



FACULTY FLOURISHING

Research suggests that intellectual engagement is a primary driver for faculty. In a 2012 study, “faculty described how their [civic and community engagement] projects offered endless and irreplaceable opportunities for them to learn how things they studied worked in practice and to develop skills and understandings unavailable in academic discourse in their fields” (O’Meara, 2012, pp. 18-19).

CALL TO ACTION

“[Community-campus partnerships] and their achievements need to be institutionalized within the community and the academy. Within higher education, this institutionalization can be achieved through the participation of community members in the recruitment, development, promotion, and tenure processes of the faculty.” (Freeman et al., 2009, p. 95)



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INTRODUCTION TO THE SERIES

The series *Contributions of Civic and Community Engagement in Higher Education* is produced by the Community of Practice, Inquiry, and Learning (COPIIL) of North Carolina Campus Engagement (formerly known as North Carolina Campus Compact). Focused on the benefits and value of civic and community engagement (CCE) in higher education, the series has two parts: (1) a Primer that provides an overview of each of 17 topical areas organized into three categories (priorities related to students, to institutions, and to communities) and that is designed as an accessible and evidence-based introduction to some of the key priorities that well-designed CCE can advance and (2) a set of more developed briefs in these 17 topical areas, intended to support ongoing exploration and inquiry in each of these areas and to guide ongoing deepening of practice.

Neither the Primer nor this set of topical briefs is comprehensive, but we do believe the topics included—selected through discussions within COPIIL and consultation with CCE thought leaders—are among the most relevant for this moment in the evolution of CCE and in our nation’s history. Neither the topics nor the work of CCE fit neatly into these categories; the topical priorities and the contributions of CCE to them are as deeply interwoven as the CCE work of community members, students, staff, and faculty is interdependent. The set of topical briefs may be expanded in the coming years as additional topics seem important to include and as additional practitioner-scholarship becomes available.

Each brief includes a summary of the topic and the role of higher education in general and CCE in particular in advancing it, an annotated list of associated scholarship, and a list of references and additional readings; quotes from students, alums, community members, faculty, staff, and literature related to CCE serve to concretize the possibilities and the stakes. Both components of the series incorporate examples from across the NC Campus Engagement network; descriptions of the examples draw on information available through campus websites and personal communication with key stakeholders.

NOTE: We use the term “civic and community engagement” to include many practices and pedagogies, including service-learning, community-engaged learning, election engagement, volunteerism, social entrepreneurship, community-based participatory research, social justice activism, and deliberative dialogue.

OVERVIEW

Civic and community engagement (CCE) bolster allied priorities of campus diversity and faculty success. It is increasingly important that institutions of higher education critically re-examine culture, practices, and policies in order to better support the success of diversifying campus populations.

Faculty flourishing is important, in part, for the interdependent success of students of color who comprise over 45% of undergraduates (Pew, 2018). New faculty, especially women of color, often prioritize the connection of public purposes with their academic careers and look for academic homes that will support them in making CCE a central part of their careers (HERI, 2018; Post et al., 2016). Campuses can leverage CCE to recruit and retain such faculty. “[E]ven after controlling for such factors as demographic characteristics, discipline, and institution type, faculty perception of institutional support for community engagement is the primary predictor of involvement (O’Meara, 2013, p. 231). CCE frames teaching, research, and service as complementary domains of work; and both satisfaction and impact often increase when these roles are more “synergistic” (Beaulieu et al., 2018; Janke & Colbeck, 2008). CCE has proven to be an important element of “academic environments that cultivate professional growth [and that, in turn] ... lead to increases in organizational commitment and retention, motivation, satisfaction, and performance ... [as faculty] thrive when they take control of their own growth, work toward purpose-driven mastery, and engage in positive professional relationships” (O’Meara, 2013, pp. 218-219).

O’Meara (2013) outlined five areas for future research related to faculty motivation for CCE, and its relationship to faculty flourishing. These areas include (1) “application of social science theory”; (2) examining “the interactions among faculty inputs or starting points, faculty members’ subsequent experiences ... and the outcomes”; (3) “focus toward contract systems and other incentives within non-tenure track appointments in terms of how they support or thwart this work”; (4) “the intersection among individual, institutional, and environmental forces”; (5) and “moving beyond the historical over-reliance on self-report surveys” (pp. 233-236).

