

New Times Demand New Scholarship I: Research Universities and Civic Engagement : A Leadership Agenda

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Research Universities and Civic Engagement: A New Voice for Leadership

Higher education was founded on a civic mission that calls on faculty, students, and administrators to apply their skills, resources, and talents to address important issues affecting communities, the nation, and the world. During recent years, increasing numbers of colleges and universities have engaged in innovative efforts to reinvigorate the civic mission of their institutions and their communities.

This movement has been fueled largely by community and liberal arts colleges and state universities. Research universities have been much quieter, despite the ambitious efforts many have undertaken to promote and advance civic engagement in their institutions.

Recognizing research universities' potential to provide leadership on this issue, Campus Compact and Tufts University in the fall of 2005 convened scholars from some of the research universities that are advanced in their civic engagement work to discuss how their institutions are promoting civic engagement on their campuses and communities.

The group not only shared their ideas; they decided to take action by becoming a more prominent and visible "voice for leadership" in the larger civic engagement movement in higher education. As a first expression of that voice, they have developed a case statement that outlines why it is important for research universities to embrace and advance engaged scholarship as a central component of their activities and programs and at every level: institutional, faculty, and student.

This statement, which has been endorsed by the entire group, argues that because of research universities' significant academic and societal influence, world-class faculty, outstanding students, state-of-the-art research facilities, and considerable financial resources, they are well-positioned to drive institutional and field-wide change relatively quickly and in ways that will ensure deeper and longer-lasting commitment to civic engagement among colleges and universities for centuries to come. To advance this process, the group developed a set of recommendations as to what research universities can do to promote engaged scholarship at their own institutions, as well as across research universities, and ultimately, all of higher education.

There could be no better time to implement this leadership agenda, the group agreed. "All of us working on these issues at

research universities,” said one scholar, “have been waiting for someone else take the lead in moving civic engagement work but it hasn’t happened. What we have now discovered is that *we are the ones we’ve been waiting for.*”

New Times Demand New Scholarship: Research Universities and Civic Engagement

The dawn of the twenty-first century has presented new opportunities and challenges for higher education. Rapid expansion and growth of advanced technologies is transforming the ways in which knowledge and information can be absorbed and distributed. Poverty, substandard education, access to health care, and other public problems have become more complex and globally significant. Although Americans’ involvement in volunteering has increased in recent years, their interest in and knowledge about civic and political issues and processes has declined steadily (*Colby, et. al., 2003; Ehrlich, 2000*).

These factors, combined with growing public dissatisfaction with higher education’s ability to demonstrate its value, have prompted many colleges and universities to reexamine their conceptions of excellence, the nature of scholarly work, and, most important, how to better reflect the original purpose of higher education: to serve as a civically engaged and active leader in preserving, promoting, and educating for a democratic society.

This ethos has a long and deep tradition that is reflected as early as 1749 in the writings of Benjamin Franklin who perceived the primary purpose of higher education to be an “inclination joined with an ability to serve.” William Rainey Harper, the first president of the University of Chicago, declared in 1899 the university to be a “prophet of democracy.” A new generation of higher education leaders has reiterated the democratic purposes of education, including Derek Bok former and interim president of Harvard University: “At a time when the nation has its full share of difficulties... the question is not whether universities need to concern themselves with society’s problems but whether they are discharging this responsibility as well as they should” (*cited in Gallagher, 1993, p. 122*).

A recent analysis of more than 300 college and university mission statements, in fact, reveals that 95 percent stipulated social responsibility, community engagement, and public service as their primary purpose—one that recognizes higher education’s responsibility to educate students to be engaged citizens of a democratic

society and to generate the knowledge necessary for an optimally democratic society (*Furco, forthcoming, 2006*).

To deliver on that mission, many colleges and universities have developed a wide range of practices, programs, and structures that engage students, faculty, and administrators in advancing democracy and improving society. These institutions have become part of a national, and, indeed, global movement to underscore and bolster higher education's role as a leader in preserving and promoting democracy and the public good. "From one campus to another," writes Harry Boyte, Co-Director of the University of Minnesota's Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, "there is increasing interest in efforts to better prepare people for active citizenship in a diverse democracy, to develop knowledge for the improvement of communities and society, and to think about and act upon the public dimensions of our educational work" (*Boyte & Hollander, 1999, p. 7*).

Despite this progress, the civic engagement movement has miles to go before genuinely democratic, engaged, and civic colleges and universities characterize all of American higher education. According to a report issued by the National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good (*Pasque, et al., 2005*), achieving this goal will require higher education institutions to

engage in a deeper reexamination of their purposes, processes, and products to assess whether and to what extent they have aligned all three with the democratic and civic mission on which they were established.

Specifically, universities, especially research universities, must entertain and adopt new forms of scholarship—those that link the intellectual assets of higher education institutions to solving public problems and issues. Achieving this goal will necessitate the creation of a new epistemology that, according to Schon (*1995, p. 27*) implies "a kind of action research with norms of its own, which will conflict with the norms of technical rationality—the prevailing epistemology built into the research universities."

"Perhaps [our] greatest challenge—and the greatest opportunity—is to strengthen the connection between our research and education missions and the needs of our society."

-President Robert Bruininks,
Inaugural Address,
University of Minnesota, 2003

New forms of pedagogy and teaching will also be required, as well as new ways of thinking about how institutions are structured, organized, and administered. Additionally, institutions will need to create new ways of determining what is rewarded and valued by universities and the larger higher education community.

Engaged Higher Education Institutions

- Seek out and cultivate reciprocal relationships with communities in which they are located and actively enter into “shared tasks”—including service and research—to enhance the quality of life of those communities and the public good, overall.
- Support and promote the notion of “engaged scholarship”—that which addresses public problems and is of benefit to the wider community, can be applied to social practice, documents the effectiveness of community activities, and generates theories with respect to social practice.
- Support and reward faculty members’ professional service, public work, and/or community-based action research or “public scholarship.”
- Provide multiple opportunities in the curriculum for students to develop civic competencies and civic habits, including research opportunities that help students create knowledge and do scholarship relevant to and grounded in public problems but still within rigorous methodological frameworks.
- Promote student co-curricular civic engagement opportunities that include opportunities for reflection and leadership development.
- Have administrators that inculcate a civic ethos through the institution by giving voice to it in public forums, creating infrastructure to support it, and establishing policies that sustain it.

