Introduction

In the last decade, the civic engagement movement in American higher education has gained significant momentum. Colleges and universities are increasingly applying their tremendous intellectual and financial resources to address pressing local, national, and global issues, while seeking to unite faculty, students, and citizens as members of a shared community. Many institutions have come to play an important role in the development of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation that can enable students to be productive and engaged citizens. In a growing number of colleges and universities, a curriculum designed merely to funnel academically prepared students into specialized careers is seen as a narrow and incomplete conception of the potential that higher education has to offer. Similarly, a dominant emphasis on narrow, theoretical research has begun to give way to a new focus on applied, practical research that emerges from mutually beneficial university-community research partnerships. Aware of their embeddedness in their own physical location, many universities are also investing their resources in efforts to improve the physical and human conditions of local communities. At its best, the civic mission the university embraces and the civic responsibility it fosters in students flow less from an ethic of pure service or outreach than from a sense of ownership of and responsibility for community problems. A civically engaged college or university not only enables its students to make connections between classroom learning and real-world experiences, it helps build stronger communities by aligning its resources with local needs.

Broadly defined, we at the Pew Partnership think of civic engagement as the will

and capacity to solve public problems. In particular, engagement is accomplished by applying faculty and student intellectual capital to address community problems; by fostering the skills and attitudes that will enable undergraduates to lead lives of civic responsibility; and by cultivating an action-oriented approach in which higher education institutions work to improve local conditions. The fullest expression of civic engagement in higher education is found in institutions where the commitment to civic education is strategic, pervasive, and integrated into the core functions of research, teaching, and service. Many universities articulate public goals in their mission statement; engaged institutions live out those commitments in their structure, values, and behavior.

We believe that engagement implies a greater role for colleges and universities in framing society's critical questions, in creating space for public deliberation that offers exposure to different points of view and enables people to form, express, and discuss their own opinions. Some leaders in higher education insist that civic engagement is accomplished simply through performing the core functions of research, teaching, and service, or that public outreach and citizenship preparation are distractions from those core functions. Along with the essayists in this volume, we believe that civic education and career preparation need not be seen as mutually exclusive, but instead can be mutually reinforcing. Similarly, community-based research – a collaborative research model in which university faculty and students partner with community practitioners to both advance knowledge and promote community improvement – can inform and support other faculty research and improve pedagogical techniques as well as help address local challenges. In short, engagement in the community need not detract from but can in fact strengthen the university's core mission and functions.

This monograph contains nine essays written by leaders in the field of higher education and community development, as well as a review essay about assessment and evaluation that is based on interviews with officials at three colleges and universities. The essayists include university outreach officers, distinguished scholars working in the field of civic engagement and higher education, community practitioners, former and current theological seminary faculty, two college presidents, and a recent university graduate. From these varied perspectives, the essayists offer a clear picture of the importance of civic engagement in higher education, describe the state of engagement efforts at several institutions, and suggest a host of ways in which to foster the civic mission of colleges and universities for the betterment of students, institutions, and communities. The final essay identifies some of the key lessons of the volume and offers recommendations for scholars and practitioners committed to enhancing the civic role of colleges and universities. The remainder of this introductory essay presents some of the themes that appear throughout the monograph and connects them to the literature on civic engagement and higher education.

Fostering Civic Engagement: Higher Education's Role in Framing the Public Debate

Colleges and universities are uniquely suited to serve as sites of and engines for civic engagement. In H.S. Commager's words, "the university is the most honorable and the least corrupt institution in American life." The university, Commager argued, has traditionally exercised a moral influence in society, serving the interests of all of mankind and the interests of truth in a way that no other institution could.[1] Most every community is home to an institution of higher education – whether it is a large research university, a liberal arts college, a historically black university, or a tribal or community college – making colleges and universities an important and ubiquitous site for dedicated outreach and engagement.[2] David Steigerwald argues that both in their "prevailing core values" and their "institutional weight," colleges and universities are "perhaps the most likely places for the reinvigoration of the democratic spirit."[3] In order to bring about that reinvigoration, colleges and universities must be committed to stimulating public debate and deliberation around society's most important and most pressing issues. Few, if any, other institutions have the capacity and the public confidence to play such a part, one that higher education has historically embraced but that has recently fallen into disfavor.

