This chapter describes the impact that participation in the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement had on the institutions of higher learning that applied for the classification. This is described in terms of changes in direct community engagement, monitoring and reporting on community engagement, and levels of student and professor involvement in service learning and engagement projects.

Analysis of the Carnegie Classification of Community Engagement: Patterns and Impact on Institutions

Amy Driscoll

A major force in recent acceleration of interest and practice in community engagement (CE) for higher education was the 2006 announcement of the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement. The classification, now awarded to a total of 317 colleges and universities, affirms that an institution has institutionalized community engagement in its identity, culture, and commitments. It also affirms that the practices of CE are aligned with the institution's identity and form an integral component of the institutional culture. Those practices may be focused in curricular engagement or outreach and partnerships, or both. For purposes of the classification, the term Community Engagement was defined as inclusively as possible to encourage and honor the diversity and scope of community engagement in a broad range of institutions.

Community Engagement describes 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. (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2006)

Development of the Community Engagement classification was part of extensive restructuring of the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, a classification that relies on national data. The new
classification for Community Engagement was intended to address elements of institutional mission and distinctiveness that are not represented in the national data on colleges and universities (McCormick & Zhao, 2005). In contrast to the use of national data, the new classification is elective and consists of an application process with required submission of documentation describing the nature and extent of CE at the institution.

Development of the Community Engagement Classification

Development of the new classification was guided by a set of intentions articulated by a Carnegie advisory group working closely with the author to frame and design the process of selecting appropriate institutions. Those intentions included:

- Affirmation and documentation of the diversity and scope of campus approaches to community engagement.
- Encouragement of inquiry and learning in the process of documentation.
- Instrumentation and documentation that provide useful data to the institution.
- A documentation process that is practical and makes use of existing data.

The 2005 design process of the Community Engagement classification was initiated with input from leaders of more than 12 national associations focused on higher education. From there, benchmarking and evaluation examples from national projects coordinated by Campus Compact, National Association for State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, the Council of Independent Colleges, and the Kellogg Commission, and literature describing “best practices” and recommendations for institutionalized CE provided direction for the classification development. Before completion of the documentation framework, representatives from 12 prominently engaged institutions of higher education participated in the revision and pilot of the documentation process. In 2006, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching announced the new elective classification and invited colleges and universities to apply.

The documentation framework of the new classification consisted of two major sections: Foundational Indicators and Categories of Community Engagement. Within the first section, Foundational Indicators, institutions are required to demonstrate both Institutional Identity and Culture with examples of mission, marketing, celebrations and rewards, and leadership, and Institutional Commitment with examples of strategic plan, infrastructure, professional development, assessment, community involvement, and budget. Within the first category of Community Engagement, institutions are asked to provide data about Curricular Engagement activities such as service learning, internships, student leadership and research, and related
faculty scholarship. Within the second category of Community Engagement, Outreach and Partnerships, institutions are asked to provide data and examples of outreach activities and partnerships between the community and the college or university.

**Initiation of the Community Engagement Classification: 2006 and 2008 Applications.** In 2006, 107 institutions were selected to apply for the Community Engagement classification. The limited number of selected institutions reflects several cautions: assurance of a careful and thorough review process for the inaugural classification, and the intention to have participation of diverse campuses and national representation. Of those 107 colleges and universities, 88 actually applied and 76 were successfully classified. A significant number of institutions withdrew from the application process with comments indicating lack of readiness: “We have significant work to do before being ready to apply for this classification.” For those that were successfully classified, feedback about the documentation process of the application was overwhelmingly positive. Leslie Boney (personal communication, 2007), provost of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, described the application process as a “tool for capturing and categorizing and quantifying current activity, as well as a tool that creates an aspiration for behavior change in the future.”

Those successfully classified institutions in 2006 included 44 public and 32 private institutions. The composition of those institutions included 36 doctorate granting universities, 21 master’s colleges and universities, 13 baccalaureate colleges, 5 associate’s colleges, and 1 special focus institution. Institutions that applied in 2006 could choose Curricular Engagement or Outreach and Partnerships or both as their focus. Sixty-two institutions demonstrated substantial commitments in both areas, while five institutions focused on curricular engagement and nine focused on outreach and partnerships.

