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THE SCHOLARSHIP OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

**REPORT ON THE
UNIVERSITY SENATE PLENARY
AND
INTER-UNIVERSITY SYMPOSIUM**

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2004
AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
PITTSBURGH, PA**

SUBMITTED BY

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE
OF THE UNIVERSITY SENATE
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH**

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The November 3, 2004 Senate Plenary and Inter-University Symposium developed in follow-up from the 2001 Senate Plenary, “The University in Civic Engagement: Service in Our University’s Mission” as a continuation of the dialogue begun at this earlier plenary. One of the most critical issues arising from the earlier plenary was the need to strengthen the connection between *scholarship* and *service* at our institution, and it was thought that another plenary to explore this topic would be useful to our campus community dialogue. The Community Relations Committee of the University Senate, having coordinated the previous plenary and prepared a report on the proceedings, once again took on the role of planning this event.

Early in the process two issues became the focus: 1) the need to redefine University civic engagement and community service through the lens of scholarship and research; 2) broadening the dialogue to include ideas and experiences from other regional universities. The Community Relations Committee sought to structure these as related events that while complementing each other would allow for the Senate Plenary to remain primarily a University of Pittsburgh forum.

Coupling the afternoon Senate Plenary with a morning inter-university Symposium had its impetus from two sources. The University of Pittsburgh’s Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC), in participating in HUD-sponsored COPC national conferences, often found these national forums an opportunity to dialogue with other regional institutions engaged in or hoping to be engaged in COPC initiatives. Often these inter-university exchanges prompted a desire to find avenues to continue this collaborative dialogue back home. During 2004 another forum had developed among regional higher education institutions under the Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education (PCHE), a coordinating network among the ten (10) colleges and universities in Pittsburgh. PCHE had begun a Service-Learning Committee among regional institutions to share ideas and best practices, as well as plan cooperative strategies. In a meeting between PCHE and Community Relations Committee representatives, these parties readily agreed to co-sponsor a complementary inter-university symposium open to teams invited from colleges and universities in Southwestern Pennsylvania. The morning Symposium would focus on three areas: 1) Service-Learning, 2) Scholarship and Research, and 3) Community Service.

While the Plenary would remain a University of Pittsburgh forum coordinated by the Senate Community Relations Committee, it was felt that the campus dialogue might benefit by having some knowledgeable voices from outside the institution, and the plenary discussion panel was structured as a mix of University and other higher education institution and community discussants. In addition, the Community Relations Committee sought to bring in a national presenter who could articulate a more rigorous vision of university civic engagement and community service connected to scholarship and research. Dr. Lorilee R. Sandmann, Co-Director of the National Clearinghouse and Review Board for the Scholarship of Engagement and Associate Professor at the University of Georgia was aptly selected to keynote the plenary.

Two ancillary events were also planned for the plenary day: 1) A showcase of service, which featured resource tables from exemplary University of Pittsburgh and other university community service projects that highlighted scholarship, research, and service-learning and 2) a luncheon panel forum featuring regional experiential learning programs that target students.

INTER-UNIVERSITY SYMPOSIUM

Nearly 100 representatives from all 10 PCHE institutions and five other regional universities participated in the morning symposium on “The Scholarship of Engagement”. The overall comments on and evaluation from the symposium were very positive and indicated that such inter-campus dialogue was useful and important to continue. The University of Pittsburgh was also complimented on its leadership in hosting this inter-university exchange.

The symposium consisted of an introductory plenary featuring two brief presentations, three concurrent breakout sessions on: 1) service-learning, 2) scholarship and research and 3) community service respectively, and a wrap-up plenary that featured brief reports from the breakout sessions. The following is a report on the symposium activities:

Introductory Plenary

Presenting at this introductory session were *Dan Horgan, Director of Robert Morris University’s Community Outreach Partnership Center and Allegheny’s Promise*, and *Tracy M. Soska, Co-Director of the University of Pittsburgh’s COPC, faculty member in the School of Social Work and member of the University Senate*.

Horgan’s presentation focused on community service as, most essentially, a journey inward, and he discussed his own development and experience in community service and the skills and knowledge it has brought to his life. He underscored through his own experience and, now in his work, the important synergy between service and education, and how service experiences can strengthen one’s educational experience. He noted that this service-learning experience should be structured - yet flexible, maintain high standards - yet represent risk-taking, help to develop identity, create win/win situations with the community, and provide a real framework for evaluation of the experience. Horgan stressed the importance of civic engagement in higher education as enhancing university visibility and recruitment, providing a moral presence, increasing learning opportunities through external experiences and application of knowledge, and creating positive impact on the community. Within his own experience he has seen his role as a catalyst for mobilizing resources for the community, a convener to promote collaboration across boundaries and territorial issues, an innovator of new community problem-solving approaches, and a civic generator to develop the entire campus community.

