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The Community Outreach Partnership Centers (COPC) Program requires adaptations in the university environment. We must examine and reinterpret (1) the roles and responsibilities of faculty; (2) the design of the undergraduate curriculum; (3) the structures of the university that create the capacity and support to sustain different working relationships with the community; and (4) our definitions of success and quality.

Expanding and Sustaining Partnerships

Characteristics of Successful University-Community Partnerships

In a recent book, *Knowledge Without Boundaries*, Mary Walshok (1996) laid out a number of critical characteristics of successful outreach programs that involve research universities. Combining her observations with those of many Portland State University participants in a variety of university-community partnerships, it is possible to define some of the conditions that must exist in order for universities to enter into truly collaborative working relationships with community partners.

1. There are persons and/or academic departments within the university that have a flexible view of knowledge and acknowledge that relevant expertise exists outside the academy as well as within. There must be ways to validate the rigor, quality, and impact of this knowledge that extend beyond the usual standards applied to academic work.

2. There is a desire on the part of university participants to *learn from* partners in collaborative projects, not just to *teach* them.

3. The university is willing to place some of its resources in the hands of a community-based advisory board or governing committee over which it does not have full control. Decision-making must be shared.

4. The university recognizes that collaborations evolve and are dynamic. In these networks,

the university does not need to be or expect to be in control or to define the agenda or the priorities.

5. There is an ongoing process of self-evaluation and tracking of program impacts that proceeds from the perspectives of all participants, both inside and outside the academic community. All of these perspectives are accepted as valid, and information about the successes and setbacks experienced by the collaboration are freely publicized and shared with all participants.

6. There is real money on the table—in the form of private, university, corporate, membership, fees for service—and no single controlling sponsor.

7. The role of the university is consistent with its traditional interests in scholarship, primarily research and education.

8. Projects are facilitated by people who understand the culture, values, and assets of the university as well as the assets and motivations of the community participants and who can help each participant understand and appreciate what the other partners bring to the collaboration.

9. The project itself has a clear focus, a manageable agenda, adequate financial support, and the full support and encouragement of university and community leadership.

10. The relationship is based on mutual self-interest, common goals, and a willingness to remain committed for a long period of time.

What the COPC Program is developing throughout the country is a new set of habits, expectations, and capacities within our communities to utilize our community resources in the public interest and to adapt our professional identities and goals to a new era. Successful partnerships place heavy demands on the university participants to change their ways.

Rarely do urban problems lend themselves to an “expert” approach by which the university defines the problem and the solutions on behalf of the community. Most urban issues are ill-defined, complex, human and environmental problems. There is often disagreement on both the nature of the problem and on an appropriate and desirable outcome. In situations like this, the traditional program planning model fails because there are no experts. There are only a lot of people with strongly held opinions and some relevant knowledge. In such cases, improvements result not from the implementation of a standard program but from “discussion and debate.” The role of the university is to bring a knowledge of reflective practice and research methodology, not ready-made answers.

Patterson (1993) proposes that an appropriate approach in such complex problem situations is to employ “action research, where researcher and client work together in exploring, analyzing, and understanding the client’s situation. Collaboratively learning together, they gain insight into the situation, allowing them to make better, more informed decisions.” This approach, in fact, is precisely what characterizes the predominant approach being adopted by urban universities as they engage in community-based research and educational activities associated with the COPC program. For university-community partnerships to be sustained, however, a number of capabilities and attitudes that are now found in discrete parts of a university must

become campuswide in scope through a process of institutional transformation that is just beginning to take shape within the higher education community.

Core University Capacities Required for Sustainable University-Community Partnerships

In their approach to *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, John Kretzmann and John McKnight (1993) lay out five steps for whole community mobilization that will permit a community to build upon its own assets. The steps are:

1. Mapping completely the capabilities and assets of individuals, citizens' associations, and local institutions;
2. Building relationships among local assets for mutually beneficial problem-solving within the community;
3. Mobilizing the community's assets fully for economic development and information-sharing purposes;
4. Convening as broadly representative a group as possible for the purposes of building a community vision and plan;
5. Leveraging activities, investments, and resources from outside the community to support asset-based, locally-defined development.

Most communities lack the skills to do these things, but can acquire the capacity through working together. To quote from Ethan Seltzer (1997), "Nothing empowers like the exercise of power, and we can make a lasting change in the capacity of communities to act when we build skills in the process of doing things to address community needs. Training, technical assistance, inspiration and appreciation are all activities that have been well received in the communities we work with and...[generally]...can give communities a sense of purpose and efficacy." This can be done by making outreach an integral part of the intellectual life of the entire university, not isolated and marginalized in special units (Michigan State University, 1993). To accomplish this transformation of the intellectual environment, a number of issues must be addressed.

