiatives. As Hanleybrown, Kania and Kramer (2012) observe, "collective impact efforts are most effective when they build from what already exists; honoring the current efforts and engaging established organizations, rather than creating an entirely new solution from scratch" (p. 4).

Engagement-center staff, particularly center directors, play a key role in connecting constituents both inside and outside the organization, demonstrating the ability to "negotiate power and balance between the organization and external agents to achieve mutual objectives" (Weerts & Sandmann, 2010, p. 708). These staff members serve as translators of each sides' perceptions and expectations. Competent engagement professionals are able to both embrace respect for community perspectives while also possessing a keen understanding of their institution's landscape in order to advocate for community engagement (Dostilio, Benenson, Chamberlin, Crossland, Farmer-Hanson, Hernandez, 2017). In addition to their unique position to span such boundaries, engagement offices are often best able to help shape a common agenda. "A true common agenda requires leadership to bring key stakeholders together; to review the key data which informs the problem or issue; to develop a shared vision for change; and to determine the core pathways and strategies that will drive the change forward” (Cabaj & Weaver, 2016, p. 6).

Engagement offices are often already working with administrators, faculty, students, staff, and community members and have often cultivated a level of trust and credibility. These broad connections across campus and community can help engagement staff bring diverse perspectives to the fore along with data to inform decision-making. Such boundary spanning staff can build strong, reciprocal relationships (Murtadha, 2016), especially those that employ “shared voice and power and insist upon collaborative knowledge construction and joint ownership of work processes and products” (Jameson, Clayton, & Jaeger, 2011, p. 264). Furthermore, these offices have often developed strategies for communicating across such diverse constituents, preparing them to support continuous communication in collective impact efforts. The community-engaged methods espoused by these offices are, by definition, central to creating mutually reinforcing activities that have the potential for enhancing public impact.

Adapting Collective Impact and Community Engagement Frameworks for a Grand Challenge Initiative

This section integrates the collective-impact and community-engagement frameworks into discussion of the design and implementation of grand challenge initiatives. Because the nature of grand challenges is to address multidisciplinary public problems, no single discipline has the capacity to address these challenges in isolation. We propose that collective impact and community engagement can guide the development of grand challenge initiatives in ways that allow institutions of higher education to demonstrate public good values and impact while leveraging structures to span and connect collaborative potential. To make this case, we describe below the development and early implementation of DU Grand Challenges (2019) at the University of Denver.

The University of Denver’s strategic plan, DU IMPACT 2025, prioritized the development of a grand challenge initiative to address complex public problems. The task of designing and implementing the initiative settled upon a working group of faculty and staff from across campus, including the authors, who serve as Director and Associate Director of the university’s Center for Community Engagement to advance Scholarship and Learning (CCESL) respectively. The Collaboration for the Public Good Working Group (Working Group) began meeting every other week in fall 2016 to design the initiative as well as other public good work from the plan.

The placement of grand challenges initiative planning within the Working Group was likely very important to the values embodied by the implementation plan as well as the community engagement and collective impact frameworks eventually applied. For example, the initiative could have chosen groups focused on expanding the University’s research impact or internal collaboration. The design priorities would have likely differed to some degree. However, the Working Group’s collaboration and public good charge led to approaches that would ensure the initiative embodied the University’s vision to be a great private university dedicated to the public good. Further, the Working Group sought to root the initiative in the University’s long-standing commitment to community-university collaborations, exemplified through the engagement office, CCESL.

The Working Group's initial proposal for implementation to the University's leadership focused on the basic structure of the initiative. Adapting the language of the White House 21st Century Grand Challenges (White House Office, 2013), the proposal framed the initiative around the potential possibilities when the multi-disciplinary expertise and interests of students, staff, faculty, and community members joins to pursue ambitious and achievable public good goals. The initiative aimed to bring together curricular, scholarship, creative work, and co-curricular activities to advance community-engaged, public good work on complex issues that affect our communities locally, as well as regionally, nationally, and globally. Further, the Working Group proposed an inherently community-engaged arc rooted in, first, articulating shared aspirations with communities, then taking collaborative actions across community-engaged scholarship, learning, and service, and finally demonstrating achievements toward our public good goals. Therefore, the Working Group designed the structure of each challenge issue to follow a 3-year time course with programming and funding for each challenge rolling out across these 3-year cycles. We also proposed that the initiative include a family of programs reflecting the goal of engaging the campus and community. The proposed programming built on successful programs already run at a smaller scale through CCESL and other campus entities.

That initial proposal also laid out a commitment to a community-engaged process of selecting the issues areas. In particular, the Working Group proposed to select the inaugural three grand challenge issue areas as part of a collaborative process with campus and community constituents. Thinking about root causes of problems, the proposal also pointed to the importance of identifying inter-related issue areas to allow DU and community partners to build on work across time (versus approaching the work as three separate and distinct challenges). This centering of community-engaged methods was in line with Cabaj and Weaver's (2016) arguments that a much stronger focus on the role of the community was essential to the evolution of collective impact. Engaging authentically, and with a sense of reciprocity and trust, with the communities with whom the University partners was essential for the initiative to have the potential to move the needle on important issues. Therefore, it is a defining characteristic of DU's approach.

Following this initial proposal, the Working Group turned to institutional operational issues. It began to integrate collective impact into structural recommendations. The collective impact framework served to argue that a backbone structure was essential to ensure implementation success and that CCESL should provide that structure. These structural arguments were grounded in descriptions of backbone functions with the ability to guide vision and strategy, support similar activities, establish shared measurement practice, cultivate community engagement, advance policy, and mobilize resources (Turner, Merchant, Kania, & Martin, 2012).

Several types of evidence helped to argue for CCESL as the backbone, including the Center's record of accomplishment in facilitating and coordinating institution-wide public good work across faculty, staff, and students within their existing organizational structures (department, divisions, centers). Furthermore, CCESL, like many engagement centers, has built a reputation for the kind of adaptive leadership required for a backbone organization, including "a delicate balance between the strong leadership needed to keep all parties together and invisible 'behind the scenes' role that lets the other stakeholders own the initiatives success" (Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012, p. 6). In addition to experience in training faculty, staff, and students in the skills necessary to do public good work using best practices in community engagement, CCESL also brought assessment expertise that could identify shared measurement tools as demanded of collective impact efforts. Finally, CCESL's expertise in community engagement best practices promised to ensure that communities remained at the center of any change processes and that the initiative consistently applied principles of inclusivity.

Community-University Input to Identify Grand Challenge Issue Areas

To identify the grand challenge issue areas, the Working Group sought to select issues that were multidisciplinary in nature. Each issue would have the potential to engage every academic unit on campus in some way. Every issue must be broad enough to engage many disciplines and communities while specific enough to allow us to identify attainable goals with community partners in the "aspirations" phase. It should be relevant to the community, focused in areas where the University has substantial faculty expertise, as well as connections to both scholarship and teaching. Furthermore, the Working Group sought to recognize the unique potential for collaboration in our local, urban context while recognizing that faculty across campus also did work regionally, nationally, and globally. To identify issues, the Working Group turned to a mix of existing data as well as collected new information. In terms of existing data, the Working Group drew on interviews and site visits conducted during the University's strategic planning process. This included interviews with community leaders and change makers, as well as visits to other campuses focused on public good work and higher education leaders nationally.

In terms of new information, the Working Group used a combination of methods that aimed to bring in diverse voices to planning and discussion. Looking externally, the Working Group reviewed grand challenge issues selected by other universities as well as priority areas detailed by the city's Mayor and state's Governor. Looking internally, the Working Group looked at areas of overlap and connection among existing programing and scholarship. Furthermore, the Working Group sought to identify existing community-university partnerships that could inform understanding of areas in which faculty and communities were committed to working together. In winter 2017, the Working Group surveyed faculty from across campus about their work with communities in research, creative work, teaching, and service. More than 300 faculty responded and described more than 700 unique community partners with whom they worked on a broad range of public issues. The majority of community partners were local, illustrating the close relationship that urban institutions have with their communities (Ramaley & McNair, 2018) as well as the potential for focusing energies locally to leverage existing collaborations for impact. The survey team coded faculty responses to identify focus areas of this scholarship and themes. This coding informed a picture of both narrow topics as well as broad problem areas in which faculty were working across campus and with communities. That information enabled the Working Group to consider different configurations of topics that reflected multidisciplinary issues for which the University had depth and breadth of faculty expertise. A similar coding process was used to a review the topic areas on which student organizations focused as a way of integrating student interest into the process.

The Working Group also brought campus and community voices directly into the issue identification process. For example, Public Good Forums took place around broad topics (such as democracy, sustainability, and equity) to foster conversation about opportunities for cross disciplinary and community-university collaboration. To promote broad engagement, Public Good Forums were live-streamed on Facebook and in-person and virtual participation via Twitter was encouraged. In July 2017, the Working Group launched a call for input on grand challenge issues as well, inviting University staff, faculty, students, and alumni as well as community members to share ideas for grand challenge issues.

These efforts provide an illustrative, not exhaustive, list of steps taken to identify the theme for DU Grand Challenges. Drawing on the information gathered in this process, the Working Group identified the overarching theme of "Thriving Communities" for the DU Grand Challenges initiative and proposed three inaugural issue areas: improving daily living in our communities, increasing economic opportunity in our communities, and advancing deliberation and action for the public good in our communities. In October 2017, DU Grand Challenges officially launched. Both Chancellor Rebecca Chopp and Provost and Executive Vice-Chancellor Gregg Kvistad expressed their enthusiasm for the initiative. Working Group co-leads, Art Jones (via video conference) and Anne DePrince presented the framework for DU Grand Challenges in terms of structure (Aspiration, Action, and Achievement) and issue areas. Both collective impact and community engagement frameworks were integrated into the launch, to set the expectation that once a common agenda (or shared aspirations in the DU Grand Challenges design language) had been set, the work would shift to developing a strategic framework for action (Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012). The launch was live-streamed in three parts, to ensure broad participation from those present as well as those joining online.

Implementation to Date: From Aspirations to Action

In fall 2017, the University entered the Aspirations phase for the inaugural issue: improving daily living in our communities. The Working Group offered the campus community both broad and narrower examples of topics that might connect to this issue area. Such topics included: (a) health, healthy development, health equity, disease, illness and injury, parenting and family; (b) crime and safety, such as interpersonal violence, disaster and emergency, or mass violence; (c) migration, immigration and refugees; (d) environmental sustainability, climate change, urban development, or energy; and (e) meeting basic needs, including food access, homelessness, hunger, poverty, or water access). These particular terms arose from the coding of the faculty benchmarking data on community-involved work. Therefore, these terms indicated areas in which faculty were already doing research, creative work, and/or teaching that involves communities. Across AY 2017-2018, DU Grand Challenges programming sought to engage campus and community constituents in intentional dialogue to set aspirations that could lead to action steps in AY 2018-2019 for improving daily living in our communities. For example, five DU Grand Challenges Forums brought together nearly 200 faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community members around themes that followed the broad problem areas above.

DU Grand Challenges also hosted the inaugural DU A Community Table event on April 11, 2018. This one-day event was based upon the Chicago Community Trust Foundation's innovative On the Table program. It brought small groups of university and community change-makers together to generate ideas to improve daily living in our communities. Anyone could sign up to host a conversation and hosts selected when and where they held their table conversation, what food options were provided, and who to invite to participate in the conversation. The goal was to obtain feedback that could guide collaborative work in the years ahead. Table participants identified priorities for action. The host conducted participant surveys and conveyed them back to our Working Group. A Community Table involved more than 70 tables, after which more than 280 people shared ideas, the majority of whom were community members. The Working Group also launched DU Grand Challenges Scholar Grants to fund faculty community-engaged scholarship that tackles issues affecting daily living in our communities. Six projects, which engaged faculty from units across campus, obtained funding. Additionally, the Working Group invested in capacity-building, bringing to campus a nationally recognized collective impact leader, Dr. Bill Fulton, for a full day of events focused on broadening conversations about collective impact as a method of accomplishing institutional goals. Participants included faculty, staff, students, and community members.

The Working Group reviewed the information collected across all DU Grand Challenges program activities during the Aspiration year of improving daily living in our communities as well as during the DU Grand Challenges planning process year (e.g., faculty benchmarking survey, call for input on grand challenge issues). A review of information from the year of programming (e.g., grants funded, input from Forums and A Community Table) suggested that DU Grand Challenges supported existing collaborations and facilitated new connections. Furthermore, the initiative seemed to be connecting people for practical purposes, such as collaboration; and for a shared identity to belong or contribute to something bigger. Moreover, the first year of programming revealed the importance of coordination with other campus activities given many inter-related opportunities. In addition, the Graduate School of Social work and Ritchie School of Engineering and Computer Science were participating in their own disciplinary grand challenge programs. Other aspects of the University's strategic plan were seeding multidisciplinary, cross-unit collaborations.

At the end of the Aspiration year, the Working Group determined that the University and community shared goals around improving daily living through addressing health and healthy development, crime and safety, migration, environmental sustainability in an urban environment, and housing and food insecurity. However, university and campus constituents did not yet share an agenda on *how* to address these issues through actions that would result in measurable change. Therefore, the Action phase focused on a distinctive and potentially high impact *process* rather than project. Specifically, the Action phase applied the lessons learned about collective impact as a guiding framework for the overall DU Grand Challenges initiative. The university took action in four areas that affect daily living in DU's urban context: (a) Crime and Safety; (b) Migration; (c) Environmental Sustainability in an Urban Environment; (d) Housing and Food Insecurity.

In September 2018, a Request for Applications (RFA) invited faculty, staff, students, and community members to join a Collective Impact Cohort on one of the four topics. With a deep recognition that "successful university-community partnerships will involve all participants as learners and teachers in shared efforts to seek solutions-focused outcomes to society's most intractable 'wicked' problems" (Fitzgerald et al., 2012, p. 18), the RFA sought broad participation from faculty, staff, students, and community members. This approach sought to maximize the impact of collaboration and minimize problems that occur when universities act alone or without adequate consultation in trying to address community issues. By applying the best approaches to community-university partnerships, this process fostered an ongoing progression of “alignment, discovery, learning, and emergence” (Kania & Kramer, 2013, p. 2). Furthermore, each Cohort has faculty leadership who will ensure that community-engaged scholarship will be at the core of the approach to advance discovery goals while also affecting change in the grand challenge issue areas at the community level. More than 60 faculty, staff, students, and community members have joined Cohorts that launched in November and December 2018.

Over the course of a six-month planning period, facilitators will guide the Cohorts through a process to review research on collaboration, create guiding results statements, review data and identify indicators, and build an action map with intentional strategies. The Cohorts will then pursue their selected action strategies over the following 12 months and be involved in evaluation and dissemination of work in the subsequent 6 months; the latter 6 months coincides with the Achievements phase of the DU Grand Challenges structure. The work of each Cohort will inform the other Cohortsm through the backbone support provided by CCESL; the Working Group will monitor and support the Cohorts’ overall trajectories. This intentional design for consistent communication and feedback will ensure that the cohorts do not fall prey to the dangers of “shifting from isolated programs to isolated collective impact initiatives” (Smith, Pelco, & Rooke, 2017, p. 27). Cohort participants are also responsible for building networks of others with expertise and interest in the issue area. The goal of this process is to build distributed networks that will continue to seed new work, identify existing work that can work in tandem, and move forward with new members when existing members leave projects. This process will balance launching new projects with continuing to look for and engage existing projects/people.

Early Successes and Lessons

There are many early indicators of success in meeting DU Grand Challenges’ goals. The earliest goals of the Working Group were to design a community-engaged initiative broad enough to be multidisciplinary while specific enough to identify goals that were attainable and relevant to the community. The Working Group was successful in many of these regards, having designed an approach to DU Grand Challenges that emphasizes community engagement and centers community-university partnerships in problem solving. The yearlong process used to identify issue areas integrated perspectives from campus and community members. With the selection of the three inaugural issues (improving daily living, increasing economic opportunity, and advancing deliberation and participation for the public good), these goals were met in terms of the reach and relevance. In terms of reach across campus, the Group found faculty experts for all issues in all units. In terms of relevance to the community, all three areas touch on existing community-university collaborations in research and teaching. This suggests that the topics selected are of interest and will continue to engage communities. As summarized in CCESL’s End of Year Report (2019), the inaugural year of programming successfully engaged students, staff, faculty and community members in activities that ranged from intentional dialogue (e.g., Forums) to research and creative work (DU Grand Challenges Scholars Grant).

Tempering early successes were challenges in identifying specific, attainable goals for improving daily living during the first year’s Aspiration phase. The phase-oriented timetable assumed that specific projects and goals would emerge out of the Aspiration phase, though the process led to the recognition that there was campus and community interest in a range of inter-related topics and projects. A success in the face of this challenge, though, was in being able to apply flexibly the collective impact framework to advance the initiative. Facing concerns that limiting the scope too soon might impede bolder action, the Working Group proposed establishing Collective Impact Cohorts as a way to dedicate more time for a relatively smaller group of campus and community members to identify specific, collaborative action plans in four areas. At this writing, the Cohorts are in the midst of a six-month, facilitated planning period, working towards specific action plans to take effect over the subsequent eighteen months. Their action plans will include indicators and program measures to evaluate the impact of their work on the public problem targeted.

Several lessons of experience stand out looking towards the end of the second year of implementation. As noted in the UCLA report, communicating effectively about a complex initiative to the many campus and community constituencies is challenging. CCESL has diversified communication strategies over the last year and sought to expand networks of students, staff, faculty, and community colleagues to amplify messages. Programming challenges have included sustaining engagement in events and grappling with place-based decisions about whether events will be on campus and/or in the community. The Working Group and CCESL continue to try new things and adjust strategies for communication and programming.

Mid- and long-term goals of the initiative include solving public problems, developing sustainable funding for the initiative, and advancing community-university collaborations as well as multidisciplinary work. Less than two years into the implementation of this initiative, there has not yet been enough time to evaluate successes in these areas. To do so in the future, the Working Group will use indicators and program metrics determined by the Collective Impact Cohorts to examine whether actions affected the public problems targeted. Further, CCESL and the Working Group are leading multi-year efforts to evaluate changes over time in faculty and faculty-community collaboration in research and teaching, using social network analysis and other tools. As the backbone support, CCESL staff are working with development colleagues on campus on external funding. To date, the University received a grant from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations to support DU Grand Challenges programming that affects undergraduate education. That support has resulted in undergraduates doing faculty-mentored, community-engaged research on topics related to DU Grand Challenges issue areas as well as engaging in faculty-mentored critical reflection on how their DU education prepares them to address complex public problems.

Conclusion

Grand challenge initiatives are meant to capture attention and imagination for public problem solving. University-led grand challenge initiatives have the potential to communicate much about institutional values and practices. For example, initiatives designed in a top-down fashion without consultation with communities may reinforce views of higher education institutions as hierarchical, remote ivory towers. Historical, “town and gown” tensions between universities and communities may only worsen. Alternatively, the emergence of grand challenge initiatives offers an opportunity to draw on traditions that have emerged within campus, such as community-engaged scholarship, and outside the Academy, such as collective impact, to establish a new approach to institution-wide collaboration with communities for the public good. The design and implementation of DU Grand Challenges offers one university's approach to grand challenges in an urban context, guided by community engagement and collective impact. A new approach that integrates community engagement and collective impact has the potential to inform thinking about institutional structures, such as the importance of engagement centers to span and connect campus and community constituents. Furthermore, this approach can also affect the public's view of higher education values, particularly around collaboration and engagement with local, urban communities to solve problems. The approach promises to allow universities to leverage existing relationships and collaborations cultivated by community-engaged faculty to advance institution-wide community-engaged work.

Moreover, by drawing on community-engaged methods, grand challenge initiatives have the opportunity to articulate and demonstrate their commitment to university-community collaborations that are mutually beneficial and reciprocal. In addition, collective impact frameworks provide a template for thinking through essential structural issues. For example, collective impact scholarship suggests that community-level change requires an influential champion, financial resources to ensure adequate progress can be made, and a sense of urgency that change is required (Hanleybrown, Kania, & Kramer, 2012). By integrating a community-engaged, collective impact approach to such initiatives, we propose that universities and communities will increase the likelihood of addressing large, multidisciplinary public problems, while ensuring institutions remain relevant and responsive to their communities.

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Author Information

Anne P. DePrince, Ph.D.
Department of Pyschology
University of Denver
2155 S. Race St.
Denver, CO 80208
Telephone: 303-871-2939
Email: anne.deprince@du.edu
Twitter: @apdeprince

Anne P. DePrince is Professor and Chair in the Department of Psychology and Director of the Center for Community Engagement to advance Scholarship and Learning (CCESL) at the University of Denver. In her capacity as CCESL Director, she has advanced the institutionalization of community-engaged work across campus. She also pursues a program of community-engaged research on gender-based violence.

*Cara Marie DiEnno, Ph.D.
Center for Community Engagement to advance Scholarship and Learning
University of Denver
2050 East Evans Avenue, Suite 22
Denver, CO 80208
Telephone: 303-871-2158
Email: cara.dienno@du.edu
Twitter: @CaraDiEnno

Cara Marie DiEnno is Associate Director of the Center for Community Engagement to advance Scholarship and Learning (CCESL) at the University of Denver. She supports faculty, staff and students in their community-engaged work – collaborating with the community to advance social justice and live out the University of Denver's public good vision. In addition to supporting the campus community, she also teaches university courses using service learning pedagogy and participates in community-engaged research.

