

Community-Campus Partnership for Tomorrow July 30, 2008 Planning Meeting Summary

Overview

In response to an invitation to participate in a discussion regarding the proposed Community-Campus Partnership for Tomorrow (CCPT), 186 individuals expressed interest in being part of the planning. On July 30, 137 of those responding attended a three-hour session at the Friday Center. Attendees represented 59 different units at UNC-Chapel Hill, including numerous research and outreach centers and administrative units. There was at least one representative of every school on campus. In addition to five community representatives, there were two attendees from General Administration and representatives of East Carolina University, North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T University, North Carolina School of the Arts, and Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation.

After hearing an overview of CCPT from Mike Smith, Vice Chancellor for Public Service and Engagement, participants broke out into nine discussion groups to address issues related to identifying a community or communities for our initial efforts. Each group had a facilitator and note taker, and was asked to address a series of questions. (See attached agenda and discussion guide.) Prior to adjourning the meeting, participants met back to share some of the critical points from their discussions.

The facilitator and note taker for each session summarized their discussion, and copies of their summaries can be found on the Carolina Connects web site (<http://www.unc.edu/pse/>) at the menu links “UNC Tomorrow/Community-Campus Partnership for Tomorrow.” In addition, we received a number of written responses from individuals. Those have been incorporated into the following broad synthesis of the discussion, organized by question as well as included as separate documents.

1. How should we define community? What process should we use for selecting the community? What criteria should we use? Should we work in more than one community as a part of the pilot?

The most striking point from this discussion is that there was no consensus regarding definition or process. The only points on which there was generally strong agreement were that we should be working with more than one community and that the communities should be reflective of the diversity of the state.

Regarding definition of community, most felt we should use a geographic approach and look to counties or regions, although some felt towns or even neighborhoods would offer the best opportunity for strong partnerships. There was also discussion of defining community by commonality of an issue/problem/interest (e.g., education, access to health care), or by some demographic characteristic (e.g., school-age, elderly, people living with HIV/AIDS).

Most of the breakout groups had extensive exchanges on criteria that could or should be used. Possible criteria included:

- Distance. This issue generated very strong opinions for being within easy commuting distance of Chapel Hill on the one hand and being located much farther away on the other. Those favoring a nearby community (≤ 90 minutes) expressed their belief that it would enable and encourage more participation from faculty and students. In stating support for working with more distant communities, participants said limiting the distance would send the message that we only want to work with communities if it is convenient for us. They also felt that communities that are closer by often have lots of attention from area institutions and might feel “over studied” and those farther away would be more welcoming and committed to a partnership.

- Level of need. During the meeting overview Vice Chancellor Smith announced we would be focusing on communities in Tier One counties. During the breakouts, several groups discussed the concern that this eliminated most urban areas and that there were pockets of serious need in many of the more “affluent” counties. A number of people expressed the hope that this decision would be reconsidered to include areas other than Tier One counties.
- Relationship with UNC. This was another area in which there were strong opinions which differed significantly. A number of people thought it is important to build on existing relationships – doing so will enable us to make more progress. Others felt working in new places would enable us to be truer to a community-driven process that could be replicated.
- Presence/involvement of other UNC campuses. There were several comments regarding whether we should look to areas where there are other UNC campuses. Those supporting doing so thought it would enable us to work in more distant areas and would strengthen both institutional and community partnerships. Others were concerned that there are areas where there may be multiple campuses already “vying” for the community and we should not add to that.

In the discussion of selecting a community, many commented on the need for communities to select us, vs. our selecting them. Some thought we should have an open call for proposals, although others expressed concern that such a process would result in some communities “losing.” The idea of having technical support available or having faculty/staff prepare the application in partnership with interested communities. Another suggestion was that we look to communities who applied for grants from or with us, but did not get them as possible candidates (e.g., Halifax County applied for a GEAR UP grant).