(Kellogg Commission, 1999; USC, 2001; Boyte & Hollander, 1999)

As world-class leaders in higher education, especially in generating knowledge, research universities have the credibility and stature needed to accelerate higher education’s return to its civic mission by developing, advancing, and legitimating these new and

engaged forms of scholarship. It is also a natural role for research universities, which help to “set the bar” for scholarship across higher education, to play in the larger civic engagement movement. While there are research universities that can point to civic engagement initiatives on their campuses, these activities tend to be seen as “special” initiatives or programs isolated from the rest of the institution. Many are the domain of small groups of faculty members or practitioners who have created and sustained them, sometimes single-handedly. Few of these initiatives have received major institutional support, been seen as a top priority, or have helped to shape the larger institutional culture and structure.

Auspiciously, a cadre of leading research universities has begun to embrace and adopt more comprehensive and sustainable approaches to civic engagement, especially engaged scholarship, at their institutions. The scholar-practitioners leading these efforts, however, lack opportunities to convene with and learn from their colleagues at peer institutions. As a result, there have been few attempts to coalesce their energy, intellect, and ingenuity toward creating a group of educators able to promote engaged scholarship as a key component of the larger civic engagement agenda across all of higher education. Providing this leadership is vital, since research universities receive the majority of federal science research

funding, award the bulk of the nation’s doctorates, educate a high proportion of new faculty, have research as their primary focus, and have a strong influence on the aspirations of other higher education institutions.

Recognizing research universities’ potential to provide leadership on these issues—and the innovative and exciting civic engagement efforts that leaders from some of these institutions are undertaking—**Campus Compact** and **Tufts University** convened scholars from some of the research universities that are advanced

“The essence of a research university is not solely its three-part mission of education, research, and service but also the fact that each faculty member and student is expected to be engaged in all three in an integrated way. Community engagement is an ideal mechanism for fulfilling that distinctive and essential mission.”

-Albert Carnesale, Chancellor,
University of California,
Los Angeles, June 6, 2006

in their civic engagement work to discuss to what extent and how their institutions were promoting civic engagement on their campuses and in their communities. For many participants, this was their first opportunity to talk candidly with peers from other research universities—all of whom face both common problems and institution-specific challenges in attempting to incorporate programs, curricula, and/or initiatives focused on civic engagement, including engaged scholarship, in their organizations.

During the course of two full days, October 24–25, 2005, participants from **Duke University, Stanford University, Tufts University, University of California-Los Angeles, University of Maryland, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, University of Michigan, University of Minnesota, University of Pennsylvania, University of Southern California, University of Utah, University of Wisconsin,** and **Vanderbilt University** shared information about the innovative work in which they had been engaged and exchanged ideas about “what works” in advancing this initiative at research institutions. The group quickly decided to establish a learning community that would involve other research universities engaged in these efforts and that, collectively, could develop and promote engaged scholarship as a way to advance civic engagement across research institutions, and, ultimately, all of higher education.

The group agreed that one of the most important efforts they could undertake is outlining why research universities should consider incorporating engaged scholarship approaches in their repertoires as core to their research and teaching. The group also agreed that placing engaged scholarship at the center of their institutions would position research universities as visible leaders in the national movement to transform higher education institutions to reflect the civic mission on which they were founded. “Civic engagement,” a leader at a larger urban research university declared, “is a core function of the research university—and always has been. We would do a better job of fulfilling this mission if we started stating it more often and, more importantly, took the lead in making it happen.”

Engaged Scholarship: A Powerful Force for Civic Engagement

Engaged scholarship is predicated on the idea that major advances in knowledge tend to occur when human beings consciously work to solve the central problems confronting their society. Espoused by Dewey (1927), this idea resonated with William

Rainey Harper (1905) and many others who viewed universities, especially research universities, as one of the nation's most important sources for generating and advancing knowledge focused on sustaining a healthy democratic society. Ernest Boyer, former president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, became recognized for his efforts to advance this vision of what he called "New American College"—one that incorporated service and scholarship to become a "more vigorous partner in the search for answers to our most pressing social, civic, economic, and moral problems" (Boyer, 1996, p. 11)

To meet this goal, Boyer (1990; 1996; Ramaley, 2004; Schon, 1995) suggested a new type of scholarship was needed—one that melds:

- The scholarship of **discovery**, which contributes to the search for new knowledge, the pursuit of inquiry, and the intellectual climate of colleges and universities.
- The scholarship of **integration**, which makes connections across disciplines, places specialized knowledge in larger contexts such as communities, and advances knowledge through synthesis.
- The scholarship of **application** through which scholars ask how knowledge can be applied to public problems and issues, address individual and societal needs, and use societal realities to test, inspire, and challenge theory.
- The scholarship of **teaching**, which includes not only transmitting knowledge, but also transforming and extending it beyond the university walls.

The "Boyer Model of Scholarship" outlined above connects all of these dimensions of scholarship to the understanding and solving of pressing social, civic, and ethical problems. Similarly, the National Review Board for the Scholarship of Engagement defines engaged scholarship as "faculty engaged in academically relevant work that simultaneously fulfills the campus mission and goals, as well as community needs....[It] is a scholarly agenda that incorporates community issues that can be within or integrative across teaching, research and service" (Sandmann, 2003, p. 4). According to Holland (2005b, p. 3), engaged scholarship is collaborative and participatory and "draws on many sources of distributed knowledge across and beyond the university." Among those sources are community-based organizations and individuals in communities where institutions are located. These and other constituencies,

which work in partnership with engaged scholars and research universities, offer knowledge or expertise necessary to explore a particular research question. As a result, engaged scholarship is “shaped by multiple perspectives and deals with difficult, evolving questions that require long-term effort during which results may become known over time as particular pieces of the puzzle are solved” (*Holland, 2005b, p. 3*).