*Corresponding author

Alignment through Community: The Case of a Metropolitan University and the Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

John F. Barthell, David Castillo, Liliana Rentería Mendoza, J. David Macey, and Charlotte K. Simmons

Abstract

The University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) is a public metropolitan university that has developed a highly collaborative relationship with the Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (HC). This partnership unites several UCO divisions and the HC in support of a set of shared goals, articulated in UCO's "Vision 2020" strategic planning document and in the HC's seven community development priorities, which include business development, cultural and environmental stewardship, workforce development, and education. To facilitate these partnerships, UCO's Division of Academic Affairs has reorganized its administrative structure to create an Office of Global and Cultural Competencies, which includes a Director of Cultural Outreach and Diversity Strategies, who serves as on-site liaison to the HC; the Division of Academic Affairs also has representation on the HC Board of Directors. These shared efforts provide a means for securing extramural funding, internships, and new leadership programs that will sustain the partnership and affect a growing demographic and economic segment of Oklahoma City. Within the university, this partnership complements the diversity and inclusion initiatives of UCO's Division of Student Affairs and promotes the legislative and economic initiatives led by UCO's Division of Public Affairs. This article addresses the often-unrecognized role that a university's academic mission plays in anchoring community partnerships, and it contributes to best practices in fulfilling an institutional commitment to serve diverse, metropolitan populations.

Keywords: partnerships; urban planning; development; cultural competencies

Introduction

Public universities increasingly confront paradoxical expectations that they engage more directly with the communities they serve and that they do so with diminished state-appropriated funding. This situation has increased the need to develop mutually beneficial outcomes with community organizations that value highly collaborative partnerships. This article outlines the basis for one such partnership, which began in 2013 through collaboration between representatives of the Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (HC) and of the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO). HC has set for itself a business-oriented mission with a seven-plank community platform that includes education, while UCO pursues a metropolitan-based mission to help students learn through a variety of degree programs by means of high-impact practices, referred to as Transformative Learning, that include six tenets (Barthell, Cunliff, Gage, Radke, & Steele, 2010). Among these "Central Six" tenets is Global and Cultural Competencies, which forms the basis for an office of the same name within the Division of Academic Affairs, led by an Assistant Vice President and a Director of Cultural Outreach and Diversity Strategies, both of whom are coauthors for this article.

UCO is an ideal educational partner for this collaboration. Founded in 1890 as the Territorial Normal School of Oklahoma, it has played an important role in the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area for over a century. UCO has grown to meet the needs of Oklahoma City and its surrounding communities. Most recently, its outreach has included UCO Downtown, a facility within the Business District that brings metro-centric as well as mainstream courses and programs to residents of Oklahoma City (Barthell, Simmons, & Youngblood, 2018). Oklahoma City has one of the fastest growing Latinx populations among U.S. metropolitan areas, with an 85% increase in the number of Latinx individuals between the last two census periods, 2000 and 2010 (Ennis, Ríos-Vargas, & Albert, 2011). UCO has also grown in Latinx enrollment, with over 11% of current students identifying as Latinx (UCO Office of Institutional Research, 2018). More than 50% of Oklahoma City Public School students are now Latinx (Oklahoma City Public Schools, n.d.). It made sense, therefore, for UCO to help the HC in creating a new collaborative space within its current facility in South Oklahoma City. The Provost/Vice President and Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at UCO work closely with the HC President and CEO; all three are coauthors of this article. UCO benefits from this relationship by fulfilling its metropolitan strategic plan documented in Vision 2020 (UCO, 2013), while the HC receives both interns and student-centered grant-writing support through collaboration with UCO's students, staff, and faculty.

As Oklahoma City's only public university, UCO has a unique responsibility to create a bridge to the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area's Latinx population. The university's mission to "contribute to the intellectual, cultural, economic and social advancement of the communities and individuals it serves" (*Mission and Vision*, n.d.) is grounded in theoretical and practical insights of scholars. Barber (1992), Gamson (1997), Ostrander (2004), Ramaley (2000), and Saltmarsh and Hartley (2011), have all examined civic engagement in higher education and have studied the goals and dynamics of campus-community partnerships. Indeed, the literature abounds with studies that exemplify the importance of mentorship through high-impact educational practices within academic settings (Tinto 1994, Jonides 1995, Seymour & Hewitt 1997, Crowe & Brakke 2008, Kuh 2008). This may be especially true for underrepresented group students in STEM disciplines (Collea 1990, Estrada *et al*. 2011). UCO therefore has every incentive to encourage community engagement and networking in anticipation of the arrival of new, often first generation, students to our university campus.

UCO and HC have implemented several new programs and initiatives, described in this document, in the past five years to support this developing and essential partnership. Below, we detail aspects of the partnership and describe how several new initiatives have contributed to the institutionalization of this partnership, sharing the perspectives of both the HC and UCO through the voices of the authors contributing to this article.

Engagement of Chambers of Commerce with Colleges and Universities

Chambers of commerce create an environment within their service area and/or within their target community in which economic growth and workforce development thrive. These goals link directly to the educational level and workforce readiness of the communities they serve. Thus, chambers of commerce often facilitate partnerships with K-12 systems and colleges and universities. Nationally, the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Foundation's University Partnership Initiative focuses on creating a college-to-career pipeline between Hispanic-serving Institutions and industry through education, access, and internships. University of Texas at Arlington is the managing partner and fiscal agent for the initiative, which will launch in Texas with the goal of nationwide expansion (University of Texas at Arlington, 2018). A local example is the Tulsa Talent Hub initiative funded by the Lumina Foundation in 2017. Tulsa Regional Chamber, Tulsa Community College, and Tulsa Technology Center are working to increase by five percent the postsecondary enrollment for Latinx and low-income individuals. This initiative involves creating guided college pathways and customized business and industry training to meet the demand of Tulsa employers (Tulsa Regional Chamber, 2017).

Higher education-chamber partnerships frequently form close ties to business and workforce development, as this is the intersection of their work. As a result, the partnerships could lead to transactional engagement. UCO's partnership with the HC is unique. Efforts to align the collaborative partnership with the missions of the two organizations resulted in campus-wide support for and participation in the partnership and full organizational commitment from the HC and its board. The university's academic mission provides a conceptual framework for the partnership, which fulfills UCO's institutional commitment to serve Oklahoma City's diverse, metropolitan populations and to promote economic development in the region. For the HC, the collaboration with various departments from admissions (college access) to academic programs as well as embedded faculty and staff at the chamber has brought about transformational successes to both organizations as detailed below.

Connecting to the Latinx Population in Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area

According to the Pew Research Center, 18% of the nation's population is Latinx, making this group the second largest ethnic group behind White/Caucasian (Flores, 2017). With this representation nationally, a growth in Latinx-owned businesses has been evident. In fact, Latinx-owned businesses are the "most dynamic entrepreneurial segment of the American economy" (U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, 2017). According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2012), there were 3.3 million Latinx businesses nationally in 2012 (latest economic census data), which contributed more than $468 billion to the economy (U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, 2017). The Latinx population, in turn, has buying power of one and a half trillion dollars (Humphreys, 2017, p. 9).

Oklahoma is seeing this dynamic segment grow and make an impact in the state and the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area. According to a 2010 U.S. Census Bureau brief, Oklahoma's Latinx population experienced an 85% growth over the past 10 years (Ennis, Ríos-Vargas, Albert, 2011) and increased its buying power to $9.4 billion as of 2017 (Humphreys, 2017, p. 24). With close to 400,000 Latinx individuals in the state and more than 110,000 Latinx individuals in Oklahoma City (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016), the Latinx population and the more than 10,000 Latinx businesses (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012) are becoming increasingly important. This is not only because of the increasing influence of Latinx interests in the economic development of Oklahoma City and state, but also because businesses create jobs and demand for an educated workforce. This demand marks the point of intersection between the vision and goals of the HC and UCO.

In 2013, UCO began planning for the growth of the Latinx population. The largest public school system in the state, Oklahoma City Public Schools, began to show a demographic shift. At that time, the Latinx student population was increasing at a rapid rate, to become the largest population in the school district. Latinx students are now the majority, with 53% of the district's 46,000 students being of Hispanic or Latinx descent and more than 13,000 students being English Language Learners, with a large majority speaking Spanish at home (Oklahoma City Public Schools, n.d.).

HC President/CEO David Castillo recalls hearing about UCO's efforts to attract more Latinx students to the university. He saw a news report that UCO was finding creative ways to reach out to Latinx parents, such as offering campus tours in Spanish. He therefore contacted UCO's Vice President for Public Relations to meet and explore opportunities for collaboration and mutual support. At that time, the Hispanic Chamber had just bought a new building for service expansion. The building had a conference room available, as well as extra office space. After discussion at the leadership level, UCO solidified its partnership with the HC by increasing its level of support from a university membership to a two-year sponsorship of the conference room and of one office and by installing state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment.

This initial step offered UCO the ability to use the conference room to provide pre-college workshops and to hold meetings with prospective students and parents, conducted in both Spanish and English, for recruitment purposes. These events were extremely successful because they brought UCO to the community, instead of asking the community to travel twenty minutes north to Edmond, the predominately White/Caucasian suburb where UCO's main campus is located. These efforts have continued since the inception of the partnership, thanks to the commitment of UCO's Division of Student Affairs and Office of Undergraduate Admissions.

Although UCO now has several locations in downtown Oklahoma City closer to the HC, providing services at multiple sites within the community remains a priority for UCO. Doing so builds trust and enhances opportunities to collaborate with and better serve the Latinx community. UCO recently renewed its sponsorship of the conference room for another two-year term and it will be upgrading the equipment by the end of the year for use by the HC and the wider community. UCO's goal is to increase and expand the services provided at the HC through the creation of new and the expansion of existing initiatives, in particular from the Division of Academic Affairs.

Realigning Resources: Office of Global and Cultural Competencies

UCO, like many other public institutions of higher education across the country, has experienced a sharp decline in state funding within the past five years. The Division of Academic Affairs has strategically reallocated existing resources in order to continue to advance the university's mission to help students learn by providing transformative learning experiences, among other means. An open assistant vice president position in the division presented an opportunity to reimagine this position for the first Assistant Vice President for Global and Cultural Competencies. This position's duties include functioning as the university's chief academic diversity officer, promoting international faculty collaborations and study abroad opportunities for students, and providing oversight to the concurrently formed Office of Global and Cultural Competencies.

In July of 2016, Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs John Barthell established The Office of Global and Cultural Competencies. This new unit brought together existing and emerging programs within the division. Since its founding, it has served as an incubator for new initiatives. These initiatives and programs, which serve a wide variety of constituents both on campus and off, address issues of inclusion, diversity, and globalization, in keeping with the office's overall mission to promote global and cultural competencies. Global and cultural competencies, as defined by the university, include the wide-ranging set of skills and knowledge necessary "to communicate effectively in a complex world, to function in multiple and diverse environments, and to adapt to the continuously changing global society through an attitude of awareness, consciousness, and respect" (*Global and Cultural*, 2018).

The Office of Global and Cultural Competencies includes two full-time staff members, the Director of Oklahoma City Cultural Outreach and Diversity Strategies and the Director of Education Abroad. It has three faculty members with administrative responsibilities: the Director of the Women's Research Center and BLGTQ+ Student Center, the Director of Faculty Outreach and Support, and the Assistant Director of the Women's Research Center and BGLTQ+ Student Center. The Assistant Vice President for Global and Cultural Competencies, one of three Assistant Vice Presidents within the Academic Affairs leadership team, oversees the operations of the office and reports to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs (UCO Office of Institutional Research, 2018, p. 13). The Office of Global and Cultural Competencies also benefits from the work of a number of student researchers supported by the Office of Academic Affairs, in fulfillment of the university's commitment to engage students in high-impact practices.

The Office of Global and Cultural Competencies collaborates with other campus units including the Center for Excellence in Transformative Teaching and Learning (Division of Academic Affairs), the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (Division of Student Affairs), and the Office of Global Affairs (Division of Student Affairs) to support education abroad activities and inclusion and diversity initiatives. The office has a direct oversight role for faculty-led study tours, semester- and year-length study abroad activities and international faculty exchanges (*UCO Centre for Global Competency*, 2019). It also sponsors a range of educational and professional development programs for faculty on topics related to global and cultural competency, including the ongoing Global and Cultural Competencies Faculty Learning Community, offered in collaboration with the Center for Excellence in Transformative Teaching and Learning (*UCO Center for Excellence*, 2018).

Through the Women's Research Center and BGLTQ+ Student Center, the Office of Global and Cultural Competencies facilitates collaboration among scholars and activists on and off campus on interdisciplinary scholarly, creative, and pedagogical projects in the fields of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (*Women's Research*, 2018). In addition, the Office of Global and Cultural Competencies serves a bridge between the campus and Oklahoma City metropolitan community by playing an active leadership role in organizations including the Oklahoma City

Inclusion and Diversity Consortium (2017), the Oklahoma Center for Community and Justice (2018), and the Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (2019).

Strengthening the Partnership with the Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

In 2013, the University of Central Oklahoma forged a partnership with the HC as both organizations sought to serve Oklahoma City's growing Latinx population. This partnership began with UCO's sponsorship of the HC conference room, to provide a physical presence in the community and to cultivate trust within the Latinx community. Once the physical location was in place, UCO's presence in the community expanded through ongoing events developed by the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and Pre-College Programs, including college-readiness workshops such as scholarship workshops, ACT preparation, and informational workshops about UCO.

Bringing the programs to the Latinx community instead of expecting the community to come to the university was the first step in creating trust within the community. Offering information, tours, and workshops in Spanish also helped to build the relationship with the community. Having a UCO representative participate in community events continues to build and sustain trust with the Latinx community. After the Office of Global and Cultural Competencies was created, the next logical step was to create a position within the office to connect faculty, in particular Latinx faculty, and faculty projects to the Latinx community.

The Director of Oklahoma City Cultural Outreach and Diversity Strategies position, formed by utilizing existing salary lines as they became available, has strengthened UCO's relationship with the HC. The Director is an integral part of the HC and works in its offices twice a week. She serves on HC and community committees and provides support for HC program expansion. This level of engagement opens avenues for UCO faculty and staff to engage in programs, events, and activities that align with their academic or service interests. One such successful and mutually beneficial program is Latino Leadership Oklahoma City (LLOKC). A graduate from the program herself, the Director for Oklahoma City Cultural Outreach and Diversity Strategies participates in the planning committee and recruits UCO faculty and staff to participate in the program in order to connect and embed additional faculty and staff into the Oklahoma City Latinx community.

A nationally recognized program now in its sixth year of implementation, LLOKC develops Latinx and bilingual individuals into effective community leaders. Participants in the program represent a broad range of organizations, including private, nonprofit, higher education, and governmental agencies. Through the six-month program, participants sharpen their skills in areas including public speaking, leadership development, and event management, and they learn about serving on boards and hear from nonprofit, governmental, media, and educational agencies. The goals of the program are to increase participants' capacity to fill leadership roles and to enhance their commitment to and involvement in community activities in central Oklahoma. The program also increases the network of peers and connects participants to established community leaders (LLOKC, n.d.).

Since LLOKC's inception, UCO has sponsored UCO leaders to participate in the program. UCO's participation demonstrates to the HC the university's commitment to being an anchor institution for the communities it serves by developing leaders who work in a wider capacity, outside of the university, and influence the community. LLOKC also helps the university to increase retention of faculty and staff who are of Latinx backgrounds or bilingual. UCO has sponsored ten of its nearly forty graduates to date. Six of the UCO participants have been faculty members in the colleges of Education and Professional Studies, Liberal Arts, and Mathematics and Science. The four staff members have represented Academic Affairs, Development, and Student Affairs. The employment retention rate for the UCO participants in the LLOKC program is 80%; all eight UCO representatives are engaged in community projects that align with their academic and professional interests. Dr. Kristi Archuleta, Associate Professor of Organizational Leadership and Class III LLOKC graduate, describes how her engagement in the program has affected her career (K. Archuleta, personal communication, April 15, 2019):

> "As a mid-career faculty, LLOKC helped me to widen my lens to integrate the Oklahoma City community and advocacy within my work at UCO. Multiple connections and pathways were presented for LLOKC participants to help us navigate and grow in new directions that are in alignment with each of us."

Universities provide professional development opportunities to employees. However, universities often overlook the importance of providing culturally relevant faculty and staff development opportunities. Such professional development opportunities increase retention of faculty and staff because they create a sense of belonging to the university and connect particular faculty, who may not be from the region, to the community that the university serves. Furthermore, Universities often discuss strategies to create a sense of belonging for underrepresented students through programming to increase retention and academic success. Similar strategies can increase retention of underrepresented faculty and staff, especially if faculty and staff from underrepresented backgrounds are proportionally less numerous than underrepresented students at their institution. Creating a sense of belonging within the university and community is essential for the professional success of faculty and staff as well as for student success. Dr. Guillermo Martinez-Sotelo, Assistant Professor of Spanish in the Modern Languages department reflects on his participation with professional organizations at UCO as well as his involvement with the LLOKC program (personal communication, April 12, 2019).

> "Being part of [the Latino Faculty & Staff] Association didn´t only help me meet other Hispanic & Latinx colleagues around the university campus when I started my position in 2013, but it also opened doors for me to be part of larger projects, such as the Hispanic Success Initiative... [T]he programs that I´ve had the chance to participate extend beyond the university. Because of UCO´s close partnership with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, in 2017; I also had the chance to be part of the 4th cohort of the Latino Leadership Oklahoma City Program. This program aims to develop Latinx leaders from different industries to work together in the betterment of the community, our community; and by extension the city we live in."

UCO has continued to enhance its community outreach efforts through engagement in HC events. UCO's intentional outreach goes beyond the recruitment of students. UCO is also intentional in the recruitment of faculty and staff through its attendance at the annual Viva Oklahoma! Hispanic Chamber Expo and Career Fair and the Bilingual Job Fair. The HC's and UCO's community partners see in UCO's presence an unwavering commitment to the advancement of the community, and this builds trust within the community. For these large community events, UCO creates a welcoming environment for community members to speak to UCO students, faculty, and staff.

Because of these efforts, UCO has seen, over the past five years, rising Latinx student enrollment and an increase in engagement within the Latinx community. For example, UCO has seen an increase in state and federal legislative members reaching out to the university to discuss Latinx issues within higher education. The Director for Oklahoma City Cultural Outreach and Diversity Strategies has expanded UCO's partnerships with the Oklahoma City Mayor's Office. The new mayor, David Holt, has emphasized the need to integrate the diverse populations of Oklahoma City, and he continues to invite UCO representatives, including members of the Office for Global and Cultural Competencies, to attend events. A local agency representative stated within the last year, "UCO is everywhere in the community." This statement points to the success of university-wide efforts over the last five years by the Divisions of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Public Affairs to connect to and better serve the growing Latinx community in the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area. Tying UCO's efforts to its academic mission has interwoven these successes with those of faculty and students.

UCO links its retention programming for students to faculty, community leaders, and partner organizations such as the HC. One clear example is the Hispanic Success Initiative, a collaboration between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. The Hispanic Success Initiative connects student participants with peers, faculty and staff mentors, and the community (*Hispanic Success*, n.d.). Now in its fourth year, the Hispanic Success Initiative (HSI) incorporates non-cognitive practices in a co-curricular setting designed to improve retention and foster a sense of belonging among students. Student participants are first-time freshmen and transfer students. The majority of the participants have at least one risk factor – low income, low high school/transfer GPA, or first-generation college-student status. Students receive information regarding the initiative via emails and paper mailings asking them to complete an application coming students and their parents as part of the recruitment effort. Once the application period closes, the initiative selects students based on the above-mentioned risk factors.

HSI builds upon "reflect-and-connect" sessions that allow for identity development while creating a sense of community. The cohort convenes bi-weekly to foster communication among students and to guide them through the Integrative Knowledge Portfolio Process using generative interviewing skills (Peet, 2015). This generative process allows students to reflect on their sense of self through discovery of their strengths, values, and purpose. UCO faculty, staff, and peer mentors participate in these sessions with cohort members and reinforce generative knowledge interviewing through mentoring. HSI connects students to UCO's values of leadership, global and cultural competencies, research creative and scholarly activities, and service learning and community engagement. As part of the program, participants hear community leaders and participate in service-learning events with community partner organizations. These values align with Kuh's (2008) high-impact practices shown to increase student retention. Students' reflections on their growth reside in an e-portfolio for assessment by the students' faculty and staff mentors, using the Student Transformative Learning Record (STLR), to determine the level of transformation that each student demonstrates.

Retention data for HSI student cohorts have shown positive results. Since the beginning, the program has served 101 students; of these students, 86 are currently studying or have successfully graduated. Year-to-year retention data for the first cohort of students shows that HSI students stay enrolled not only at a higher rate than other Latinx undergraduate students, but more than all UCO undergraduates. HSI participants were retained from Fall 2015 to Spring 2017 at a rate of 78%, compared to 71% for Latinx undergraduate students overall and 69% for all undergraduate students. The average GPA for HSI participants in Fall 2016 was 2.94, compared to 2.81 for all Latinx undergraduate students and 2.88 for all UCO undergraduate students. For the second cohort, 97% persisted from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017, compared to 70% for the overall undergraduate Latinx population at UCO, and 69% for all undergraduate students. Early analysis of the third cohort's data shows similar trends. At the end of the current academic year, the program will have data on four-year graduation rates for the first-time freshmen and three-year graduation rates for transfer students who participated in the first cohort of the program. Tables 1 and 2 below provide academic performance and persistence data for the first cohort semester to semester since Fall 2015.

