# *Current Practice and Infrastructures for Campus Centers of Community Engagement*

## Marshall Welch and John Saltmarsh

## Abstract

This article provides an overview of current practice and essential infrastructure of campus community engagement centers in their efforts to establish and advance community engagement as part of the college experience. The authors identified key characteristics and the prevalence of activities of community engagement centers at engaged campuses by reviewing the professional literature and analyzing over 100 successful applications for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching elective Community Engagement Classification. These data can be used as a baseline for centers and institutions of higher education to assess their current structures and programs and to assist in strategic planning for the future.

## Introduction

*T*he civic mission of higher education has a long history *(Harkavy, 2004)*. That mission has included an emphasis on cocurricular volunteering as one way to promote students' civic role. This emphasis began in the 1980s, and shifted in the 1990s to an academic focus through service-learning *(Jacoby, 2009; Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999)*. As a result, the field of service-learning has existed for nearly a generation, during which it has experienced significant growth and evolution. A variety of initiatives, reports, and practices have helped shape the field and the administrative centers that advance and coordinate this form of experiential education. Early on, campuses created centers to coordinate programming, although such centers often were organized as ad hoc offices within student affairs. Many of these offices had to "make it up as they went" due to the limited empirical best practice and evidence on impact available in an emerging field. Later, through the 1990s, many campuses created centers or offices associated with academic affairs to link community-based teaching, learning, and research to core faculty work. Substantial infrastructure in the form of a community engagement unit (office, center, division) is a key organizational feature of a highly engaged campus *(Etienne, 2012; Hollander, Saltmarsh, & Zlotkowski, 2002; Walshok, 1999; Zlotkowski, 1998)*.

The early professional literature in this burgeoning field gradually suggested practices and structures to support this work. Over 20 years ago, the National Society for Internships and Experiential Education *(Kendall, 1990)* published a two-volume resource book that included examples and recommendations for establishing campus community engagement centers. Bucco and Busch *(1996)* were also among the first scholars to recommend specific programmatic frameworks designed to create service-learning programs on college campuses. About that same time, Hatcher and Bringle *(1996)* also enumerated specific infrastructure for service-learning centers. Soon, a small collection of innovative programs coordinated by dedicated offices specifically designed to promote service-learning emerged on college campuses. Zlotkowski *(1998)* provided a collection of program descriptions that included an appendix containing actual organizational flowcharts, administrative forms, syllabi, and policy documents that could be easily adopted by other institutions. Over time, other scholars have contributed to this literature in various publications and reports.

Since these early days, there has been an expansive shift to include and incorporate a broader umbrella of community or civic engagement under which cocurricular volunteer programs and service-learning fall. The Carnegie Foundation defined community engagement as "the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity" (Carnegie Foundation, 2012). We acknowledge that the term "civic engagement" is often synonymously incorporated in the literature and conversation. Saltmarsh, Hartley, and Clayton *(2009)* noted in their white paper that civic engagement is a commonly used term that is loosely defined and serves as an "umbrella term" *(p. 5)* characterized by activity and place: that is, it refers to a campus-based activity that relates to an off-campus issue, problem, or organization. We, however, have chosen to use "community engagement" in this discussion since this term is used by the Carnegie Foundation for the elective classification and is the basis of this study.

In 2006, the Corporation for National and Community Service inaugurated the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, which annually recognizes colleges and universities that promote civic engagement by involving students and faculty in solving community problems using meaningful, measureable outcomes in the communities they serve. Similarly, in 2006 the Carnegie Foundation established the elective classification

Community Engagement by creating and incorporating a set of benchmarks to assist in designating institutions for this classification. To apply for classification, campuses must provide evidence of campus practices, structures, and policies designed to deepen community engagement and make it more pervasive across the institution. To deepen community engagement across the campus, a growing number of institutions endeavor to expand and coordinate cocurricular service and curricular service-learning programs through a campus center in ways that promote broader civic community engagement.

More recently, the report by the National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement titled A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future *(2010)* proposed a comprehensive framework consisting of a knowledge base coupled with skill sets, values, and collective action designed to prepare college students to be engaged citizens in the 21st century. The report presented six best practices proven effective to promote civic learning, which includes service-learning and extracurricular activities. Thus, the expectation remains that institutions of higher education will infuse civic and community engagement throughout students' curricular and cocurricular experience. The question and challenge associated with this expectation is, how will this be organizationally facilitated and by whom?