As noted, the point around which there was the most consensus was that we should be working in multiple communities. There were a number of suggestions regarding that as well as various rationales: driven process that could be replicated.

- Provides a basis of comparison.
- Allows for geographic and/or other diversity
- Could permit working at different stages of a partnership or with different types of partnerships

2. What will success look like at the end of our work with a community? What might it look like from the community perspective? What might it look like from the campus perspective?

There was a fair amount of agreement in the discussions around these questions. People felt strongly that we should approach the process with some ideas of how we would measure success and that the community should help define what success would be for them.

The discussion included a number of points as to what success would look like from the vantage point of community and campus, and they are summarized below.

From Community Perspective:

- We need community to tell us what success looks like for them.
- Ownership of program is unidentifiable because there is so much collaboration and community buy-in. Project becomes integrated into the fabric of the community.
- Community sees UNC as a place where they can turn – relationship building
- Community achieves real measurable results.
- Improved outcomes as defined by community, such as lower high school dropouts, decrease in gang activity, increase in employment, increased access to health care, etc.

- Empowered and engaged citizens
- Outcome is sustainable.
- Community now has resources not previously available.
- Better quality of life for all citizens.

From Campus Perspective:

- Expanded view of community, engagement and our responsibility as a community of scholars and learners – changed worldview.
- Building capacity of 501c3s to impact change
- Success for faculty and staff will be an appropriate reward for their efforts which will likely mean a change in the reward system.
- Have strong buy-in by community of our work and us.
- There will be other communities asking for this assistance.
- Can channel our work into new proposals, new projects, new articles, and new grants.
- Statewide perspective –extends to improve state’s perception of university system.
- New relationships formed with sister institutions.
- We can’t always look at helping the community as the goal, but rather should see success as learning and forming relationships
- Campus is able to put theory into practice, learns how to engage in partnerships, learns new areas to focus on. Ideas for continuing or engaging in other projects.
- Campus silos come down and people are working together to engage appropriately (without politics) with the chosen communities
- Template for replicating partnerships with other communities.
- Grad student dissertation projects, undergrad service-learning, faculty applied research grants and publications, and staff service project connections.
- Statewide recognition by General Assembly of University’s successful engagement.

3. What are the risks to be avoided in this project? What factors must be present for success?

Not surprisingly, discussants noted a number of risks to try to avoid in the process. Many of those were similar to comments made in response to other questions and centered on the relationship established with the community and the commitment of the University. Noted risks to avoid included:

- Lack of community buy-in.
- Not listening to voices of those not in establishment.
- Short-term life of partnership (early bailout by UNC)
- Not enough research or understanding of community before work begins.
- Not delivering on what was promised - failure is not an option.
- Not taking time to develop relationships – CCPT is already in fast mode; if we don’t build in time, we’ll fail.
- Unclear or too high expectations.
- We deliver but create dependency – need to make sure the community is engaged and knowledge is transferred.
- Failure to break down silos, work across administrative lines.
- Too much emphasis on Chapel Hill. Staff needing too much recognition – this is not the focus.
- Selection process becomes part of public criticism.

- Community “burn out” from too much attention, faculty “burn out” if they don’t get “credit” from involvement.
- Don’t become so engaged that we forget the scholarship.

As important as avoiding risks is assuring we do everything possible to assure success. The discussion resulted in a number of specific suggestions regarding what needed to be present to do so:

- We need a well-defined process to start with.
- Rewards – for community participation and faculty participation (Deans need to be involved and sanction workload effort – leeway and time release, promotion and tenure).
- Sustainability is the key.
- Giving credit is key—including to people that work from the community. Even a framed certificate from UNC might mean a lot. Including them in professional presentations is another important example.
- There needs to be the potential for sustainable funding.
- We need to be sensitive to turf issues with other universities.
- The people interacting with the community need to be well trained with exceptional people skills.
- Start small and build from there.
- We must have quality control especially if students do some of the work.
- Participants should be cross-trained so no one person is indispensable.
- There is diversity across faculty/ staff/ students.
- Community champions are key to forming the bridges.
- We need resilience to critics and failures along the way. Respond to press criticism and roll with it.
- Bring our connections to Foundations, such as Golden Leaf.
- Tier 1 counties have been studied, researched to death. What they really need – water, sewer, infrastructure, money.