Soska’s presentation sought to recognize the growing scholarship and research of civic engagement and how this provides an avenue for higher education institutions and their faculty and students to participate in this community of scholars. He acknowledged the civic engagement movement that has been characterized through such initiatives as Campus Compact’s President’s Declaration of Civic Engagement among college presidents, and he stressed how this engagement has institutionalized in reports from such notable higher education accrediting bodies like the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Kellogg’s Commission on Public and Land Grant Universities. In addition, he stressed, higher education bodies such as the American Association of Higher Education, have hosted national conferences addressing related topics, such as the AAHE conference “Knowledge for What? The Engaged Scholar.” He also noted major funding opportunities for this work through such

government avenues as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of University Partnerships and National Corporation for Community Service's Learning and Serve America initiatives, as well as from such national foundations as the Pew Partnership for Civic Change, the Knight Foundation, Kelloggs, and others. The community impact of the higher education enterprise has heightened the appreciation of the civic importance of academic institutions to their regional economic, social, and cultural life. Soska underscored that university-community partnerships, service-learning, and other civic engagement work has advanced a significant scholarship and literature focusing on teaching, learning, applied research, and evaluation of university partnerships. He cited journals such as *American Behavioral Scientist*, *Metropolitan Universities*, *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, to name a few have dedicated special or numerous issues to this scholarship, in addition to other staple journals such as the *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, Outreach Scholarship*, and HUD's own, *Cityscape*. Finally, Soska acknowledged that there are many national resources for higher education faculty and administrators to explore to help them in strengthening their scholarship of community service, such as the National Service Learning Clearinghouse and the National Clearinghouse and Review Board on Engaged Scholarship, whose co-director would be addressing the Senate Plenary

Symposium Breakout Sessions

There were three concurrent workshops, and the following are reports from those sessions:

Scholarship and Applied Research Workshop

Facilitator: Maureen K. Porter, Associate Professor, School of Education

Dr. Porter began the session by presenting an overview of issues salient to the practice of applied academic research. They were: challenges in the academy, redefinition of scholarship, evaluation of scholarship, modes of research, modes of publication, best practices, and effective collaborations. Dr. Porter then proceeded to speak to each issue in a PowerPoint presentation she had prepared.

Challenges in the Academy: The major problem identified by Dr. Porter was that professors must often choose between service or research or teaching, but cannot effectively combine all three. Another issue is the risk of seeming "soft or emotional" by one's peers, supervisors, and university administrators for engaging in applied research, particularly if one is in a field that highly values basic research. This can adversely affect one's status within a department and even potentially hurt chances for tenure and promotion. A final concern was the risk of "overload" for courses, students, and professors. Applied research often must be done above and beyond standard coursework or research, and thus can become very burdensome.

Redefinition of Scholarship: Dr. Porter stated that a major way to reduce the stress mentioned above was to modify our definition of valid scholarship to more fully include applied and service-oriented research. She discussed the need for a definition of scholarship that promotes excellence in teaching, application of ideas, and integration of approaches. Finally, Dr. Porter stressed the importance of "creative engagement" in academia; successful engagement and

creativity come through collaborations, tolerance of failure, cross-cultural exchanges, interdisciplinary exchanges, and ample time and resources.

Evaluation of Scholarship: According to Dr. Porter, the current standards of scholarship in the academic community are too focused on immediate results and single outcomes. She suggested that the process of generating scholarship and long-term results should also be considered. The academic community must, in addition, redefine what it considers to be appropriate methods, significant results, effective presentation and adequate preparation to be more inclusive and welcoming of non-traditional applied research.

Modes of Research: Dr. Porter talked in this section about her own experiences with service-learning and applied scholarship as the leader of a service project in Peru. In her own work with the L.I.N.C.S. (Learning Integrated with Need Construction and Service) program, Dr. Porter was able to produce research about service-learning, research and service-learning, and research through service-learning – the difference among these aspects merits further discussion. She was also able to explore new forms of data-gathering and documentation, which is very important in the promotion of applied scholarship.

Modes of Publication: In this section, Dr. Porter stressed a philosophy of publication that is community-centered. She stated that publication is the academic community's primary way of giving back to the community: it shows subjects and the world what you have created and the knowledge you have generated. For this reason, it is important to a variety of modes of publication and to not simply disseminate research through scholarly journals and academic presses. Traditional academic channels of publication should not always take precedence over popular press; similarly, academic conferences and gatherings should not be privileged over community outreach and social settings of dissemination.

Best Practices and Effective Collaborations: Dr. Porter discussed the importance of academic communities working towards a “purposeful goal of continuing to build a community of practice.” She spoke of the need for openness in forging alliances and willingness to think regionally and beyond. She encouraged the idea of relationships that transcend traditional academic communities.

Following her presentation, Dr. Porter opened the room up for discussion. No strong conclusions were drawn from the discussion. Rather, concerns and salient issues were raised with less emphasis on generating solutions than exchanging ideas. The following is a summary of issues raised by participants.

- Overwork and under-appreciation were common themes. Several people spoke of the problem of time constraints and the stress of maintaining and integrating many roles and efforts. Others felt that they do not receive adequate credit for service-learning or applied research efforts, making it difficult to give that work priority.
- Chuck Lanigan asked how academics can meaningfully apply research. He pointed out that many professors don't necessarily have the training or knowledge to become involved in or apply research.

- Several participants also brought up the role of students in applied scholarship and service-learning. There were issues with how professors can teacher students to ask good questions and make the extra effort required by service-learning. One participant mentioned that students can be trained to do grounded research and that new priorities in research (that promote applied scholarship) can be encouraged through students.
- Bob McCall saw senior faculty as often being a big problem because they dictate the agenda of the department and are entrenched in traditional methodologies and priorities. He felt that universities often denigrate applied researchers and don't give them credit because academic institutions operate under an "old values system."
- Strategic work and partnerships were also brought up during the discussion. Participants felt that information should be disseminated strategically to prevent information overload and efforts at applied research should be joint ventures between faculty in order to complement skills and prevent the stress mentioned at the beginning of the discussion.
- Mario spoke about the issue of community-university connections. He said that community-based scholarship might draw activists back into the academic world, but that there are, nonetheless, issues of how to connect community-based efforts with university scholarship. The community is busy "doing" while the university "decides what to do."
- Other participants stressed the importance of building long-term trusting relationships between universities and communities and changing the structure of universities to make them more engaged and to give power to communities as well as universities in dictating the agenda of applied scholarship. There must also be organizational and departmental change to ensure that service is valued.
- Nicholas Bircher, University Senate President, brought up the concern of funding sources that privilege basic over applied research, speaking specifically about the NIH. Yet, at the same time, he felt we need to weed out extraneous information when teaching – that is, not all applied *or* basic research is necessarily relevant or valuable.
- A final question raised was "What does society view as the purpose of education?" Society now sees educators as lacking in practice and real-world experience. Academia must balance theory and practice for better impact.