ASSOCIATED SCHOLARSHIP

- CCE provides an avenue for faculty to integrate their whole selves into their work, aligning personal, professional, and civic aspects of their scholarly identity (Dostilio et al., 2016; Ward, 2010).
- Many younger faculty entering the academy have been exposed to CCE as students and intend to integrate the practice into their research and teaching (Post et al., 2016).
- Community members encourage higher education institutions to value their faculty partners, writing: “Sharing power . . . is the very essence of building a democracy. Education, especially higher education, is what helps us to ensure these democratic principles. . . . Those within an institution . . . practicing those democratic principles deserve to be rewarded through promotion and tenure. This will be one of the key ways for these community-university partnerships to become even more mainstream and to ensure that deep, systemic social change will be possible both inside of the academy and out in the world” (Freeman et al, 2009, p. 89).
- Retention, especially as related to women of color faculty, is increasingly important not only for faculty but for the interdependent success of students of color. Research shows students of color feel more connected to and trusting of educators with whom they share “salient characteristics” (Espinosa et al., 2019).
- Faculty learning communities or “communities of practice” (Wenger 1998) organized around a shared CCE issue can support faculty as scholars and practitioners (Van Note Chism et al., 2013).

UNC GREENSBORO

UNC Greensboro is a national leader in incorporating community engagement and community-engaged scholarship into policies and practices for faculty promotion and tenure. UNCG's current University-Wide Evaluation Guidelines for Promotions and Tenure (as approved in April 2010) contains language explicitly supporting faculty community engagement:

- **Teaching:** “encourages a wide array of student learning opportunities including community engaged teaching” and names “service-learning experiences” as part of the appropriate scope of teaching
- **Research and creative activity:** scope includes “community-engaged research and creative activities,” “evaluations from . . . experts from the community” are an accepted source of judgments, and “social changes (e.g., policies, programs, and procedures)” is an example of appropriate documentation of outcomes
- **Service:** distinguishes between “community service” and “community engaged service,” with examples of the latter including “collaborating with schools, businesses, advocacy groups, community groups, and civic agencies to develop policies”

For additional information contact the UNC Greensboro Institute for Community and Economic Engagement.

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

Western Carolina University supports faculty in integrating CCE into their courses and scholarship and in developing and deepening community-campus partnerships through an intensive annual Faculty Institute on Community Engagement (FICE). FICE is a year-long, multi-disciplinary faculty learning community in which around a dozen faculty participate in workshops, retreats, and conferences while also working in teams to develop new community-based/engaged projects. The content of FICE includes such topics as exploring definitions, purposes, and theoretical bases of CCE; establishing community-campus partnerships; creating and assessing learning objectives; creating and evaluating impact and making plans for continuous improvement; and undertaking engaged scholarship. Upon completion of FICE, participants receive a professional development grant that can be used to support their community engagement activities (e.g., conferences, student researchers, and supplies).

For additional information contact the Western Carolina University Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning.

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AUTHORS

Jennifer Ahern-Dodson (PhD) has been involved in a number of multidisciplinary initiatives focused on community-engaged scholarship at Duke University, leads faculty learning communities that explore pedagogical innovations in writing and undergraduate research, and founded the Faculty Write Program -a faculty writing initiative designed to support faculty across their roles and responsibilities.

Leslie Garvin (MSW) is the Executive Director of North Carolina Campus Engagement. In this role, she facilitates faculty and staff professional development, builds strategic partnerships to develop and expand higher education community and civic engagement, and leads the elections and democracy and food insecurity initiatives. Leslie is a 2022-23 UC National Center for Free Speech and Civic Engagement Fellow.

Melissa L. Lyon (Ed.D.) served as a community engagement professional at Fayetteville State University for 13 years. Her dissertation focused on competencies in community engagement professionals. She has authored work on mindfulness and service-learning. She has moved to Minnesota and continues to collaborate with COFIL. In her spare time, Melissa enjoys spending time with family, gardening, and reading Stephen King novels.

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COFIL 2019-2021 + 2022-2023 members who contributed to this series:

- Jennifer Ahern-Dodson, Duke University
- Patti H. Clayton, PHC Ventures & NCCE
- Margaret Commins, Queens University of Charlotte
- Kathleen E. Edwards, UNC Greensboro
- Leslie Garvin, NC Campus Engagement
- Cara Kozma, Duke University
- Danielle Lake, Elon University
- Melissa L. Lyon, Independent practitioner-scholar
- Kristin Medlin, Collaboratory
- Ryan Nilsen, UNC-Chapel Hill
- Allison Walker, High Point University
- Elizabeth Wall-Bassett, Western Carolina University
- Catherine Wright, Wingate University

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- Jessica D. Brazell-Brayboy
- Robert G. Bringle, IUPUI
- Emily Kohl, Rockbridge Area Relief Association