

CAMPUS COMPACT

Indicators of Engagement

PROJECT

In May 2002, Campus Compact received a three-year grant from the Carnegie Corporation to combine documentation and dissemination of best practices of the engaged campus with an organizing effort to help campuses achieve broader institutionalization of civic engagement.

Preview of Coming Attractions

As was true with community colleges, minority-serving institutions have an important history of deep engagement in their local communities. Our work with minority-serving institutions will seek to capture and bring wide visibility to best practices. Findings from campus visits will be reported to participating campuses, published in a monograph for widespread dissemination, and posted on the Campus Compact national website in our database of exemplary program models. Campus Compact will also use the findings from this project to advocate for the importance of minority-serving institutions as gateways to civic engagement, helping policymakers at the local, state, and federal levels recognize the importance of supporting public contributions of minority-serving institutions.

Key Year Two Activities

- Online survey of minority-serving institutions, summer 2003 (Please visit www.compact.org/community-colleges/indicators/ for details).
- Telephone interviews of institutions with promising practices, fall 2003.
- Site visits to selected institutions, January-April 2004.
- Searchable, online database of model programs at minority-serving institutions, 2004.
- Monograph on Civic Engagement at Minority-Serving Institutions, early 2005.

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Campus Compact

For more information on the Indicators of Engagement Project, please contact Jenn Meeropol, Project Coordinator, at jmeeropol@compact.org or (401) 867-3950.

Additional information is available on our website at www.compact.org/community-colleges/indicators/.

Grant Focus

Campuses are hungry for good information about how to achieve a culture of engagement. Campuses need access to best practices they can adapt to create civic engagement strategies appropriate to their type of institution and their specific needs. Campus Compact will research community colleges in year one (May 2002-May 2003), minority-serving institutions in year two, and comprehensive universities in year three to compile information on successful engagement strategies.

Major Activities

- Visiting colleges to identify, document and disseminate best practices of civic engagement at each type of institution.
- Publishing monographs with models of engagement for community colleges and minority-serving institutions.

The Indicators of Engagement

- Mission and purpose
- Administrative and academic leadership
- External resource allocation
- Disciplines, departments, and interdisciplinary work
- Faculty roles and rewards
- Internal resource allocation
- Community voice
- Enabling mechanisms
- Faculty development
- Integrated and complementary community service activities
- Pedagogy and epistemology
- Forums for fostering public dialogue
- Student voice

Adapted from Hollander, Saltmarsh, & Zlotkowski. "Indicators of Engagement," in Simon, Kenny, Brabeck, & Lerner, eds. *Learning to Serve: Promoting Civil Society Through Service-Learning*. Norwell, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002.

Information Gathering

In the first year of the Indicators of Engagement Project (IOEP), program staff visited thirteen institutions with exemplary approaches to one or more of the indicators. An additional seven institutions were profiled for their innovative approaches to specific civic engagement strategies.

Sites Visited

Albuquerque Technical Vocational Institute, NM

Anne Arundel Community College, MD

Brevard Community College, FL

Chandler-Gilbert Community College, AZ

Kirtland Community College, MI

Malcolm X College, IL

Miami-Dade Community College, FL

Middlesex Community College, MA

Portland Community College, OR

Raritan Valley Community College, NJ

Southern Maine Technical College, ME

UH-Kapi`olani Community College, HI

Yakima Valley Community College, WA

“One of the most exciting aspects of the IOEP has been observing how questions about the indicators have sparked groups to say something like ‘we aren’t addressing that issue yet, but maybe it would fit into this new project that we will be developing next fall.’ If the indicators can serve as this type of spark to generate more collaboration among various stakeholders in college communities, they will be not only useful measures of engagement but also factors for transformation.”

-Donna Killian Duffy

Campus Compact
Community College Engaged Scholar

“At all the campuses I have visited as part of the IOEP, I have been struck by how many students who have come from past disadvantage are reducing the severity of present disadvantage as engaged college students. These students are both transformed and transforming.”

-Robert Franco

Campus Compact
Community College Engaged Scholar

Sites Profiled

Chaffey College, CA

College of Lake County, IL

Collin County Community College, TX

Hocking College, OH

Johnson County Community College, KS

Mount Wachusett Community College, MA

Virginia Highlands Community College, VA

Initial Findings from Year One: Civic Engagement at Community Colleges

- The community college can itself be viewed as a community-based organization: It is *of*, not simply *in*, a particular place.
- Community-based work is seen as one important way to operationalize the college’s stated mission: “To reach” and “to teach” are facets of a single *responsibility*.
- Civic engagement must be related to and delivered through workforce-readiness skills.
- The primacy of teaching and learning as an institutional commitment helps elevate proven effectiveness above purely disciplinary concerns. Primary allegiance of faculty is to the institution.
- The student population, as well as the faculty teaching load, has important implications for the design of community-based assignments.
- The culture of the institution, especially as *modeled* by the president and her/his administration, together with hiring practices that emphasize compatibility with that culture, plays a critical role in generating and sustaining faculty interest in community-based work.
- The relative absence of “mission creep” and the irrelevance of research university norms allow for a more flexible understanding of faculty roles and rewards.
- Effective “enabling mechanisms” – and the willingness to fund them – are in most cases of fundamental importance.
- The college provides resources to the community primarily by acting as an “honest broker” and “active listener” – relationships are indeed reciprocal.

“What for me is most important about this project is that it will help the Compact clearly recognize the distinctive nature of the community college contribution to civic engagement and academic renewal. I have been enormously impressed by the willingness of so many community college leaders to ‘walk the talk.’ In doing so, they have won levels of community trust and respect that should be the envy of four-year institutions.”

-Edward Zlotkowski

Campus Compact
Senior Faculty Fellow