An entire generation of students, faculty, staff, and community partners has thus created a new area of study, professional literature, and set of practices while shaping the design and architecture of community engagement structures on campus. Many campus centers originally designed to coordinate cocurricular volunteer service evolved into facilitating service-learning and are now expected to continue expanding in ways that also include new programming to promote community engagement. However, many institutions of higher education continue to encounter challenges within and outside the academy. Internally, centers may lack the infrastructure or resources necessary to maintain quality programs and partnerships. Defining features such as organizational structure, reporting lines, funding, student programming, faculty professional development, community partnership development, and policies and procedures are critical elements for a successful center.

Entering a second generation of development in the field provides a unique twofold opportunity to revisit the structures of campus community centers initially created and designed for cocurricular service and service-learning that are now expected

to promote community engagement.  First, there is the oppor-tunity for existing centers and programs to assess how well their currrent structure and programming aligns with recommended practice found in the literature.  Second, for institutions creating new centers, this retrospective review provides an empirically-based starting point by articulating essential, key components as identified and enumerated by experienced directors at established centers. This is timely, as institutions of higher education and the field as a whole may implicitly assume that campus centers origi-nally designed for cocurricular volunteering and later service-learning have the necessary structure and resources to also coor-dinate newer community engagement efforts. Therefore, this study was designed to answer the following questions:

- What are the defining features of the organizational structures created by campuses for the purpose of facilitating connections to communities at the local, regional, national, and global levels?

- To what extent are the activities undertaken through these institutional structures connected to institu-tional or community change initiatives?

This investigation was designed to provide an overview of critical components and essential infrastructure to guide campus administrators and center directors as they establish and continue to advance community engagement as part of the college experi-ence.  These data can then be used as a baseline for centers and institutions of higher education to assess their current structures and programs as well as assist in strategic planning for the future.

## A Review of Center Components and Infrastructure

A review of the literature was conducted to identify the com-ponents and infrastructure enumerated in the earlier phases of the field.  The review also analyzed over 100 successful applica-tions from the 2010 cycle for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching elective Community Engagement Classification *(Carnegie Foundation, 2012)*.  The review revealed a total of 66 key characteristics at community engagement centers on college campuses, as identified in Table 1.  Therefore the list is inclusive rather than incorporating any type of criteria to select specific features found in the literature. Those examples of prac-tice that were derived anecdotally from personal conversations are attributed to "other."  These characteristics were categorized into

six sections to assist in the organizational structure and format of a survey instrument: (a) institutional architecture/policy, (b) center infrastructure, (c) center operations, (d) center programs for faculty, (e) center programs for students, and (f) center programs for community partners. Institutional architecture/policy is described as systemic structures such as organizational flowcharts, strategic plans, policy and procedures manuals/handbooks, and governance. Conversely, center infrastructure consists of administration, personnel background/roles, physical space, and operational tools that support and maintain the center's existence and work. The center operations category includes day-to-day functions that maintain overall center programming that was then subcategorized into operations pertaining to specific stakeholders associated with the center, including faculty, students, and community partners. Survey items in these categories focused on specific operational activities.

**Table 1. Review of Practice and Structural Elements of Campus Centers**

| Practice | Source |
| --- | --- |
| **Institutional Architecture/Policy** | |
| Academic Affairs reporting line | Battistoni, 1998 |
| Budgeted institutional funds | Carnegie; Hollander, Saltmarsh, & Zlotkowski, 2002; Walshok, 1999 |
| Campuswide commitment to civic engagement | Carnegie |
| Central coordinating center/office | Carnegie; Bucco & Busch, 1996 |
| Civic engagement in institutional strategic plans | Carnegie |
| Course designation process | Carnegie |
| Institutional leadership promotes civic engagement as a priority | Carnegie |
| Official/operational definitions of service-learning, CBR, engagement | Carnegie |
| Transcript notation of engaged courses | Carnegie |
| **Center Infrastructure** | |
| Adequate office space | Walshok, 1999 |
| Advisory/governing board | Carnegie; Fisher, 1998 |
| Annual report | (Other) |
| Center vision/mission statement | Fisher, 1998; Furco, 2002; Hollander et al., 2002 |
| Center alumni association | (Other) |
| Center director background (faculty, Student Affairs, Community) | (Other) |
| Center director credential/degree (terminal degree, graduate degree) | (Other) |
| Clear internal/external access entry points to the Center | Pigza & Troppe, 2003 |