Table 1 *HSI Cohort 1 Academic Performance Compared To UCO Undergraduate (UG) Students*

N = 41	UCO UG Students	UG Latinx Students	HSI Participants
Avg GPA Fall 2015	2.84	2.76	3.18
Avg GPA Spring 2016	2.88	2.89	2.87
Avg GPA Fall 2016	2.86	2.83	2.95
Avg GPA Spring 2017	2.88	2.83	2.91
Avg GPA Fall 2017	2.86	2.81	2.90
Avg GPA Spring 2018	2.87	2.78	3.01

Table 2 *HSI* Cohort 1 Persistence* Compared To UCO Undergraduate (UG) Students

N = 41	UCO UG Students	UG Latinx Students	HSI
Persist* to Spring 2016	84.8%	85.5%	92.7%
Persist to Fall 2016	73.1%	75.6%	87.8%
Persist to Spring 2017	69.4%	71.0%	82.9%
Persist to Fall 2017	66.4%	66.9%	78.0%
Persist to Spring 2018	63.9%	64.0%	78.0%

*Persistence includes continuing at UCO and graduating.

HSI participant feedback, in addition to the academic outcomes, demonstrates a sense of belonging among the students served. At the end of each program year, participants mention they have gained a sense of community in HSI by seeing other HSI students as well as faculty/staff regularly around campus and within the sessions. This sense of community has made them feel that they are not alone and have connections to the campus, which mirrors the results documented by Hurtado & Carter (1997). Below are two quotations from student participants:

> "Being a part of this organization has given me insights and reflection skills necessary to gain a greater understanding of experiences present in my life."

> "As a first-generation college student, being a part of HSI has provided a community, like a home away from home, here at UCO that has made me feel welcome[d] and involved."

Faculty and staff mentors report the same positive outcomes. Through HSI interactions with students, faculty and staff mentors develop a stronger sense of belonging to the campus and Oklahoma City communities and increase their advocacy work on behalf of students. Many of the faculty and staff mentors are graduates of the LLOKC program discussed earlier. HSI committee planning member and chair of Chemistry, Dr. Luis Montes reflects on the impact of his participation in the Hispanic Success Initiative below (L. Montes, personal communication, April 10, 2019).

> "Being a mentor in HSI has helped me understand the importance of being visible in my roles as STEM faculty member, department leader, and faculty leader. While I would do these things anyway, I understand the value in demonstrating to Latinx students that these paths are open to them as well. And more generally, they can be successful in other paths outside of academia or the sciences…From a personal standpoint, the [Integrative Knowledge Portfolio Process] training has helped me to recognize some of my own talents and what I value. The increasing population of Latinx students in my courses has helped me to understand the importance of being a role model."

Having the Director of Cultural Outreach and Diversity Strategies embedded at the HC has also supported HC staff in enhancing programming supported by Academic Affairs. The Director has connected chamber projects with UCO's colleges and academic departments, as well as with other university departments. Faculty have made connections HC programming. For example, a faculty member from the Adult Education department has served on the LLOKC planning committee.

UCO also provides grant-writing expertise for HC program development and expansion. The Director and a faculty member with reassignment time, provided through the Transformative Learning Scholars Program, work closely with HC staff to identify opportunities and to write proposals for external funding. The faculty member assists the Director in finding external funds to support community initiatives that further UCO's role as an anchor university.

HC recently received, with UCO's assistance, grant funding for a project to provide culturally responsive business development services to women who are of Latinx descent, who belong to other underrepresented groups, or who are from low-income backgrounds. The project's service-delivery progresses by a community-building approach that will foster a sense of belonging, confidence, and skill development for women entrepreneurs through support groups, mentorships, and networking. This project will revolutionize the way in which business development services are delivered in central Oklahoma.

As part of this project, UCO's College of Business will provide assistance by engaging faculty content experts for curriculum development, presentations, and mentorships for aspiring women entrepreneurs. Students will reap the benefit of the faculty members' involvement. The Customized Education department, a UCO unit that runs the Catbird Seat, a successful business incubator, will provide resources and support to the HC project participants by sharing curriculum and providing seats in incubator workshops. Staff from UCO's business incubator will also assist high-achieving women in the project, including those who have an established business and are seeking to expand.

Finally, the Director has been able to connect students to the HC via grant-funded internships. These internships operate through the Student Transformative Learning Record grant, a Title III grant awarded to UCO by the U.S. Department of Education. Interns have assisted the Director and HC staff in data collection for grant-writing purposes, as well as program evaluation, program development, and event-planning assistance. HIS members have served as interns, connecting students to community organizations and business leaders.

UCO's Division of Academic Affairs has expanded the partnership with the HC since the establishment of the Office of Global and Cultural Competencies more than two years ago to connect faculty and students to the community. This relationship could not operate at its current level without the buy-in from the top. HC President/CEO David Castillo has stated on multiple occasions that UCO's engagement and investment can be seen at every level of the university, including the President, Provost, and the Vice Presidents for Public Affairs and Student Affairs. From the Vice President for Public Affairs' original discussion with HC regarding conference room sponsorship to its current support and equipment maintenance, from the first campus tours in Spanish to the current efforts to market and advertise to the community to hire diverse individuals and recruit diverse students, UCO's wide-ranging support is evident. An example of this support can be seen in UCO's regular attendance at annual events such as the Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber Luncheon (see Picture 1 below). Additionally, the Hispanic Chamber President/CEO is part of the UCO President's Council of Advisors, and the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs is the current chair of the HC Board of Directors.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Building and strengthening transformational partnerships requires investment by parties working toward a similar goal. As a metropolitan university, UCO invests its future in the success of the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area and its growing Latinx community. The decisions UCO leadership have made in order to connect to the Latinx community have resulted in increased retention of students through programs such as the Hispanic Success Initiative, as well as increased retention of faculty and staff through culturally-relevant professional development programs, community engagement efforts, and internship opportunities. Investments of time and resources require financial support. With continued reductions from state support, the challenge will be to sustain and grow the partnership with the HC.

Picture 1. UCO delegation to the 2017 Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber Luncheon include UCO President Betz, vice presidents for Student Affairs, Public Affairs, and Finance, five assistant/associate vice presidents for Academic Affairs, three college deans, faculty representatives, student and academic affairs staff, and students.

Because applicants for the Hispanic Success Initiative are a self-selecting group, another challenge will be to scale the initiative to serve additional students who might not otherwise participate. UCO plans to expand the initiative by incorporating a first-year success course that will reach Latinx students who may have limited availability to participate in co-curricular cohort activities due to job or familial obligations and might not consider applying to the initiative because of these requirements. Once the course is underway, additional research will need to compare the outcomes of the cohorts based on different delivery methods.

Engagement of faculty and staff within the Academic Affairs initiatives has had a strong positive impact professionally and personally on those who have been involved, as the statements above illustrate. For UCO, the benefits are many. The university is retaining these employees at higher rates, and an even greater value emerges from strengthened ties to the community and to community organizations, which in turn enhances faculty and staff members' sense of belonging. Faculty and staff are proud ambassadors of the university and use their skill-sets and knowledge to advance the economic, social, and intellectual development of the metropolitan area. Tenure and promotion requirements for faculty and end-of-year staff reviews can limit participation when these community outreach activities do not specifically align to the division's or department's mission, values, and initiatives. Additional research shall need to find how these processes can be adapted in ways that recognize and support collaborative partnerships.

For the HC, the lessons learned with the highly successful collaboration with UCO will serve efforts to cultivate and strengthen partnerships with area K-12, vocational, and higher education institutions. Many of these entities are engaged in HC activities and programs. HC President/CEO David Castillo knows relationship building takes time, resources, and buy-in from both organizations for the partnership to be mutually beneficial in the long-term. Building the buy-in from the institution from its leadership throughout the entire organization will be key to ensure replication of highly collaborative partnerships with educational institutions throughout the metropolitan area.

Projecting forward and social mobility

UCO is a member of the Regional University System of Oklahoma (RUSO) with a specific charge to serve the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area. As a public regional university, UCO strongly supports the social mobility of its diverse student body, many of whom are first-generation college students. A recent study by the Equality of Opportunity Project reveals that universities like UCO are far more likely to create this mobility for these students than are research-intensive public or private universities (Chetty, Freidman, Saez, Turner, & Yagan, 2017).

One of UCO's primary goals should therefore be to create opportunities to help students from such communities, including Oklahoma City's Latinx Community, which is a growing and highly productive component of the state's workforce. Indeed, the Stanford Graduate School of Business's Latino Entrepreneurship Initiative Report shows a national 46% increase in Latino-owned businesses this year, compared to a six percent decline in White/Caucasian-owned businesses during the same period (Orozco, Oyer & Porras, 2018). Because of the unprecedented increase in the Latinx population in Oklahoma City and the resulting increase in Latinx high school graduates, the partnership described in this article is essential for both UCO and the HC.

At UCO, the College of Mathematics and Science recently (Fall 2018) became the first academic college to reach a "majority minority" status. Just over fifty percent of the college are now non-White/Caucasian. The college's rate of Latinx enrollment is increasing more rapidly than in any other UCO college during the last five years (UCO Office of Institutional Research, 2018). The need for STEM-related jobs, a topic often noted in private- and public-sector settings in Oklahoma, has obvious implications for UCO and its future enrollment patterns, as it does for the communities UCO serves. The Oklahoma City Innovation District, for example, has emerged as an area of investment to increase wealth-generation through STEM and especially BioScience disciplines; the Brookings Institution has identified UCO (Andes et al., 2017) as a key contributor to the workforce in the Innovation District. The College of Mathematics and Science has already made great strides in developing programs that will encourage Latinx students and students from other underrepresented group to participate in STEM fields (Barthell et al., 2013), and it can serve as a model for other colleges.

Throughout this article, we have tried to convey that it is essential to act in substantive ways in collaborations of this sort and to understand the importance of return on investment, both financially and in terms of human capital. Community partnership must be authentic and deep. Both UCO's President and Provost, as well as other members of the President's Cabinet, regularly attend events hosted by the HC and vice versa. Both parties must therefore commit staff and administrative time to ensure that the partnership remains mutually beneficial in its outcomes. Initiatives in both domains must also entail substantive investments such as the Hispanic Success Initiative and the Latino Leadership Oklahoma City programs described in this article. Pursuing these avenues is rewarding and essential in the challenging environment that currently surrounds public universities in metropolitan environments; deep collaboration is the key to our future.

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Author Information

John F. Barthell, Ph.D.
Provost and Vice President Academic Affairs
Academic Affairs
University of Central Oklahoma
100 North University Drive
Edmond, OK 73034
Email: jbarthell@uco.edu
Telephone: 405-974-3371
Fax: 405-974-3519

John F. Barthell is the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO). He previously served for seven years as the Dean of the College of Mathematics and Science. His 24-year career at UCO has emphasized student-centered approaches to education, especially in undergraduate research. In addition to serving as a nationally elected Councilor for the Council on Undergraduate Research, he has now served as the Principal Investigator (PI) or co-PI of seven National Science Foundation grants that support Transformative Learning (High-Impact Educational) learning practices.

David Castillo
President/CEO
Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
3321 S. Western Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73109
Email: david.castillo@okchispanicchamber.org
Telephone: 405-616-5031

David Castillo is the President/CEO of the Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. He oversees chamber operations and program development. He has over 12 years of experience helping Hispanic entrepreneurs establish and grow businesses through his leadership in expanding and developing the Hispanic Chamber.

Liliana Rentería Mendoza, M.A.
Director, OKC Cultural Outreach and Diversity Strategies
Global and Cultural Competencies
University of Central Oklahoma
100 North University Drive
Edmond, OK 73034
Email: lrenteria@uco.edu
Telephone: 405-974-5762
Fax: 405-974-3843

Liliana Rentería Mendoza is the Director for Oklahoma City Cultural Outreach and Diversity Strategies. In her role, she works closely with the Greater Oklahoma City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce providing program development and grant writing support to the CEO/President

David Castillo. She has been instrumental in supporting new and existing Academic Affairs and university-wide initiatives with the chamber and other community organization in Oklahoma City with a particular focus on South Oklahoma City.

*J. David Macey, Ph.D.
Assistant Vice President
Office of Global and Cultural Competencies
University of Central Oklahoma
100 North University Drive
Edmond, OK 73034
Email: dmacey@uco.edu
Telephone: 405-974-5922
Fax: 405-974-3843

J. David Macey serves as Assistant Vice President for Global and Cultural Competencies in the Office of Academic Affairs and as Professor of English in the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Central Oklahoma. Through the Office of Global and Cultural Competencies, he coordinates a range of programs related to inclusion, diversity, and globalization including faculty recruitment and retention initiatives, international academic partnerships and exchanges, community outreach and engagement activities, and education abroad programs.

Charlotte K. Simmons, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President
Academic Affairs
University of Central Oklahoma
100 North University Drive
Edmond, OK 73034
Email: cksimmons@uco.edu
Telephone: 405-974-2538
Fax: 405-974-2538

Charlotte K. Simmons is the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO). In this role she provides the financial planning that underlies several programs that support Hispanic initiatives on the UCO campus. She is also a nationally recognized author of subjects pertaining to the History of Mathematics (*The Best Writing on Mathematics in 2012*) and serves as a Councilor and Executive Board member for the Council on Undergraduate Research. As a former Dean of the College of Mathematics and Science, she laid the groundwork for the Donald Betz STEM Research and Learning Center on the UCO campus.

*Corresponding author

Civic Leadership Education at the University of Chicago: How an Urban Research University Invested in a Program for Civic Leaders that Resulted in a Positive Impact for both the Civic Leaders and the Faculty, Staff and Students of the Institution Itself

Joanie Friedman

Abstract

The University of Chicago (UChicago), known for transformative education, created the Civic Leadership Academy (CLA) to address the need for leadership development in government and the non-profit sector. In 2014 the Office of Civic Engagement recognized that while there were a host of leadership development opportunities for individuals in the private sector, similar opportunities for nonprofit and local government employees were lacking. The program begins by investing in fellows' leadership capacity, so that in turn, their organizations are better able to carry out their missions. After three years of research and co-creation with foundations, corporations, individuals and groups, an original design, structure and curriculum emerged. The curriculum is rigorous and analytical, drawing upon the expertise of the faculty and the experiences of established civic leaders in Chicago. Action skills help individuals use their knowledge to achieve desired outcomes, and involve elements of communication, negotiation, persuasion, motivating others, and teamwork.

Keywords: civic leaders; Chicago; Civic Leadership Academy; non-profit; government; leadership development; civic engagement; equity; civic infrastructure

Introduction

The University of Chicago (UChicago), known for providing transformative educational experiences, created the Civic Leadership Academy (CLA) to address a lack of rigorous leadership development in non-profit and government employees who work in a variety of domains (education, housing, transportation, parks, arts, law, etc.) and who have at least 5-7 years of experience. This six-month, international, interdisciplinary program exceeded expectations by benefiting the civic leaders, the organizations that invested in those leaders, and the city's larger civic infrastructure. In addition, this program transformed the way the University understands civic leadership education and its own role and responsibility in fostering it in Chicago. The process the University undertook, to weave together faculty from five professional schools and to create a learning environment for faculty to interact with local civic leaders impacted the school in anticipated and unanticipated ways. The civic actors, while studying with faculty from multiple disciplines, raised new questions about what civic leadership is, how it is employed in the dynamic civic sector, and how the institution itself wrestles with questions of race, equity, inclusion, and difference. Fellows helped shape the curriculum and sparked uncomfortable, and therefore fruitful, questions for UChicago faculty and staff. As an institution dedicated to rigorous civic dialogue, the University welcomed the insights and made changes based on the feedback of civic leaders. This reciprocal relationship between academics and practitioners makes this program distinctive. The field of civic studies looks at the relationship between the academy and the surrounding civic sector. The CLA is a concrete example of how a University can invest in civic studies. As Peter Levine (2014), Lincoln Filene Professor of Citizenship & Public Affairs at Tufts, writes,

> Civic studies [is] a strategy for reorienting academic scholarship so that it does address citizens—and learns from them in turn. In fact, it treats scholars *as* citizens who are engaged with others in creating their worlds. Civic studies integrates facts, values, and strategies. Those who practice this nascent discipline are accountable to the public for what they believe to be true, to be good, and to work. They are accountable for the actual results of their thoughts and not just the ideas themselves. Civic studies is a large river fed by tributaries of scholars and practitioners who share commitments to particular forms of civic action in the world.

The creation of the Civic Leadership Academy was a way to bring scholars and practitioners into meaningful contact around a contested notion of civic leadership. While the original intent was to serve civic leaders, an additional benefit was the impact these civic leaders had on faculty, staff and students inside the University of Chicago. For example, the question raised in the CLA curriculum, "What is civic leadership?" (Howell & Wolton, 2014) led to an interdisciplinary faculty symposium hosted on campus entitled "A Symposium on Leadership" that included faculty from philosophy, political science, comparative literature, and behavioral science, seeking new questions about leadership. The lessons learned, and the results described below, might help other universities recognize the potential they have in contributing to the education of civic leaders who are addressing complex urban challenges.

Origin Story: What was the Situation and the Opportunity?

> This University is here to assist teachers, students, businessmen and women, and particularly those whom circumstances have deprived of educational opportunities once eagerly sought. I maintain that University men and women owe something as an institution to the people who are without its walls. Our obligation does not cease when we give instruction to those who come to us; it is our business to go beyond just as far as our means and opportunities permit.
>
> —William Rainey Harper 1894, University of Chicago's first President

In 2014, the Office of Civic Engagement recognized that while there were a host of leadership development opportunities for individuals in the private sector, there were not the same opportunities for nonprofit and local government employees, who were addressing some of the most complex urban challenges. In Chicago, nonprofit and government agencies are often working on the same issues but sometimes at cross-purposes. Individuals who work for the public library, the park district, and the public school system for example often did not have mechanisms to form relationships with nonprofit agencies in education, housing, and health. Robert Zimmer, President of the University of Chicago, as part of the University's strategic vision, invested in civic engagement as a key priority, and hired Derek Douglas, former Special Assistant for Urban Affairs in the Obama White House, to become the Vice President of Civic Engagement in 2011. Given the University of Chicago's desire to help strengthen the civic infrastructure of its home city, while staying true to its educational mission, the Office of Civic

Engagement committed to co-create, with local partners, a new program to serve “the people who are outside its walls.” The original intent was to leverage the University’s intellectual resources to build the leadership capacity of non-profit and government leaders. As evidenced by the three-year study, it accomplished its goal, and created positive benefits for the Universit as well.

What is the Model and How Does it Work?

The program begins by investing in fellows’ leadership capacity, so that in turn, their organizations are better able to carry out their missions. The CLA has another goal of building a collaborative network that “breaks down silos.” Bringing together fellows across sectors will ultimately contribute to Chicago’s civic infrastructure. Civic infrastructure is defined as an active, engaged network of civic leaders who gain strength from 1) *Relationship development*, or the extent to which individual fellows developed strong personal and professional relationships with other fellows in their cohort, and 2) *Networking activities*, or the extent to which fellows exchanged information and resources and/or formed mutually beneficial organizational collaborations. (Cassata, Talbot & Century, 2018).

The six-month CLA program is distinctive for three reasons. First, the curriculum is interdisciplinary, with 110 hours of classroom learning with faculty from Chicago Harris School of Public Policy, Chicago Booth School of Business, University of Chicago Law School, the School of Social Service Administration, and the Graham School of Continuing Liberal and Professional Studies. The curriculum is curated to expose the fellows to contradictory and divergent ways of thinking. For example, two political science professors modeled how to disagree with the accepted definition of the concept of “leadership.”