In 2008, 120 of 147 applicant institutions were classified. Of those, 68 were public institutions and 52 were private institutions. The composition of those institutions varied slightly from the 2006 successful institutions in that 38 were doctorate granting universities, 52 were master’s colleges and universities (significantly larger), 18 were baccalaureate colleges, and 9 represented community colleges. Three specialized institutions were classified representing the foci of arts, medicine, and technology. Of the 120 institutions, 115 were classified in both categories—Curricular Engagement and Outreach and Partnerships.

**Analysis of 2008 Carnegie Classification Institutional Data**

In 2006, for the inaugural round of applications, the application data were analyzed broadly in terms of descriptions of common strengths and areas needing improvement. Most attention was given to determining whether the documentation framework was effective and how to improve the
process. With feedback from applicants and from the National Advisory Board, the documentation was revised minimally and strictly for clarification of directions and questions, and formatted for online application. In 2008, the application data were analyzed again to determine trends, this time with both quantitative and descriptive results. A major commitment of this first in-depth analysis is provision of information that will contribute to the enhancement and expansion of CE across all universities and colleges.

Within the Foundational Indicators, a number of application items were not analyzed—mission, budgetary support, leadership, and community involvement in institutional decision making. Responses to those application items were diverse as expected and encouraged, making analysis difficult. Within the first category of Community Engagement, Curricular Engagement, the application items not analyzed included definitions of service learning, processes for identifying service-learning courses, departmental learning outcomes and assessment, and examples of faculty scholarship. In the category of Outreach and Partnerships, the application items not analyzed included descriptions of strategies to ensure mutuality and reciprocity in partnerships, ongoing feedback mechanisms, and related faculty scholarship. Again, these data consisted of diverse examples and were best addressed with broad themes for use by higher education.

2008 Data: Foundational Indicators. The 2008 data indicate that community engagement has been institutionalized to the extent that it is specifically addressed and planned for in 119 of the classified colleges’ and universities’ strategic plans. The one exception was an institution without a strategic plan. In most cases, community engagement represents a substantive component of the plan with descriptions of an increase/expansion/enhancement of CE activities, particular emphases for CE such as economic development, sustainability, and education, and/or support for increased faculty development and participation in CE.

Infrastructure. With few exceptions, colleges and universities have specific infrastructure to support CE activities, the most common being a central center or office with varied names, staffing, budgets, and fairly common purposes. The literature on partnerships and implementation of service learning indicate that such a central infrastructure is essential to the effectiveness of institutional partnerships and to faculty recruitment and development for curricular engagement with community (Bringle & Hatcher, 2002; Leiderman, Furco, Zapf, & Goss, 2003; Portland State University, 2008). Descriptions accompanying other forms of infrastructure from task forces to offices of president/provost were less clear about operations, budgets, and purposes.

Professional Development. For those of us higher education professionals engaged in community for the last 10 years, the data describing how professional development support is delivered are not surprising. The financial support for individual faculty and staff is encouraging as it signifies noteworthy institutional commitment. In contrast to traditional
professional development through workshops, speakers, and conference
attendance, two forms of professional development—community visits,
tours, and immersion, and Faculty Fellows/Scholars programs—offer ex-
citing potential as supported by studies of the impact on faculty and staff
(Bowen & Kiser, 2009; Harwood et al., 2005). It is hoped that those sup-
ports will be expanded in the future.

Tracking and Assessment. This area of support has begun to receive
expanded attention as evidenced by the increase in examples and practices
since 2006, and by the descriptions of new approaches, especially initiation
of databases. Institutional databases represent systematic and ongoing col-
lection practices, another sign of institutional commitment. In 2006, most
institutions described traditional annual reports and examples of faculty
surveys as common approaches, and that form remains prominent in 2008
as the second most frequent form of tracking and recording. Twenty-three
institutions referred to their National Survey of Student Engagement data
that provide limited records of CE of students, specifically first-year and se-
ior students. A small number of institutions maintain two or more of the
tracking mechanisms.

Following the question that probed tracking and recording of CE, in-
stitutions were asked if they studied or assessed the impact of CE on stu-
dents. All applicants responded “yes” followed by a description of at least
one key finding. Not all impact findings were authentic examples of im-
 pact, but rather statistics of numbers of students engaged in community.
For those who reported impact findings, their reported impact is aligned
with the learning outcomes reported later in the application data. Again, the
impact data are supported by findings in the work of engagement scholars
(Bringle & Hatcher, 1995; Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich, & Corngold, 2007;

When institutions were asked about the impact on faculty, 29 were
unable to respond. Among those that did, there was indication of two com-
mon types of impact: changes or improvement of pedagogy and observed
learning in students, specifically students making connections between cur-
ricular content and community issues.