**Table 1. cont...**

| | |
|---|---|
| Community representative to advisory board | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Database tracking system/ hardward | Carnegie; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Development officer | (Other) |
| Faculty advisory committee/board | Carnegie; Fisher, 1998 |
| Faculty liaison to academic units | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Full-time administrative assistant | Bucco & Busch, 1996 |
| Newsletter/web updates | (Other) |
| Support programming staff | Walshok, 1999 |
| **Center Operations** | |
| Assessment mechanisims/procedures | Carnegie;  Hatcher & Bringle, 2010 |
| Announce/provide resource materials | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Community voice/input | Carnegie; Furco, 2002; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Hollander et al., 2002 |
| Conduct research on faculty involvement | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Conduct surveys on student involvement | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Create student course assistants | Bringle 7 Hatcher, 1996 |
| Provide course development grants | Furco 2002; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Maintain course syllabi file/database | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Database on faculty involvement | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Establish faculty award | Carnegie; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Hollander et al, 2002 |
| Evaluate community partner satisfaction | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Evaluate student satisfaction with SL | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Facilitate faculty research on SL/CE | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Fund-raising mechanisms | Carnegie; Holland & Langseth, 2010 |
| Involve students in creating SL courses | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Presentations at student orientations | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Publicize faculty accomplishments | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Risk Management policy/procedures | Rue, 1996 |
| Recognition of student accomplishments | Rubin, 1996 |
| Recognition of faculty accomplishments | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Rubin, 1996 |
| Student leadership and decision making | Furco, 2002; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Transportation coordination/policy | Rue, 1996 |
| **Center Programming--Faculty** | |
| One-on-one consultation/support | Furco, 2002; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Faculty fellowships | Furco, 2002; Fisher, 1998 |

**Table 1. cont...**

| | |
|---|---|
| Faculty professional development program | Canegie; Clayton & O'Steen, 2010; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Hollander et al., 2002; Rue, 1996 |
| Faculty mentor program | Fisher, 1998; Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| **Center Programming--Students** | |
| Opportunity for student research | Carnegie |
| Opportunity for student leadership | Carnegie |
| Opportunity for student internships | Carnegie |
| Opportunity for Student study abroad | Carnegie |
| Cocurricular programs and opportunities | Pigza & Troppe, 2003 |
| Offer service-learning minor/emphasis | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Service-learning/CBR student scholars | Fisher, 1998 |
| **Center Programming--Community Partners** | |
| Presentation/publications wtih partners | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Award to community partner | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Collaborative grant proposals with partners | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Educate partners on engaged pedagogy | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Initiate site visit/meetings with partners | Bringle & Hatcher, 1996 |
| Community incentives and rewards | Furco, 2002 |

A survey instrument was developed using this list of "critical practices." A prototype instrument was field tested by two practitioners who then provided feedback used to make revisions. The revised survey consisting of 66 items and study methodology was reviewed and approved by the University of Massachusetts–Boston Institutional Review Board, the institution of one of the authors. The instrument was then sent via e-mail to 311 directors of centers at campuses that received the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement in 2006, 2008, or 2010. The electronic survey included a detailed description of the study outlining safeguards for confidentiality, respondents' rights and options for participation, and an informed consent response button. Electronic reminders were sent twice over a 2-month period. This procedure generated 147 responses for a response rate of 47%. Because we were interested in overall features of institutions receiving the community engagement classification, we did not ask for or record the specific types of institutions that responded. Therefore, it is not possible to ascertain any specific pattern of responses by type of institution. This type of analysis will be conducted in future phases of the research project. Table 2 indicates the Carnegie Foundation's "basic classi-

fication" of the campuses surveyed. Large master's degree granting campuses (comprehensive universities) and research universities were oversurveyed and community colleges were undersurveyed.

**Table 2. Carnegie Classifications of Institutions Surveyed**

| Basic Classification | Number of Institutions |
|---|---|
| Assoc/Pub2in4: Associate's--Public 2-year colleges under 4-year universities | 1 |
| Assoc/Pub4: Associate's--Public 4-year Primarily Associate's | 2 |
| Assoc/Pub-R-L: Associate's--Public Rural-serving Large | 5 |
| Assoc/Pub-R-M: Associate's--Public Rural-serving Medium | 4 |
| Assoc/Pub-S-MC: Associate's--Public Suburban-serving Multicampus | 3 |
| Assoc/Pub-S-SC: Associate's--Public Suburban-serving Single Campus | 3 |
| Assoc/Pub-U-MC: Associate's--Public Urban-serving Multicampus | 7 |
| Assoc/Pub-U-SC: Associate's--Public Urban-serving Single Campus | 1 |
| Bac/A&S: Baccalaureate Colleges--Arts & Sciences | 41 |
| Bac/Assoc: Baccalaureate/Associate's Colleges | 1 |
| Bac/Diverse: Baccalaureate Colleges--Diverse Fields | 12 |
| DRU: Doctoral/Research Universities | 23 |
| Master's L: Master's Colleges and Universities (larger programs) | 76 |
| Master's M: Master's Colleges and Universities (medium programs) | 26 |
| Master's S: Master's Colleges and Universities (smaller programs) | 10 |
| RU/H: Research Universities (high research activity) | 43 |
| RU/VH: Research Universities (very high research activity) | 47 |
| Spec/Arts: Special Focus Institutions--Schools of art, music, and design | 2 |
| Spec/Health: Special Focus Institutions--Other health professions schools | 2 |
| Spec/Med: Special Focus Institutions--Medical schools and medical centers | 1 |
| Spec/Tech: Special Focus Institutions--Other technology-related schools | 1 |