Mission

All significant change must begin with a clear sense of mission and direction, and extensive community involvement must be an integral part of the mission. As Holland (1995) has described it, a number of other elements can then be built on the foundation of a specific institutional mission and goals or benchmarks defined by that mission. These include the restructuring of administrative resources to support mission-specific activities and the reengineering of administrative processes to streamline the work of the organization in order to free up much-needed resources to invest in program quality and outreach. For an example of how mission-driven institutional change can be accomplished, see the case study on Portland State University (Ramaley, 1996).

In a recent study of the mission statements of 45 universities that had an urban planning department listed in the Guide to Graduate Education in Urban and Regional Planning, Wiewel, Carlson, and Friedman (1996) found that six of the institutions made a key point of emphasizing their urban mission in their mission state-

ments and urban issues permeated their strategic plans. Eight institutions had the urban mission as a major focus, listing university-community interaction as one of the goals within the mission statement or one of the directions of the strategic plan, and the remaining institutions mentioned community outreach, partnerships, and service in their mission statement or strategic plan but without any explicit reference to a distinctive urban mission.

As Wiewel et al. (1996) point out, "development of an urban mission affects each university differently," but in all cases the designation of a strong outreach, partnership, and service component to the university mission was accompanied by structural changes or programmatic changes to permit the institution to address the needs of the urban area. Once resources have been identified either from internal reallocation or from external sources, an institution may then consider appropriate reorganization and development of academic programs, a new curricular philosophy, a reinterpretation of faculty roles and rewards, and institutional support structures that facilitate the kinds of working relationships that are needed in university-community collaboration and to support and advance the institutional mission.

Professionalism and the Role of the Expert

A number of studies have recently documented the gap between the issues that preoccupy faculty and administrators on our campuses and the concerns of policymakers and the general public. The gulf between the concerns and attitudes of "experts" and the needs of the communities that we allegedly serve is the cause of growing concern. Chester Finn (1997) recently laid out some of these differences and made the case that the priorities of educators have little in common with the interests of parents and the general public. As he puts it, "Higher education producers are impelled by the trinity of maximizing revenues and resources, pursuing quality or excellence as defined within the academic community, and questing after personal and institutional status and peer approbation...From the consumer standpoint, however, the foremost priorities are affordability, value for money, and the real-world utility or marketability that results from the credentials and other products offered by their colleges and universities."

In addition to the gulf that often exists between the priorities of universities and the people they serve, there is a value and attitude difference as well. David Mathews (1996) has written about the growing disenchantment of the general public with the concepts of professionalism that have grown up around the emerging professions, including the academic profession. He argues that we are losing confidence in all of our major public institutions and in the professionals that staff them. According to Mathews, the revolt is about the mind-set of experts and the attitudes that professionals have about the public, its role and its abilities. "Professionalism reduces a sovereign public to patients, supplicants, clients, consumers, and audiences. The public, by these lights, has emotion and need," but no resources to bring to bear on the solution of their problems. It is up to the experts to define the problem and teach the public how to take care of themselves. He believes that we must align

our practices with the processes that create a public and that contribute to the building of community by designing opportunities for a community to deliberate together on its needs and its future and to develop through self-study the capacity to invest in a desirable future.

In a similar vein, Thomas Bender (1993) traces the emergence of the academic disciplines and the gradual separation of intellectual discourse from public life. Bender links the rise of “expert authority” to the unfortunate impoverishment of public discourse and the public sphere. “There is...an argument that intellectuals turned to academic culture as a hedge against the market—whether to insist upon the superiority of honor to market values, or for a sanctuary from intellectual chaos and competitiveness, or to purify and clarify discourse, even at the risk of social irrelevance.”

Bender also suggests that, until the rise of modern professionalism after the mid-nineteenth century that separated one’s identity from a particular place, the city provided the primary context for a life of the mind. As specialization began to emerge in the academy, academics began to identify with a profession and a translocal body of knowledge, rather than with a particular place. According to Bender, “The collapse of intellectual vitality in American towns and cities coupled, perhaps, with an anti-urban resentment of the metropolis, opened the way for the rise of a multicentered and nonlocal system of professionalism stressing individual membership and the fragmentation of elites...America’s largest cities were no longer able to organize a vital, rigorous, and coherent intellectual life.” As a result, “Intellectual specialization took on a new character in the process of becoming a system of disciplines. No longer an emphasis within a shared culture, each new disciplinary profession developed its own conceptual basis...Disciplinary peers, not a diverse urban public, became the only legitimate evaluators of intellectual work.... Knowledge and competence increasingly developed out of the internal dynamics of esoteric disciplines rather than within the context of shared perceptions of public needs...their contributions to society began to flow from their own self-definitions rather than from a reciprocal engagement with general public discourse.”