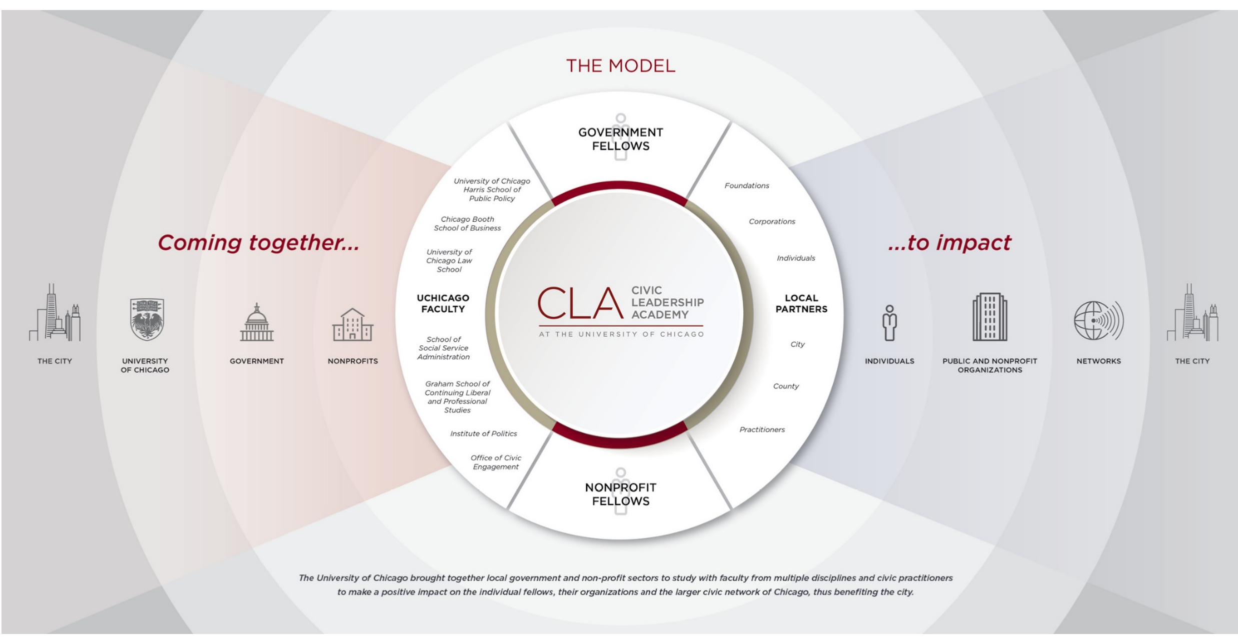

Figure 1. Theory of action diagram, University of Chicago’s Civic Leadership Academy.

As Figure 1 illustrates, UChicago brought together local government and nonprofit sector leaders to study with faculty from multiple disciplines and civic practitioners to develop individual fellows, public and nonprofit organizations, and civic networks, all in order to benefit the city.

Second, all 30 fellows engage in a week-long global practicum to South Africa or India that exposes them to their counterparts in a radically different context. Third, fifty percent of the cohort is admitted from the non-profit sector and fifty percent from the government sector so that fellows build an intentional community across non-profit and government sectors aimed at building a stronger Chicago.

Partnering Across the Civic Sector

After two years of research and co-creation with foundations, corporations, individuals and groups such as LISC Chicago (a community-development support organization) and the Civic Consulting Alliance (an engine of public-private sector collaboration), an initial design, structure and curriculum emerged. LISC Chicago hosted a set of focus groups for the target population of nonprofit candidates for the Civic Leadership Academy. The Civic Consulting Alliance helped identify promising public sector leaders who would benefit from this kind of program. Seed funding for the program came from local foundations such as the Searle Funds of the Chicago Community Trust, McCormick Foundation, and the Field Foundation, in addition to corporate donors such as JPMorgan Chase and Microsoft Corporation, as well as significant investments of time and resources from the University of Chicago. One important factor in the program's success was its partnership model. From the outset, planners gathered input from an Advisory Council comprised of individuals from foundations, corporations, community-development corporations, public/private entities and all five of the University of Chicago's professional schools. The process was a form of civic engagement itself, which built a sense of collective ownership. The full cost of the program, including six months of study and a one-week global practicum, is $25,000 per fellow or $750,000 for 30 fellows in each cohort. To make this program affordable to the non-profit and government section, the University committed to raise $17,000 per student from philanthropy and asked the host organization to pay $8,000 for this certificate program. Additional financial aid was raised for organizations who could not afford the $8,000 fee, no organization was turned away based on financial constraints.

The Curriculum is Grounded in Theory

The CLA curriculum is rigorous and analytical, drawing upon the expertise of the faculty and the experiences of established civic leaders in Chicago. The Civic Leadership Academy is grounded in an approach emphasizing the need (Davis & Hogarth, 1992) to acquire both "conceptual" and "domain" knowledge, and develop both "action" and "insight" skills.

Conceptual knowledge means learning about fundamental leadership and management principles, theories, and ways to think rigorously about problems and challenges. It is acquired through formal instruction and learning experience. To that end, CLA employs an interdisciplinary team of UChicago faculty from all five professional schools and the Institute of Politics, as well as industry professionals, who help fellows think broadly, critically, and creatively.

Domain knowledge, on the other hand, is area-specific and acquired by hands-on experience or through a company or industry training program. To that end, CLA not only draws on some of the University's top professors, but also from the expertise of its nonprofit and government partners, and from the fellows themselves, who come on average with 5-7 years of field experience. The program's comprehensive nature fills a need for skill-based, conceptual and practical leadership development. By bringing together nonprofit and government leaders, CLA creates an environment where fellows can learn from their counterparts in public service.

Action skills help individuals use their knowledge to achieve desired outcomes, and involve elements of communication, persuasion, motivating others, and teamwork. As part of the application process, fellows select a leadership skill to advance during the CLA and provide two examples of opportunities to exercise that skill.

Throughout the six months of the program, each fellow identifies, collects, and analyzes data on his or her own leadership action skills. These "insight skills" help fellows learn the right lessons from their experiences and profitably interpret feedback about the outcomes of their actions. Working with faculty, each fellow reflects individually and in a group, to ensure that she or he is gaining the appropriate insight. In this way, the CLA experience is also a reciprocal one, where faculty and practitioners engage participants in new questions that inform and shape their teaching and work. This reciprocal knowledge sharing benefits both the participants and the instructors.

The Six-Month Curriculum is Divided into Three Sections

The CLA curriculum is dynamic and changes in response to feedback from faculty and fellows every year. In the first four years of the program, the curriculum was divided into three sections. The first section focused on foundational ways of thinking about leadership, including sessions on discovering one's capacity for leadership, defining civic leadership, and collecting and analyzing data to inform civic action. For example, a history professor taught a session on foundational ideas of leading through Plato's *Crito* and Martin Luther King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." A political science professor challenged notions of power and ethics by teaching Machiavelli's text *The Prince*.

The second section was the global practicum that in years 1-4 brought fellows to Johannesburg, South Africa or Delhi, India, where they meet with nonprofit and government leaders in a different context who faced similar leadership obstacles and employed leadership strategies. The goal of the week-long immersion was not to understand "what" leaders in South Africa or India are doing, but to investigate "how" those leaders were advancing goals, persuading audiences and negotiating in contested civic spaces. The week-long global practicum sparked fellows to think differently about the broader context in which they operate and how they as a network of leaders across Chicago might learn with and from the leaders in South Africa and India who faced similar challenges in a larger and more complicated context.

The final section focuses on the application of concepts to practical challenges of leading in the civic space. For example, a business school professor teaches techniques in negotiation in the civic sector. A behavioral science professor teaches conceptual knowledge on securing commitment, a necessary skill for leaders who need to secure commitment from civic actors. A community organizer engages fellows on disrupting power through an analysis of Saul Alinsky's *Rules for Radicals*. The classwork and global practicum provide a powerful transformative learning experience for nonprofit and government leaders. In addition, in the program's fourth year, the curriculum added an interactive civic case-study, based on Chicago's history with the "CHA Plan for Transformation." This new case study focused on goal-setting, persuasion and negotiation in a local historical set of events. In the fifth year, the program's management transitioned from the Office of Civic Engagement to the Harris School of Public Policy, which had served as the academic home of the program from the program's inception. Under the leadership of the Harris School the curriculum continues to be refined based on input from faculty, staff and fellows.

How to Measure the Success of the Civic Leadership Academy?

The Office of Civic Engagement worked with UChicago's Outlier Research and Evaluation Network to conduct a three-year comprehensive evaluation of the Civic Leadership Academy addressing the following questions:

- To what extent have CLA fellows experienced and demonstrated changes in leadership behavior and self-efficacy over time?;
- To what extent have organizations benefited from having a fellow participate in the CLA?; and
- To what extent has the Civic Leadership Academy experience facilitated the development of a network and in turn contributed to a civic infrastructure in Chicago?

The methodology used to address these questions included: pre and post fellow leadership surveys, pre and post fellow network surveys, pre and post supervisor surveys, fellow focus groups and fellow case study interviews.
Results of the three-year study:

The Outlier evaluation was able to illustrate with qualitative and statistically significant quantitative data that from the beginning to the end of the program, fellows became more confident in their ability to:

- Use data and information to guide decision-making;
- Understand others' perspectives;
- Reflect on the effects of their behavior;
- Develop effective action plans;
- Adjust their behavior in response to feedback;
- Use assessment tools to understand others' needs;
- Make a greater effort to understand others in the organization; and
- Consider both experience and research when goal-setting.

The results reveal that the Civic Leadership Academy had a positive impact on individuals, organizations and civic infrastructure. Over the course of the program, fellows became more confident in using data to guide decision-making (59% pre to 91% post), understanding others' perspectives (59% pre to 82% post) and developing effective action plans (77% pre to 91% post). Furthermore, the organizations benefited from having a fellow in the program, both because of the professional connections and because of the change in behavior. 78% of supervisors of fellows agreed or strongly agreed that CLA improved their fellows' ability to be better leaders in the organization. Moreover, qualitative and quantitative data revealed that a larger civic network emerged from the program, resulting in concrete new collaborations. For example, when the Deputy Commissioner from the public library connected with a nonprofit that focused on job placement, training and coaching people affected by poverty, they were able to create a new initiative to connect homeless individuals who arrived in the public libraries with services to help them find employment. Illustrations of these collaborations can be found in all twelve case studies (Cassata, Talbot & Century, 2018).

The pre- and post-surveys, focus groups and interviews revealed that fellows built strong personal and professional relationships, their behaviors changed over time, and the organizations benefited because of the leaders' increased self-efficacy. These findings, collected during the program's first three years, indicate that an urban research university, when it partners with local government and nonprofits, can use its resources to convene and educate civic leaders in the service of strengthening the individual, organizational and civic infrastructure of a city.

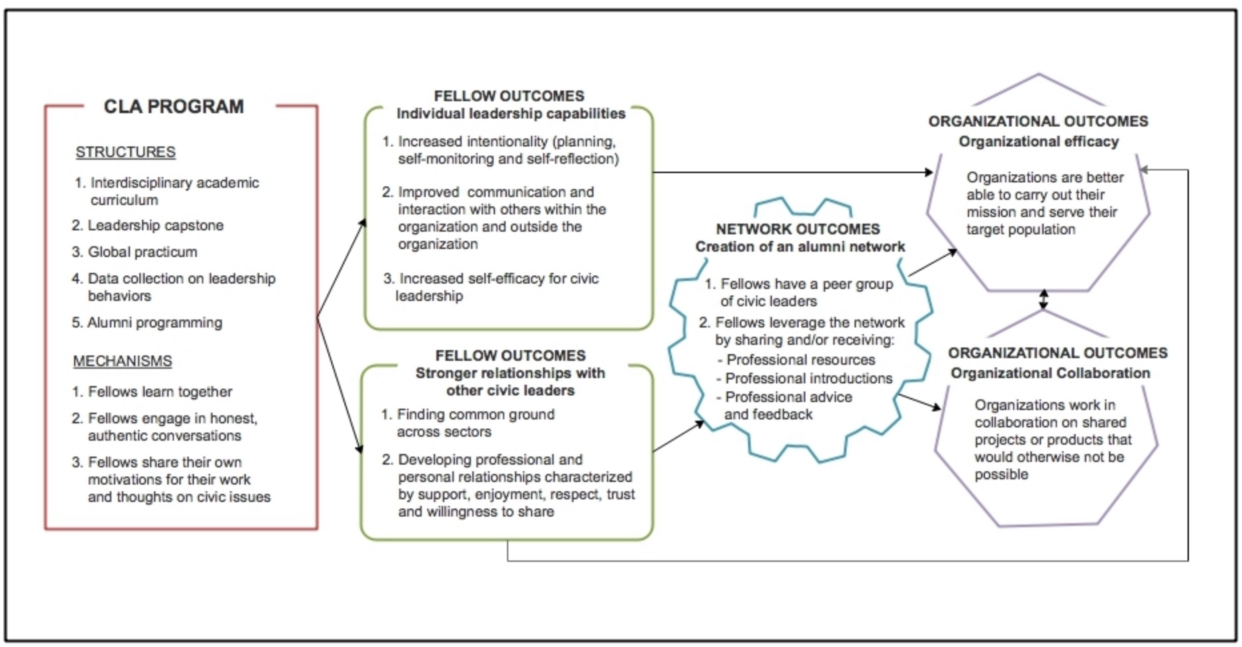

Figure 2. Civic Leadership Academy – Working Theory of Action Based on Evaluation Data (2015-2017)

Figure 2 illustrates relationships between the CLA program and the key outcomes described in the summative evaluation findings. Program structures experienced by fellows are listed in the left-hand box, and described in detail below. Program mechanisms, derived from evaluation data, describe the processes through which program structures may yield the identified fellow, network, and organizational outcomes. The arrows depict relationships between outcomes, illustrating multiple paths through which particular outcomes may be reached.

Lessons Learned

The three-year Outlier evaluation served both a formative and summative role that informed program design and refinement of the Civic Leadership Academy. Data collected in the evaluation led to two significant adjustments to the program. First, after the first year, it was clear that while the fellows enjoyed exposure to the variety of professors and ways of thinking, they needed help integrating one class with another and connecting them to their own work. Therefore, in the second year, the program added a "faculty advisor" who attended all classes, met with each faculty member to help design the sessions, and traveled with the cohort on the global practicum, in order to be the "red thread" tying these elements together. Second, there were major changes made to the capstone project in order to have it align with the mission of the program. The intended goal of the capstone project was to help fellows put their leadership development into action. In the first year of the program, fellows were asked to submit two proposals (with sign-off from their supervisor) for active projects that could advance their own leadership and benefit the organization. At the end of the first cohort, the evaluations revealed that while capstone projects advanced the work of the host organization, they did not improve the leadership skills of the fellows as much as anticipated. One possible reason is that the types of people nominated for and accepted into the program were high-performing, task-oriented individuals. The work of leadership development requires one to become more self-aware, more vulnerable and to take risks. Because of the high stakes of doing a project at one's home institution, as soon as the project was scoped, the individual focused on immediate results and lost sight of the more nuanced task of observing one's own behavior in particular contexts. Because of this real-time feedback, the program adjusted its requirement from a capstone project to a capstone reflection paper, which asked fellows to synthesize and draw connections from classwork to their experiences. The reflection paper employed in the fourth and fifth year encouraged fellows to consider *how* one leads, rather than focus on the completion of a particular task.

Anticipated and Unanticipated Benefits to the University

In launching the CLA, the University hoped that the program would result in positive benefits to the University. For example, CLA fellows can help undergraduate and graduate students gain access to opportunities working with or in the public sector. CLA fellows met with undergraduates from the Institute of Politics to share their career stories. A student group reached out to CLA fellows to host a civic hack-a-thon; students were able to use "real data" from Cook County to scope meaningful data-science projects. These types of initiatives led to a year-long program where public-policy data scientists partnered with Cook County staff to deploy teams of data scientists to inform policy makers how to make evidence-based decision making easier for government employees (International Innovation Corps, 2019). Enriching the lives of the civic leaders, welcoming them into the University community and providing new opportunities and connections for current students were anticipated positive outcomes of this investment.

One unanticipated benefit was that the lived experiences fellows and practitioners brought to the university informed the curriculum itself and helped instigate conversations within the

University on race, equity and inclusion. Fellows raised questions of how race, equity and power dynamics shape the policies and protocols in Chicago and how that inherently influences the work of civic leadership in Chicago. As part of a session taught by a political scientist on “undefining civic leadership,” students met with a local activist who was a key founder of the Movement for Black Lives. These activists and fellows pushed back on the definition of leadership as inherently hierarchical.

The input the fellows and practitioners brought to the CLA curriculum challenged UChicago faculty and staff to think and teach differently. As a result, there was a new CLA session introduced into the fifth cohort on “Confronting Difference,” where Fellows grappled with the ascriptive characteristics that shape how—and in some instances, whether—one is able to lead. Texts for this section include Palacios (2016), Delaney (2018), and Richie (1996; 2012).

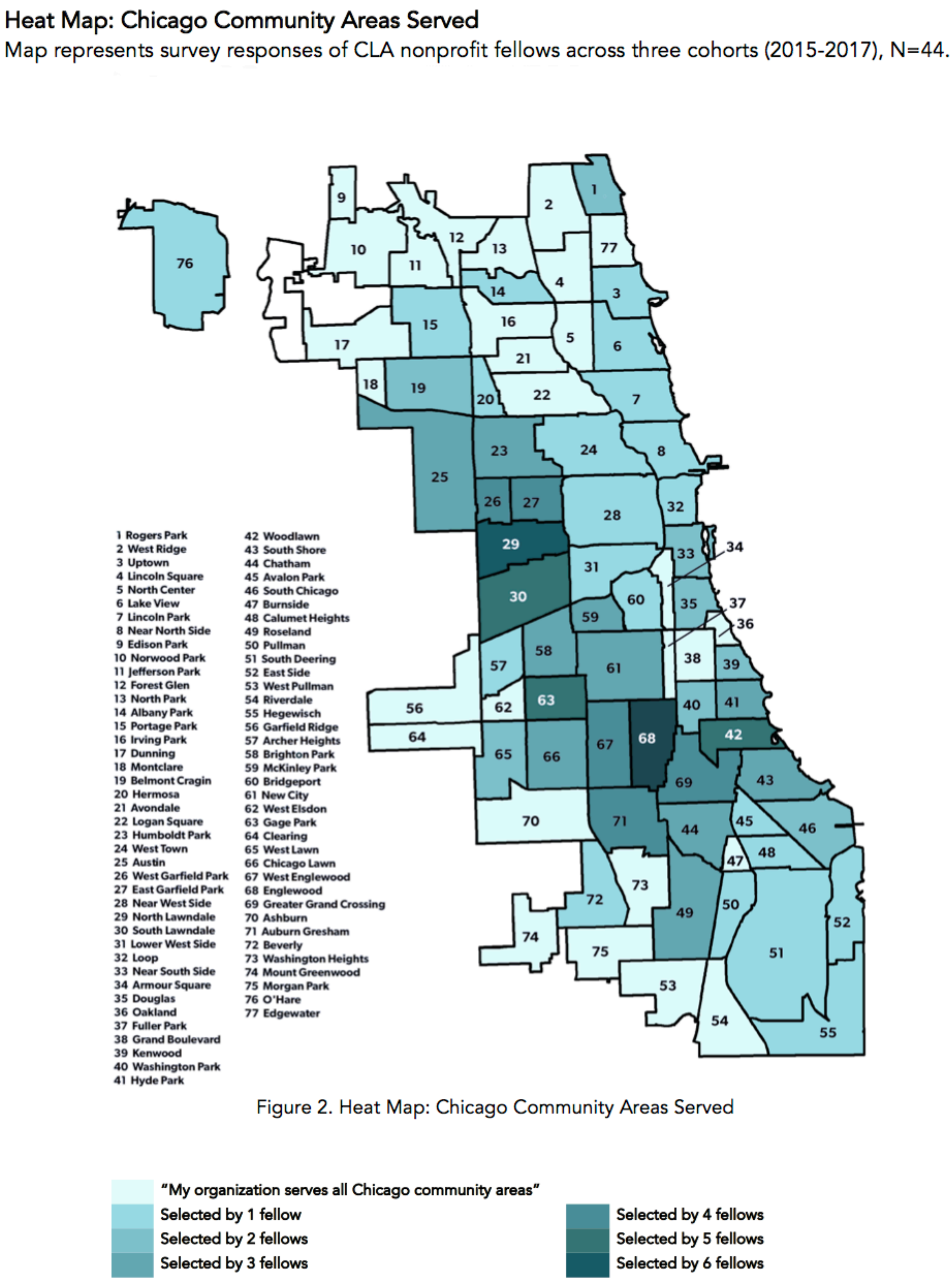

Figure 3. Heat Map: Chicago Community Areas Served

Conclusion and Implications

The University of Chicago created a model program that demonstrated how an urban research university could partner with local government and nonprofits to benefit individuals, organizations and civic infrastructure. In the program's first five years, the University discovered many positive benefits. By welcoming full-time nonprofit and government leaders as a new kind of "student" at the University of Chicago, both the participants and the University itself benefited in anticipated and unanticipated ways. Faculty from five professional schools mobilized to teach this group of eager students, and found that the life experiences they brought to the classroom were much different from those of undergraduate and graduate students.

The success of the Civic Leadership Academy has deepened the University's commitment to civic leadership scholarship, teaching and practice. The University's Office of Civic Engagement created a new position of the Executive Director for Civic Leadership to coordinate, invest in and discover new ways that an urban research university can leverage its resources, so that all students, faculty, staff, alumni and civic actors can sharpen and enhance their civic leadership.

In the next five years, it is looking for ways to leverage the initiatives that invest in civic leaders at the University, e.g. Civic Scholars, a scholarship for an MBA for nonprofit and government leaders, as well as Chicago Commons, a program of the Divinity School for faith-based leaders. UChicago leaders seek to create new platforms for civic leadership education and help support a "civic leadership exchange" for citywide leadership development programs. For example, based on the CLA curriculum, the University is piloting a new program called the "Civic Actor Studio." The initiative recognizes the performative aspect of leadership, and partners with theater directors from the University's Court Theatre, to help leaders strengthen their leadership performance skills. The Civic Leadership Academy at the University of Chicago is one example of how a major urban research institution can leverage its intellectual strength in order build the capacity of the city it calls home. In investing in inquiry and recognizing civic leaders as reciprocal partners, the University has become more permeable and has been influenced by the new perspectives civic leaders bring. By engaging a new kind of student and opening up inquiry on the very concept of "civic leadership" an urban research university can not only impact its intended audience, but can also change the research institution itself so that the institution at large can play an even more significant role in shaping its home city.