The survey ... indicated that 83% of the faculty felt that service learning en-
chanced their ability to communicate the core competencies of the subject
matter they taught. (Anne Arundel Community College, 2008, p. 11)

In addition, this institution described a faculty decision to include out-
comes for social and civic responsibility in the updates to college-wide
competencies and a question about engaged learning in a revised Student
Opinion Form.

When institutions were asked about studying the impact on commu-
nity, 100 institutions responded that there were findings but their key find-
ings were as diverse as expected. They included many anecdotes relevant to
Assessing Civic Engagement

one community group or agency or school district or project, such as “mentored 7000 youth.” These findings are not trivial but limited when describing the institutional impact on community. The key findings are usually for one partnership or one college. Those findings can best be categorized into four themes:

1. Increased capacity for a community group or an agency to fulfill mission in terms of serving an increased number of clients, coordinating larger scale projects, influencing larger numbers of supporters, extending networks, attracting more funding, etc.
2. Improvements in client services, higher standards, more services and resources, and expanded professionals, such as “improved reading scores,” “raised school standards,” “264 new homes for homeless,” “more trained science teachers,” etc.
3. Expanded program capacity such as “151 new small businesses as participants,” “global network,” “new initiatives,” etc.
4. Better relationship(s) with university/college in terms of “university as coeducator,” or “reduced isolation from college.”

When asked about studies of the impact on the institution, again, not all applicants responded with examples. The 102 descriptions of key findings can best be described in categories that include new programs or centers, awards, recognition, and funding; image and visibility; transformation of the teaching/learning culture; and increased cohesion and collaboration. Some of these findings were anecdotal, and some reflected a systematic study of the impact on institution. Many applicants expressed an interest and even commitment to a more intentional approach to studying the impact on the institution.

When the impact categories are reviewed, studies of student impact are the most prominent and are probably deemed most important by institutions to document their effectiveness. For the future of community engagement in higher education, studies of the impact on faculty/staff and the institution will contribute to motivation, rationale for resources, and enhanced professional development agendas.

2008 Data: Curricular Engagement. This analysis section includes data on service-learning courses, faculty and student involvement, departmental representation, and the institutional learning outcomes associated with curricular engagement. The term service learning is only one way to describe the academic courses that are connected with community activities, and institutions are encouraged to use whatever term has been chosen and defined, and is appropriate for their institutional context.

The 2008 data on academic courses designated as service-learning courses (Table 1.1) show an increase over the 2006 data in all areas: in percentage of all courses, in departmental representation, and in faculty and student involvement. Only percentages are reported here because the
Table 1.1. Curricular Engagement Data: Academic Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal service-learning courses</td>
<td>7.24%</td>
<td>(1–100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departments</td>
<td>56.21%</td>
<td>(3–100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty represented in service-learning courses</td>
<td>16.43%</td>
<td>(1–96%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students engaged in service-learning courses</td>
<td>22.53%</td>
<td>(1–96%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

numbers are reflective of institutional size and are not comparable across the applicant institutions. It can be noted that smaller institutions reported larger percentages than larger institutions. Applications from larger institutions frequently reported difficulty in obtaining institutional data and a lack of centralized reporting. Another common pattern in larger institutions was a service learning focus in specific departments/colleges/schools in contrast to the 100% departmental representation in smaller institutions. Those patterns help explain differences in the course, faculty, and student percentages.

Institutional applicants were asked about institutional learning outcomes and departmental learning outcomes for CE. These data are reported in terms of the number of institutions reporting examples of learning outcomes in dominant categories. A significant number of institutions provided outcomes in more than one category as seen in Table 1.2. Only the data on institutional learning outcomes will be reported here. Of those colleges and universities reporting institutional learning outcomes, citizenship learning outcomes were the most prominent. Those learning outcomes most commonly focused on understanding and awareness of community issues. Additional citizenship learning outcomes described some of the following intentions for students:

- Practice stewardship of resources, the environment, and the community. (Anne Arundel Community College, 2008)
- Analyze, evaluate, and assess human needs and practices within the context of community structures and traditions. (Florida Gulf Coast University, 2008)

Table 1.2. Student Learning Outcomes for Curricular Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General education</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural understandings/diversity</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical thinking</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No learning outcomes</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One interpretation of these data is that service learning is seen as an effective pedagogy and curricular context for general education learning outcomes, and learning in areas such as cultural understandings, critical thinking, ethics, and communication, all of which also typically constitute general education. Only the category of citizenship is typically confined to service-learning courses.