It is this gradual separation of the work of the academy from the intellectual interests and needs of thoughtful citizens in our urban areas that we are now trying to reverse, in order to restore a sense of place to our disciplines and our institutions and to reintroduce a vigorous intellectual vitality to our community-building work.

Faculty Roles and the Nature of Scholarship

The primary asset of a university is its ability to generate knowledge, integrate new knowledge into a broader understanding, interpret to a variety of audiences, and apply its expertise to a variety of practical challenges (Boyer, 1990; Johnson & Wamser, 1997). Traditionally, universities have defined their role as the generation and transmission of knowledge and have relegated interpretation and application to a secondary role. In 1990, Boyer started an entirely new conversation within the academy when he published *Scholarship Revisited* and challenged us all to move

beyond the artificial boundaries of research, teaching, and service as expressions of scholarship to see the underlying pattern of discovery and use of knowledge that is the core capability of the academy. He called us to connect “the work of the academy to the social and environmental challenges beyond the campus,” and to break out of the old, tired teaching vs. research debate and define, in creative ways, what it means to be a scholar.

Boyer’s monograph triggered a widespread discussion of the values of the academic enterprise, the evolution of higher education in this country, and the pivotal role that faculty expectations and institutional desire for prestige play in contributing to, or detracting from, the ability of a university to achieve its mission and play an appropriate societal role.

Ira Harkavy (Harkavy & Puckett, 1991) has made the case that a broader definition of scholarship will revitalize the academy and heal the debilitating fragmentation that our customary values and expectations have created in our intellectual interests, our disciplines, the structure of our universities, and the nature of our relationships with the communities that we serve. A few universities, including Portland State University, have redesigned both their promotion and tenure guidelines (Johnson & Wamser, 1997) and the nature of their undergraduate curriculum (White, 1994) to incorporate new broader concepts of scholarship for both faculty and students. The goal is to encourage community-based learning and action research that brings community participants and faculty and students together to engage in scholarly work together and to build within the community the capacity for reflective practice.

Service Learning and the Undergraduate Curriculum

A core capacity that a university must have, if it intends to engage in sustained partnerships with the surrounding community and contribute in meaningful ways to the building of reflective practice and capacity in the community, is a curriculum that connects students to the community and connects the community to students. The most common form of community-based learning under active development today is service learning (Ramaley, 1997). The roots of the experiential learning movement go back in this country at least as far as William Penn but are most often associated with the work of John Dewey. In 1915, Dewey wrote in *The School and Society*, “...we cannot overlook the importance for educational purposes of the close and intimate acquaintance got with nature at first hand, with real things and materials, with the actual processes of their manipulation, and the knowledge of their social necessities and uses. In all this there was continual training of observation, of ingenuity, constructive imagination, of logical thought, and of the sense of reality acquired through first-hand contact with actualities.”

In recent years, a connection has been made between how direct experience can promote learning and the value of using a particular kind of direct experience—service learning—to cultivate leadership and civic skills and to contribute to larger societal purposes through new curricular designs that promote learning in com-

munity settings. To accommodate this strategy, it is necessary not only to broaden the definition of scholarship but also to broaden our expectations about who will engage in it. In a service learning mode that involves active participation by faculty, students, and community members, anyone can engage in any of the four aspects of scholarship—discovery, integration, interpretation, and application—and the work can occur anywhere, on campus and off campus. When the work occurs in community settings, it leads naturally not only to knowledge transfer but also to community capacity-building.

Community-Based Graduate and Professional Education

Many professional schools within our universities are developing new models that bring together preparation for the profession, applied research to enhance professional practice, and the strength of our institutions that serve the public interest, such as schools and government agencies, and continuing professional education for local practitioners. An early example of this blending of purposes, using local schools as laboratories, is the professional development schools movement in education (Case, Norlander, & Reagan, 1993). The result has been the design of new forms of university-school collaboration that blend the traditional faculty roles of teaching, research, and service into a deeper scholarly approach that incorporates discovery, integration, interpretation, and application in the two cultures of the university and the community school. In this model, everyone—faculty, students, and practitioners—participates in all aspects of scholarly work.

In the urban professional development center model described by Case et al. (1993), the interaction between the university and the school becomes an instance of cultural interaction and transformation taking place in a collaborative manner in which all parties develop the capacity to overcome traditional barriers and conceptual frameworks and both sides change in fundamental ways.

Similar approaches are being taken in other professions. In a recent report on the nature of these expanding partnerships, Lawson and Hooper-Briar (1994) describe three years of observing innovative programs in which heretofore separate professionals are working as teams (interprofessional collaboration) to bring education, health, and social service together in the community. The result is “a dramatic departure from conventional thinking and practice.” These new collaborative frameworks are creating new capacities to leverage the resources of communities while changing in fundamental ways the concepts of professionalism that universities interpret for their students.