Service-Learning Workshop

Facilitator: Joanne E. Burley, Executive Director - Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education

First, the group was introduced to Linda Dickerson, a principal at *501c3 Squared*, consulting practice that assists nonprofit organizations. At present, her firm is conducting a ***feasibility study of a regional service-learning institute***. The institute would serve as an infrastructure to support service-learning programs, a clearinghouse of service-learning initiatives. The firm is working with the Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education to conduct a focus group on service-learning. From their findings the firm will submit a proposal to perspective foundations considering sponsorship of this project.

Next, the group established a ***definition for service-learning***. Mrs. Burley quoted Cynthia A. Wood, a respected professor and practitioner of service-learning at Duke University. In short, service-learning is a pedagogy that brings community needs, student inquiries, and faculty expertise together. "It [service-learning] is an experience where students can immerse themselves in practical application of theoretical models" (Burley).

Mrs. Burley proposed questions to the group for discussion, as follows:

How can we move theoretical models into practical applications?

The student service-learning experience helps students build character and ascertain or discern life/career direction. To fulfill the aforementioned characteristics, the service projects must be reflective of the theories presented in class. The service-learning projects have a greater impact on students when they reflect the student's interests.

The service-learning experiences can also reflect well upon the faculty member conducting the project. But many times universities are unable to encourage faculty members to facilitate such learning experiences. One suggestion is peer encouragement. Some local universities (Duquesne) have faculty encouraging faculty through shared interests and ideas. ***Generations Together*** at the University of Pittsburgh publishes faculty work on service-learning. Penn State Fayette established a funding initiative to pay faculty a stipend or course release on service-learning semester projects.

What is the difference between service-learning and community service or volunteerism?

Linda Dickerson said it best: "...anything you service can teach you something of value..." The difference between service-learning and community service is when learning is applied to service and a reflection component exists. To ensure that the service-learning experience is valued, credits are given for reflection instead of for the number of hours completed. Duquesne University implements this model. Students discuss civic engagement and concepts for how to be better professionals.

Service-learning is the intersection of community service, civic responsibility and long term civic engagement. It is the facilitator of motivation for students to become change agents within the community.

How do we identify perspective projects or agencies with which to work?

In the beginning, many service-learning programs identify agencies to work with or projects to complete. Many times faculty have great ideas but are not in tune with the needs of the community or the agency. Some regional resource or clearinghouse on opportunities might be helpful in identifying and brokering prospective projects.

Should service-learning be mandatory or optional?

Universities all over the country implement different strategies to encourage service-learning into the curriculum. Duquesne University is exploring a strategic plan that will require students to register for at least one service-learning course within a specified discipline or a core course.

Another model permits faculty members to make service-learning an optional requirement. Students have the choice of completing the assigned project or writing a paper.

Some potential issues arose out of this discussion: If a school is a major service-learning institute, how can a student balance multiple service-learning requirements for different classes? Nontraditional students and some traditional students have life responsibilities (living expenses, children, etc.), how can they have the time to complete assignments?

Members of the group suggested to creative curriculums for those students with outside responsibilities. Another suggestion was to provide students with independent study credits for the service-learning projects completed.

Do the social benefits outweigh inconveniences?

Some members of the group shared the social benefits of their experiences and student experiences. In one case, diversity engagement in the provision of health care was a great way to encourage understanding and maturity in the student learners. At the Dental School at the University of Pittsburgh, students engage in required service-learning as they provide dental services to low-income minority communities.

Another group member shared that literacy education was another way that students were able to witness the needs of others and the power of their work.

But many members still wondered how to achieve such benefits in the allotted time frame. Some shared that at their institution, students have a community time every Wednesday to complete their service-learning hours. In general the group agreed that such an inconvenience is small compared to the work completed.

Members shared that the interdisciplinary approach of service-learning mimics life. They also shared that the work provided is not charity and should be translated into justice.

A professor from Duquesne University suggested that faculty must encourage students to examine the question of “what can they, as democratic citizens, do to change policies to help the population they serve change their lives?” Civic responsibility must render review of marginalization and social justice. Service-learning is not just about serving and learning but advocating for those you serve.

Community Service Workshop

Facilitator: Tracy M. Soska, University of Pittsburgh COPC Co-Director and School of Social Work faculty member

Over three dozen representatives from area colleges and universities participated in this workshop session, and each was given a opportunity to report on key community service effort. Several campus service initiatives were highlighted, along with the various funding resources that helped in promoting their community service or service-learning programs.

Waynesburg College discussed how community service is a campus-wide requirement for which credit is offered to all students. Community service is part of the mission, faith-base and identity

of Waynesburg, and the hallmark initiative is the ***Bonnors Scholar Program*** - one of several such programs supported by the Bonner Family Foundation nationally. Several Bonners Scholar/students shared their experience with leadership through community service.

Generations Together at the University of Pittsburgh talked about their experience with a national service-learning grant supported by the ***National Corporation for Community Service's Learn and Serve America*** program and focused on developing intergenerational service-learning courses in colleges and universities across the country. Intergenerational projects seem particularly well suited for integrating service activities with academic coursework.