Scholars and observers have proposed a number of reasons why higher education is less willing to take on an active role in the public sphere. According to Carol Geary Schneider, American intellectual culture underwent a transformation after World War Two in which knowledge, not virtue, became the raison d'être of colleges and universities. A new emphasis on enlightenment values of science, analytic capacity, reason, and value-free analysis resulted in a move away from overt involvement in civic themes and issues.[4] David Mathews similarly contends that the post-war development of professionalism, with its patronizing attitude toward the public, "and an accompanying romance with scientific objectivity, accelerated the displacement of the public."[5] These developments, in turn, contributed to a growing conviction among professionals that citizens were apathetic clients or consumers to be acted upon, not active participants capable of civic dialogue and public deliberation.

Today, other forces too prevent higher education from embracing a more civic-minded philosophy, mission, and curriculum. In particular, during times of economic hardship, budgetary concerns become paramount and push aside civic agendas and other "peripheral" functions not central to the academic mission of the institution. At the same time, college presidents are experiencing increasing pressures to focus on their role as fundraisers, which in turn leads them to overlook activities that do not appreciably add to the university's bottom line. In addition, engagement is often unfortunately associated with indoctrination into a particular value system that contradicts one of higher education's most revered tenets: freedom of expression. We discuss further these and other challenges later in the essay.

Many scholars have pointed out that colleges and universities, and their presidents

in particular, were in the past more willing to step into the political fray. But the kind of engagement we propose does not necessarily ask presidents, trustees, administrators, faculty, and staff to stake out a position on controversial issues of the day or indoctrinate their students into particular ideologies or political philosophies. Rather, it exhorts higher education stakeholders to engage students, the public, and community partners in thoughtful, reflective, democratic dialogue and insists on respecting the diversity of opinions that result from that dialogue. The essayists in this volume document some of the many ways and reasons why institutions of higher education should demonstrate a commitment to civic engagement: intellectually, structurally, institutionally, behaviorally, and ideationally.

Bruce Mallory and Nancy Thomas contend that universities need "intentionally designed, permanent spaces on campus for identifying, studying, deliberating, and planning action regarding pressing issues with ethical or social implications."[6] Peter Levine of the University of Maryland's Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) has argued that what we need is not more talk but improved talk that allows stakeholders with different backgrounds and expectations to reach common ground. Mallory and Thomas identify several characteristics of effective dialogue, including sustained conversations; discussions guided by trained, neutral facilitators; and a progression that starts with personal perspectives, includes identifying common language and studying the facts and issues, and concludes by moving from dialogue to action. In order to fulfill their potential to "serve the interests of the whole of mankind and the interests of truth," as Commager eloquently put it, colleges and universities must be committed to civic leadership, democratic dialogue, and public engagement.

Those who wish to renew the civic mission of American higher education must not lose faith. As one working paper on this issue aptly points out, "If collegiate institutions are to retain their privileged positions within society, benefiting from public support and tax-exempt status, more attention must be given to documenting the reasons the public should then invest in institutions that are responsible not just for teaching and job preparation, but also for research and service to society."[7] The millions of dollars in public funding that benefit land-grant and other state-sponsored universities in particular compel these institutions to think deeply about how they can more fully engage the communities of which they are a part.

Fostering Civic Engagement: Preparing Students for Active, Responsible Citizenship

For thousands of students, higher education is the gateway to a better life. College and university graduates hope to put their knowledge and skills to work in careers that offer more responsibility, satisfaction, and earning potential than jobs that do not require a college degree. Much of the focus in higher education is on preparing students for success in the workplace, and rightly so. But the Pew Partnership and the

essayists in this monograph believe that more attention needs to be paid to preparing students for participation in their communities.

The population of students at undergraduate institutions – motivated, eager to learn, open-minded – represents great potential as the next generation of community leaders. Despite their low levels of political engagement, many observers have noted young people's enthusiasm about service learning and volunteering. For example, in a 2002 survey CIRCLE found that 40 percent of people ages 15-25 reported volunteering within the past year. At the same time, however, current community leaders bemoan the lack of public spiritedness in today's college and university students.[8] The causes of this disengagement are many, but one way to address its effects is for the institutions where students spend their formative years to commit to replacing this disillusionment or apathy with a sense of civic responsibility and a willingness to take action. Young people have extremely low rates of voting; in presidential election years between 1972 and 2000, the national voter turnout rate for 18- to 24-year-olds declined by 13 percent.[9] Other research by CIRCLE has found that nearly six in ten 15- to 25-year olds are completely disengaged from civic life, and fewer than four in ten believe citizenship entails certain responsibilities.[10]