4. What process should we consider using to involve members of the community in the partnership?

As highlighted in the responses to virtually all the questions, community involvement is key to success at every stage of the process. Responses included both general and specific suggestions as to how to involve community members in the partnership.

1. Use existing resources, efforts, models

- Involve Southern Oral History Project, NC Collection and other knowledgeable historians to provide advice and guidance on community’s history, stakeholders, interest groups, leaders and issues to identify key individuals across a broad spectrum.
- HBHE has already done a lot of work around defining communities. Reports are already available.
- Look at process used by HPDF, Public Health, Child Development Institute, RENCI
- We could tap into faculty, staff, and students who already have connections to the community to get their ideas.
- Use existing local networks. Don’t reinvent them.

2. Invite the community to participate in various ways
 - Hold community forums/town hall meetings.
 - Everyone needs to be at the table during every discussion, during various phases – design, implementation, assessment and evaluation.
 - Focus groups, key informant interviews led by community – need to be a various times of day, various locations.
 - It may be important to start off talking with discreet groups before bringing everyone together in order to get different points of view
 - Don't make assumptions about who wants to be involved. Provide means to involve people (e.g. send out school buses to pick up parents who don't have transportation, etc.)
 - UNC needs to identify “trust agents” within the community who also act as leaders. We need to find intermediary individuals who have considerable ability in trust building and working with trust agents.
 - Have community people leading meetings.
 - We could host community suppers to get families talking, e.g., parents' night out.

5. **What process should we use for involving campus partners in this project? How do we involve people in the process of identifying the community's interests? How do we involve people in helping to address community needs once they have been identified?**

The responses to the question of process underscored and expanded on some of the other discussions.

As with a number of the other questions, the issue of incentives was raised. As in most discussions of engaged scholarship, there was concern regarding the importance of this for junior faculty who need research opportunities. There was also caution to “be aware of resistance” to any change in P&T. The incentive discussion was not limited to faculty, and the importance having incentives for EPA non-faculty was also noted as important.

Another theme of the discussions was to understand and be aware of efforts already underway and those who are involved in the work. It was underscored that we should look to “exemplar programs (not just individuals).” Suggestions for collecting information on existing efforts included: collect case studies, look for pan-university threads, collect examples of staff driven outreach, and find out who has been seeking resources for work (even if it has not been funded). There was a lot of discussion of the need for a database to inventory place-based work being done, an inventory of examples/people/programs that have been successful.

It was underscored that there was no central place to access campus expertise, particularly around specific geographic areas. AHEC, Rural Center, School of Government, County Extension, SBTDC, APPLES, Sheps were among the pockets of resources noted. On the other hand, there was caution about limiting it or letting it be seen as driven or dominated by the College of Arts and Sciences or other campus entities including the Schools of Government or Public Health.

There was similar concern for not turning to the “easiest” community partners. In the case of city and county departments, it was suggested to involve staff in addition to (or instead of) the political heads. The importance of diversity came up numerous times when community involvement was discussed, just as it did for campus involvement.

The need for administrative support including, but not limited to financial resources was noted. In addition to the necessity of commitment from campus administrators, the need for Deans to view the

activity as positive and commit resources was expressed. It was underscored that the support of supervisors was also necessary, for both EPA and SPA staff.

The involvement from throughout campus, both in terms of schools, departments and units as well as from faculty, student, staff and administrators was seen as an opportunity to enrich the experience. Involvement of students was seen as a way to enhance the effort as well as to provide a rich learning environment. There was a suggestion to use interdisciplinary teams of graduate students with faculty advisors for the process.