Penn State University – Fayette shared its experience in developing a Service Learning Center also supported through the ***Learn and Serve America*** program. They also recognized the important role that ***AmeriCorps*** opportunities provide for student community service and for staffing service-learning initiatives.

Both ***Robert Morris University*** and ***Point Park University*** discussed their recent experience with integrating student community service and service-learning through their ***Community Outreach Partnership Centers funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of University Partnerships***. Point Park is using faculty and students in music and writing to work with Focus on Renewal in McKees Rocks to develop programming at a new youth center in the community. Robert Morris University has connected its students as classroom aids and tutors to work with teachers and children in the distressed Duquesne School District, as well as to work with community agencies on youth career development and service in the Duquesne community. ***The importance of evaluating*** both the student learning experience and the community and school impact of this work, e.g., improvement of children's classroom performance, attendance, and scores of standardized achievement tests, was underscored as essential to the research and scholarship of this community service.

Indiana University of PA, St. Vincent College, and Community College of Allegheny County also shared lessons from their student community service and experiential learning programs that help students explore careers, build real world experience, and promote citizenship and service. ***Student Volunteer Outreach*** at the University of Pittsburgh also shared how it has drawn on a number of the funding resources previously noted, as well as the ***Federal Work Study Program***, to promote student community service. The Federal government is evaluating colleges and universities as to how well they are using their Work Study funding to support community service and outreach. The ***Amazide-Global Services Learning Center*** was also noted as an initiative promoting international service through service-learning courses in other countries.

The session discussion provided a range of community service ideas across a variety of higher education institutions, and participants were able to network with other campuses whose activities were worth replicating or exploring further. The session also underscored a number of grant or funding resources that can help support and develop community service programs on campus and promote university-community outreach partnerships that provide community service and service-learning experiences. There was a general sense that this discussion was an excellent first step in inter-university exchange, and participants were hopeful that future opportunities for information and resource networking would follow from this symposium.

THE SENATE PLENARY

“THE SCHOLARSHIP OF COMMUNITY SERVICE”

The Senate Plenary was to consist of four segments: 1) introductory remarks by the Chancellor, 2) keynote presentation, 3) discussion panel and 4) round-table discussions among participants. With the post-Presidential election activities, specifically Senator Kerry’s concession speech, delaying the start of the Plenary, the round-table discussions were replaced with a brief period of open questions and comments with the discussion panel and participants. The unfortunate timing of the Plenary for the day after the Presidential election did seem to detract from larger participation.

Senate President, Nicholas Bircher, opened the Plenary by touting the public service work of the University and its importance to enhance teaching and research at Pitt. He introduced Chancellor Mark Nordenberg for Introductory Remarks. He also recognized Linda M. Hartman, Chair of the Senate Community Relations Committee, who introduced the keynote speaker.

Chancellor Nordenberg’s Introductory Remarks

After reflecting on several of the outstanding, international recognitions bestowed on the University this past year, including: two Nobel prizes, our designation as a Marshall Center of Excellence, election of faculty to key National and American Academies in the Sciences and Arts and Sciences, and several other noteworthy awards, Chancellor Nordenberg turned his attention to the economic decline, fiscal crisis, health disparities, and other problems that have gripped our region. He noted that: “Whether they are seeking solutions to these or other problems, people increasingly turn to Pitt...virtually everyone wrestling with a serious problem wants Pitt, and the people of Pitt, to be engaged in the community.”

Chancellor Nordenberg reflected on the importance this dimension of our institutional mission was given in February 1996 when the Board of Trustees made building community partnerships to enhance the quality of life in our region and the Commonwealth one of our priority statements. He noted our growing emphasis on and role in regional economic development through such initiatives as the Pittsburgh Digital Greenhouse and the Pittsburgh Life Science Greenhouse among other centers, i.e., robotics, tissue engineering, and other technologies and bio-technologies. Pitt has developed partnerships with CMU, local business and industry, and regional and state government that builds on our excellence in research and makes us a strong university. The Chancellor underscored that when we effectively advance our teaching and research priorities we better position ourselves as good community partners.

Stressing that service is not a substitute for teaching and scholarship, “(B)ut in the best of circumstance, community service or community engagement functions as an enhancer of those critical dimensions of our core mission.” He acknowledged good examples in the University where community service functions just that way, including “our very successful Community Outreach Partnership Center” – which reaches out to neighborhoods adjoining the campus, “the Healthy Black Family Project being undertaken by our Center for Minority Health,” and “our still-relatively-new Center for Urban Education” – which is piloting programs in the Wilkinsburg School District and in Pittsburgh Public Schools.

In closing, Chancellor Nordenberg reflected on having lived most of his adult life in the region and noted that community engagement is “a matter of the heart for me.” He concluded by noting that “...effectively aligning our service initiatives with our teaching and research mission also is a matter of the mind”, and he applauded the Senate for choosing this important topic to explore.

Keynote Presentation

Dr. Lorilee Sandmann, Co-Director – National Clearinghouse and Review Board on Engaged Scholarship; Associate Professor – University of Georgia School of Education.

Dr. Sandmann began her keynote address by asking: “Where is the scholarship in the scholarship of community service and why do it?” She then proceeded to answer why it is important and what’s in it for faculty, the institution and higher education. She defined this scholarship as the “work of scholars in an *Engaged Institution*... (one that) is fully committed to direct, two-way interaction with communities and other external constituencies through the development, exchange, and application of knowledge, information, and expertise for mutual benefit.” She stressed the values of this scholarship being place-related, interactive and collaborative, mutually beneficial, integrated, and dedicated to learning. *Engaged scholarship* is scholarship “for the common good” that “engages faculty in academically relevant work that simultaneously fulfills the campus mission and goals as well as community needs.