Higher education has the ability to reach young people who, we are often told, are the most politically and civically disengaged segment of the American population, transforming their enthusiasm about community service and volunteerism into a deeper structural understanding of social problems and a willingness to become involved in civic and community affairs.[11] As Harry Boyte has put it, "The goals of community service typically include self-esteem, a sense of personal worth, and consciousness of personal values, but they omit attention to power, politics, and community impact."[12] With guidance by college faculty and administrators, service and outreach activities are connected to larger structural and institutional forces and to students' roles and responsibilities as citizens of local, national, and global communities. In this way, service becomes not merely an episodic, feel-good activity but a critical source of insight into social problems and a commitment to reflecting on and addressing the roots of those challenges. Service should not be a substitute for civic and political awareness and engagement, but a complement to it. Other forms of outreach, too, must form and maintain connections between academic learning and community improvement. University-community research partnerships, which we discuss later in this essay, should not be a one-way street in which the community is acted upon by detached, expert researchers, but a truly collaborative enterprise in which all constituencies help to develop the research design and benefit from the research findings.

One of the most powerful ways in which higher education can demonstrate engagement is by committing to nurture in students the civic skills and attitudes that will enable them to be responsible and effective citizens. Some have argued that the development of civic skills, competence, and conscience is even more important than

the transmission of civic knowledge in colleges and universities.[13] Civic education therefore does not take place only in the classroom, but occurs in the crucible of day-to-day university life that undergraduates experience through co-curricular activities and campus culture, for instance. By bringing contemporary issues and problems into the curriculum and into students' college experience, faculty members can both transmit content knowledge and inspire a sense of civic responsibility and ownership for community problems.[14]

The civic engagement literature has identified a number of civic skills that colleges and universities may seek to cultivate. For instance, the second to last essay in this volume, which deals with assessment strategies for civic education, documents the ways in which Tusculum College encourages students to master a set of "Virtue Competencies" including civility, self-knowledge, and an ethic of social responsibility. Critical thinking, problem solving skills, deliberation, conflict resolution, character, teamwork, and leadership are other examples of civic skills. Unlike mastery of a particular academic subject, which can be an isolated and independent project, the mastery of civic skills includes the development of both individual and social skills and knowledge that enable students to act more effectively as members of a community.

Clearly, many institutions are already convinced of the value of actively and intentionally fostering the development of students' civic skills and attitudes. Claiborne Walthall discusses how Brown University's Center for Public Service and service learning courses help prepare students for responsible citizenship as well as strengthen the University's partnerships with the community. Anne Colby, Thomas Ehrlich, Elizabeth Beaumont, and Jason Stephens emphasize the importance of motivation, political efficacy, and political participation as components of the "civic maturity" of undergraduates, and argue that curriculum, extra-curricular activities, and campus culture are key sites in which to integrate civic concerns. Nancy Thomas points to a number of other academic reforms, including interdisciplinary studies, learning communities, and deliberative dialogue, that can enhance student engagement as well as institutional commitment to social and community issues.

The burgeoning research in the field of civic engagement and higher education has made a great deal of progress in documenting the value of civic education and the ways in which it can be incorporated into undergraduate life to enhance student learning and foster a sense of connectedness to local, national, and international communities. Assessment efforts underway at many institutions aim to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement by carefully tracking indicators of student engagement. In addition, assessment strategies often have as part of their goal integrating and coordinating civic education with other parts of the curriculum and undergraduate life. What remains to be accomplished in many institutions is to weave existing curricular, co-curricular, and other initiatives into a holistic, integrated, institutionalized approach. Students must come to see community service, service learn-

ing, volunteerism, community-based research, and civic skills development not as episodic opportunities to explore during their undergraduate careers but as the beginning of a long-term contribution to society and part of their training as active citizens in a democracy.

Fostering Civic Engagement: Community Partnerships and Applied Research

Another way in which colleges and universities can embrace a public mission is by establishing and maintaining partnerships with local communities. Two forms that these partnerships often take include targeted physical investments in the community that apply the university's resources to address pressing local needs, and community-based research approaches in which university faculty and community practitioners work together in order to advance knowledge and bring about community improvement.