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Author Information

Joanie Friedman
Executive Director of Civic Leadership
Office of Civic Engagement
Edward H. Levi Hall
University of Chicago
5801 South Ellis Avenue
Chicago, IL 60637
Telephone: 773-702-1035
Email: joaniefriedman@(UChicago).edu

As Executive Director of Civic Leadership for the Office of Civic Engagement, Joanie is responsible for advancing the knowledge, teaching, and practice of civic leadership locally, nationally, and globally to increase civic trust and strengthen cities. Working across the University, she raises the visibility of programs and partnerships that strengthen the civic sector via civic leadership. In 2015, Joanie launched the Civic Leadership Academy, an interdisciplinary leadership development program for nonprofit and government leaders who study with practitioners and faculty from Chicago Harris School of Public Policy, Chicago Booth School of Business, University of Chicago Law School, the School of Social Service Administration, and the Graham School of Continuing Liberal and Professional Studies. Prior to working with the Office of Civic Engagement, Joanie led the Southside Arts & Humanities Network of the Civic Knowledge Project, which connected the cultural resources of the surrounding community with the resources of the University. Joanie holds a B.A. in History from Brown University and an M.A. in Social and Cultural Foundations in Education from DePaul University.

Achieving College Readiness through a Dual Enrollment Course: "Strategies for Success"

Bridgette Cram and Elizabeth Béjar

Abstract

To increase equitable postsecondary access and success outcomes it is critical to address the college preparedness gap. While Florida International University (FIU) continues to improve retention and graduation gaps for currently enrolled students, it became evident that the university could play a larger role in preparing high school students for college and university. In 2017, FIU developed a dual enrollment version of a currently offered course, *SLS1510: Strategies for Success,* to address this gap. The purpose of this article is to describe the context in which this decision occurred, the philosophy used to drive development of the course, and the steps taken to pilot the course. This article highlights the successes of the course, including enrollment of over 2,000 students over 4 semesters, along with areas of improvement for future iterations. The findings of the pilot can help to inform colleges and universities who are interested in addressing college preparedness in the k-12 pipeline.

Keywords: preparedness; non-cognitive; k-12; access; self-awareness

Introduction

The college-readiness gap among incoming students, especially low-income and underrepresented students, is well documented (Conley, 2007; Roderick, Nagaota, & Coca, 2009; Ross, et al., 2012). Literature indicates that in addition to traditional measures of college readiness (e.g. GPA, SAT/ACT scores), there are a number of non-academic, traditionally referred to as non-cognitive, characteristics (e.g. time management, study skills, and motivation) that help ensure a student is ready to succeed in college once admitted (Conley, 2007; Mattern, et al., 2014).

While Florida International University (FIU) takes a holistic approach to college readiness efforts with its k-12 partners, the purpose of this article is to describe how FIU addresses the non-academic college readiness gap through a high school dual enrollment course, *Strategies for Success*.

The authors first present a brief history of the student success work that took place at FIU to establish the context for addressing college readiness through dual enrollment. An overview follows of the theoretical framework used to develop the course and a discussion about the selection of dual enrollment as a vehicle for increasing college readiness. The paper ends with a survey of key curricular points, lessons learned, and future directions for the program.

History and Context

Florida International University (FIU) is a large research university located in Miami, FL. Home to over 57,000 diverse students, many of whom enter the university from the surrounding three counties; FIU has the unique opportunity to support the local community and economy through its delivery of high-quality education to these students.

In 2015, FIU invested in the creation of the Student Success Initiatives (SSI) office, committed to developing retention and graduation interventions. The context for this article lies in two of the interventions developed by this office: College Life Coaching (CLC) and SLS1510: Strategies for Success. Several institutions across the country have used one or both of these interventions to improve retention and graduation rates (see: Florida State University, Tulane University); and FIU adapted these models to address the specific needs of our students.

The CLC program functioned initially as a targeted, reactive intervention. The SSI team would identify freshman students on academic warning or probation and invite them to participate in the program. The coaching program focuses on five core areas: time management skills; study habits and learning strategies; ability to identify and create goals; coping strategies; critical thinking skills; and intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. FIU piloted the program in summer 2016 (15 students) and launched to a larger cohort of students in fall 2016 (46 students).

While the CLC program experienced success, the FIU team was not able to scale to the number of students needed due to limited staffing. Because of this challenge, *Strategies for Success* was developed. Much like the growth of academic/life coaching in the higher education landscape; student success courses are common at all levels of post-secondary institutions and have been demonstrated to improve persistence (Zeidenberg, Jenkins, and Calcagno, 2007). The goal of this course at FIU is to incorporate coaching in the classroom through training instructors in coaching skills combined with a standardized curriculum. With this new model, the team has served 907 students since spring 2017.

Due to the large number of FIU students requiring this course in their spring semester, the SSI team recognized that many of the conversations that instructors and students were having during class and related coaching appointments had to do with lack of preparation and/or knowledge before they entered FIU. It was at this time that the SSI team began to have conversations with the dual enrollment office to explore offering this course at the high school level.

Dual enrollment in the state of Florida is guided by §1007.271. Students are eligible to take dual enrollment courses beginning in 6^{th} grade, provided that they have "a 3.0 unweighted high school grade point average and the minimum score on a common placement test adopted by the State Board of Education which indicates that the student is ready for college-level coursework" (Dual Enrollment Programs, 2018). The statute also outlines requirements for faculty credentialing and course content. Briefly, these must be equivalent to those of the post-secondary institution issuing the credit. FIU drafts articulation agreements for each county that is engaged in the dual enrollment program to ensure adherence to the robust regulatory environment within Florida.

The FIU Dual Enrollment program serves, on average, over 5,000 students per semester. The research on dual enrollment indicates that students who have previously earned dual enrollment credits demonstrate higher GPA and completion rates once they enter a postsecondary institution (Jones, 2012; Radunzel, Nobel, & Wheeler, 2012). Students in the FIU dual enrollment program, who enroll at FIU, show results consistent with this research. They are more likely to persist to their 2nd year, maintain higher GPAs, and have 4- and 6- year graduation rates higher than students who did not enter with dual enrollment credits. Furthermore, the admissions yield rate for students with dual enrollment credit is over twenty percent higher. This data demonstrates why FIU has pursued dual enrollment and seeks to build affinity with enrolled students so that they come to FIU and can succeed in graduating with a 4-year degree to further their academic and career goals.

Theoretical Framework and Operationalization

A myriad of personal, societal, and institutional forces influence post-secondary success. In general, the literature indicates that at a personal level, both academic (traditionally described as cognitive) and non-academic (traditionally described as non-cognitive) skills are of critical importance (Conley, 2008; Farrington et al., 2012; Komarraju, Ramsey, & Rinella, 2013). Development of non-academic factors happens well before the transition to college, and occurs primarily outside of the classroom (Farrington et al., 2012; Pascarella et al., 2016). Therefore, it becomes even more imperative to review these skills overtly with students, especially those who may be more at-risk of not completing their degree. In fact, much attention over the past 5 years has focused on the "hidden curriculum." Smith (2013) calls this "a set of unwritten norms, values, and expectations that unofficially governs how individuals interact with and evaluate one another" (p. 47). Addressing these issues through interventions such as success coaching or success courses is based on literature demonstrating that these non-academic factors can in fact be influenced and changed (Bettinger & Baker, 2014; Zeidenberg, Jenkins, and Calcagno, 2007).

The initial development of *Strategies for Success* drew heavily from the conceptual framework presented in figure 1, developed by Conley (2008). Conley posits that college readiness is comprised of four factors: key cognitive strategies, key content, academic behaviors, and contextual skills and awareness. In regards to specific types of non-academic factors, Farrington et al. (2012) found that the literature identifies five areas of importance: (a) academic behaviors; (b) academic perseverance; (c) academic mindsets; (d) learning strategies; and (e) social skills. These are subsets of what Conley defined as academic behavior and contextual skills and awareness.

While recognizing that many students may come to college ill-prepared in all four domains, FIU sought to design the *Strategies for Success* course and coaching interventions for developing only two, academic behaviors and contextual skills and awareness. Conley (2007) defines academic behaviors as "a range of behaviors that reflect greater student self-awareness, self-monitoring, and self-control of a series of processes and behaviors necessary for academic success" (p.16). Contextual skills and awareness signifies "the privileged information necessary to understand how college operates as a system and culture" (p.17).

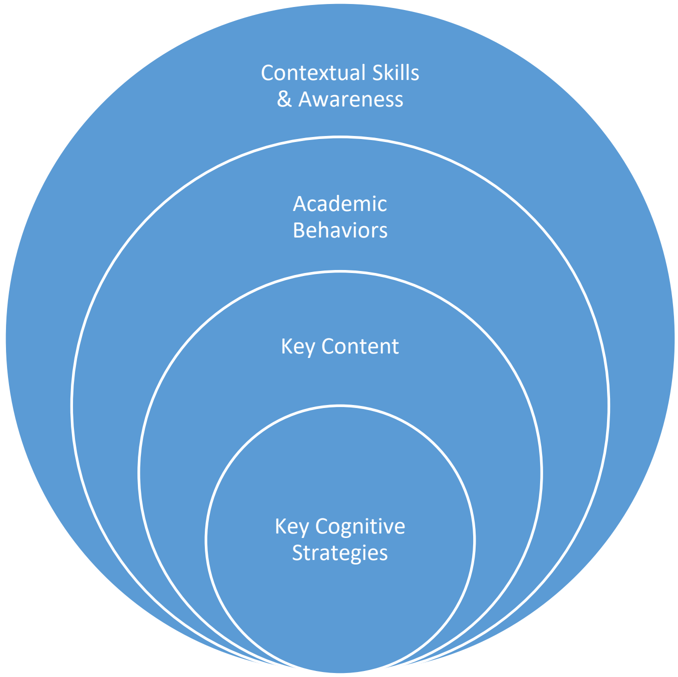

Figure 1. Facets of College Readiness. From Conley, D. T. (2008).

SSI staff chose to focus on these two elements given the results of our CLC pilot and the fact that many of our students do not come to FIU with the social and cultural capital needed to navigate a university campus. The staff selected the academic behaviors in the course to include topics such as time management, study skills/test preparation, motivation, and social and emotional intelligence. Next, the staff operationalized contextual skills and awareness through topics such as academic and career planning and financial literacy. Please see Table 1 for more detail.

Table 1. *FIU Strategies for Success Course Objectives*

Strategies for Success Modules	**Connection to Facets of College Readiness (Conley, 2008)**
Goal Setting	Academic Behaviors
Mindset Matters	Academic Behaviors
Time Management	Academic Behaviors
Learning How to Learn	Academic Behaviors
Study Prep	Academic Behaviors
Roadblocks and Problem Solving	Contextual Skills and Awareness
Resources and Getting Involved	Contextual Skills and Awareness
Wellness	Contextual Skills and Awareness
Self-Evaluation	Academic Behaviors
Aligning Your Values, Skills, and Goals	Academic Behaviors
Is Your Major Right for You?	Contextual Skills and Awareness
Career Exploration	Contextual Skills and Awareness
Financial Aid and Financial Literacy	Contextual Skills and Awareness
Final Reflection and Forward Thinking	Academic Behaviors

Implementing SLS 1510 as a Dual Enrollment Course

Once planners determined that *Strategies for Success* should be pilot tested in a high-school setting, they made several important adjustments. The course offered to FIU students is one credit only, to avoid excess credit accumulation. However, it was necessary to offer the course in a variable credit format—up to three credits—so that it could be included as part of the dual enrollment program. This presented several benefits. First, coverage of critical strategies related to time management, studying, and test preparation could be more in-depth. Furthermore, the SSI team integrated sections on social and emotional intelligence and additional material on how to navigate college. Adding these elements served to increase the coverage of the "hidden curriculum" through discussions about how to navigate systems such as financial aid and how to gain "the knowledge and skills that enable them to interact with a diverse cross-section of academicians and peers" (Conley, 2008, p. 11).

Moreover, adding this course to the dual enrollment portfolio helps to establish dual enrollment credit at more high schools throughout the county and allow for more students to enroll who otherwise may not be prepared for content-specific dual enrollment courses,. In fact, since its inception in fall 2017, over two thousand students have taken SLS1510 as a high school course at twenty-six different high schools through a specialized summer course on FIU's campus, and online. In fall 2018, 815 high school students enrolled in the course, accounting for nearly 14% of dual enrolled enrollments. This is our highest enrollment thus far. In addition, the course serves a diverse demographic – roughly twenty percent of students who have taken the course identify as black or African-American while 73% identify and Hispanic or Latino; exceeding the proportion of these students currently enrolled at FIU (13% and 61% respectively). Recognizing the importance that early preparation can have on postsecondary access and success, FIU intends to leverage SLS1510 as a tool for increasing equitable access to FIU.

In addition to high enrollment numbers, persistence data for students who successfully transition to FIU is encouraging. Thus far, 78 students transitioned into the FIU freshman cohort during the 2018-19 academic year. Of those, 99% (77) persisted into the spring semester. While this persistence rate is higher than the university average for fall to spring persistence, as larger numbers of students make a transition to FIU, we will be able to look closer at whether or not this course significantly influences retention and graduation rates.

Key Curricular Points

Several key design elements ensure students receive the same content regardless of location. These elements include instructor training and support, a master class format, a commitment to the course philosophy, and active learning.

Instructor Training and Support

Dual Enrollment instructors must meet the minimum requirements for an adjunct faculty appointment at FIU, which is at least a Master's degree with 18 hours of focus in the disciplinary area. Since *Strategies for Success* is a general studies course, instructors must have a Master's degree and be identified by their principal as having a capacity to succeed in teaching a college-level class. A benefit that this course offers is that it has engaged school guidance counselors in the teaching process, which leverages their expertise in the classroom. Once selected, dual enrollment instructors complete the FIU credentialing process and attend a required instructor training. This training introduces them to the master class template and overall philosophy of the course. In addition to these trainings, FIU mentors visit each high school instructor at least once per semester. This gives an opportunity for high school instructors to ask questions or address any challenges they may have experienced; it also gives the FIU mentor an opportunity to see how instructors put the curriculum into operation in the classroom. Instructors also have access to a SharePoint website, updated through the semester. This site includes updates from the FIU mentor as well as any shared best practices that instructors have found to be helpful.

Master Class Format

The master class format for this course includes a standardized syllabus. The course structure consists of four modules and four required projects. Module 1 highlights the importance of mindset, goal setting, and time management. The project for this module is a Mindset Reflection paper where students reflect on how to develop a growth mindset and why this is critical for college success. The second module focuses on how we learn, study habits, test preparation, and the development of critical thinking. For their second module project, students must develop a presentation of study “best practices” rooted in the science of learning. The third module encompasses what many refer to as “life skills”, including chapters on social and emotional intelligence, diversity and cultural competency, and financial literacy. For this project, students reflect on their personality type: how it shapes their choices in life, academics, and future careers. The final module revolves around academic and career planning. Students reflect on their values and interests to guide them in creating plans for success after high school. Their final project is a career and budget report, where they research their selected career and develop a budget based on projected earnings. The course provides instructors with rubrics for each assignment, which ensures that assessment of artifacts is consistent across all sections.

Commitment to Course Philosophy

The entire curriculum related to the course centers on development of self-awareness through reflection. Students are required to keep a journal (either written or electronic) to address key reflection questions for each reading. The purpose of the reflective assignments are two-fold. First, the process of reflection helps students develop self-awareness, which is critical to both college and lifelong success. Second, it serves to facilitate classroom discussion more effectively.

Active Learning

The final design element critical to facilitation of the course is a commitment to active learning. FIU mentors provide instructors with lesson plans guided by the reflections that students complete each night. The premise of the course is that there should be limited lecturing, with a greater focus on discussion and facilitated group work.

Considerations for Adopting Strategies for Success

While additional data must accrue and give a clearer picture as high school students continue to graduate, the initial feedback from high school instructors and students alike demonstrate that this course can be helpful in exposing students to critical non-academic factors important to their post-secondary success. To pilot this course, institutions must consider the following: state-level dual enrollment policy, transferability of course, human resources, and financial resources.

State-Level Dual Enrollment Policy

Not all states offer the same flexible dual enrollment policies as Florida. According to the Education Commission of the States (ECS) (Dounay Zinth, 2016), several states have no statewide dual enrollment policy. For those that do, stipulations vary on who is responsible for paying tuition, where courses may be offered, or how courses are evaluated, among other rules and regulations that must be complied with.

Course Transferability

FIU allows *Strategies for Success* to count as transfer credit towards a student's degree program. In addition to this course, FIU takes care in offering courses that count towards university core-curriculum requirements. This helps ensure that students are able to decrease their time to degree once enrolling in a post-secondary institution. Florida's statewide articulation agreements also provide assurance that students who wish to attend other institutions within the state can receive credit for their FIU dual enrollment.

Human and Financial Resources

FIU has invested in the Dual Enrollment program based on the overall success that students have once they enroll in FIU. FIU currently has eight staff that serve the central dual enrollment office, responsible for overseeing agreements and administrative functions for the program. Each course must have specified a faculty mentor(s). These mentors must have specified credentials to teach the course at FIU, provide training to high school instructors, and conduct site visits to each high school. They must ensure that syllabi, teaching methods, and assignments meet college-level standards. Institutions looking to pilot a dual enrollment program must determine the appropriate method of paying the mentors depending on how they receive payment for offering the dual enrollment courses.

Lessons Learned

While S*trategies for Success* has only just begun its fourth semester, the FIU team has already made changes to the textbook and course. The original version of the course depended on the instructor to develop reflective activities and discussion prompts. Based on feedback, the 2018 version of the course incorporated an edited textbook and specific lesson plans that aligned the reflective activities to classroom discussions. In addition, the course scaled back the number of required projects from eight to four. This provided high school teachers with a framework to meet all necessary milestones, and adapt the course to fit their teaching style and address the varying needs of students.

The most important lesson learned over the past year, however, is of s*tructured flexibility.* From the university perspective, this course serves as a foundation for students to build upon. The structure of a master class is necessary to maintain consistency with student learning outcomes, and ensure that all students receive the same information and complete the same activities to build this foundation. At the same time, the high school environment is unique and FIU must allow high school teachers to exercise best practices in classroom management and engagement. The relationship that exists between the FIU mentors and dual enrollment instructors embodies this concept of structured flexibility; which is the core reason why the course continues to evolve and improve.

As of spring 2019, the course has entered its third design iteration. Project leaders adjusted the instructor materials, to provide enough information to be successful without burdening instructors with too much material. It is important that the course mentor and high school teachers communicate to find the right balance of structure and flexibility, as every high school is unique in its needs. FIU is currently piloting a fully online version of the course using open educational resources (OER), designed to maintain a high-level of student reflection and application of course strategies and skills. The FIU team will evaluate the success of the online course at the end of the term to determine if this is a viable mode of delivery for the content of this course. However, the OER materials will serve for use in the face-to-face sections for high schools to reduce the cost burden to local school districts. Data collection and analysis is also an area for improvement. The course mentor works closely with the central dual enrollment office to ensure that appropriate data points are collected; furthermore, the course mentor is exploring how to collect data from high school students taking the course to determine changes in behaviors and attitudes.

Conclusion

As FIU looks to the future, it becomes increasingly clear that universities must proactively address college readiness gaps that occur long before a student applies for admission. At a time when performance-based funding is placing increasing pressure on institutions to adopt policies that may decrease equity, programs such as these can work proactively to ensure that we provide students from all backgrounds with the opportunity to gain skills that translate into academic and career success. This article outlines an approach to collaborating with the k-12 system and intentionally working with high school students to develop the academic, social, and emotional skills they need to be successful lifelong learners. Not only will interventions such as this move to close this gap, but long-term success can also help to improve equity in terms of access to postsecondary education and completion.

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Author Information

*Bridgette Cram, Ph.D.
Academic Programs and Partnerships
Florida International University
11200 SW 8th St. PC 526
Miami, FL 33199
Email: bcram@fiu.edu

Bridgette Cram is Director of Academic Programs and Partnerships at FIU, where she works to leverage internal and external partnerships for student success. Bridgette was the founding member of the Student Success Initiatives office and serves as the primary mentor for SLS1510. Bridgette earned her PhD in Public Affairs from FIU where she focused on the measurement and development of cultural competence in graduating Masters of Public Administration students.

Elizabeth M. Béjar, Ph.D.
Academic and Student Affairs
Florida International University
11200 SW 8th St. PC 526
Miami, FL 33199
Email: bejare@fiu.edu

Elizabeth Béjar is Senior Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs at FIU. Elizabeth serves as Principal Investigator for multiple grants focused on minority-serving institutions-models of success. She serves on the board of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, serves on the Florida Board of Governors Council of Academic Vice Presidents Academic Coordination Workgroup, and is an advisory board member to Excelencia in Education. She earned a PhD in Higher Education Administration from Boston College.