She characterized the scholarship of engagement as significantly involving community-based research that focuses on local and cosmopolitan knowledge, as well as collaborative practices and pedagogy. She invoked the Noah Principle, wherein rewards aren’t just “for predicting rain, but for building the arks”. She also underscored that the scholarship of engagement offers ample opportunity for crossing scholarly boundaries, and interdisciplinary work is often the norm. Dr. Sandmann stressed that while this scholarship assumes the established epistemology where knowledge is generated by faculty members in the university, it is then applied in external contexts. To do his work effectively requires that learning and instruction are multi-directional and expertise is shared, and it brings community planning and discussions into the process from the beginning. She notes that this scholarship approach reconceptualizes faculty involvement in community-based work.

Dr. Sandmann then discussed how this work should be counted as scholarship within quality-evaluation criteria – as defined by the National Review Board for the Scholarship of Engagement. Engaged scholarship must have clear goals and questions, and it must offer a context of theory, literature, and best practices. It should delineate methods and provide results worth of analysis. This scholarship must also be communicated and disseminated, and, in particular, should offer reflective critique.

Finally, Dr. Sandmann related her own experiences in supporting engaged scholarship at Michigan State University (MSU) and, now, the University of Georgia, and what systems are needed to support the scholarship of community service/engagement. First, one needs to develop a “learning community” that works to define common understanding of terms, rationale, and rewards. At MSU leading departmental chair and faculty forums addressed outreach scholarship

and helped to define outreach, engagement, and quality. There was also institutional alignment at MSU including institutional planning and in the evaluation of faculty work where documenting and assessing quality outreach was done at both faculty and institutional levels. She underscored that these processes need to be rigorous, reliable, and understood by traditionalist, yet appropriate to community work. Collaboration with the institution and across disciplines needs to be encouraged and supported, as well as collaboration between the institution and the community. It is essential to develop some institutional mechanisms to build capacity for this work among faculty, within disciplines, and for the institution. Universities that have been successful in their engaged scholarship made the effort to build capacity and promote cultural change and alignment.

In closing, Dr. Sandmann reiterated why she felt this work was important at campuses where she worked and should also be at the University of Pittsburgh and “what she felt was in it” for faculty, the institution and higher education. She then posed the question to the panel, “What needs to be done to strengthen scholarly community service at Pitt?”

DISCUSSION PANEL

Members of the Discussion Panel, which commented on Dr. Sandmann’s presentation, included:

James V. Maher, *Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor, University of Pittsburgh*

Gregg Behr, *President, The Forbes Funds*

JoAnne E. Burley, *Executive Director, Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education*

Robert M. Goodman, *Professor and Chair, Behavioral and Community Health Sciences, Grant School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh*

Maureen K. Porter, *Associate Professor, School of Education, University of Pittsburgh*

Evan Stoddard, *Associate Dean of Liberal Arts, Duquesne University*

Moderator for the Panel was: **Sabina E. Deitrick**, *Associate Professor, Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and Co-Director, Community Outreach Partnership Center, University of Pittsburgh.*

Provost Maher’s Remarks

Dr. Maher cautioned those assembled for the Plenary that many of the “very best faculty are not in the room because they do not think that this is a worthy enterprise” and that this dialogue must engage the very best of the University in a high quality way. He also offered several disclaimers, including: that tenure must follow traditional lines; that he is “prepared to wait a long time to get this working”; that he has no intention of “acting with any disrespect toward the role in governance played by the faculties at the schools”, and that one should not “bring a tenure case that runs counter to the collective opinion of the faculty of the school as to the appropriateness of the activity.” He noted that he is not hostile to this venture but is, in fact, “dedicated to the success of this kind of project”; however, we must face the barriers very clearly if we want to solve the problems of community service scholarship, which he acknowledged is “remarkably important.”

Stressing the region can benefit from our role as a learning community, he underscored that there should not be a dichotomy between research and service by noting: “I don’t understand why

these two need to be regarded as two separate enterprises.” Dr. Maher acknowledged the many problems of our region and our need as an institution to respond with service, but that such community engagement must be evaluated and the outcomes documented, which in itself is research “as long as the faculty of that school have put into place mechanisms for evaluating that research and have endorsed that kind of activity as being within the scope of the mission of the school and in the interest of the development of the school.” He noted how important it is for this work to be done right and be academically rigorous and stressed that “well intentioned mistakes make for skeptical faculty.”

While recognizing that such connection between community service and our teaching and research is often easier within the professional schools, the Provost recognized the importance of service learning and finding more ways to help students learn through experience. He offered the analogy of what faculty in sciences have always done through teaching laboratories, and he focused on using the community as a teaching laboratory that can benefit student learning and faculty scholarship, as well as the community with which they partner. He challenged the assemblage to help make this work in the arts and sciences and get the very best faculty engaged in this process.

Gregg Behr’s Remarks

Mr. Behr acknowledged that he is a product of civic engagement initiatives through his undergraduate studies at Notre Dame University where faculty are encouraged and rewarded for their community engagement and his graduate/professional studies at Duke University, which has grown a significant base of engaged scholarship and is advancing research service-learning as a more rigorous take on connecting service with teaching and research. Gregg noted that The Forbes Funds is vested in engaged scholarship at Pitt and other universities and that the foundation community is especially interested in this direction at this time. He underscored the importance that higher education institutions do and must provide for nurturing civic leadership of the community. He stressed that higher education community service and civic engagement builds capacity in nonprofit organizations, makes our community attractive to young professionals, and helps us rethink leadership in our community.