One of the exciting differences between applicant data in 2006 and 2008 is in this area of institutional learning outcomes. In 2006, approximately 12% of the successful applicants reported examples of institutional learning outcomes related to CE. In 2008, approximately 15% reported no institutional learning outcomes related to CE. This difference can probably be explained by the pressure from accreditation agencies across the country for greater specificity in learning expectations and assessment. This assumption is supported by the lack of progress in significant advances in assessment of service learning (Driscoll, 2008).

2008 Data: Outreach and Partnerships. Two application items in the category of Outreach and Partnerships were analyzed for trends and prominent forms of CE. The first is a tallying of reported outreach activities. The sheer numbers indicate that many institutions were able to report a significant number of the outreach activities. The sequence of the reporting represents the order of the application form. It appears that the two most common categories of outreach are related to student affairs activities or cocurricular CE with tutoring, volunteerism, and work study, and a kind of sharing of institutional facilities and resources such as libraries, cultural offerings, athletics, technology, and faculty expertise. Although the term outreach signifies a one-way kind of engagement, many of the examples described collaborative processes of planning and policy making.

The entire data set describing the kinds of partnerships reported by the successful applicant institutions is both encouraging and inspiring. The reported distribution of those partnerships adds further inspiration and affirmation of the power of CE (Table 1.3). Each institution was able to describe a maximum of 15 partnerships, and many applicants expressed dissatisfaction with the limits of this aspect of the documentation. When given the opportunity at the end of the application, approximately one third of the applicants described several more partnerships that were considered significant and prominent for the institution. It appears that this activity is a source of pride, institutional image, and commitment.

The data clearly indicate that partnerships with schools and school districts are a major focus of institutional collaborations. It must be noted that these partnerships are not the sole domain of Schools or Colleges of Education, but rather they were represented consistently by departments of science, health, mathematics, art and music, drama, anthropology, history, and geography. Partnerships focused on health issues were typically clinics in neighborhoods of poverty and nutrition and health education programs. Access programs were typically directed to making higher education...
Table 1.3. Higher Education/Community Partnerships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools/districts</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health issues</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access programs</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic development</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for homeless</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities/neighborhoods</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for disabled</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunger</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior programs</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

accessible to populations not typically motivated or encouraged to pursue college. The programs served students from elementary school age to youth and took diverse forms. The partnerships that were focused on specific communities or neighborhoods typically committed to a range of goals that included the economic, educational, environmental, recreational, and health issues. They were dynamic examples that often engaged the entire institution across departments.

After reviewing the kinds and purposes reported for the many partnerships represented in the Carnegie applications, it appears critical that institutions begin to more seriously study the impact both of individual partnerships and across partnerships. Such inquiry has the potential to both direct and improve the partnership practices and expand the capacity of those partnerships to address the societal issues as urged by Ernest Boyer (1996).

Challenges Continuing for Carnegie Institutions Classified as Community Engaged

When the 2008 application data are reviewed as a whole profile of higher education’s engagement with community, three areas remain in need for improvement and expansion. Those same areas were challenges for successful 2006 applications:

- Assessing community perceptions of institutional engagement;
- Assessing the impact of community engagement on faculty, community, and institution;
- Initiating and maintaining mutuality and reciprocity in partnerships with community and specifically in terms of ongoing feedback mechanisms.
It is not surprising that the first two challenges are connected to assessment, as higher education continues to struggle with assessment practices especially on an institutional level. For the first challenge, when asked to describe if and how the institution assesses community perceptions of its CE, most applicants described advisory boards and community partner evaluations of student service or projects. The former of those responses provides limited data on community perceptions, often from one person or a small group. The latter response is typically limited to perceptions of a student’s engagement rather than the institution and, even with aggregate data on students, only reflects one aspect of CE. There are a few exceptions to the data describing this component of the institutional documentation. Some colleges and universities have sponsored series of community focus groups on an ongoing basis, an annual survey of community partners, and a day-long event to which community representatives are invited to participate in a “think tank” format directed to assessing and improving institutional engagement with community. This aspect of CE deserves creative and focused attention for improved assessment of community perceptions of institutional engagement. It is a data source with potential to improve, expand, and enhance CE with collaborative planning and strong community input.