Judith Rodin's essay documents how the University of Pennsylvania's investments in West Philadelphia helped to stimulate neighborhood improvement, economic and retail development, and the housing market, as well as improve local public education. Penn's institutional engagement both helped to revitalize the West Philadelphia community and offered a positive example of engagement to its students and faculty. As David Wilson indicates in his essay about Auburn University's partnership with Alabama Black Belt communities, university-community partnerships can be most beneficial when universities focus more on listening to and working alongside community stakeholders than on offering assistance through a traditional top-down paradigm. Wilson also describes the ways in which Auburn officially recognized the value of faculty service and outreach through changes to its tenure and promotion system. Osvaldo Cardoza and Gustavo Salinas write about the University of Texas-Pan American's Office of Center Operations and Community Services (CoSERVE), which is comprised of 23 centers that provide education, training, and professional expertise to local, state, national, and international communities. CoSERVE devotes particular attention to fostering innovative solutions to economic challenges unique to the South Texas-Mexico border. Rather than looking outside to a political official or expert to solve the community's problems once and for all, a strong university partner can help citizens to look within themselves for the solutions they seek. David Mathews of the Kettering Foundation describes this as a process of transformation from public service to public building.[15]

"Public scholarship" or "community-based research" facilitates what the influential Wingspread Declaration has called a "more porous and interactive flow of knowledge between universities and communities."[16] With community-based research, or what is sometimes called the "scholarship of engagement," faculty members collaborate with community practitioners in order to apply and disseminate knowledge with the ultimate goal of community improvement. Traditional research confers most of its benefits and rewards on individual faculty and higher education institutions and

often views community members as clients or consumers of services, rather than active participants in community development. Community-based research, by contrast, allows universities and communities to enjoy the fruits of reciprocal, mutually beneficial partnerships. In arguing for the role of higher education in rebuilding civic life, Zelda F. Gamson insists that universities "must recognize that communities are not voids to be organized and filled by the more knowledgeable; they are well-developed, complex, and sophisticated organisms that demand to be understood on their own terms – or they will not cooperate."[17] Just as civic education efforts are ultimately designed to strengthen democracy by educating responsible citizens, the scholarship of engagement can strengthen the ties between universities and communities in a way that advances the cause of community improvement.

Aside from large research universities such as the University of Pennsylvania, programs at other institutions can offer important lessons about how to stimulate student engagement and foster strong partnerships. For example, in his essay Carlyle Ramsey explores how rural, tribal, and community colleges such as Danville Community College can contribute to the civic health of local, state, and national communities. James Waits and Robert Franklin demonstrate that theological schools play an important role in building inclusive communities, inspiring in students a sense of social justice, and teaching the skills needed for democratic citizenship. Community colleges and theological seminaries can set a powerful example of engagement for traditional liberal arts colleges and research universities. As Edward Zlotkowski eloquently states in reflecting on Campus Compact's Indicators of Engagement project, "I have been enormously impressed by the willingness of so many community college leaders to 'walk the talk.' In doing so, they have won levels of community trust and respect that should be the envy of four-year institutions."[18]

Supporters of the scholarship of engagement and university investments in local communities too often overlook the community's perspective on the features of effective university engagement. In Part Three of this monograph, John Bryant and Miriam West describe the benefits of university-community partnerships from the community practitioner's perspective. Bryant and West spent many years with the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative, a school-based community program that offers a variety of initiatives including tutoring, mentorships, internships, and college preparation assistance. Since its inception, CYC has partnered with a number of neighboring universities, and Bryant and West indicate that they and other CYC staff members have noted an increasing willingness among local universities to become actively engaged in community problem-solving efforts. Bryant and West document several ways in which universities and communities together can help to address pressing local challenges.

In order for a college or university to demonstrate a genuine commitment to civic engagement, it must be willing to enter into long-term, democratic, reciprocal, mutually beneficial relationships with its surrounding community. The substance and

tenor of university-community relationships matter as much as, if not more than, their existence. The best university-community partnerships can enhance student learning, faculty research, institutional engagement, and community problem-solving and revitalization.

Challenges

A great deal of evidence points to the value and effectiveness of civic engagement on the part of American colleges and universities. What prevents more institutions of higher education from embracing a civic mission and purpose?