*Corresponding author

Urban Partnerships to Address Health Literacy in High Need Populations

Abiola O. Keller, Amy Vuyk, and Joshua Knox

Abstract

Low health literacy disproportionately affects racial and ethnic minority communities and lower-income socioeconomic groups. To address this critical determinant of health inequity, two nonprofit organizations, Repairers of the Breach, a day shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness, and Bread of Healing a neighborhood-based clinic serving individuals with low incomes, partnered with researchers at Marquette University to implement and evaluate an evidence-supported health literacy program. The partnership delivered the curriculum in seven one-hour sessions over seven weeks. The program attendees were predominantly African American men and women from 19–73 years old. Most participants had formal education ranging from elementary school to some college. Forty individuals attended at least one class and 14 attendees completed 4 or more classes. Program completers demonstrated gains in confidence and topic knowledge. Most interviewees reported a personal/family need for the program, acceptability of the group format, and the ability to learn the skills they needed for self-care. The project used a successful collaboration between community-based organizations serving vulnerable populations and an urban academic institution to demonstrate the necessity, feasibility, acceptability, and effectiveness of formal health literacy education in adults with low incomes or who are experiencing homelessness. Urban and metropolitan serving institutions can work in partnership with community to address low health literacy in high need populations.

Keywords: HEAL program; health education; community-academic collaboration

Introduction

To promote health, improve health outcomes, and achieve equity, individuals must be able to understand and use the health information they hear, read, and see from numerous sources. Yet, approximately 80 million adults in the U.S. have difficulty using everyday health information (Kutner, Greenberg, Jin, & Paulsen, 2006). Health literacy, defined as the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services need to make appropriate health decisions (Ratzan & Parker, 2000) is an important determinant of health. Research has shown low health literacy to be associated with adverse health outcomes (Berkman, Sheridan, Donahue, Halpern, & Crotty, 2011) and poorer use of health care services (Griffey, Kennedy, D'Agostino McGowan, Goodman, & Kaphingst, 2014). While low health literacy affects people of all races, ages, education, and income levels, rates are higher among minority and lower socioeconomic groups (Kutner et al., 2006). Given the disproportionate burden of low health literacy and its adverse impact on health, improving health literacy had been recognized as a critical mechanism for improving health and health outcomes (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010). Notably, improving health literacy is included as one of the Healthy People 2020 objectives (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2019).

Institutions of higher education can play a major role in addressing inequities in determinants of health such as health literacy. In addition to collaborating with community to deliver health-promoting services and programs, urban and metropolitan serving institutions may also serve as evaluation partners. Collecting and analyzing data to determine the feasibility and effectiveness of community-based programs in order to better understand what does and does not work is critical for optimizing program outcomes and maximizing the return on investment. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019). In this article, we present an example of leveraging a community-academic partnership to deliver and evaluate a health literacy intervention in a high need population.

In response to a community-driven agenda to elevate the health and well-being of community residents (Milwaukee Health Department) and in recognition of the potential for limited health literacy to reinforce existing inequalities, researchers at Marquette University, an urban institution, partnered with two local clinics serving individuals with low incomes or who are experiencing homelessness to address low health literacy. Available evidence suggests that health literacy can be increased through focused interventions (Taggart et al., 2012). Moreover, interventions delivered by non-physicians (Dennis et al., 2012), or in a community setting (Taggart et al., 2012) are promising approaches. The Health Education and Literacy (HEAL) Program (Literacy for Life, 2016) is a community-based, health literacy course. Although the HEAL Program has been shown to increase participants' confidence and health knowledge (Mellor & Uselton, 2016), this has not been investigated in lower resourced settings. Moreover, participants' perceptions of the necessity, acceptability, feasibility, and safety of the intervention have not been examined. Information on these parameters is essential for guiding efforts to augment health literacy skills in underserved populations. To address this gap, a community-academic partnership sought to assess the necessity, acceptability, feasibility, fidelity, safety, and effectiveness of the HEAL program in an urban setting.

Methods

Design

This qualitative and quantitative study explored the six critical parameters—necessity, acceptability, feasibility, safety, fidelity, and effectiveness—of a health literacy intervention in an urban community. This approach has been used in previous intervention research with people facing multiple barriers (Bekhet, Zauszniewski, & Matel-Anderson, 2012). Data were collected from participants during face-to-face interviews at the conclusion of the intervention. This study was approved as minimal risk by the Marquette University Institutional Review Board.

Setting

*Repairers of the Breach (ROB)***.** Repairers of the Breach is a nonprofit day shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness. Repairers is engaged in healing activities that build community awareness and pave the way for individual improvement through nutrition, fellowship, counseling and support groups, violence reduction, substance abuse recovery, leadership, and volunteerism. Repairers also operates a free medical clinic serving individuals experiencing homelessness and the local community.

Bread of Healing (BOH). Bread of Healing is a nonprofit neighborhood-based clinic serving individuals with low incomes. Bread of Healing provides medical, pharmacy, dental, counseling, social service, and health education services.

Participants

For the study, the study team recruited a convenience sample of adults receiving medical services at ROB or BOH medical clinics. Individuals were eligible for the study if they attended ROB or BOH medical clinics, were willing to attend up to 8 intervention sessions, and able to provide information via pre and post surveys and an interview.

Procedure

The community partners informed recruitment approaches for the study. At ROB, researchers distributed printed materials about the study and posted flyers in prominent places. In addition, the investigators had one-on-one conversations with prospective participants in the clinic. At BOH, investigators held an information study where they presented general information about the study. At both sites, anyone who was interested in participating and eligible was invited to attend the first intervention session.

The Intervention

Literacy for Life (2016), an independent non-profit organization of the William and Mary School of Education in Williamsburg, VA, developed and disseminates the intervention used here, entitled Health Education and Literacy (HEAL) Program. Prior to beginning the study, the authors traveled to the Literacy for Life Learning Center and completed the 1-day certification training course necessary to obtain a license for administering the HEAL program. The research team conducted the HEAL program twice, once at ROB and once at BOH. Consistent with the established protocol, the HEAL program sessions took place in a small group format. Each session was held in a private classroom. Dr. Keller and Mr. Knox alternated teaching the sessions at BOH. Ms. Vuyk taught the curriculum at ROB with support from Mr. Knox. The research team delivered the HEAL program curriculum in seven one-hour sessions over seven weeks. They addressed topics such as how to describe symptoms to a doctor, reading and understanding medication instructions, understanding when to use non-emergent health care services versus using the emergency room, understanding medical forms, and identifying healthy lifestyle choices. Each of the sessions was conducted by one or two members of the research team.

Measures and Instruments

Measuring and Evaluating the Intervention Parameters. The team assessed the necessity of the HEAL program by asking participants if they felt they needed the program and if they thought that their friends and family would benefit. The authors also gauged necessity using the participants' baseline scores on the Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine-Short Form (REALM-SF), a 7-item word recognition test. The REALM-SF has been validated, and field-tested in diverse research settings (Arozullah et al., 2007). Possible scores on the REALM-SF range from 0 to 7. Individuals with a score of zero (grade equivalent = third grade or below) will be unable to read most low-literacy materials, those with a score of one to three (grade equivalent = fourth to sixth grade) will need low-literacy materials and be likely unable to read prescription labels. Adults with a REALM-SF score of four to six (grade equivalent = seventh to eighth grade) often struggle with most patient-education materials and would benefit from low-literacy materials. Those with a score of seven (grade equivalent = high school) will likely be able to read most patient education materials. Additionally, this study examined baseline scores on a brief questionnaire assessing participants' confidence for and knowledge of the topics covered in the HEAL program. Confidence was measured by asking how comfortable and confident participants felt in doing routine health tasks such as asking providers questions, competing forms, and determining when and where to seek care. Available responses for each item were on a 5-point Likert scale including not at all, not very, somewhat, very, and extremely with higher numbers indicating more confidence. The authors assessed the knowledge gained with eight true or false questions based on the program curriculum.

To evaluate acceptability of the HEAL program, participants were asked to describe what part or parts of the program were most, and least interesting. They were also asked whether they thought the program content and the group format were appropriate for them.

The feasibility of the program was assessed by asking participants to describe what part or parts of the program were easiest and most challenging, and whether they thought the number of and length of each session was appropriate for them.

To determine program fidelity, participants were asked if they thought they learned the skills they needed to take care of their health and what would have helped them to learn better. Fidelity was also assessed by administering the brief questionnaire to assess participants' confidence for and knowledge of the topics covered in the HEAL program at the completion of the curriculum. To compare the pre and post confidence and knowledge scores a paired Wilcoxon signed-rank test was performed. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test is similar to the paired t-test but is more suitable when the data are non-normally distributed (McDonald, 2014). The research team hypothesized that the post-program scores would increase if the program content was taught effectively.

The safety of the HEAL program was measured by asking participants to describe the part or parts of the program that were the most, and least, uncomfortable or distressing and whether they had any worries about confidentiality during the group sessions.

The effectiveness of the HEAL program was evaluated by asking participants to describe the part or parts of the program that were the most, and least, helpful in teaching them about taking care of their health. Participants were also asked for feedback on ways that the program could be improved.

All participants were asked to provide demographic information (age, gender, race, ethnicity, and education). Perceived health status was evaluated using a single item question asking participants to rate their general health on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent.

Results

The Study Sample

Forty adults attended at least one HEAL program session (ROB = 24, BOH =16) with 13 attending four or more sessions (ROB = 7, BOH = 6). Fourteen adults completed the post-program evaluation (ROB = 9, BOH = 5). Thirteen of the 14 adults identified as African American. Among those who completed the post-program evaluation, 7 were women (50%) and 7 men (50%). Participants in the program evaluation were between the ages of 27 and 64 years (mean, 50), the majority had a high school education or less (n =12, 86%) and rated their health to be good, very good, or excellent (n = 11, 79%).

Evaluation of Intervention Parameters

Necessity. The baseline REALM-SF scores, as well as participants' confidence for and knowledge of the program topics, were assessed as indicators of the level of need for the HEAL program. The REALM-SF scores of the study sample ranged from one to seven (mean, 4.6), baseline confidence scores ranged from three to five (mean, 3.9), baseline knowledge were between zero and six (mean, 4.1). Most program completers reported feeling that they needed the program (86%) or that their family and friends needed the program (79%). One participant said, "At first I didn't [feel I needed the program], but now that I went through it, I learned a lot of stuff. It was beneficial." Another shared, "I can say I need it. Even though I knew some of it, it helped freshen my mind."

Acceptability. When asked what part or parts of the program was most interesting, the most frequently discussed topics included communicating with providers (n=4) and diet and nutrition (n=4). One participant said, "Health wise about the weight, learning how much calories in soda." Information about smoking cessation and medication taking emerged as the least interesting. With regards to smoking cessation, one participant explained by saying "Smoking, not trying to quit right now." When asked about the appropriateness of the group format, many participants responded positively. Responses included "It was fun cause you learn more from different people." and "It was awesome cause you learn something from everybody."

Feasibility. Half of the participants reported that nothing about the program was difficult. Among those who reported finding part of the program challenging, the most frequently (n=3) discussed challenge had to do with making changes related to diet and nutrition. One participant described this by saying "Eating right. I am still in the process of eating right. Sometimes I eat too much cake." Another added, "I have to watch what I eat even though I want fast food, I can't have it." Six individuals responded that the content pertaining to diet and nutrition was the easiest. This was exemplified by comments such as “I used to eat a lot but [the class] told you different things to eat to watch your weight” and “I never knew to go to the store and look at labels. I used to go to the store and just pick up stuff.” The majority of participants (64%) wanted either more class time or longer sessions, “The hour was too short” or additional classes “for a beginning it was [long enough], but I wish they has a Step 2.”

Fidelity. Approximately 93% of participants felt they were able to learn the skills they needed to take care of their health. One said, “Since I have been in the class I’m controlling my blood pressure better and eating better, less fried food, more baked food, more veggies.” When asked about what would have helped them learn better, 36% said nothing more was needed, 29% commented on individual factors such as, “maybe if I wasn’t so stubborn” or “pay more attention,” and 14% requested changes to the methods used to deliver the content, including writing on the board more and using a projector. Post-program confidence and knowledge scores were measured as an indicator of the fidelity of the program. After completing the program, confidence scores ranged from 2.7 to 5 (mean, 4.1). Using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test, there was no statistically significant difference between the pre and post confidence scores (p-value > 0.2). The post knowledge scores were overall higher than the pre-scores and ranged from 2 to 7 (mean, 5.9). Based on the Wilcoxon signed-rank test there was a statistically significant difference between the pre and post knowledge scores ($0.02 < p\text{-value} < 0.05$).

Safety. Over half (57%) of the participants reported that nothing made them feel uncomfortable. Three participants reported discomfort with activities focused on behavior change. One participant described this by saying. “Trying to force you to eat something you don’t know anything about, never heard of. I like soul food.” Most adults (93%) were not concerned about confidentiality during the group sessions and felt they were able to control the information that was shared. This was exemplified by statements such as, “if I want them to know something, I’ll tell them.”

Effectiveness. When asked what part or parts of the program were the most helpful in teaching them about taking care of their health the majority (79%) of participants reported that everything was helpful. The most frequently mentioned topic was learning about communicating with providers and preparing for appointments. With regards to ways the program could be improved, responses focused on participants’ desire for more program sessions.

Discussion

This is the first study to evaluate the necessity, acceptability, feasibility, safety, fidelity, and effectiveness of the HEAL program in individuals with low incomes or who are experiencing homelessness. Regarding fidelity and effectiveness, participants’ knowledge scores were significantly higher at the end of the program compared to their scores before the program. Moreover, most participants reported that everything they learned was helpful in helping them take care of their health.

The study findings indicate that there is a great need for health literacy training in populations with low resources. Given that the study participants were primarily (93%) African American, the findings are consistent with previous research suggesting that racial and ethnic minorities are at increased risk for having low health literacy (Kutner et al., 2006). In addition to demonstrating need, this study also found evidence that adults at the two clinics desired health literacy training and most notably, they found the topics included in the HEAL program acceptable and wanted more training sessions.

Delivering health literacy training programs in a group format within a community setting may be a valuable method for increasing access to these programs. This study showed that learning about and discussing health topics in a group format did not cause participants discomfort and in fact, participants valued being able to share their experiences and listen to others.

Throughout this community-academic partnership to address health literacy, the research team overcame challenges and learned valuable lessons. These may be useful to other urban and metropolitan universities seeking to influence health outcomes in their communities. A key challenge for the study team was participant attrition. It was encouraging that forty total participants attended at least one class. However, only 14 participants attended most of the classes and completed the post-assessments. The high attrition rate possibly resulted from the forced transience of the population, the degree of uncertainty in their daily schedules, personal or family illness, and other competing commitments such as job or housing searches. In addition to securing the support of organizational leaders, the successful implementation of group-based, multiple session programs, like the HEAL program, requires identifying champions for the classes amongst the organizational staff and program participants. Other critical components for success include advertising the classes beforehand in the clinics and securing dedicated space within the community partners' facilities for the classes.

While healthy food was provided at each session, a modest financial incentive was provided only at the first and last session. Financial incentives played a larger role in attendance at ROB with a more significant drop in attendance after the incentives diminished. It is recommended that future classes provide healthy food and modest financial incentives or small non-monetary items at each session to encourage attendance if utilizing this course with individuals with low incomes or who are experiencing homelessness.

Another challenge encountered was developing class cohesion. At both sites, the degree of engagement and enthusiasm for the curriculum was remarkable; however, a notably higher level of class cohesion and belonging occurred among ROB participants. Additionally, the research team noted robust discussions about changing health behaviors at ROB. There were discussions of the same issues at BOH but less participant commitment to behavior change. Speculatively, the different cohort constituencies, low income vs. experiencing homelessness, may explain this observation. Never the less a group dynamic that is cooperative and encourages respect of individual differences and abilities is essential for promoting learning. As such, it is recommended that instructors actively build class cohesion and model healthy behaviors for future classes.

The qualifications and experience of the HEAL teachers have implications for both this study and future interventions. All members of this research team were qualified adult educators with formal teacher training and certifications as health care professionals. Our qualifications as teachers were certainly an asset to the program. However, our background is unusual compared to most health literacy programming including typical HEAL courses where the instructors are either adult educators or healthcare professionals but not both. Further, we recognize our own limitations as teachers in this population. The students in the course were atypical compared to the graduate health professions students whom we ordinarily teach. Instructors planning to teach health literacy classes in low literacy populations need to be able to recognize basic literacy issues, adapt their teaching methods in response, and demonstrate flexibility and patience in classroom management of variations in attention, participation, and interruption. We suggest that others who are considering teaching health literacy take formal training such as the HEAL program provides or use online education through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018).

Future researchers and others working in this sphere need to consider both the sustainability and feasibility of community partnerships in health literacy programming prior to initiation. This study was externally grant funded by the nccPA Health Foundation Kathy J. Pedersen Grant to Promote Equitable Care and a matching donation from the Hepburn Foundation. The authors' institution, Marquette University, has continued to support licensing fees that have allowed the program to continue another year. Two of the authors, (Knox and Vuyk) have continued to teach the classes at the ROB site. A program to train physician-assistant students remotely to deliver the HEAL curriculum is currently in the planning stages. However, the authors recognize that factors including availability of funding, trustworthy relationships with community partners, and qualified available teaching staff may be serious impediments to others planning similar interventions.

Conclusion

In times of diminishing public resources and increasingly complex social problems, urban and metropolitan universities, and especially those universities with social missions, should be investigating and supporting collaborations with their communities and community-based organizations to curb urban decline in the areas of housing, violence, employment, education, and healthcare. This community-academic partnership to improve health literacy illustrates the value of fostering community-academic networks focused on addressing critical community issues and demonstrates the key role urban and metropolitan universities can play in improving the health of all groups in the cities they serve.

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Author Information

*Abiola O. Keller
College of Nursing
Marquette University
Clark Hall 363
PO Box 1881
Milwaukee WI 53201-1881
Telephone: 414-288-8569
Email: Abiola.keller@marquette.edu

Abiola O. Keller, PA-C, MPH, PhD is an Assistant Professor in the College of Nursing at Marquette University. Her research focuses on depression, medication adherence, and chronic disease self-management with particular interests in health disparities. In particular, her work emphasizes partnering with community agencies and using Community Engaged Research methodologies to address self and symptom management.

Amy Vuyk
Curative Care Network
amymaulbetsch@gmail.com
Telephone: 414-526-8575

Amy Vuyk, MS, CCC-SLP is a pediatric speech language pathologist at Curative Care Network in Mílwaukee, Wl. Amy earned a B.S. in Education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1993. She completed an MS in Speech and Language Pathology at Marquette University in 1995.

Joshua Knox
Department of Physician Assistant Studies
Marquette University
1700 West Wells Street
Milwaukee WI 53233
Email: joshua.knox@marquette.edu
Telephone: 414-288-8483

Joshua Knox, PA-C, MA is a Clinical Associate Professor in the Department of Physician Assistant Studies at Marquette Univerisity and Associate Director of the Marquette University Emergency Medicine Post-graduate Physician Assistant Program. His areas of clinical expertise and research interests include gastroenterology, hematology/oncology, emergency medicine, public health, and health literacy.

*Corresponding author

Community Engagement vs. Racial Equity: Can Community Engagement Work be Racially Equitable?

Arien B. Telles

Abstract

The literature on the transformation of higher education institutions into engaged institutions identifies the great potential this transformation can have on higher education's ability to address pressing social issues. However, engagement work frequently operates in White racialized spaces and within systems that perpetuate racial oppression. A lack of critical reflection on this phenomenon may lead to racially inequitable or racially exclusive institutional transformation. If an understanding of racial equity work within community engagement does not occur, we run the risk that the transformation into engaged institutions will include some and not others, and those decisions will likely fall along racial lines. The purpose of this article is to identify and discuss four key findings based on a critical analysis of the ways in which the literature on transformation via engagement addresses issues of racial equity. The analysis leads to a discussion of the implications of the lack of connection between racial equity and community engagement. Most importantly, the overarching question of my own future research in this area is not *if* there is racial equity work taking place in community engagement initiatives, but *how* racial equity work is done in community engagement initiatives.

Keywords: institutional transformation; engaged institutions; critical analysis; educational equity

Introduction

The literature on the transformation of higher education institutions into engaged institutions identifies the great potential this transformation can have on higher education's ability to address pressing social issues (Alter & Book, 2002; Bridger & Alter, 2006; Fitzgerald, Bruns, Sonka, Furco, & Swanson, 2012; Holland, 2001, 2005; Inman, 2004; Kellogg Commission, 1999; Ramaley, 1996, 2002, 2009, 2014; Spanier, 2011.) However, a lack of critical reflection on how engagement work operates in White racialized spaces (Barajas & Ronnkvist, 2007; Moore, 2008) and within systems that perpetuate racial oppression (Dowd & Bensimon, 2015; Feagin, 2006) may lead to racially inequitable or racially exclusive institutional transformation. Without an understanding of racial equity work within community engagement, we run the risk that the transformation into engaged institutions will include some and not others, and those decisions will likely fall along racial lines.