JoAnne E. Burley’s Remarks

Ms. Burley introduced the Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education (PCHE) as a consortium among ten (10) colleges and universities in Pittsburgh, and each of these higher education institutions has some focus on community service, service learning, and applied research. All of the PCHE institutions are affected by service learning and service research that makes theory real in practical application, more so than formal research that lacks application. Engaged scholarship is important to students in that it affords an opportunity to increase the enthusiasm for research that is important to their future lives. PCHE schools represented over 682,000 hours of service in 1999 and more than 712,000 in 2000; community service is increasing by at least 24,000 hours each year. She also remarked that PCHE has also recently established a Service Learning subcommittee with representatives from each of its institutional members, and that PCHE co-sponsored the morning inter-university symposium hosted at Pitt.

Robert M. Goodman's Remarks

Professor Goodman noted that he left Tulane University and an endowed professorship there to come to our Graduate School of Public Health because of its growing commitment to community, which fit well with his career as a community scholar in public health. He stressed that this community scholarship has developed its own theories, principles and system of scientific logic, as well as its own science and epistemology. He also stressed the need for revised policies for the standards of “engagement”. He differentiated between community-place work that is often initiated by grants and outside funding that is hard to translate to community and community-based work that is developed out of partnerships with community. He sees the impact of this collaborative approach as a discipline, and he offered a number of examples from his own work with the Center for Health Aging working with the County Housing Authority in on research that helps empower elderly on issues of concern for their own care and civic engagement research in Uniontown. Professor Goodman noted that this year he received a national award from his public health research peers, which he said underscored that one can have a productive career working in community-based research.

Maureen K. Porter's Remarks

Professor Porter characterized community service scholarship as having “3 Rs”:

- 1) Risk-taking: Faculty and students need to be provided opportunities to fail, so long as there is potential for longer-term outcomes
- 2) Reciprocity: The community needs to understand what institutions of higher education need in the process, and the community should share in the power and recognition of joint ventures where community input promotes partnerships.
- 3) Recognition: Needs to be part of the local discussion, too; type of products of this research not always articles; who are the peers who set the standards for this work.

She noted that dissemination of knowledge is an important senior faculty role and that engaged scholarship work has mutual benefits for faculty, students, and community partners.

Evan Stoddard's Remarks

Dean Stoddard shared his own experience with service learning from one of his courses where students studied homelessness as a public policy issue. The level of student engagement and enthusiasm for the course greatly increased when he added field visits to homeless shelters to help out in the shelters and to interview and learn from the homeless and those working with this population. By making this a service learning course, the connection of classroom to field application enhanced the learning experience. Dr. Stoddard raised three questions for faculty members to ask themselves in this work.

- 1) Will my students learn better if I engage in community research?
- 2) Do I have the expertise and interest to take on community problems in my research?
- 3) Will I ensure that the community will receive value from working with me?

He underscored that it is important for us to make sure we “do no harm” in our work, and both the university and community benefit from working together. He also recognized that this work is not for every academic or everybody.

Concluding Discussion

Owing to the lateness of the program, round-table discussions were deferred, and **Dr. Deitrick** invited the audience to comment, ask questions, and discuss ideas with the panel. The following are highlights from that large group discussion, which Dr. Deitrick moderated:

Dr. Ken Thompson, *Associate Professor, School of Medicine*, noted that many institutions have built national reputations on their civic engagement work. He asked if there are any national rankings on civic engagement and how does our university get to be one of those ranked institutions?

Dr. Sandmann noted that the Carnegie classification is creating standards for engagement, but these are optional. National benchmarking at the University of Chicago has looked at the indicators and measures to assess engagement across institutions and to identify faculty, student, and administration alignment to promote engagement.

Dr. Thompson also raised the idea of redoing *The Pittsburgh Study* – landmark quality of life study now 100 years old. How is our scholarship important to the region? He noted we have many elements already in place in UCSUR, COPC, and other outreach efforts to take on such a research project.

Dr. Maher raised the issue of the need for clarity on this project and that such a search will help the process. He noted we need to define what we could do for Pittsburgh and in this he asked that we compare this to the medical research model of define “best practices”.

Dr. Sandmann concurred with Dr. Maher and pointed out that two real concerns in civic engagement scholarship are over-promising and under-delivering. She differentiated engagement between work predicated on outreach into the community and that in-reached from community to the academy. She posed several questions in this regards:

- 1) How does the community know where to in-reach? Where is the community access point?
- 2) How is the community request interpreted and acted upon in the institution?
- 3) Why do universities find it difficult to collaborate, not only externally, but internally?

Ms. Burley also stressed from her experience that there is a need to build rapport between university and community, as well as the need for community access point. She noted the Community Outreach Partnership Centers now at four Pittsburgh universities as good places for building this rapport.

Mr. Behr addressed how the university sends messages to the community by the incentives it provides to faculty and nonprofit organizations and that this is rewarding self-interest. We must also be willing to share chairmanship of this work.

Dr. Maher noted that community partners must be ones who are respected and who respect us. He cautioned that we shouldn't play roles we're not good at and that we should be careful from the start to make sure we are good at what we are being asked to do. There is sometimes a pitfall

in this work that “we can do anything”. We can do some things very well, and we should do those things.

Dr. Deitrick thanked the audience and the panel for their discussions and for the excellent comments on Dr. Sandmann’s presentation. She invited **Dr. Bircher** to close out the plenary, which he did by thanking everyone who contributed to the excellent plenary dialogue on this important topic that he hoped will continue within the university community.