One of the most often cited challenges involves the dominance of academic departments and disciplines in today's colleges and universities, which tend to overemphasize the marketability of technical skills and deemphasize contribution to civic life.[19] A primary focus on specialized, expert knowledge and the self-interested purposes of higher education may discourage a willingness to look outside one's own field to the broader civic and social purposes of knowledge. As Elizabeth Hollander and Matthew Hartley put it, "the landscape of higher education looks like a prairie with a lot of unconnected silos which could, if brought together, provide a rich feed for the civic renewal movement."[20] The Wingspread Declaration on Renewing the Civic Mission of the American Research University articulates the concern that research-oriented schools have become increasingly competitive and individualistic: "Every department, every discipline, every unit of our research universities experiences pressures to draw back from connection to the whole."[21]

The support of college presidents and other administrative leaders is often essential for the articulation and execution of university engagement. As a recent Wingspread statement put it, "presidents, chancellors and provosts have a vital role in championing engagement, not only as a result of their position at the nexus of campus and community, but also as those individuals most vested in the leadership and success of their institutions."[22] However, because college and university presidents' and other top administrators' primary concern is often their roles as fundraisers and managers, questions of civic engagement may be pushed aside. In fact, the faculty members most committed to the civic purposes of higher education may not wish to assume the burdens of administration, preferring instead to make their mark through teaching undergraduates and forging relationships with community practitioners. Presidents and other administrative leaders, in turn, may lack knowledge of or information about the possibilities and benefits of civic engagement activities or may prefer to use their positions to exert control over budgets and academic departments rather than to establish connections with the community. Finally, particularly during difficult economic times, the pressure to use the university's budget to meet basic teaching and research needs slants institutional emphasis away from questions of civic engagement.

Another commonly mentioned barrier to enhancing the civic role of higher edu-

cation is what some believe to be an "excessive" focus in colleges and universities on preparation for the workplace and on the "publish or perish" approach to faculty research, scholarship, and rewards.[23] With the cost of a college education rising faster each year, students place great emphasis on developing the skills and knowledge that will lead to career and financial success first and civic responsibility second – if at all. As Ernest Boyer eloquently put it, "Increasingly, the campus is being viewed as a place where students get credentialed and faculty get tenured, while the overall work for the academy does not seem particularly relevant to the nation's most pressing civic, social, economic, and moral problems."[24] Indeed, faculty encounter disincentives to engaged teaching and scholarship when universities do not acknowledge community-based research in the tenure and promotion process. As the essays in Part Three demonstrate, some community colleges and theological seminaries as well as liberal arts colleges prioritize student civic education and reward engaged scholarship to a greater extent than do universities focused primarily or exclusively on career preparation and pure research.

We believe that education for democracy and education for the economy need not be mutually exclusive.[25] Rather than emphasize primarily the private purposes of higher education, colleges and universities can demonstrate a stronger commitment to public responsibilities and a stronger connection between public and private goals. While faculty and student support are also critical, many of the essayists argue that without institutional commitment to public scholarship and civic engagement, curricular, extra-curricular, and other initiatives to foster this engagement will ring hollow.

Conclusion

Leaders at many institutions of higher education might argue that civic engagement is being "taken care of" simply by performing the university's traditional functions of teaching the liberal arts and providing service and volunteer opportunities. Our view of civic engagement encompasses a broader perspective. As one report puts it, "shifting institutional leadership and grant-based funding often relegates community partnerships to boutique initiatives, paraded out when the university needs to demonstrate its engagement bona fides. We have created a 'thousand points of light' but not enough concentrated heat to produce institutionalization."[26]

At its best, civic engagement is not an isolated, uncoordinated commitment to service learning, volunteerism, or experiential education, but is an integrated, strategic commitment on the part of the university community, from the trustees, to the president, to college administrators and community partners, to faculty and staff, to students. At engaged institutions, multiple stakeholders are united by a common language and a dedication to fostering the civic skills, attitudes, and values that will enable students to take an active role in their communities both during the college years and after graduation. In addition, engaged institutions offer faculty the opportunity to forge sustained, mutually beneficial connections with the community and

to apply their skills toward the goal of local improvement. Finally, a commitment to civic engagement can enable universities to develop institution-wide relationships with their communities, approaching those relationships with an attitude of reciprocity and shared problem-solving, not merely service or need.