Several breakout groups noted the need for some sort of steering committee. Suggestions for constituting that entity included: having representation from the UNCT content areas and community representation.

It was pointed out in at least one group that in addition to the university understanding the community, the community must also understand the university, including the policies and procedures that will affect this effort, including the Institutional Review Board, the requirements for promotion and tenure, and financial policies.

6. What conditions must be present for you to be actively involved in this project? Community members? Faculty? Staff? Students?

Discussions of conditions that facilitate participation resulted in a number of common factors as well as some that were specific to the constituency. Commonalities included:

- Support of the Chancellor and other top administrators
- Clear central leadership to set roles and expectations
- Alignment with University mission
- Capacity
 - Dedicated staff
 - Coordinating council/Steering group
 - Financial resources (e.g., grants, travel)
 - Training on working with communities
 - Defined outcomes
- Recognition and reward
- Clear communication
 - What is time commitment?
 - What is process?
 - Involve media and JOMC
- Involve faculty, staff and students
- Truly interdisciplinary – across silos in both campus and community
- Measurable, tangible outcomes

Following is a summary of conditions suggested for involvement for specific constituencies:

Faculty:

It was during the discussion of this question that the issue of incentives resulted in the strongest comments.

- Needs to be framed as engaged scholarship
- Support from Deans of each school

- Workload issues (course release)
- Include as recognized (valued) category on year-end reports
- Administrative structure must support this – tenure reform recognizing challenges that are outside of UNC
- Removal of sanctions for doing this work
- Description of work for tenure/promotion file

Staff:

- Incentives in the form of grants and awards
- Support from administration
- Role for unit or release time

Students:

People saw students (particularly graduate and professional) as very important to the success of the initiative and the initiative as a great opportunity for interdisciplinary student training. In addition to listing many advantages to including students, they had several suggestions for what students would need to participate:

- Structure and system
- Course credit
- Fellowships, awards (e.g., IMPACT)
- Training grants and longer internships
- Centralized place/resource to identify opportunities

Several groups noted the potential contribution of centers on campus, given that this sort of work is inherent (and sometimes explicit) in their missions and that by definition and administrative placement, they are interdisciplinary in nature.

Perhaps most important for the individuals responding is a need for the skills and expertise they possess. Several mentioned that if they could make a contribution, they would like to participate. Others noted that they had particular expertise or knowledge that might be of use (e.g., disaster preparedness/response, environment, computer science).

7. Can you identify similar projects from this campus or from any other organization that might provide useful guidance in developing this project and share the lessons learned? Can you identify other people with relevant experience who might provide helpful guidance?

Following are two lists of suggested projects, organized by those within UNC-Chapel Hill and those external to our campus. Although only listed once, a number of these were mentioned by several of the breakout groups.

Campus

AHEC

School of Government

Public Intersection project

Civic Education Consortium

Workshops

Fayetteville, Cumberland County and Greene County projects

School of Public Health

Public Health work in Malawi

HBHE community assessments

Institute for Public Health Incubator projects

Dept. of Epidemiology:

Rogers-Eubanks Neighborhood Association, Concerned Citizens of Tillery, NC Environmental

Justice Network, Coalition to End Environmental Racism

Nutrition Institute

School of Law

Center for Civil Rights

School of Information and Library Science

School of Nursing

Multi-institutional Center working with HBCU's

School of Education

Research Triangle Schools Partnership

Department of City and Regional Planning

City and Regional Planning assessments

Center for Urban and Regional Studies

Durham program experience

Urban revitalization students

Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

Sampson and Duplin counties work

Carolina Advising Corps

Kenan Institute Center for Community Competiveness program

CTSA grant

Institute for the Environment

RENCI

Asheville Engagement Center

CIRA

Carolina Center for Public Service

Faculty Engaged Scholars Program

Southern Oral History Project

Citizen Soldier

Tar Heel Bus Tour

External to Carolina:

Alumni good connecting point, including:

Danville, VA Regional Foundation (includes Caswell Co.)
Student U

Carter Center

Portland State, Emory, Cal State Chico(?)