Assessment of the Impact of Service and Service Learning

As the nature and complexity of the partnerships between universities and schools, government agencies, businesses, and other constituencies continue to expand, the need to design new ways to measure the impact and value of these new approaches to learning and research and collaboration has inspired new assessment strategies (Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996). At Portland State Univer-

sity, the need to invent new strategies for assessment accelerated when the university began to implement a new undergraduate curriculum that introduced service learning as a vehicle for accomplishing many of the goals of the educational philosophy that formed the foundation for the new design. The outcomes of service learning have not been clearly defined nationally, nor is there any uniformity in intent (Driscoll et al., 1996). Furthermore, service learning affects multiple constituencies whose goals, values, and expectations may differ. The early exploration of this issue at Portland State supports the hypothesis that participation in service learning has positive impacts on students, faculty, the community, and the capacity of the university as a whole to achieve its mission.

Complex university-community partnerships consume considerable time and resources. For this reason, it is essential to document the progress of these new forms of collaboration and to establish that projects like those funded by the COPC Program really do pay off.

Support Structures

The capabilities required to work in collaborative modes require considerable attention to faculty development, the identification of appropriate matches between faculty and student interests and expertise and community needs, capabilities, and interests, and technical assistance to encourage and sustain new working relationships once they form. The support needed can range from logistical help such as transportation and costs of preparation of materials to complex technical and research support and faculty development programs. This assistance requires a clear and demonstrable investment of university resources and cannot be dependent upon grant or contract support. The goal of this investment is to identify and support individual faculty who have interests in new forms of scholarship and outreach and to spread new capacities into existing programs and academic departments as larger groups of faculty adopt new modes of scholarship.

In 1995, Portland State University created a new support structure, The Center for Academic Excellence, to support faculty development in all areas of scholarship, to enhance teaching and learning, to foster community-university partnerships, and to develop approaches to assessment that will document and evaluate the quality and impact of these new forms of learning, on campus and in the community. The goal is to foster innovation, a special kind of change designed to improve organizations and organizational life (Kreps, 1986).

Where the facilitated spread of an innovative practice throughout the campus is a goal, there are observable patterns regarding how the changes that are needed in the university must be developed—first by identifying and supporting individual faculty, then by creating infrastructure and technical assistance as the volume of activity increases, and then by working with groups of faculty and programs.

Managing Collective Responsibilities

Most universities lack a mechanism to handle these kinds of university-community partnerships within their usual operations, where most assets obtained by grants or contracts are held by faculty members or administrators in academic departments and academic units that control the project and are responsible for its successful completion. We often lack shared institution-wide purposes or a common ground for projects that must draw on the expertise of many different fields and that will enhance the university and its ability to achieve its collective mission more than it will enhance particular departments or programs that agree to participate.

Many of the university-community interactions called for in projects such as the COPC program will benefit everyone in the long run, but the consequences of collective activities like these are not adequately reflected in the budget and incentive structure of the institution nor accommodated in its usual management structure. Who ought to take the time to prepare the proposal? Who ought to manage the resulting award? How will the institution handle the resulting turf issues in an environment in which people who write grants expect to control the project if it is awarded? What is the appropriate home for a project that must effectively draw on many parts of the university for its success? If there is any indirect cost return, who gets to manage the assets? Who gets credit for the work? Who pays for the cost of preparing and then managing these projects, especially since they tend to be more expensive to operate than individual investigator awards or program project awards within a single field?

At Portland State, some funds were set aside within Grants and Contracts to support the preparation of responses to programs like COPC's, in the hope of building a stronger collaborative capacity within the institution, PSU also developed a "managing partners" concept that requires senior faculty and administrators to manage these projects on behalf of the institutional and the community, rather than to benefit their individual units.

A Coherent Agenda

The variety of university-community partnerships sponsored by the COPC program and the lessons that we can learn about effective mobilization of community resources through university-community collaboration can provide a basis for designing a coherent federal investment strategy to promote local partnerships that build strong communities.

The assets that the universities bring to the table are specific: our research capacity, our faculty expertise, our knowledge of assessment and evaluation, our curriculum, and the talents of our students. What is becoming clear to us after over a decade of rethinking our missions and the limitations as well as strengths of our academic culture and expectations is that there are extraordinary assets in the community that can not only help us achieve our own mission but will place our work in a context of meaning and purpose that enhances our commitment and that rewards and encourages our effort. We are grateful for the generous sharing of ideas and

talents that the COPC program encourages. Relationships such as this will gradually reinvigorate the academy and close the gap between academics and the public.

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