One example of the consequences of not examining how engagement work operates within higher education institutions is the connection between faculty-of-Color retention and their ability to work with communities. In her discussion of the important role connection to community played for faculty women of Color as they attempted to surmount isolation, marginalization, and hostile campus climates, Turner (2003) described the tension faculty of

Color feel between service contributions they feel are important, but not valued by the institution. She found that “many faculty express a need to serve their communities and a continuing commitment to do so even if such service does not factor in as an important part of the faculty reward system at their institutions” (p. 122). This connection between the success of faculty women of Color and the connection to their communities questions how much of the community service being done by women of Color faculty could be considered engaged scholarship, yet was considered to be service by the institution.

Engaged scholars have called for significant shifts in promotion and tenure (Boyer, 1990; Bridger & Alter, 2006; Blanchard et al., 2009; Cherwitz, 2010; Fitzgerald et al, 2012; Kellogg Commission, 1999; Lambert-Pennington, 2016; O’Meara, 2011; Saltmarsh & Wooding, 2016). However, there has been little research conducted that explicitly connects changes to promotion and tenure policies and practices to facilitate consideration of engaged scholarship, and the impact those changes have had on faculty of Color tenure and promotion outcomes. This is only one example of a potential consequence of not considering racial equity in community engagement work within institutions of higher education. By not addressing the historical and current-day racialized exclusion, and the inequitable educational outcomes occurring because of it, the institutional transformation that community engaged scholars and administrators seek will not likely come to fruition. Thus, critically analyzing how racial equity operates in community engagement initiatives within higher education institutions is crucial to higher education’s ability to transform into equitable spaces.

It is important to recognize that the work in this piece developed because of my own positionality. Specifically, in both my academic and professional work as a Latina in higher education and as someone examining racial inequity in educational contexts, I connect language such as tokenism and marginalization with the ways in which students, staff, and faculty of Color describe their experiences in higher education institutions. However, I came across similar language during a recent review of the literature on the connections between community engagement and institutional transformation in higher education. Instead of this language connecting to the experiences of people of Color, the literature made numerous statements about the ways in which higher education institutions marginalized the work of community engagement. For example, in their discussion of the importance of institutionalizing engagement into higher education institutions, Fitzgerald et al., (2012) suggested that to “avoid tokenism” (p. 23) is to make engagement central to higher education institutions. In her discussion of the long-standing practice of community engagement in higher education, Holland (2009) stressed that, “questions persist as to whether the practice survives only at the margin of academic organizations” (p. 86). Rosean, Foster-Fishman, and Fear (2001), in their discussion of the value that engaged scholarship provides to higher education stated, “we acknowledge the presence of engagement work at the margins within the academy and argue for wider recognition and more explicitly valuing of its contributions” (p. 11). To see language that held such strong racialized meaning for me used in a context completely removed from any reference to racial inequity in the literature on engaged scholarship gave me pause.

The purpose of this article is to call attention to the need for a critical analysis of racial equity work within community engagement in higher education institutions through an identification of four key findings based on an analysis of the ways in which racial equity appears in the literature on the transformation of higher education institutions into engaged institutions. The research question guiding this study is: how is racial equity addressed in the literature on higher education institutional transformation into engaged institutions? The remainder of this article addresses the research methods and data analysis, findings, and a discussion regarding implications of the lack of connection between racial equity and community engagement. In addition the article will discuss next steps to continue to examine critically the connection between racial equity and institutional transformation via community engagement work.

Method

Qualitative content analysis is a process that "involves the simultaneous coding of raw data and the construction of categories that capture relevant characteristics of the document's content" (Merriam, 2009, p. 205). Qualitative content analysis provides a way to generate themes specific to the research question, allows for a connection between use of keywords and the context under which keywords are used, and allows for an ability to make meaning of the connections among research question, keywords, and contexts (Patton, 2002).

I initially began the data-gathering process using the body of literature on higher-education institutional transformation into engaged institutions. It was this body of literature that inspired my question about its treatment of racial equity. Much of the literature comes from the perspective of senior level administrators, who argue that the role of administrators is vital in aligning institutional transformation with community engagement (Liang & Sandmann, 2015; Sandmann & Plater, 2009). For this study, I determined it vital to understand how the literature on transformation into engaged institutions from the perspective of administrators addresses racial equity.

There were 42 articles written between 1997 and 2016 that had appeared in a literature review about the institutionalization of engagement. These same articles formed the basis for this study to explore the ways in which this body of literature addressed racial equity. The literature was searched both by reading each article, as well as by using a search function for keywords. Recognizing that terms used to refer to racial equity would likely be different, I expanded the keywords used to search for references to racial equity. These 13 keywords were race, racial, racism, racist, equity, equality, equal, diverse, diversity, minority, minoritized, culture, and cultural. Data were recorded in a spreadsheet that included one column for the article, one column for each of the keywords, and one column for each of the contexts of the keywords. For example, Ramaley (2009) used the term "diverse" four times and "diversity" once in her article, referring variously to diverse points of view, diverse talent, diverse communities, diverse perspectives, and human diversity. Therefore, the data entered in the column for term used were "diverse" and "diversity", and the data entered for the context columns were "communities" "perspectives" "abilities" and "people".

Preliminary findings from the analysis indicated there were limited references to racial equity in this body of literature, but led to some concerns that this might not be an accurate assessment. I had recently attended a conference specific to community engagement. Several sessions focused on the work of chief diversity officers, diversity initiatives on campus, and the role race played in societal issues. My preliminary findings, however, did not reflect this recognition of the importance of diversity work. Therefore, it was important to expand this study to understand better how the field of community engagement referred to these terms on a larger scale. I was interested to see how leading journals that published articles on community engagement addressed racial equity. I selected two journals to examine: the Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement, and the Metropolitan Universities Journal. I conducted a keyword search within these journals for articles using the terms "diversity" "diverse" and "racial equity". The preliminary findings from the analysis of the literature on transformation into engaged institutions indicated that "racial equity" was not a term often used, yet the terms "diversity" and "diverse" did appear in this literature. Thus, I chose to use the terms "diversity" "diverse" and "racial equity" when looking for articles in these two journals. Articles identified through a keyword searches were analyzed by both reading and via a search function, just as was the initial data. Articles published between 1997 and 2016 in the Metropolitan Universities Journal yielded 64 related articles. Articles published between 1997 and 2016 the Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement yielded 20 articles.

Analysis

Once the data gathering process was completed, similar terms and contexts were collapsed as appropriate. As shown in Table 1, specific terms were collapsed into one term, and the contexts for the use of each term were also collapsed.

Table 1. *Final Keywords and Contexts Collapsed from Original Keywords and Contexts*

Final Keyword	**Original Keywords Included**	**Final Context**	**Original Contexts Included**
Diverse	Diverse, Diversity	Community	Community, Society, Populations
Race	Race, Cultural, Culture, Minority, Minoritized	Thought/Institution	Thought, Discipline, Action, Institution, Process
Racism	Racism, Racist	Students	Students, Populations, Changing Demographics
Racial	Racial	Faculty	Faculty, Populations
Equity	Equity	Unconnected Initiatives	Unconnected Initiatives
Equality	Equality, Equal		

Findings

Much of the literature stressed the need for institutions to transform. However, little discussion took notice of racial equity. The ways in which the body of literature on transformation into engaged institutions, as well as the way articles in leading journals that publish community-engaged work addressed racial equity, is important to consider, as it contributes to the ways in which higher education institutions think about, understand, and act on transforming into engaged institutions. There were four key findings of my analysis of this literature. The first finding is the lack of reference, explicitly, to the term “racial equity” in this body of literature, which prevents an examination or discussion of the role racial equity has in institutional transformation. The term most often utilized within this body of literature is “diversity”, thus necessitating a change from focusing on racial equity to focusing on diversity.

The second finding in this analysis is scholars writing about engaged work tend to address diversity in terms of diversity of discipline or diversity of thought. For example, Johnson and Wamser (1996) discussed the need for the scholarly work of faculty to be diverse, an approach where faculty strengths work collectively, as opposed to individually, to meet the research, teaching, and outreach expectations in higher education. Similarly, Rosean et al. (2001) provided important institutional steps to support faculty from a variety of disciplines in their engaged scholarship in order to move the work of engaged scholarship out of the margins of academia. Fear, Sandmann, and Lelle (1998) provided a useful framework to understand the diverse ways higher education has institutionalized engagement by focusing on where within the institution engagement has been incorporated (e.g., realigning institutional mission, or restructuring faculty reward systems). Likewise, Jaeger, Jameson, and Clayton (2012) argued that the diverse activities of faculty creates the best learning environment and productivity, particularly at land-grant, research-intensive universities. All of these articles addressed the importance of having diversity in faculty work and areas of expertise, which is an important perspective to take in engagement work to prevent engagement from becoming synonymous with particular disciplines.

The third finding is that authors discuss diversity in terms of racial demographics, most often of community demographics and student demographics within higher education institutions. While Checkoway (1997) refers mostly to diversity in higher education in terms of disciplinary approach, he also briefly addresses the needs of diverse communities and the mistake higher education makes when there is a lack of alignment between higher education goals and diverse community needs. Cantor, Englot, and Higgins (2013) describe the importance of establishing anchor institutions, or institutions that serve as a community place-based organization that are the as “social glue, or economic engines” (p. 20), and that have mutual benefit and reciprocal partnerships as the foundation of engaged work between universities and communities. Although establishing anchor institutions is vital to sustain community-university partnerships, the racial diversity addressed by Cantor et al. is the diversity embedded in the community. The racial diversity referenced in these examples focus on particular populations that are either external to or are students within institutions of higher education. Cortes (1999) identified four diversity topics that will be most salient in the 21st century: affinity groups, facilitating constructive intergroup relations, modification of identities, and restructuring curriculum. He argued that these diversity topics would become increasingly important, because of quickly changing student demographics.

The fourth and final finding is specific to diversity work internal to institutions of higher education, yet has no connection with community-engagement work. For example, Butler (1990) described the experiences of African American faculty in higher education and provided suggested ways for faculty of color to survive and thrive in higher education. Butler also cautions administrators against expecting faculty of color to tend to all diversity initiatives on campus. Yet, no literature links these experiences and the work happening in community engagement.

Similarly, King, Barnes, and Hitt (1999) provide invaluable insights into the importance of ongoing faculty development in order to create a better understanding of diversity issues within higher education institutions. However, it fails to connect this need for development to the work of community engagement. Edwards and Montague (2014) conducted interviews with racially diverse community members who had been a part of the community engagement initiatives a specific institution. They found that community members overwhelmingly thought the university was doing a good job of recognizing and engaging in issues of race relations within the community, but that the institution could be more diverse. Pointing out a lack of racial diversity within the university provides important insight into the need for more people of Color within institutions of higher education.

However, this reference to demographic differences did not connect the work of engagement with the work of diversity. This group of scholars all focus on racial diversity internal to higher education institutions and are published in a journal dedicated to engagement, yet all focus on the experiences faculty of Color within higher education with no connection to community engagement or engaged scholarship. This sort of attention to the topic of racial diversity within the body of literature on transforming into engaged institutions shows promise. However, the lack of connection between the work around racial equity and the work around engagement leaves me skeptical of the ability for engagement to transform higher education institutions into spaces and places that truly consider communities to have and produce meaningful and valuable knowledge through their own expertise.

In the midst of conducting this analysis, I attended a conference on public engagement, which focused on looking at the role of publicly engaged work in addressing pressing social issues. The experience at the opening plenary mirrored, almost exactly, the findings in the analysis of the ways in which the literature on institutional transformation addressed issues of racial equity. The plenary featured six panelists who represented the ways in which community engaged scholarship addressed community issues. All six panelists were White and all were from science or health-based fields. At the end of the session, an audience member asked, “Where are the faculty of Color and Indigenous faculty who are also doing engagement work?” The panel responded to the question, but never addressed the question directly. They stressed that they knew that having a diverse group of people was important because diverse people represent other ways of knowing. One panelist quickly stated that 40% of the research team were people of color without providing additional information about what role they played on the team. Two panelists added that community members provided racial diversity on the project, and one asserted that everyone on the team brought great diversity to the table. Lastly, the panel facilitator, who was a White high-level administrator who represented the engaged work of the university, stated that the central office (which was hosting the conference) offered workshops on decolonizing methodologies to those who were interested in learning about that topic.

Yet this individual failed to connect this optional workshop with the question about the lack of racial diversity within community-engaged work. The inability of the panelists or of the high-level administrator moderating the panel to answer the question about the lack of faculty of Color and Indigenous faculty represented in engagement work at the institution is troubling, and it represents, on the surface, one of the issues at hand. Although troubling, the historical and current-day experiences of people of Color within higher education institutions may explain the demographics of the panel of engaged scholars. Their experience may also provide an explanation as to why the panelists were unable to answer a direct question about the lack of racial diversity in community engagement. However, because there is a gap in the literature that directly connects racial equity with community engagement initiatives in higher education, we cannot be sure. Even though demographic representation is a good place to start when attempting to understand and address racial inequity, relying solely on racial diversity cannot address educational inequity along racial lines (Dowd & Bensimon, 2015). Thus, the ways in which community engagement impacts people of Color within institutions of higher education continues to be unexamined.

My observation at the public engagement conference is not the first time thoughtful observers have called into question the lack of racial diversity within community engagement. Simpson (2014) argued there was lack of attention to systemic issues of inequity and injustice within the civic engagement work in higher education; "in the context of social issues that are profoundly entrenched and complex, the scholarship of engagement does little to sustain even an awareness of these issues, let alone consideration of their resolution" (p. 82). My own observations and experiences at various community engagement conferences, events, and workshops support this conclusion. Similarly, Hernandez and Pasquesi (2017) argue that it is not possible to make substantial changes outside of higher education if the institution continues to lack racial equity within itself. Additionally, Strum, Eatman, Saltmarsh, and Bush (2011) assert that in order to have full participation in the transformation of higher education institutions, building an architecture for both community engagement and diversity is critical, as the two fields need to come together to inform, support, and grow with one another. Nevertheless, the literature connecting racial equity to community engagement within higher education institutions is still lacking, leaving community engagement initiatives critically unquestioned and unexamined.

Discussion

I have found that the literature addresses diversity instead of racial equity. Its authors conceive of diversity as difference in thought or discipline. The literature isolates the importance racial demographic diversity to community and student populations, and addresses diversity work within higher education institutions as important yet unconnected to community engagement work. In terms of the lack of focus on racial equity, addressing diversity instead of racial equity within community engagement work prevents racial equity, specifically, from obtaining exploration in the work of community engagement. Dowd and Bensimon (2015) found that "discriminatory sorting occurs through structures and practices that are so thoroughly institutionalized that they seem normal (to many) until we ask why racial inequities in outcomes are occurring so routinely and prevalently" (p. 1). It is imperative to understand the ways in which community-engagement work may, intentionally or unintentionally, facilitate routine discriminatory sorting, which requires a narrowing in focus from the generality of diversity to the specificity of racial equity. Furthermore, by focusing on racial equity instead of diversity, we can continue to highlight the importance of having diversity of thought and diversity of discipline without diluting the conversation about racial equity. In other words, focusing on racial equity indicates exactly what we are intending to analyze, as opposed to diversity, which can mean several different things to different audiences.

By focusing only on student or community racial demographic diversity, racialized spaces and practices within higher education institutions may go unrecognized, unaddressed, and unchallenged by community engagement scholars and practitioners. Much like the earlier example of the connection between engagement and women faculty of Color, we do not yet understand the ways in which changing policies and practices specific to recognizing community engagement work may affect tenure and promotion of faculty of Color.

Lastly, by not connecting internal issues of racial equity with internal work of engagement, higher education institutions run the risk of continuing to move forward with a transformation that, at its core, is exclusionary to faculty, staff, and students of Color, which is the opposite of what I argue engaged scholars believe to be central to transforming into engaged institutions. Take, for example, my experience at the public engagement conference where the plenary panelists responded to an inquiry about the lack of faculty of Color and Indigenous faculty representation in the same ways the literature addressed racial equity. I omitted from this example that the faculty on this panel represented projects awarded institutional-level grant money for continuing to do work that addressed pressing social issues. In fact, a critical mass of faculty of Color at this institution are also engaged scholars (personal communication, 2018).

If we knew better how racial equity and community engagement connected in this example, we might question why this group of people won selection to represent their work on this panel. What were the racial demographics of those who applied for this grant funding? What were the racial demographics of those awarded and those who were not? What were the racial demographics of persons involved in the projects? What were the racial demographics of those who served on the review board for the grant? These are only some of the important questions needed to unpack the connection between community engagement and racial equity at this particular institution.

Conclusion

Although this literature analysis has shown a lack of attention to racial equity work, I believe the field of community engagement is ready to analyze their own practices in terms of racial equity. From the beginning of this field, there has been ongoing and critical analysis of how higher education is transforming and what the intended and unintended consequences might be for this transformation. Although this analysis has not included connections between racial equity work and community engaged initiatives within higher education to date, there is still a willingness to learn. The fact that the literature on institutional transformation has addressed diversity at all indicates that scholars understand, at some level, that diversity plays an important role in community engagement. However, the discussion only circles the issues of racial equity internal to institutions of higher education, lacking the connection needed to make the argument that racial equity is an important component within engagement initiatives. This gap in the literature opens up the opportunity for empirical investigation into the ways in which engagement initiatives within higher education consider racial equity.

In addition to the recognition that diversity and engagement are somehow connected, it has become clear both through my own review, as well as comments from scholars within this field (Sandmann, 2008; Sandmann, Jordan, Mull, & Valentine, 2014), that much of the published work in this area includes descriptions of model programming, innovative approaches, and critical opinion pieces from revered scholars. What is lacking in this field is empirical research and theory development. Thus, a focus on empirical research and theory development is an important aspect of connecting racial equity and community engagement as we move forward with this work.

As the literature has indicated repeatedly, knowledge and expertise does not just exist in traditional manners within higher education. In the context of future work, this means that just because peer-reviewed journals have not published it does not mean no one is doing such work. In other words, there might be great work and attention paid to issues of racial equity in community engagement initiatives internal to higher education, but no one has written about it yet. Thus, the focus of my future work in this area is not a "gotcha" adventure; it is quite the opposite. I have recently proposed a study that focuses on the ways in which institutions of higher education address racial equity in their community-engagement initiatives. Race is pervasive and has been foundational to the way our society, including higher education institutions, functions (Feagin, 2006; Dowd & Bensimon, 2015). The question is not if, but how racial equity work goes on in community-engagement initiatives.

By failing to address issues of racial equity within higher education, community-engagement initiatives may result in engaged institutions that continue to operate as racially exclusionary spaces. It may prevent a critical consideration of how policies and practices are meant to strengthen the institutionalization of engagement could continue to produce racially inequitable outcomes in higher education. In addition, much like a buffer block prevents trains from moving past particular points on a track, the lessons we are learning from our community partners through our community engaged work may be prevented from being utilized within our own institutional communities if we are unable to critically analyze the role of racial equity within our own work. If we are prevented from taking our lessons-learned from communities into our college or university communities, we may be doing a great disservice to our community partners and our desire to recognize multiple ways of creating knowledge.

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Author Information

Arien B. Telles
Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy and Development
University of Minnesota
206 Burton Hall
178 Pleasant St. SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
Telephone: 651-308-7991
Email: atelles@umn.edu

Arien B. Telles is a Ph.D. candidate of higher education at the University of Minnesota in the Department of Organization Leadership, Policy and Development. Her research interests include community engagement, engaged scholarship, equitable institutional practices, and issues of racial equity and racialized spaces within the context of higher education. She is currently working on a dissertation that focuses on the ways in which community engagement addresses issues of racial equity.

Scholar-Administrators as Change Agents

Emily M. Janke

Abstract

Flexibility and readiness to change are not necessarily valued or recognized traits in higher education. Yet higher education is in a period of dramatic change, because of rapid change in scholarship and society. With this change in mind, I reflect here on the role and effect of scholar-administrators as agents of change.

Keywords: social change; society; college administration; higher education; scholarship; scholar-administrators; leadership

Introduction

The Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU) named its scholar-administrator award in honor of my esteemed colleague, Dr. Barbara Holland. She often shares a joke when she introduces herself to a new audience of faculty, staff, or administrators. She says, "Hi, I'm Barbara, and I study change in higher education. Some think that's an oxymoron." This joke is funny, if the point is not already obvious, because being flexible and nimble, organizationally speaking, is not a recognized, or even necessarily valued, characteristic of higher education.

Higher education is in a period of dramatic and broad change because it is tethered, necessarily and inextricably, to the trends and needs of scholarship and society, which is changing at unprecedented rates. Institutions face a greater connection to the global economy and internationalization of campuses and curricula. Our increasingly diverse students, faculty and staff engage campuses differently than in the past. Society demands greater accountability of public investments. A new economic sector of for-profit higher education has emerged spurring competition and marketization. Rapid technological innovations have transformed how knowledge is generated, accessed, and shared (Kezar, 2013, pp. 5-6). Higher education institutions have always been and continue to be "inextricably interlocked" (Boyer, 1996, p. 11), as they exist to serve the current and future needs of society. So as society changes, so too must higher education if it is to remain relevant.

If institutions of higher education are to keep pace with the rapid advances and changes, indeed, transformations, occurring in society and the environment more broadly, administrative leaders of all ranks must remain at the forefront of learning about new directions and strategies to effect the outcomes they demand. To ensure the relevance, and hence, vibrancy of our institutions, it is important that administrators and scholars learn with and from each other—in real time. Across disciplines, even applied ones like higher education and business, practitioners lament the long latency between idea and useful implementation, or the challenge of converting theory to practice (Van de Ven, 2007). To stay current with trends and experiences, we need to empower and enable administrators to become and be *scholar-administrators* transcending false separation between scholarly and administrative work and identities.