Engaged Scholarship:

- Is collaborative and participatory
- Draws on many sources of distributed knowledge
- Is based on partnerships
- Is shaped by multiple perspectives and expectations
- Deals with difficult and evolving questions—complex issues that may shift constantly
- Is long term, in both effort and impact, often with episodic bursts of progress
- Requires diverse strategies and approaches
- Crosses disciplinary lines—a challenge for institutions organized around disciplines

(*Holland, 2005A, p.7*)

Engaged Scholarship Works on Several Levels

At the institutional level, engaged scholarship connects the intellectual assets of higher education institutions, including faculty expertise and high quality graduate and undergraduate students, to public issues such as community, social, cultural, and economic development. “Through engaged forms of teaching and research, faculty apply their academic expertise to public purposes as a way of contributing to the fulfillment of the core [civic] mission of the institution” (*Holland, 2005a, p. 7*). Engaged scholarship is also “conducted in collaboration with, rather than for or on, a community” (*CSHE, 2006, p. 8*), creating a reciprocal and “interactive relationship between the academy and the community” (*CSHE, 2006, p. 8*)—collaborations that benefit a wide variety of academic fields and the larger community and public good. Engaged scholarship’s interdisciplinary approach—one in which students, faculty, and administrators work across disciplines, to address increasingly complex public problems and issues—also helps to create better institutional alignment and reduce the

departmental and disciplinary silos, fragmentation and isolation that sometimes characterize research universities (*Harkavy, 2005, p. 4*).

- The Jonathan M. Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service (Tisch College) at **Tufts University** plays a uniquely comprehensive role by engaging faculty and students in civically engaged scholarship. Established as a school on a par with all the other Tufts' schools, Tisch College is leading the development of civic engagement research capacity within and among Tufts' schools by forging links across disciplines on pressing public problems and building partnerships between the university and its communities—efforts that have resulted in reciprocal relationships with a diverse group of partners and maximized the impact on the public good. Tisch College does not admit or grant degrees to students; instead, through leadership and collaboration with other schools it is working with faculty to infuse civic engagement into the research and curriculum of every student, regardless of major, degree, or profession.
- The Engaged University Initiative (EUI) at the **University of Maryland** identifies opportunities for the university and its surrounding communities to engage in reciprocal and mutually beneficial learning, research, and social action. The goal is to enhance the quality of intellectual, social, cultural, and economic life in Prince George's County, as well as on campus. The activities of the EUI focus on needs identified through three years of community-based research and action that found the most pressing need to be improving the quality of public school education. The framework for EUI activities is the university-assisted community school, which combine rigorous academics and a wide range of vital in-house services and opportunities to promote children's learning and the wellbeing of their families.
- Through its Neighborhood Participation Project (NPP), the **University of Southern California's** School of Policy, Planning, and Development collaborated with city officials and community leaders to study a system of neighborhood councils established

by a new city charter. As part of this project, teams of faculty members, doctoral students, and others worked with the City of Los Angeles to bring together representatives of groups of neighborhood councils with representatives of city departments to engage in deliberative processes that would help lead to future collaboration. University researchers documented these processes and distributed them to participants after the meetings to develop written agreements between the two constituencies that stipulate how each would work with the other to make decisions about the delivery of public services. Techniques developed through this engaged research will be applied to future efforts to encourage collaboration among immigrants, neighborhood councils and city agencies. The NPP has also recently been subsumed under a larger project, the Civic Engagement Initiative, which will expand its work beyond neighborhood councils and beyond Los Angeles.

- The Edward Ginsberg Center for Community Service and Learning at the **University of Michigan** aims to engage students, faculty, and community partners in learning together through community service and civic participation in a diverse democratic society. The Center has three “connecting” programs that create and strengthen initiatives with community members, faculty, or students. Four in-house programs offer several thousand students opportunities for community service and civic engagement each year. The Center also nurtures programs during start-up or restructuring at critical points to strengthen and reinforce programs for civic engagement and service across the campus. “Nurtured” programs move in and out of the Center over time.
- Taking a place-based, culture-change oriented approach, in 1995 faculty and staff from the **University of Minnesota’s** Center for Democracy and Citizenship and the College of Liberal Arts joined with faculty from the College of St. Catherine to hold a series of conversations with new immigrant leaders on the West Side of St. Paul about what they might do together in the community. These led to the creation of Jane Addams

School for Democracy, a national model for creating a culture of collaborative learning, public work, and knowledge generation with immigrants. Now ten years old, the Jane Addams School has involved more than 200 faculty and staff and more than 1000 students from eight Twin Cities colleges and the university in learning and public work projects that have catalyzed curricular and pedagogical innovations, policy changes on immigration issues and education, and new scholarship on themes ranging from second language acquisition to the meaning of citizenship.

At the faculty level, engaged scholarship is a vehicle through which faculty can participate in “academically relevant work that simultaneously fulfills the campus mission and goals, as well as community needs” (*Sandmann, 2003, p. 4*). To engaged faculty, scholarship is not defined as the scholarship of engagement—but in engagement, making it a scholarly agenda that incorporates community issues that can be within or integrative across teaching, service, and research (*Sandmann, 2003, pp 3-4*). Faculty, for example, can employ a host of engaged teaching approaches that dovetail with research, allowing them “to see how their work matters in important ways to the lives of students and the society around them” (*Applegate, 2002, p. 10*). As a result, “the ‘hollowed collegiality’ that characterizes much of the American academic setting no longer remains an option” because faculty are addressing difficult issues by working more collaboratively in interdisciplinary research teams.” Faculty also are better able to see the impact of their work; as a result, their “energy, their excitement, and their commitment to the work skyrocket.” Even conflict can be a form of engagement because “that conflict is always discussed within the larger context of the outcomes of the work and not in the narrow context of department, university, and disciplinary politics” (*Applegate, 2002, p. 10*).