Ultimately, student civic education, university-community research partnerships, and other engagement activities can build stronger ties between universities and communities that advance knowledge, enhance local capacity, and bring about community improvement. Perhaps better than any other institution, colleges and universities can convey the message that citizenship is about more than academic expertise, professional success, or the occasional volunteer opportunity. Citizenship, in fact, involves a much broader set of skills and attitudes.[27]

Lessons and Recommendations

Lessons and Recommendations

In this edited monograph, nearly twenty distinguished leaders in the fields of higher education and community development have shared their insights about how to enhance the civic role of American colleges and universities. Along with the essayists, the Pew Partnership believes that higher education has a larger role to play in helping to address national and community problems and in preparing students for engaged, responsible citizenship. The ten papers in this volume explore how universities can become more involved in community problem-solving and civic education and identify the benefits and challenges of these efforts for both universities and communities. Based on their experiences as recent college graduates, university leaders and administrators, and community practitioners, the essayists draw on both theory and practice to answer the question of how to enhance higher education's civic mission in order to bring about community improvement. Together, the essays explore how and why colleges and universities should form community partnerships, not simply perform community service, and educate citizens, not merely consumers.

As we move forward in thinking about ways to strengthen the civic role of American higher education, the essays suggest a number of lessons and recommendations that can guide civic engagement studies and practices in the future.

Defining the Engaged Institution

- For colleges and universities, too often "engagement" is synonymous only with service and volunteerism on the part of undergraduates. As worthy as service

and outreach efforts are, true engagement encompasses an institution-wide commitment to civic education and community problem-solving efforts that are much broader in scope.

- Engaged institutions exemplify citizenship both by forming and maintaining partnerships with local communities and by training responsible citizens through curricular, extra-curricular, and other activities.
- The kind of engagement we envision asks higher education stakeholders to engage students, the public, and community partners in thoughtful, reflective, democratic dialogue and insists on respecting the diversity of opinions that result from that dialogue. In order to bring about the "reinvigoration of the democratic spirit," colleges and universities must be committed to stimulating public debate and deliberation around society's most important and most pressing issues.
- The articulation of a public mission in a college or university's mission statement can influence the priorities and culture of higher education institutions and can provide a powerful justification and motivation for the institutionalization of engagement. But colleges and universities must also be willing to live out that mission in their structure and behavior.
- There are many other ways in which higher education institutions can demonstrate their commitment to civic engagement. Examples include encouraging university-community partnerships and "public scholarship"; nurturing the development of students' civic skills; creating learning communities that allow students to study across disciplines; and promoting deliberative dialogue around important social and political issues.
- An institution-wide commitment to positive civic engagement in the community can provide a powerful example and stimulus to college and university efforts to educate productive, responsible citizens.
- Different kinds of institutions have much to learn from one another. Many rural, tribal, and community colleges have forged strong ties with their communities and dedicated themselves to addressing local needs, such as economic and workforce development. Part of the mission of many theological schools is to teach students to build inclusive communities, work for social justice, and promote the common good. As some of the largest employers and most influential institutions in their geographic areas, research universities can set an example of advancing academic and civic knowledge while at the same time strengthening local communities.
- Ultimately, treading the path of engagement can and should serve both universities and communities by advancing theoretical knowledge, training productive citizens, and helping to solve community problems.

Building Successful University-Community Partnerships

- Several distinctive features characterize successful university-community partnerships, including communication about procedures, goals, and priorities; the ability to adapt to external changes; and a vision on both sides for positive change. By working collaboratively, universities and communities can help one another fulfill their priorities and missions.
- In order to be successful and to be sustained, faculty, students, and administrators must be committed to applying academic knowledge to public service in a way that benefits all interested parties. Community partnerships must not be seen as simply an add-on component of university activities, but instead must hold intrinsic value for those who become engaged with the community.
- Successful partnerships are part of a long-term process and should not be seen as merely episodic, feel-good opportunities to perform service for the community. Universities must be committed to acting with the community, not simply acting upon the community.
- Community practitioners should be creative in seeking out partnerships with local universities, for example, by taking part in student-initiated programs, collaboratively submitting grant proposals, and proposing programs and initiatives in which universities can participate.
- Universities and communities must share similar long-term goals for their partnerships. The university, for example, can reasonably expect partnerships to foster the advancement of knowledge and to improve the living and working conditions of its surrounding area. Community practitioners, meanwhile, can make greater strides in addressing challenging local issues with the help of college faculty, staff, and students. In order to keep the partnership going, both stakeholders must feel as though they are benefiting from it and that, at the same time, a larger purpose of community improvement is also being served.