MDC, Inc.

Project for Rural Carolina

Duke Endowment program in distressed counties

NC Rural Center

Leadership program

SRDI (Raleigh)

NC Partnership for Young Children

Smart Start National Technical Assistance Center

NC Office of Mental Health (organized a process)

State Department of Commerce's 21st Century Communities

Duke

Durham-Duke Partnership

Community-Campus Partnerships for Health

Annie E. Casey Foundation

Patrick Foundation (CA)

National think tanks

Aspen Round Table

Chapin Hall

HUD Community Outreach Partnership Program

Imagining America

National Civic League

Penn Partnership

Kellogg Community Partnerships for Health (East TN University)

Cooperative Extension

Millennium Village Projects

Transforming Philanthropy

Ford collaboration

National Community Development Institute

Appalachian Regional Commission (Jesse White, former director)

McKnight Foundation

Oregon Shines (data collection process)

SBCDC (Santa Barbara Community Development Center?)

Cornell (Ken Reardon)

Community-based research group in DC

Top two critical points from your discussion for us to keep in mind as we develop the CCPT.

- Building human capital to solve community problems. Understand community and our current relationship with them. Build on existing UNC programs.
- Build capacity within UNC. Create better infrastructure for faculty to do this work.
- Don't promise what we can't deliver.
- Don't recreate the wheel – understand communities before work starts, use data and partnerships that exist.
- Emphasize community ownership and management
- Keep it simple and focused.
- Must be true partnership.
- University must develop an appropriate reward/recognition system for faculty
- Manage expectations and remain focused.
- We need to know what non-negotiables are:
 - What is relationship with GA, sister institutions
 - Does it have to be Tier 1 county
 - Will there be more financial backing, what is \$350,000 for?
 - What is to happen by when for whom?
- Figure out the Initial Process:
 - a. Assessment – put skilled, trusted people on the ground to assist community. Ask around about communities that could use some help (first level scan). Don't make commitment or over promise.
 - b. Technical analysis.
 - c. Identify willing partners.
 - d. Put together team of people to make issues bubble up – highly skilled listeners and facilitators to go out in community and have expertise to tap into existing social networks.
 - e. Need intermediary - with visioning process – priority setting.
 - f. Need a ready made list of successful projects that have a multiple effect in the community – so we can say to the community, “here's the range of what people are doing (at university and others)” and share it – inform community about possibilities – find out what's appealing.
- We are making a long-term commitment (financial and otherwise). University needs to commit funds. Ultimate goal should be to improve local capacity.
- Need a small group of people skilled in community development work to drive the project. Solid leadership is important to engaging campus and community.
- University must serve as a catalyst, listening and bringing people together.
- Community must engage in process to identify and prioritize its concerns and needs.
- Research interests should be secondary to building community capacity.
- Integrated and focused communication strategy essential.
 - Words themselves must come from the community
 - Language is very important – make it clear the University is fulfilling its mission, not imposing its will.
- Consider that there are pockets of need in non-Tier 1 counties and that we may need to think beyond communities of place to consider communities of interest across county lines or along corridors.
- Focus not on campus service to communities but rather on the development of true reciprocal partnerships focused on realistic but imaginative shared goals and with real resources for all participants.
- Consider having two different communities: one that is more partner-ready and one that is not as much so.
- Involve as many as we can from Carolina in this project – students, staff, faculty, and alumni. “Who's your daddy (and where are they from)?” has a new relevance in the project.
- Success cannot be defined without all the partners at the table. In the first phase of this process, success may well be developing a trusting relationship between the Community and the University.
- Resources, rewards and the internal structure must be in place in order for Carolina to do this work over time. There must be tangible benefits to the Community and to faculty, staff and students for everyone to be willing to take these risks.