Earlier in this chapter, the lack of assessment and inquiry approaches to determine the impact of CE on faculty, community, and institution was addressed. The three constituencies represent such significant potential to influence the sustainability and growth of CE that they cannot be ignored in the future. Publications from Campus Compact offer resources for such assessment and study, and the examples of CommUniverCity San Jose and use of Furco’s Institutionalization of Service-Learning in Higher Education self-assessment rubric are useful for insights and strategies to address this need.

The last challenge is especially disturbing when considered in the context of the enormity of community partnerships reported by successful applicants in both 2006 and 2008. Very little change is seen in the responses to the questions probing mutuality and reciprocity in partnerships and seeking strategies for assuring those qualities in the relations between higher education and community. The lack of understanding and experience is supported by the studies of community partner perceptions and satisfactions/dissatisfactions with higher education partnerships conducted by Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (2007) and by the Council of Independent Colleges (Leiderman et al., 2003). Prior to the 2008 classification application period, Carnegie staff located and organized resources for addressing this component of the required documentation and made those resources available to applicants. Those resources included Community-Campus Partnerships for Health’s (2007) Achieving the Promise of Authentic Community-Higher Education Partnerships: Community Partners Speak Out! and Portland State University’s (2008) A Guide to Reciprocal Community-Campus Partnerships.
Institutional Responses to the Community Engagement Classification: Feedback on the Documentation and Application Process

While not all institutions commented on the process or documentation framework of their application, those that did described their processes with language that affirmed achievement of the original intentions. Many discussed a self-study process and the discovery of gaps and strengths.

This application process was a productive way for Middle Tennessee State University to review its commitment to community engagement. Although partnerships and outreach are integral to our academic master plan, this process provided us the opportunity to review many of our policies, procedures, and curricular offerings with a different eye. It has given us another baseline to use to determine if we are honoring our commitment to community. (Middle Tennessee State University, 2008, para. 9)

In terms of assessment, a number of applicants described new processes influenced by the 2006 application reports of challenges and by the application examples provided by Campus Compact to guide 2008 applicants. Others admitted the need for development of assessment practices and specific plans for such development.

There are many positive benefits resulting from this process that go beyond classification . . . an opportunity to record community engagement across the university—a first for Villanova. Beyond chronicling, as noted above, Villanova has built a dynamic database that will endure and add utility. The process has sparked action on other levels as well. A cross-functional team has been established to look into better assessment of community engagement activities. (Villanova University, 2008, p. 33)

When the CE classification process and documentation framework were designed, the intentions included an opportunity for both self-study and learning for interested institutions. A number of comments affirmed that expectation being met:

The value of the program is not the completed application, but rather the organizational learning that emerged from this documentation process. From this documentation framework, a report sharing the voices that contributed and reflected, as well as the information collected, will be disseminated, along with suggestions for improvement. In essence, our application is submitted only with the understanding that we are seeking to enhance our community engagement in several areas. This speaks to the documentation framework and process. (Loyola University of Chicago, 2008, para. 4)
Benefits of the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement

When institutional feedback—in the applications, in informal conversations at conferences and meetings, and as content in institutional presentations following their classification—is aggregated for general themes, a substantive list of benefits emerges. Those benefits include the following: public recognition and visibility, accountability, catalyst for change, institutional identity and image, self-assessment, and self-study (Driscoll, 2008). If all of the 196 classified institutions were interviewed or surveyed for the description of impact, those benefits would no doubt expand in many directions. Just as important as the impact on institutions is the impact on higher education in general. As future applicants address the challenges of assessment and partnerships, and achieve the “best practices” of CE embedded in the classification documentation, the status of CE will be strengthened and expanded. Carnegie’s classification truly has the potential to expand and enhance the prominence and the promise of CE in higher education.

Addendum

Institutions have continued to apply for the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement with applications in 2010 and 2014. In addition, the 2006 and 2008 classified institutions reported in this chapter applied for reclassification status in 2014. It is too soon to conduct analysis of the 2014 data but initial reviews indicate that many of the patterns reported in this chapter continue to be a challenge for institutions. It must also be noted that the institutions to be reclassified have “weathered the years of shrinking resources” with intact CE budgets, strong infrastructures, and continued professional development for faculty engaged with community. Partnership data reflects changing needs of communities and institutional responses to those changes with increased attention to reciprocity. In addition, recent applications continue to describe and appreciate the self-study process with benefits for the institution.

References


**Amy Driscoll** is a consulting scholar with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the New England Resource Center for Higher Education.