Recommendation from the Senate Community Relations Committee

Subsequent to the Senate Plenary and Inter-University Symposium, the Senate Community Relations Committee which planned and coordinated these events reviewed the reports and discussions toward recommendations for future dialogue and action on the Scholarship of Community Service at the University of Pittsburgh. The following recommendations are offered to the University Senate:

- *The Faculty Assembly and Senate Council should look for continued opportunities to discuss community service and civic engagement at the University of Pittsburgh and how this can best connect to our teaching and research mission.*
- *The University Senate, particularly through the Office of the Provost, should seek opportunities for Deans and Schools to dialogue on civic engagement, service-learning, and engaged scholarship, and these dialogues should extend into the faculty of schools.*
- *The Community Relations and the Tenure and Academic Freedom Committees of the Senate should explore collaborative dialogue on strengthening engaged scholarship within promotion and tenure guidelines relative to new Carnegie guidelines and standards on engagement to help schools and departments in their deliberations.*
- *The University should look for opportunities to invite nationally prominent speakers from universities that have Centers of Excellence in civic engagement and service-learning research, e.g., Michigan, Notre Dame and Duke, to continue to promote a dialogue on “the scholarship of community service”.*
- *The University should explore the Research Service-Learning model as one that could attract the top faculty and scholars at our institution as it has done at Duke University and is starting to do at other Carnegie One research universities.*
- *The University should further explore redoing The Pittsburgh Study for this new century as a project worthy of a multi-discipline research endeavor partnering the City of Pittsburgh and the University Center for Social and Urban Research.*
- *The University should explore funding and other opportunities to build support and incentive systems in centers, such as its Community Outreach Partnership Center, to support community research, research service-learning, and engaged scholarship.*

Ancillary Events

There were two additional events related to the Senate Plenary and Inter-University Symposium:

- 1) An Experiential Learning Forum
- 2) A Showcase of Service Exhibit

The following are reports on these two related events:

Experiential Learning Forum

During lunch students, faculty, and staff from the University and visiting institutions were invited to attend a forum on experiential learning opportunities. This forum, moderated by Gregg Behr, President of The Forbes Funds, offered a panel discussion on innovative community service organizations in the Pittsburgh region. Representatives of these organizations presented on opportunities for fellowships, internships, civic engagement, and leadership development, especially for students and young professionals. Featured organizations included:

- Coro Center for Civic Leadership
- Leadership Pittsburgh
- New Pittsburgh Collaborative
- Pittsburgh Regional Internship Center (Coro)
- Pittsburgh Social Venture Partners
- Pittsburgh Urban Magnet Project (PUMP)
- Urban League of Pittsburgh – African American Leadership Development Program

Showcase of Service - Exhibitors

From the close of the Symposium until the start of the Plenary, a Showcase of Service featured table displays by over thirty (30) exhibitors representing the University of Pittsburgh and regional colleges and universities. These exhibits highlighted community outreach and service-learning activities that also included research and scholarship, including the following:

University of Pittsburgh

- Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC)
- Generations Together – University Center for Social and Urban Research
- University Center for International Studies
- School of Dental Medicine
- Office of Child Development – School of Education
- Kinder Kinetics – School of Education, Healthy and Physical Activity
- Bridging the Gaps – School of Medicine and Health-Related Professions
- Healthcare to the Underserved – School of Medicine
- Pharmaceutical Science - School of Pharmacy
- Center for Minority Health – Graduate School of Public Health

St. Vincent College

Robert Morris University

- Community Outreach Partnership Center
- Bayer Center for Nonprofit Management

Point Park University

- Community Outreach Partnership
- Honor's Program

Waynesburg College

- Bonner Scholar's Program
- Center for Service Leadership
- Kid's Café

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

- Office of Service Learning
- Intelligence Community E-Learning Project

Duquesne University

- Pharmacy
- Community Outreach Partnership Center
- Occupational Therapy

Carnegie Mellon University (2 tables total)

- Center for School Outreach
- Studio for Creative Learning

Chatham College

Experiential Learning Opportunities (from lunch-time forum)

Amizade – Global Services Learning Center

APPENDIX

Attached in this Appendix is the Executive Summary from the 2002 University Senate Plenary on *The University in Civic Engagement: Service in the University's Mission*.

THE UNIVERSITY IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: SERVICE IN OUR UNIVERSITY'S MISSION

**Report on the Spring Senate Plenary
March 21, 2001
William Pitt Union
University of Pittsburgh**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Report Prepared and Submitted by
Community Relations Committee
University Senate
University of Pittsburgh**

Executive Summary

The Senate Plenary of March 21, 2001, *University in Civic Engagement: Service in the University's Mission*, demonstrated broad and active participation from across the University community and generated productive discussions summarized and enhanced in this report. All indications are that this topic is an important one for the University community and one that merits ongoing inquiry and communication within the academy. The Plenary session and this report are intended to stimulate focused discussion about these issues within schools, disciplines, and units, as well as within the University's leadership and governance bodies.

Introductory remarks from Chancellor Nordenberg noted that one of the institutional goals explicitly calls for the university to be an active partner in local community development in keeping with our teaching and research mission; Dr. Nordenberg also emphasized the importance of service in his leadership role and underscored the theme that the *City is our Campus* is a vital component of the academic mission and should enhance the teaching/learning experience. In his keynote address Ira Harkavy, Director of the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Community partnership focused on the historic public service role of higher education institutions. Dr. Harkavy further noted how that role is evolving into what he termed the *cosmopolitan democratic civic university* that enhances teaching and research through targeted community outreach initiatives and civic engagement partnerships to strengthen student, faculty and staff citizenship. Provost James Maher and Pittsburgh Planning Director, Susan Golomb, each noted that the University has made considerable progress in developing effective relationship with our broader community, and all emphasized the virtue of maintaining respect and responsiveness toward our community partners and the importance of a long-term commitment to collaboration.