Nurturing Civic Skills

- For higher education to graduate productive citizens, not merely professionals, colleges and universities must focus on both the "hard" skills of academic knowledge and the "soft" skills of tolerance, conflict resolution, problem-solving, and leadership.
- Higher education can enhance the civic maturity of undergraduates by developing their understanding of civic and political concepts, fostering a motivation to act to address community concerns, and teaching the skills that will encourage civic and political participation.
- Colleges and universities must make a more intentional effort to structure the undergraduate experience as a whole – including curriculum, extra-curricular activities, and campus culture – in a way that facilitates the task of "educating citizens" for civic responsibility.

- Too often, academic and civic knowledge are seen as separate, even mutually exclusive enterprises, when in fact both kinds of learning are necessary in order to graduate productive citizens as well as skilled professionals.
- Universities must strike a balance between providing a highly structured curriculum that advances engagement but stifles student creativity, and a completely open curriculum that provides little guidance or structure for students to realize their interests and passions.
- Integrating a service learning requirement into departmental course offerings, and making that requirement a core component that is directly tied to course content, could enhance student engagement with the local community outside of the college gates.

Final Lessons: Leadership Matters, and the Benefits of Assessment

- Strong support on the part of the college or university president is almost a prerequisite for an engaged institution. While faculty and student buy-in are also critical, without a voice from the top articulating an institution-wide vision, engagement efforts are in danger of remaining episodic and incoherent.
- In a promising trend, 80 percent of member campuses in Campus Compact's 2003 Annual Membership Survey indicated that administrators and faculty actively support community engagement programs. Faculty and administrative backing of the establishment and maintenance of engagement initiatives and activities enhances the possibility that engagement will become an intentional part of the university's mission.
- College presidents are uniquely positioned to provide the vision and help encourage the culture shift that can translate into an abiding institutional commitment to engagement. They can do so by becoming personally involved in regional and community activities; mobilizing faculty, staff, and students to participate in engagement initiatives; and fostering inclusive, collaborative leadership. Administrative leaders, too, can take charge of implementing a grand vision in the day-to-day programs and activities of the university.
- Civic engagement efforts, in particular attempts to foster students' civic skills, can benefit from assessment strategies designed to identify the strengths and weaknesses of these efforts. Assessment can build support for civic engagement internally and point to ways in which existing initiatives can be improved. Overall, assessment tools and strategies can both improve the content and enhance the long-term sustainability of engagement efforts.

Endnotes

1 "The Crisis of Uncertainty," in S. Hook, ed., *In Defense of Academic Freedom* (New York: Pegasus, 1971), qtd. in John S. Brubacher, *On the Philosophy of Higher Education:* 124.

2 For example, the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Tribal Colleges and Universities Program grants awards to allow tribal colleges and universities to build, expand, equip, and renovate their own facilities, especially those that are available to and used by the larger community. See "Department of Housing and Urban Development Announces Awards to Tribal Colleges and Universities Program," at http://www.omhrc.gov/OMH/WhatsNew/2pgwhatsnew/special187.htm, for more information.

3 David Steigerwald, "Educating Citizens," Book Review, *The Civic Arts Review,* 16(2) (Summer-Fall 2003): 13-15.

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6 Bruce Mallory and Nancy Thomas, "When the Medium is the Message: Promoting Ethical Action Through Democratic Dialogue," *Change* 35 (5) (2003), 11.

7 "Contributing to the Civic Good: Assessing and Accounting for the Civic Contributions of Higher Education," Working Paper, Jane V. Wellman. The New Millennium Project on Higher Education Costs, Pricing, and Productivity, July 1999, 11.

8 Nancy L. Thomas, "Community Perceptions: What Higher Education Can Learn by Listening to Communities," Program for Democratic Values and Practices. Available from www.oup.org/curriculum/files/commpercep.doc

9 Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, www.civicyouth.org

10 *Ibid.*

11 According to Campus Compact's 2003 Annual Membership Survey, across member campuses, an average of 36 percent of students participate in service activities, representing a record high level of involvement. See "Highlights and Trends in Student Service and Service-Learning," at http://www.compact.org/newscc/highlights.html.

12 Harry C. Boyte, "Civic Populism," *Perspectives on Politics* 1(4) (December 2003): 737-742.

13 Cynthia Gibson, "From Inspiration to Participation: A Review of Perspectives on Youth Civic Engagement," The Grantmaker Forum on Community & National Service/Carnegie Foundation, November 2001, available from www.gfcns.org/pubs/Moving%20Youth%20report%20REV3.pdf; Thomas, "Community Perceptions: What Higher Education Can Learn by Listening to Communities."

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