Faculty are also increasingly interested in the area of civic engagement itself as a particularly promising area for developing engaged scholarship efforts such as research about the various forms of civic engagement, how people develop civic values and skills, the challenges and value of research produced in collaboration with communities, and how public problems and public decision-making occur.

- Under the direction of the Lowell Bennion Center at the **University of Utah**, study-action groups of

faculty have been appointed to coordinate colloquia on the importance of civically-engaged scholarship. Among these have been several presentations targeted to administrators and other key decision-making bodies such as the Council of Academic Deans and Department Chair Consortia. The Center also provides a \$10,000 grant—funds that are provided by the Academic Vice President—to a Public Service Professor to conduct a special civically engaged scholarship project.

- Through **Vanderbilt University's** special seminar series, stipends are provided for faculty members and graduate students to learn about and implement service-learning courses, including engaged scholarship methodologies, with students. Courses also include instruction in building successful community partnerships, creating curricula, and designing syllabi with a civic engagement and engaged scholarship focus. This effort was so successful, it garnered considerable internal and external funding from sources such as HUD, FIPSE, and other government and foundation entities.
- The **University of Michigan's** Edward Ginsberg Center for Community Service and Learning works with faculty across the university to reform curricula, revise courses, and create new programs that will incorporate community service and civic engagement. The Center also offers grants to faculty to help in making innovations in teaching and research to strengthen community service and civic engagement. To assist faculty in these efforts, the Center publishes the Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning as well as monographs and workbooks. The annual Dewey Lecture features an engaged scholar of national prominence who shares research with scholars on campus and offers ideas about the value of engagement in enhancing scholarship.

At the student level, engaged scholarship can enhance academic learning and knowledge generation because of its ability to blend research, teaching, and service. As a result, engaged scholarship approaches can serve as richer and more rewarding learning experiences for both undergraduate and graduate students who

“learn by doing,” are given opportunities to reflect on those experiences, and, ultimately, put them in their broader social, political, economic, and/or historical contexts. Through service-learning programs and courses that incorporate engaged research projects, students are also given the chance to experience the world outside the university walls with all its complexity, diversity, and challenges and learn how to build healthy collaborative relationships with a wide range of partners.

- Through the **University of Massachusetts Amherst’s** “Citizen Scholars Program,” students participate in a two-year honors curriculum that combines service-learning programs in local communities and research projects that work with community partners to address pressing issues or problems in those areas. Supported in part by the Corporation for National and Community Service, the program was also selected by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as a model for promoting political engagement among undergraduate students.

“The University of Utah encourages social responsibility by emphasizing that academic pursuits do not exist in a vacuum—the intellect is best put to use when students and faculty find ways to apply knowledge, innovation, and imagination beyond the confines of campus to solve real problems.”

-Michael Young, President,
University of Utah

- Duke University** has created a three-stage undergraduate research program called Research Service Learning (RSL), a series of research courses that teaches research methods by involving students in increasingly complex research collaborations with community partners. The program culminates with a full research study that meets both research standards of quality and the community partner’s research needs. The program is currently available in five different subject areas, with more planned.

- At the graduate level, **Stanford University's** School of Medicine encourages medical students to acquire the knowledge and skills they will need to address the health challenges of diverse populations in underserved communities by offering a "Scholarly Concentration in Community Health and Public Service (CHPS)," which requires service-learning, rigorous community-responsive scholarship, and civic engagement. CHPS students plan and implement rigorous community health interventions and scholarly research with community partners in California, across the United States, and overseas. All projects must be designed to have a specific and measurable impact on community health policy and/or practice, meet rigorous methodological standards, and advance knowledge.

It is important to underscore that engaged scholarship does not replace basic, traditional research; rather, it enhances and complements it by offering a more nuanced and interactive blend of "discovery, teaching, and engagement" (Boyer, 1990; Holland, 2005b, p. 1). This blended model of engaged scholarship is reflected in *Pasteur's Quadrant*, a landmark book by Stokes (1999), who argues that new times demand new forms of scholarship, particularly those that transcend the traditional dichotomy of "basic" or "applied" and, instead, emphasize "user-inspired basic research" or work that is focused on finding solutions to improve the lives of people and communities in which institutions are located—a perspective that is at the heart of engaged scholarship.

Stokes and others argue that such approaches are needed if research universities are to become full participants in a highly complex society—one in which universities will be only one part of a "network of learning...a fluid and changing network of different sources of expertise" (Holland, 2005, p. 6). Gibbons, et. al., (1994) note that engaged scholarship will not replace traditional research but, rather, will become "increasingly important" because it provides a "more flexible approach to intellectual inquiry driven by the rapid diffusion of knowledge facilitated by the spread of information technology as a vehicle for knowledge exchange and a platform that supports new forms of collaboration" (Holland 2005b, p. 2). By adopting such engaged scholarship approaches—those that see teaching, learning, and engagement as integrated activities and involve many sources of knowledge that are generated in diverse settings by a variety of contributors—research universities can lead

the way in setting the bar for a standard of “new scholarship” and in turn, bolster the important role higher education overall can and should play in responding to the changing nature of global society and its knowledge needs.

Engaged scholarship does not imply that scholars leave their rigorous academic principles at the door. In fact, the same principles and standards of academic rigor that are applied to traditional research should—and must—be applied to engaged scholarship. “Engaged research is very concerned with validity and research rigor. The key is whether the research question itself is valid and reflects the real concerns of the community,” Minkler notes (2005, p. 12). In short, engaged scholarship is not concerned with results that benefit communities instead of academic rigor; rather, it is concerned with beneficial results in addition to academic rigor.

Concerted action by research universities to elevate engaged scholarship can yield multiple benefits—to society and also to institutions of higher education. These reasons are discussed in the next full section of this report, starting on page 16. At the same time, it is imperative that research universities deal more strategically with several barriers to engaged scholarship and work together to overcome these obstacles.