Round-table discussions were lively and several overarching themes were identified as the focus for the Plenary and follow-up efforts. From these themes emerged a range of issues and recommendations for consideration in the University community. The Senate's Community Relations Committee, that organized the March 21st Plenary and the accompanying Celebration of Service fair, has focused considerable attention on these issues since the Plenary. The following is a summary of the main issues and recommendations:

ISSUE I: DEFINING SERVICE IN THE UNIVERSITY

Transforming our vision of service from a limited view of "academic charity" to an enriched and broader conception of service-based learning and scholarship was a critical focus of discussion. Community outreach and civic engagement have emerged as common terms for defining service that is linked to the academic mission of higher education and characterized by collaboration with community partners. How we can most effectively coordinate and advance our community outreach and civic engagement efforts is critical to this enterprise.

Recommendations:

- 1) *Conduct follow-up efforts to report on the Plenary and to sustain the momentum generated by the Plenary and subsequent discussions.*
- 2) *Define a continuum of community service modes that facilitate the engagement of both individual academic units and campus-wide forum.*

- 3) *Support coordination and communications of service activities, e.g., developing a centralized, web-based inventory of relevant service opportunities and activities.*
- 4) *Encourage effective community representation in community outreach and civic engagement initiatives to promote productive university-community dialogue about how to best apply the knowledge, energies, and resources of the University and our community partners.*

ISSUE II: LINKING SERVICE TO TEACHING AND RESEARCH

Administrative support and incentives to encourage great faculty investment in service-based teaching and research is crucial to develop more effective faculty mentors and role models for students. Expanding our concept of research to accommodate the scholarship of teaching, integration, and engagement (Boyer 1990) will likewise require institutional investment to ensure academic rigor, long-term commitments, and a broader dissemination and application of knowledge to the community. Extending the scope of service learning and scholarship beyond a narrow range of professional schools and programs to the broader academic community is a considerable challenge that must be addressed.

Recommendations:

- 1) *Raise the level of discussion/inquiry about awareness of service in teaching and research in ways that help define our institutional leadership in the city and the region.*
- 2) *Develop and provide resources seed and sustain service learning, university-community partnerships, and service scholarship.*
- 3) *Engage community partners as a co-learner, co-worker, and co-creator in building mutually beneficial relationships conducive to service-based teaching and research.*

ISSUE III: RECOGNITION AND REWARD FOR SERVICE SCHOLARSHIP

Advancing the recognition of service learning and teaching opportunities and service-based scholarship (research) has become a priority in several national higher education forums , i.e., Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, American Association of Higher Education, Campus Compact. While a university-wide dialogue on recognition and rewards would almost certainly be beneficial, focused discussions at the academic unit level must be part of an effective strategy if we are to shape the University culture by encouraging new thinking about how community outreach and civic engagement can enhance the teaching and research of individuals schools and disciplines while addressing real needs identified through community partnership.

Recommendations:

- 1) *Encourage ongoing dialogue to build academic recognition for service learning and scholarship at the department, School, and university levels.*
- 2) *Develop and establish a mechanism to encourage, support, fund, and monitor service-based scholarship.*
- 3) *Support and reward collaboration and interdisciplinary approaches to community outreach, service learning, and service scholarship.*
- 4) *Involve the community in University recognition of and rewards for service and civic engagement.*

ISSUE IV: SERVICE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

Students are actively participating in and seeking service-learning opportunities, but they expressed concern about how little emphasis is given this interest within and outside the classroom. How service can enhance the student academic experience by providing more diverse social networks, deeper multi-cultural understanding, leadership and career development, and scholarship should be explored. Consideration must be given to faculty rewards/incentive systems if we are to transform a vision of how service can move from being extra-curricular or co-curricular to a more curriculum-grounded, core component of our education mission.

Recommendations:

- 1) *Develop a center or office to support and promote service learning on campus that builds on our strong student volunteer program and use this resource to build leadership and career development programs for students.*
- 2) *Engage students in ongoing discussion, planning, and participation in community service, service learning, and civic responsibility initiatives that further the implementation of the vision of the “City is our Campus”.*
- 3) *Develop mechanisms to recognize and reward community service and scholarship within our University community and the academic disciplines.*

CONCLUSIONS

The Community Relations Committee asks the Faculty Assembly and Senate Council to give special attention to the following considerations:

- *Service and community outreach must be linked to our teaching and research, and we should strive to raise the level of scholarship around service and civic engagement to promote a deeper recognition and reward for this work.*
- *Students see a value in community service as it relates to their learning and development in the college experience; they look to faculty and academic leadership to model community service and civic engagement within and outside the classroom.*
- *Recognition and rewards for service, while important across the entire campus, might best be addressed first at the department or school level where more direct linkage to teaching and research might foster greater scholarship in this arena. However, the university should encourage and support these efforts, including the allocation of resources to support innovative and promising ideas.*
- *Service-learning and service scholarship would benefit from enhanced resources and incentives to help encourage and nurture this effort as a center of excellence.*
- *University-Community partnerships are critical for this work to have impact at both the academic institutional and community levels; both partners should anticipate mutual benefits from working together to solve community problems.*
- *Coordination of community outreach and access to university resources to help community problem-solving is an important goal for the short and long-term*