As the inaugural recipient of the Barbara A. Holland Award for Scholar-Administrator, I reflect on the role of scholar-administrators *as* change agents within their institutions and beyond.

Scholar-Administrators

It is difficult, if not impossible to define precisely who a scholar-administrator is, mostly because it is an identity that individuals tend to claim, more so than a formal role codified in job descriptions. I have gained no purchase on which to assert a single definition of this identity. For the purpose of this essay, however, I focus on the definition provided by the Coalition for Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU), which highlights "both a scholarly approach to their administrative role" and which establishes "an integrated record of administrative leadership and high-impact scholarship that (shapes) ideas and actions within and beyond (an) institution" (application, 2019).

This description suggests that through integration of scholarship with administration, one can advance multiple goals synergistically. One can use scholarly approaches to improve one's understanding of the issues facing higher education and how best to navigate them. Furthermore, one can develop scholarship that can be shared with others, passing along insights learned from the scholarship and strategies for guiding change that may be helpful to administrators of other campuses.

While administration is an appointment or position that one assumes formally, scholarship is an activity that one pursues. Individuals who produce scholarship are scholars, and scholarship may develop across various roles (e.g., faculty and administrative roles). Scholarship stands on its core characteristics: it demonstrates current knowledge of the field/discipline, invites peer collaboration and review, is open to critique, is presented in a form that others can build on, and involves critical reflection of the work (Glassick, Huber & Maeroff, 1997).

The CUMU framing of a scholar-administrator identity is valuable because it focuses squarely on the role of scholarship in administration—as a tool and strategy that shapes not only what we know, but also what we do as administrators. This characterization resonates across narratives I have found in the limited scholarship on those who identify as scholar-administrators, as well as my own. Scholar-administrators leverage the skill sets, perspectives, networks, and resources they possess—as scholars who continue scholarly approaches and agendas—in their administrative positions to push proactively for change.

Change Agent

For many scholar-administrators, they seek administrative positions because it affords them access to resources and networks that are necessary for change, and which may not be otherwise possible, for example, as a faculty member within an academic department. In my own experience, I pursued administrative positions solely upon earning my doctorate because I wanted to build systems of support and encouragement that would increase the number of students and faculty engaged with communities through mutually beneficial and reciprocal partnerships. Since then, through administrative roles, I have accessed to tools of leadership and organizational development, namely funding, membership in decision-making teams and committees, power to recruit and convene, and the time needed to wake up every day focused on achieving the administrative agenda set forth. Working within an office focused on institutionalizing community engagement through building supportive policies, practices, and cultures among faculty, staff and students, I work with people across disciplinary and institutional silos. While my colleagues in faculty roles have limited time to push forward a community engagement agenda for the institution, it is my primary work. My view is expansive; I am working to transform the university, and higher education, more broadly.

Reading the Changing Landscape

Every discipline and administrative area is constantly evolving, due to changing conditions and new understandings. Therefore, it is essential for administrators to be constantly looking on the proverbial horizon, to help understand what is to come, and to plan how best to prepare the institution for that future. Hence, scholar-administrators are constantly on the steep end of the learning curve of new trends, technologies, and strategies. We read relevant literature and engage in national conversations so that we understand the issues and opportunities that will arise for our institutions.

In her article, "Change as a Scholarly Act: Higher Education Research Transfer to Practice," Ramaley describes the necessity of administrative leadership to actively pursue new areas of inquiry and scholarship, describing areas of scholarship that are far different from her training as a biologist. These include the areas of women and minorities in academia, university-industry partnerships and technology transfer, fundraising, team building and professional growth of staff, community college and high school articulation, enrollment management and student success, and conflict resolution.

She goes on to argue that "an administrator today must also be a *learner among learners,* willing to embrace the novel and unexpected and able to be an agent for change. To do this, we (scholar-administrators) must model what it means to have a truly educated mind and then use this mind in public. We must constantly study our environment and test various ideas, let us call them hypotheses, in the living laboratory over which we preside. It would be wise for us to apply to ourselves the same expectations that we have of any well-educated person… to employ a rigorous scholarly approach. (p. 76)

As a three-time university president, Ramaley embodies the approach of a scholar-administrator. She maintains a sense of curiosity about why and how things work, and then collaborates with individuals across a broad array of areas to identify new areas for collective learning. We need scholar-administrators because they are not satisfied to learn about ideas from others, repeating them on their own campuses, but instead seek to frame the questions themselves, engage in rigorous inquiry, and assess situations for themselves, integrating lessons learned from scholarship and their own administrative practice. In my own decade-long work as an administrator for community engagement, I have had to learn about many new topics that, at first, seem unrelated to community engagement. Often, I had to move across disciplinary and administrative silos, interpreting and adapting ideas and tools for use in my context. I have collaborated with many different people across many different roles and institutions to improve not only my, but collective understanding of the issues we face. Many of the areas of scholarship that Ramaley lists are still relevant nearly two decades later, but also have grown to include newer ones such as,

Ways of Knowing:

- Inter- and trans-disciplinary scholarship;
- cross-sector partnerships and anchor institutions to support collective impact (Kania & Kramer, 2011; Taylor & Luter, 2013; Vortuba, et al., 2002);
- Development of inter-institutional collaborations and shared cyber-infrastructure to support community-level data collection and use to improve services, programs, and quality of life;

Scholarly Communications:

- New and diverse forms of products and artifacts of knowledge generation, (Eatman, 2012, 2014), pluralistic forms of scholarly impact (Aguinis, Shapiro, Antonacopoulou, & Cummings, 2014), and platforms for scholarly communications (Kramer & Bosman, 2016; Narock et. al, 2019);
- Scholarly use of social media and altmetrics (Sugimoto, Work, Larivière, & Haustein, 2017);
- Open data, open access, and open scholarship (Kramer & Bosman, 2018; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018);

Diversity, Equity and Full Participation:

- Expanding the range of faculty and non-faculty positions and roles (e.g., non-tenure track teaching-focused and/or research-focused faculty; scholar-administrators) (Kezar, 2012);
- Policies, practices, and structures to support the full participation of diverse faculty, staff, and students (Sturm, Eatman, Saltmarsh, & Bush, 2011); and

New Institutional Structures:

- Divisional models rather than departmental structures to organize faculty lines, curricula, and academic focus areas (Silverman, 2019).

Just these few major transitions and transformations are already underway on our campuses. These have required me to engage in the scholarly practices I describe. For example, I have read widely across different disciplinary and administrative areas to gain different perspectives on these topics. I have conducted interviews, focus groups, and surveys to gain a sense of campus climate on various issues to understand faculty members' knowledge, values, attitudes and behaviors related to various topics. I co-designed a database for tracking and measuring community engagement activities and partners so that our institution could have a better sense of our faculty and staff members' engagement with external communities so that we could better align community-university talents and priorities.

The tools that scholar-administrators use to view the landscape, therefore, are the tools of a scholar. When necessary, they develop new lines of inquiry and research to improve understanding and practice. The administrator acts as a researcher as well as a leader of change (Holland, 2019, personal communication).

Studying Leading Change

Some forms of scholarship produced by administrators allow administrators to learn from each other about how to create conditions for change, as well as what needs to be changed. Studying the change process: what changed, who affected the change, how the change came about, and to what ends the change yielded is an essential aspect of being a change agent. To do this, they must not only stay current with issues, trends, and current events to help identify what changes need to occur. They also need to hear about best practices and innovations tried at other institutions, and, perhaps, based on the lessons of others, resist unproven changes that will not advance, or worse, will harm the mission, viability, and vibrancy of their institution if adopted (Kezar, 2014).

Little has changed since Cohen and March (1974) first described the factors that make change difficult in higher education. As a system, it has many ill-defined, often inconsistent, goals. Furthermore, it is comprised of members who vary concerning their level of time and personal investment in the organization. “Despite new policy and funding frameworks for education at the state and federal levels, higher education has largely tried to cope without changing core organizational practices and cultures. *The sector has been slow to adapt to new conditions and expectations* (Holland, 2019, p. 68, emphasis added). Seeing change coming is the easy part, it is organizing people and reorganizing structures and cultures that are most difficult.

Through their scholarly approach and sharing of scholarship, administrators build not only new understanding, but as importantly, relationships and trust. As they work with co-authors and share their work with colleagues, they develop personal relationships and social rapport. They find individuals who share similar passions for shared areas of inquiry, and they demonstrate to faculty that they understand what it takes to be a scholar and produce scholarship. They can appreciate the full process of scholarship, from inception to writing to dissemination and all of the steps in-between. When they attend academic conferences to present on their scholarly efforts, they sit alongside other faculty and scholar-administrators who are seeking to stay current with trends, pressing issues, and future directions for advancing various fields of scholarship. More importantly that the scholarship itself, most certainly, is the many different connections and relationships made among scholar-administrators and faculty through producing and sharing scholarship.

Any administrator who has been tasked to lead a new initiative knows that achieving success as change agents cannot be achieved by individuals or policies alone; “Being a successful change agent requires a broad and expansive view of leadership… to include members of all groups” (Kezar, 2014, p. 110). Such relationships make it easier to gain informal feedback on ideas, gain buy-in, and build coalitions for change.

The composition of the faculty and staff in higher education is changing dramatically, and with it, expectations are changing as well. This demographic transition provides ripe opportunity for working alongside new cadres of colleagues who are similarly interested in transforming aspects of higher education so that they are more relevant and aligned to the needs of society and scholarship. Holland (2019) points out that higher education is now comprised of four generations of faculty and staff, from Baby Boomers to Gen Xers, to Millennials, to Gen Ys, and that these different generations have different profiles and expectations of academic work and professional life (Kezar & Maxey, 2015; Trower, 2012). The faculty and instructor demographic profiles, trending similarly to but more slowly than national and student profiles, are becoming more diverse with regards to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and generational culture.

These different individuals have different ideas about their sense of purpose, such as why they are scholars and what it means to be a scholar. They also view scholarship more expansively in terms of who produces scholarship, whom scholarship is for, and what aims scholars intend to influence and impact. No less, they tend to value and produce many diverse expressions of scholarship that are manifest in different types of products, shared on platforms that maximize the potential that their work will be viewed and used by the audiences and partners they have identified. No less, they believe in measuring the "impact" of one's contributions through scholarship in ways that go beyond more traditional notions of citation counts and publisher prestige (see Aguinis, Shapiro, Antonacopoulou & Cummings, 2014 and Alperin, et al, 2019.).

Sharing Change Strategies

Scholar-administrators share their change strategies with others as a way to advocate for change within and across institutions. To do that, they do what other scholars do: they think, create, and share. In scholarly terms, they present and publish their work. Their work does not end once they have accomplished a goal; they share what they have done broadly and critically.

My own scholarly record reflects this. For the past decade, I have co-produced diverse artifacts of scholarship about the change processes that occurred at the University of North Carolina Greensboro's campus, about integrating recognition for community engagement into the faculty promotion and tenure guidelines. I have co-authored presentations, journal articles, book chapter, websites, datasets, workshops, surveys, reports, and other forms of scholarship, some of which has been peer-reviewed by other scholars, and nearly all of which is available on public platforms for broad and free access. I strive to share my scholarly work because I have benefited from learning with and from others. I want my learning to contribute to the collective learning about these topics we study so that the field can advance more effectively and quickly. An essential, but sometimes overlooked, practice of the scholar-administrator is that of producing scholarship: artifacts that are presented to others, so that the ideas may be reviewed, critiqued, and built upon.

Just as faculty are increasingly publishing and sharing new forms of scholarly communications (e.g., digital scholarship, data sets, digital archives, etc.), scholar administrators are also contributing new forms of scholarship. When scholar-administrators create and share data sets, videos/films, websites, blogs, social media feeds, reports, programs, manuscripts, exhibits, programs, and webinars, as well as performances, technical reports, program evaluations, curriculums, patents, and exhibits that are firmly grounded in the standards of high-quality scholarship—then they are producing scholarship. If one considers scholarship as residing along a continuum of approaches and artifacts, and which uphold the standards of scholarship, then scholar-administrators can situate their unique contributions of diverse forms of scholarship to the larger field of practice and research (Janke, 2019).

Challenges of Being a Scholar-Administrator

A scholarly approach to administration (i.e., the use of research, inquiry, evidence and other ways of examining and understanding systems of change) is not an intellectual exercise for the personal benefit of the scholar. However, the academic world, too often, treats this work as though it were. To be clear, many of my scholar-administrator colleagues relate that they are neither asked to nor rewarded for producing scholarship. They do scholarly administrative work in spite of the lack of recognition, and sometimes, disincentives for scholarship (Post, Ward, Longo, & Saltmarsh, 2016). Lina Dostilio currently serves as associate vice chancellor for community engagement at the University of Pittsburgh. She has also, among other scholarly work, edited a book, authored a book, and served in fellowship positions to advance research and administrative agendas at the request of two national associations (Campus Compact and the CUMU), shares of her experience as a scholar-administrator at a previous institution:

> My choice to maintain a scholarly agenda is also outside the norm for most administrators. As a result, my scholarship is not a main thrust of my administrative position, but is seen as a beneficial byproduct. Scholarship is the work I do early in the morning or late at night after my child is asleep. It is not the work I can do amid the chaotic phone calls, meetings, and e-mails of an engagement administrator. *Yet, without research, my practice loses its focus and begins to cede the larger reason for why it exists*. That larger vision, of leveraging higher education to address injustice, is compelling and sees me through to a stronger identity as a boundary spanner and community-oriented scholar. (Dostilio, Janke, Miller, Post, & Ward, 2016, pp. 125–126, emphasis added)

Many scholars repeat this story of the importance, indeed, the necessity, of maintaining a scholarly agenda as an administrator for the sake of the administrative practice of serving as a change agent. Bickford and Whisnant's (2010) informal count at their large university revealed:

> At least 40 such administrators, roughly three-quarters women. Many of us continue to pursue our scholarly research, writing, publication, public speaking, public engagement, and teaching while fulfilling our administrative duties… Academe has no system to recognize and encourage our unique contributions. (para. 3)

A review of administrative positions shows that policies and practices do not recognize the time and resources required for scholarly-administration. Scholar-administrators are too often not provided the resources, often in the form of access to data and the time and talents required to analyze the data (Ramaley, 2000).

Learning Organizations

We ignore the scholarship of scholar-administrators to the detriment of institutions and system of higher education, as they are critical for supporting and effecting changes that are and will be required in order that higher education remains relevant, valued, and viable as a public good. Theories about organizational learning solving suggest that in order for institutions to change, they must provide change agents and other members with time and skills for reflection and professional support to develop personal competencies such as how to create a shared vision and facilitate team dialogue, and they must emphasize systematic inquiry and problem solving (Kezar, 2013).

Despite the importance of learning, however, many organizational leaders do not realize that such learning deserves support. Furthermore, it can be easily and unwittingly thwarted by policies, practices, and doubts that change is, in fact, possible (Kezar, 2013). For example, Bickford and Whisnant (2010) recount, "Those academic departments and administrative offices inclined to make more generous or flexible arrangements for us [scholar-administrators] lack precedents, policies, structures, and money for doing so" (para. 7). Even though one might expect institutions of higher education to be paragons of higher learning, which are supportive of professional development opportunities to foster creativity, innovations and visionary thinking, organizational learning is *not* a common phenomenon (Argyris, 1991). The previous examples suggest that this is so.

Hence, we must rethink and create awareness about the importance of the cyclical cycle of scholarship and administrative practice. Scholarship is integral to the work that scholar-administrators do, and, likewise, administrative work advances scholarship. Though the cycle is generative, it is not self-evident: time and resources must be provided to ensure that scholar-administrators are able to foster their scholarship as part of their work expectations. This means that scholarship, to use a recipe metaphor, is not an "additive" but is rather, "baked in" as an integral ingredient in the recipe for scholar-administrator success. This also means establishing criteria for recognizing and rewarding the various scholarly artifacts produced by scholar-administrators in personnel evaluations, creating clear guidelines for expectations from both the supervisor to support and the scholar-administrator to conduct scholarship.

Building a Cadre of Scholar-Administrators

I have written previously about the resonance that Rhoades and colleagues' (2008) writing about expectations of new and diverse faculty has had on my own thinking: they come not to "make it" in the academy, but to "remake" the academy. I have come, likewise, to understand that scholar-administrators, of the type that I have described in this essay, seek not to reify and uphold the academic structures and cultures that they inherited, but rather, to create and hold spaces in which these new scholars can arrive, persist, and thrive. The role of the scholar-administrator, then, is to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with other innovators, working towards transformation of our disciplines, our institutions, and higher education systems more broadly. This form of leadership encourages, cultivates, and, where necessary, protects scholars.

What does a scholar-administrator need to be successful? By successful, I mean to help institutions of higher education remain flexible and vibrant in rapidly changing environments. We must move from idealistic encouragement of scholar-administrators, a theoretical stance not often accompanied by the structural space to practice scholarship, to a very practical, logistical effort of introducing policies and structures for encouraging the types of contributions we need from scholar-administrators. Such reform of policies, structures, and practice must begin to effectively recognize and reorganize conceptions about who is a scholar and what constitutes scholarship. The following list provides some recommendations for institutions of higher education as well as disciplinary and professional associations:

Institutional-Level Changes

1. Structure positions, expectations, and funding to allow scholar-administers to:
    a. Review the base of evidence;
    b. Establish their own theories of change;
    c. Allot and protect time in administrative work schedules ("on the clock") for writing and the "deep work" (Newport, 2016) required to read, reflect, and produce scholarship to be shared with others;
    d. Participate in regional, national, and international conversations, and translate them for local discussions and decision-making;
    e. Proactively network and collaborate with other scholars for the purpose of collecting, generating, and sharing learning and scholarship, remotely and in-person;
    f. Plan for scholarly work in annual work plans, reports, and reviews; and
    g. Recognize and reward scholarly work and artifacts when evaluating accomplishments and making determinations about annual review accomplishments, merit pay, and promotions.
2. Recognize the scholarly accomplishments of scholar-administrators in similar ways to faculty accomplishments, including recognitions in campus-wide communications, awards, recognitions, and celebrations.
3. If the scholar-administrator has a faculty line or affiliation, include space in annual reporting documents and conversations to include activities and accomplishments related to scholarly administration so that such scholarship is recognized as an integrated aspect of the scholar-administrators profile.

Disciplinary- And Professional Association-Level Changes

4. Use existing and create new online, digital, and open access platforms for sharing the scholarship of academic change.
5. Carve out or establish new venues for diverse forms of scholarly artifacts, including, and beyond manuscript-form articles, generated by or used within administrative work. Consider the role of peer-review and how this may be different for scholarship and artifacts intended primarily for administrative audiences.
6. Recognize and celebrate excellence in scholar-administration, like the Barbara Holland Scholar-Administrator Award given by CUMU.

This list will continue to develop and evolve as the environment continues to change as well.

Conclusion

The future of higher education will be led and populated by people we have not yet met, and they will address issues we have not yet encountered that will require knowledge, skills, and approaches we yet to imagine or invent. The need for higher education to change is inevitable if it is to stay current and relevant to needs and demands of society. Fortunately, we have in our midst a growing cadre of scholar-administrators who believe in the transformative power of higher education for students and society, and the ability of higher education to transform itself. These individuals span rank, position, discipline, and demographic.

It is time to better recognize and support the role of scholar-administrators as key change agents on our campuses. They are critical to supporting the work of others pursuing new ideas, emerging technologies, and expanding approaches to generating scholarship. Scholar-administrators are key partners in helping institutions of higher education transform their policies, practices and cultures because they possess both the tools of administration and research. They are practitioners, who understand the internal working of administration and who have networks of collaborators across disciplines, units and institutions. They have the passion for change, and they are forces of change. It is time, then, to recognize, prepare and support scholar-administrators more effectively, so that they can do what they do so well: serve as key change agents in and of higher education, and lead boldly into a yet-to-be defined future.

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Within all of my research on change, leadership emerges as perhaps the most important facilitator, for without *change agents'* energy and enthusiasm, there would be little change. (Kezar, 2014, p. 108, emphasis added)

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Author Information

Emily M. Janke
Institute for Community & Economic Engagement
UNC Greensboro
1111 Spring Garden Street
Greensboro, NC 27412
Telephone: (336) 256-2578
Email: emjanke@uncg.edu

Emily M. Janke, Ph.D. is director of the Institute for Community and Economic Engagement (ICEE) and an associate professor in the Peace and Conflict Studies department. As the Director of ICEE, Emily leads and supports initiatives that encourage, support, elevate, and amplify faculty, staff, student, and community colleague community-engaged teaching, learning, research, creative activity, and service. Emily's scholar-administrative work addresses multiple aspects of community engagement focused on community-university partnerships, and institutional culture and change strategies. In particular, she focuses on tracking and measuring community engagement and public service within and across institutions of higher education, the recognition of community-engaged scholarship in reappointment, promotion and tenure policies; the role of conflict management and transformation in community-university partnerships; institutional support for community engagement; innovations in scholarly communications; and reciprocity, collaborative communication, and restorative practices as aspects of high quality, ethical community engagement.