“In a way I have come to find quite inspiring, Duke has taught me to think of the University as a problem-solving place, a place where intellectual inquiry can be mounted with subtlety and power without shutting itself into an isolated space of abstract expertise; a place where intelligence is energized by the challenges of real-world problems and exercises its powers in devising their solutions.

—Richard H. Brodhead,
President,
Duke University,
September 29, 2005

Barriers to Engaged Scholarship

While scholar-practitioner leaders from research universities who attended the Tufts/Campus Compact meeting believe that engaged scholarship can be a powerful catalyst for broader civic engagement across institutions, they acknowledged a reluctance among some administrators and faculty of these institutions to

incorporate, support, and reward these approaches. That is because it is “difficult for research institutions to embrace anything that sounds overtly political or partisan, which the terms civic engagement and engaged scholarship sometimes convey,” said one scholar. The group agreed, however, that at the very least research universities could and should be developing research practices—“something we do well already”—that help institutions become more aligned with their civic missions.

Other barriers to engaged scholarship the group identified were:

A focus on individual disciplines rather than on public problems or issues. Research universities have a long tradition of supporting and investing in objective inquiry whose primary purpose is to add to the knowledge base of a field or discipline. As Holland (2005b, p. 2) writes: “Historically, research universities have emphasized scholarship that is “pure, disciplinary, expert-led, hierarchical, peer-reviewed, and university or ‘lab’-based”—a direct contrast to engaged approaches that are applied, problem-centered, interdisciplinary, demand-driven, network-embedded, and not necessarily led by universities. Unlike traditional scholars, who tend to view problems through the lenses of specific disciplines (i.e., the economist may see the causes of poverty differently from the way the sociologist sees them), engaged scholars see the problem itself as the primary research focus rather than as a foil for advancing or increasing knowledge about a particular field’s perception of it.

An emphasis on abstract theory rather than actionable theory derived from and useful for “real-world” practice. Another challenge for engaged scholars, writes Harkavy (2004), is research institutions’ adherence to a Platonic notion of scholarship and education—one that assumes pure abstract theory as superior to actionable theory derived from engagement in “real-world” practice. This view contrasts with Dewey’s notion of education as participatory, action-oriented, and focused on “learning by doing”—a focus that engaged scholars and teachers tend to embrace. *The challenge for research universities*, some believe, is to find ways to meld and/or incorporate both approaches into practice; instead, the “dead hand” of Plato (Harkavy, 2004; Hartley, et. al., 2005) has continued to dominate and shape American research universities, which, in turn, has influenced the research and scholarship efforts of higher education overall.

Lack of understanding about what engaged scholarship is and how it works. The factors noted above have led many at research universities to view engaged scholarship as somewhat suspect and less valid than traditional research. This may be due to an uncertainty about what engaged scholarship is and how to assess it (*Finkelstein, 2001*). Because engaged work is largely interdisciplinary and involves partnerships with community-based organizations, the links to academic expertise are not always evident. In addition, these kinds of efforts do not necessarily lend themselves to traditional measures of quality and productivity that stem largely from federal funding and publication in mainstream disciplinary journals.

Few incentives exist to reward engaged scholarship. Many believe that traditional disciplinary-focused research approaches endure primarily because of a strong set of incentives that reward them, including expectations with respect to National Research Council rankings and publication in academic journals. There is also a tendency among those who make tenure or promotion decisions to value individual, rather than collaborative, achievement. Young scholars beginning their careers in research institutions, for example, are often advised to focus their energies on conducting and publishing articles that will help position them as leaders in particular fields or disciplines, rather than in solving complex social problems because the former is often their only route to promotion or tenure. Powerful financial incentives also make it more difficult to loosen the hold traditional research approaches have on research universities. Immediately after World War II, research universities, for example, began to receive a considerable portion of their grant funds for research in science, technology, and engineering largely for military purposes. These government research and development contracts dwarfed those of the largest industrial contractors (*Harkavy, 2004, p. 11*). As a result, they began aligning their research activities and structures to ensure an ongoing flow of research dollars and became less focused on the results of that research for improving other aspects of society.

Institutions are organized in ways that prohibit engaged scholarship. A predominantly disciplinary focus has led to institutions being structured in ways that inhibit engaged scholarship and teaching—structures that have existed, in some cases, for more than a hundred years and that comprise myriad “cultures” of departments, centers, institutes, and classes. Within these structures, academic fields are emphasized, faculty work in silos, students are encouraged to “declare their emphasis,”

and classroom instruction predominates over community-based learning. These structures, in turn, limit the ability of scholars, practitioners, students, and administrators to work across the disciplines—a fundamental component of engaged scholarship approaches. As Harkavy notes, “Communities have problems; universities have departments” (*CERI, 1982, p. 127*).

Research universities are often cut off from the communities in which they are located. The tendency to compartmentalize or distinguish external organizations and relationships as separate from the institution is another barrier engaged scholars in research institutions face. Research universities are sometimes viewed as distinctly separate from the communities in which they are located and, in some cases, where poverty and other social problems are rampant. While engaged scholars see such issues as opportunities to work with community residents and organizations to design studies that find solutions to these problems, they can face challenges from institutions who view “external” organizations or non-academics as inappropriate to include as part of scholarly research efforts.

“Our neighborhood effort is not a matter of noblesse oblige. Rather, it is an approach that acknowledges that all of us live here together as neighbors. The university has resources that can help the neighborhood. And our neighbors have resources that can help both the neighborhood and our campus community. It is not what USC is doing for our community; it’s what USC is accomplishing with our community through partnerships that counts.”

-Steven B. Sample, President,

University of Southern California, December 2005

Why Engaged Scholarship is Important for Research Universities

A growing and influential cadre of scholars and practitioners from research universities, including those who participated in the Tufts/Campus Compact meeting in October 2005, agree that there are numerous reasons that research universities should incorporate an ethos of engaged scholarship in their curricula, policies,

and programs. Among these are: a growing commitment to reclaiming the historic civic mission of institutions of higher education; increasing evidence that engaged scholarship can elevate the quality of research on a broad range of topics; and new requirements for funding and accreditation.

Research universities were founded and established with a civic mission. In 1749, Benjamin Franklin wrote that the “ability to serve” should be the rationale for all schooling and for the secular college he founded (Penn)—a mission to which other colonial colleges, including Harvard, William and Mary, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Brown, Rutgers, and Dartmouth adhered, based on their desire to educate men “capable of creating good communities built on religious denominational principles” (*Harkavy, 2004, p. 6*). Land-grant universities, established through the Morrill Act in 1862, also stipulated “service to society” as their primary mission, as did urban research universities that were founded in the late nineteenth century. Today, research universities continue to pay homage to their civic mission in their rhetoric and published materials. Astin (1997, cited in *Harkavy, 2004, p. 8*), found that random samples of the mission statements of higher education institutions, including research universities, tend to focus more on “preparing students for responsible citizenship,” “developing character,” “developing future leaders,” and “preparing students to serve society,” rather than on private economic benefits, international competitiveness, or preparing people for the labor market.

Interdisciplinary, collaborative, and community-based scholarship increasingly is becoming a requirement for consideration for funding, accreditation, and categorization. Growing numbers of major federal funding agencies are incorporating criteria for research proposals that include collaborative approaches and stipulate the public impact or future application of the study. The U.S. National Institutes of Health has begun discussions about adding community members to peer review panels and about whether “clinical research needs to develop new partnerships among organized patient communities, community-based health care providers and academic researchers. In the past, all research for a clinical trial could be conducted in one academic center; that is unlikely to be true in the future” (*NIH, 2006*). The National Science Foundation also has adopted criteria for proposals to address aspects of collaborative methods and the public impact or potential application of research. Specifically, the foundation requires applicants to assess how their research will “address the broader social impacts of the proposed research on public understanding;

policy and/or practice; educational strategies; or broader participation in the research..." (NSF, 2006). (Ramaley, 2005, cited in Holland, 2005b, p. 4). Regional higher education accreditation organizations also have begun to introduce new accreditation standards related to engaged research and teaching. National educational associations such as the American Council on Education, the American Association of Secondary Colleges and Universities, and others have also advanced engaged scholarship approaches (Sandmann, 2003).

- The **University of California, Berkeley** has established the Berkeley Research Futures Program (BRFP), which provides up to \$50,000 in seed funding for faculty who are willing to serve as principal investigators for large interdisciplinary research grant applications. The BRFP was designed to maintain the university's competitiveness in research grant funding, based on a recognition that challenges in the natural sciences, engineering, social sciences, and the humanities now require interdisciplinary, rather than individual,

"Stanford students and faculty have long been dedicated to community service ... I believe we provide our graduates with both the skills and sense of social responsibility necessary to make significant contributions to our nation and the world in the coming decades."

-John Hennessy, President,
Stanford University, 2005

investigations. Through the BRFP grants process, there has been increased interaction among faculty, both within a given discipline and across disciplinary lines; the development of larger-scale studies that can attract attention from students, the public, community organizations, funders, and the media; the creation of a shared infrastructure that can be more cost-effective. Approximately five grants are awarded each semester for teaching relief, supplemental compensation to current staff employees, grant writing support, and outreach coordination.

- The Lincoln Filene Center for Community Partnerships at **Tufts University** builds the capacity of community residents and organizations to identify

research questions that address pressing community priorities. The Tufts Community Research Center matches faculty with community partners, helps these teams develop research proposals, and identifies likely funding sources. The center also trains faculty and community partners to collaborate throughout the research process. The Provost's Civic Engagement Scholars program pairs students with faculty mentors and provides funds for them to conduct engaged research over a summer. The Faculty Fellows program provides \$30,000 over two years to selected faculty across the university who conduct engaged scholarship and research efforts.

Students and other higher education stakeholders increasingly are asking for engaged scholarship curricula and opportunities. Increasingly, research universities that fail to incorporate civic engagement into their work “risk having younger people, who see this as a new pathway to achieving a learning society, go elsewhere” (*Minkler, 2005, p. 12*).

- According to the Washington Post (*Romano, 2006*), urban research universities such as the **University of Pennsylvania** that are investing heavily in adjacent neighborhoods and making connections with local civic life are becoming some of the “hottest” schools in the country. These institutions have seen their applications rise (14 percent since 2002) as the “children of baby boomers drift away from bucolic academic settings toward action” (*Romano, 2006, p. A1*) that these institutions are providing through courses, programs, and initiatives focused on civic engagement.
- A survey conducted by the **University of Maryland** in Spring 2005 found that 90 percent of respondents believed it to be “very important” for the university to “provide students with opportunities for civic engagement,” but fewer than 34 percent believe that the “university adequately prepares students to be civically engaged.” In response, the Provost and Vice President for Student Affairs created the Coalition for Civic Engagement and Leadership—a campus-wide group that works to increase and enhance opportunities for students to learn about and practice civically-engaged leadership.

- At the **University of Southern California (USC)**, administrators cite its efforts to engage with the larger Los Angeles community as the reason it was named the Times-Princeton Review College of the Year in 2000. Today, more than half of USC's undergraduates volunteer in the community, enrollment is soaring, and the quality of the applicant pool has improved significantly ... because "USC markets itself as a school at which students can live and learn how to create positive impact on the urban environment" (*USC, 2001, p. 3*).
- During 2004 to 2005, the **University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)** received more applicants for admission than any other university in the country—45,000 for approximately 3,800 slots—an upward trend that coincided with the creation of the university's civic engagement initiative.

Demographic, cultural, economic, and knowledge shifts in American society, as well as globally, are demanding new approaches to research and problem-solving. Rapid and complex developments in technology, science, business, and other domains, both in the United States and globally, have led to a need for research and data that is able to incorporate the contributions of many disciplines, addresses public problems, and is sensitive to increasingly diverse populations and communities. Technology "has made knowledge, data, expertise, and information so widely available that much research now can draw upon dynamic, interactive networks across different organizations, sectors, individuals, and even nations to address problems that were until now unsearchable" (*Holland, 2005b, p. 3*).

Engaged scholarship aligns traditional research methods with teaching to enhance student learning. Some research institutions are offering a combination of community-based research and service learning courses that, together, provide extraordinary opportunities for students to obtain more meaningful experience with the inquiry process and to marry theory and practice. Through community-based research courses students gain understanding and expertise on social issues by engaging in cross-disciplinary inquiry and action, accessing community situations, asking significant questions, collecting data and information, analyzing the data using appropriate disciplinary methods, and drawing conclusions that are

transformed into strategic action steps. Often, these efforts build on students' participation in high-quality service-learning courses through which students work in partnership with diverse groups of people in communities to address issues or problems identified by those communities as important. As a Center for the Study of Higher Education report on a symposium for the University of California system noted: "Providing students with environments in which theory meets practice can promote greater cognitive complexity, make learning more relevant to today's social issues, and foster the civic skills and inclinations necessary for society's future leaders" (*CSHE, 2006, p. 3*). Research, for example, suggests that the service-learning process promotes reflective thought through which students engage in higher order thinking skills, problem solving, analysis of complex issues, and evaluation (*Eyler and Giles, 1999*).

- The Public Service Scholars Program at **Stanford University's** Haas Center for Public Service serves as a capstone experience for seniors, drawing together academic and public service interests from their undergraduate career. The year-long program supports students in writing honors theses that meet both high standards of academic rigor and also making the results of their research useful to a specific community or organization, or available for the public interest. Students participate in the Public Service Scholars Program concurrent with their departmental honors program. Through seminars, mentors, retreats, and presentations to peers and the public, students explore the public implications of their research interests. In addition, the program functions as a service-learning course, where students are asked to think critically about the nature of and obstacles to "engaged scholarship" in a university, while simultaneously participating in efforts to produce such scholarship through their honors projects.
- The Morgridge Center for Public Service (MCPS) at the **University of Wisconsin-Madison** provides a combination of opportunities for students and faculty to become engaged scholars, among them, peer learning and training, community-based research grants, assistance in designing service-learning and community-based courses and programs, and

service-learning fellowships. MCPS also helps create sustainable partnerships with community organizations, citizen groups, and local coalitions to meet identified community needs.

- The **University of Utah's** Lowell Bennion Center has created a "Teaching Associates" program that

"Many of the faculty we are recruiting want to come to Tufts because of our focus on both civic engagement and academic excellence. We don't substitute one for the other. Indeed, we are committed to demonstrating that civic engagement can be a route to high-quality research and vice versa."

-Jamshed Bharucha, Provost,
Tufts University,
Opening Remarks to the
Tufts/Campus Compact
meeting on research
universities and civic
engagement,
October 24, 2005

allows students to create and deliver an introductory service-learning course under the guidance of a faculty member. In addition to providing students with the chance to gain first-hand experience with the teaching and learning process, the program provides academic credit and stipends for participating students. The Center also encourages students to conduct community-based research as a form of engaged scholarship. Under the guidance of a faculty member and in partnership with a representative of a community agency, students design and implement research projects that address critical needs in communities and create new knowledge. Students' findings are presented in a published report.

Research universities provide the bulk of graduate education and, thus, can serve as a major pipeline for tomorrow's faculty and administrators skilled in engaged scholarship approaches. Research universities educate the bulk of graduate students who, if exposed to methods of engaged scholarship, can promulgate these approaches as faculty members, thereby serving as powerful information and practice disseminators. An increasingly prevalent motivator for undergraduates to pursue

graduate studies is the engaged educational experiences many are now having and want to continue, but they are not finding them at research institutions because of the latter's tendency to focus on disciplinary-oriented coursework and dissertation research. This drains the excitement and meaning from students' studies, and they lose the passion that led them to seek a higher degree or to continue to pursue a civic-oriented career path. As a result, graduate education associations are now encouraging graduate educators to consider civic or engaged scholarship frameworks in their decisions about admissions, curricula and graduation requirements. In *Recommendations from National Studies on Doctoral Education* (Nyquist and Wulff, 2000, cited in Bloomfield, 2005), a major recommendation was for graduate schools to "produce scholar-citizens who see their special training connected more closely to the needs of society and the global economy." The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation Responsive Ph.D. Initiative (2004, cited in Bloomfield, 2005) also urges that "... the goal of the doctorate [be] redefined as scholarly citizenship..."

Engaged scholarship helps research universities align their focus on high-quality research with the civic missions on which they were founded. Research universities can be specialized, fragmented, and unintegrated institutions, which mitigates their potential to align themselves more effectively with their civic missions. Working with communities to help solve universal problems which are manifested locally—such as substandard schools, lack of affordable housing, poverty, crime, access to health care, and others—allows research universities unprecedented opportunities to create the kind of institutional alignment that is needed to fulfill their civic missions. The resources and expertise of virtually every university unit are needed to identify and implement more effective solutions to these problems (Harkavy, 2006). Other types of higher education institutions that have adopted engaged scholarship approaches, have found that doing so helped them to clarify their scholarly agenda and enhance their quality and performance in both teaching and research. In turn, they have improved their performance as measured by student learning, retention, research productivity, and increased financial and political support from community leaders and funders (Holland, 2005b).

- Established in 2002, the "UCLA in L.A." program at the **University of California-Los Angeles**, is a chancellor's initiative that uses the scholarship of engagement to more intentionally and meaningfully connect university interests to community interests

in the greater Los Angeles area. Overseen by the Center for Community Partnerships, the initiative has several programs. It provides partnership support to faculty members or professional staff (up to \$75,000) and nonprofit organizations (up to \$50,000) in the surrounding Los Angeles area so they can work together to address issues in three areas: children, youth, and families; arts and culture; and economic development. Projects, for example, have produced art installations in Chinatown that examine the impact of culture on economic development; nanotechnology kits to improve math and science pedagogy in secondary education; and medicinal gardens in East L.A. to study the relationship between health outcomes and cultural practices. The Center also convenes community knowledge forums featuring the work of supported partnerships; has an undergraduate internship program; awards an annual prize recognizing outstanding community-campus partnership projects; facilitates faculty and community relationships; and works with administrators to develop standards for evaluating engaged scholarship.

Engaged scholarship can enhance the credibility, usefulness, and role of universities as important institutions in civic life. A focus on civic engagement through service-learning, community-based research, or engaged scholarship can help burnish the image of research universities, including state universities that, in recent years, have suffered from decreases in public funding and questions about their role in society. Similarly, research universities have been charged with being “out of touch” with or isolated from the “real world.” These perceptions persist, even in the face of efforts by several research universities to tackle difficult public problems through engaged scholarship and service-learning initiatives, underscoring the need for leaders of research institutions to step forward and speak publicly about these efforts and the larger civic engagement context in which they operate (*Gilliam, 2005; Holland, 2005a*). By speaking publicly about engaged scholarship—and encouraging other institutions to implement similar approaches to research—research universities not only help to promote these models but also send a message to the public that they are responsive to community needs and committed to contributing more meaningfully and directly to public problems and issues at the local, national, and international levels.

- Citing Minnesota's changing demographics and the increasing needs of its children, youth and families, the **University of Minnesota** has launched the President's Initiative on Children, Youth and Families that includes a series of "Children's Summits." Through these summits, university and community leaders from all parts of the state work together to research and document the most effective strategies for helping children move through the developmental stages needed to start strong and stay strong as they transition from birth to adulthood. The integral role of neighborhoods and communities that support and sustain children, youth and families also is recognized throughout the series.
- Through the **University of Pennsylvania's** Center for Community Partnerships, the university has helped to create a set of community schools that function as centers of education, services, engagement, and activity for students, their parents, and other community members within a specified geographic area. With its community and school collaborators, the center has developed significant K-16 service-learning programs that engage students at all levels in work designed to advance civic skills and abilities through service to and advocacy on behalf of their schools, families, and communities. Through the program, Penn students and faculty and public school teachers and students are engaged in service-learning that requires the development and application of knowledge to solve problems, as well as reflection on the experience and its effects, civic education, and advocacy/community change. Launched in 1985, this program now involves more than 5,000 children and youth, parents, and community leaders each year at its six most intensive sites in West Philadelphia. Additional schoolday, after-school, and family and community programs reach several thousand more individuals annually.

What Individual Research Universities Can Do To Advance Civic Engagement at Their Institutions

- Engage the university's governing body in an appraisal of the institution's role and effectiveness in delivering on the civic mission of higher education.
- Appoint dedicated senior academic leadership (e.g., an Associate Provost or School Dean) to promote engaged scholarship that addresses pressing public problems. Provide that leadership with the platform and infrastructure to have a meaningful impact on the entire university.
- Ensure that engaged scholarship is valued in tenure and promotion decisions, grant awards, and public recognition, regardless of discipline.
- Create opportunities to meld engaged scholarship teaching and curricula, including service-learning courses, community-based research, and other civic engagement programs that offer students the chance to learn about this kind of research through direct interaction and partnership with communities working to address public problems.
- Educate graduate students, who will be the future faculty of other higher education institutions, in engaged scholarship approaches so that the latter can become standard practice across higher education.
- Develop university-community partnerships that are of mutual benefit to the university and its local community, as well as to communities throughout the world. Provide sustainable funding streams for engaged scholarship efforts through centrally-funded small grant programs, endowed centers for engaged scholarship and teaching, and/or interdisciplinary centers focused on addressing public problems.
- Offer graduate degree or certificate programs in civic engagement that can be open to community scholars.

What Leaders at Research Universities Can Do To Advance Civic Engagement Across Higher Education

- Develop research projects based on engaged placed on education research associations such scholarship approaches and publish the results of as the Association for the Study of Higher the research in peer-reviewed journals and other Education and the American Educational venues that reach a wider audience.
- Develop and agree on a set of standards for what constitutes high-quality “engaged scholarship”—and then work collaboratively to ensure that these are used by institutions as the basis for tenure and promotion decisions and grant awards.
- Create journals devoted to publishing the highest quality engaged scholarship research, including peer-reviewed journals devoted to research about and with the communities in which research universities are located. The latter would welcome interdisciplinary work, be available on-line, and provide opportunities for organizations outside the university to comment on research findings.
- Establish national and/or regional institutes for faculty interested in civic engagement that provide training in engaged scholarship, teaching, and curricular development, as well as information about finding streams and partnership opportunities.

“No one mistakes Penn for an ivory tower. And no one ever will. Through our collaborative engagement with communities all over the world, Penn is poised to advance the central values of democracy: life, liberty, opportunity, and mutual respect.”

-Amy Guttman, President,
University of Pennsylvania,
Inaugural Address,
October 15, 2004

- Meet with and encourage disciplinary and broad-based higher education associations to promote, advance, and integrate engaged scholarship into their standards, mission statements, and goals for their constituencies. Special emphasis should be placed on education research associations such as the Association for the Study of Higher Education and the American Educational Research Association.
- Convene scholar-practitioners who are recognized as leaders in this work to engaged in continued discussions about how research universities can fulfill their civic missions, especially how these institutions can be transformed to meet the challenges of the future. Develop ways to integrate this work with that of other leaders in the higher education civic engagement movement.
- Design panels, workshops, and other forums for a multidisciplinary audience that focus on engaged scholarship approaches, especially discussions about the purpose of research universities and how the latter can and should be transformed to meet the challenged of the future, particularly those that will require more cross-disciplinary approaches to research and teaching.
- Create a national clearinghouse or database that includes data and information relevant to civic engagement work in urban environments and to which universities have access.

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