Additionally, the survey gathered information regarding institutional architecture such as budgets and reporting lines, center infrastructure, center operations, center programming, and the director's degree and disciplinary background. Respondents used a modified Likert scale to indicate the status of these components: (a) in place for operation, (b) in the process of being implemented, (c) hoped to be in place, or (d) not in place. When responses indicated that a component was in place or in the process, that component was considered essential to a center's operation. When responses placed a component into "hope to be in place," that component was considered aspirational, thus indicating ways in which the work of centers is continuing to develop.

The survey concluded with an open-ended question in which respondents were asked for their "Top Ten" list of essential components of a campus center. These responses were compared to the list of practice and structural elements that generated the 66 survey items as a form of reciprocal validity *(Welch, Miller, & Davies, 2005)* in which practitioners socially validate best practices enumerated in the professional literature. Reciprocal validity involves reviewing the literature to identify salient theoretical features and cross-referencing those features or concepts by practitioners to determine social validation. This is a form of action inquiry *(Reason, 1994; Torbert, 1976)* in which events are observed and interpreted by active participant-observers to make meaning. The process ascertains whether the theoretical concepts articulated in the professional literature appear or take place in authentic settings or situations. The aim of reciprocal validity is to produce practice-based evidence.

There were 955 individual responses to the Top Ten list question. One of the investigators and a staff member from his office conducted a narrative analysis *(Berg, 1998)* by sorting each individual response into one of the six categories of the survey. The sorting process was accomplished by considering literal and related words or phrases in the response in light of the categories. Once the categorization was completed, the two reviewers performed a blended manifest and latent content analysis *(Berg, 1998)* to reach consensus. This approach combines quantitative and qualitative interpretation by counting the frequency of responses, then interpreting their deeper structural meaning. A decision criterion that a topical response had to appear on at least five of the Top Ten lists was incorporated. The rationale for this criterion suggests these topical areas were deemed significant by at least half of the respondents. The data from the reciprocal validity process have been examined to identify innovative practices as well as to ascertain

which of the components initially enumerated in the literature are among those that practitioners do not deem essential to the work of centers.

# Results

The results of the survey are presented in two parts. The descriptive findings that provide a profile of campus centers organized by the six structural categories of the survey described above is presented first, followed by the open-ended Top Ten list responses.

## Descriptive Statistics—A Profile of Centers

### Institutional Architecture/Policy Context

The survey data reveal that a typical community engagement center exists in an environment of campuswide commitment to community engagement and is structured as a central coordinating office reporting to academic affairs with a budget from institutional funds. The director of the center has a graduate degree and is most often professionally aligned with academic affairs; however, the disciplinary background of the administrator varies considerably. Only a third of the respondents had a background in student affairs, and a quarter reported coming from a community leader role. Just over half (53.9%) of the directors have a doctorate, and slightly less than half (47%) have a master's degree. Among the latter, a variety of areas are represented (e.g., M.Ed., MBA, MFA, MPA).

Table 3. Degrees Held by Center Directors

| Degree | Count | Percentage |
|--------|-------|------------|
| B.A/B.S | 5 | 3.9% |
| M.A. | 42 | 33.6% |
| Ph.D. | 61 | 47.7% |
| Ed.D. | 7 | 5.5% |
| J.D. | 2 | 1.6% |
| Other | 17 | 13.3% |

Nearly three quarters of the respondents indicated there is institutional commitment to community engagement. This is supported by the large number of respondents (90.9%) indicating that they either currently have a central coordination structure or that one is in process of being established. Community engagement is enough of an institutional priority that it is included in the campus's strategic plan (83.6% of respondents) and is part of the criteria used in accreditation processes (63.4% of respondents). The context for community engagement includes the existence of an institutional operational definition of service-learning, community-based research, and/or engagement at the vast majority of campuses.

Likewise, just over half (57.1%) of the respondents indicated that community engagement courses are "designated" in some way, although methods of designation varied considerably. Some campuses indicate community engagement options in the course catalogue, and others designate courses after completion, on transcripts. A number of responses indicated that a faculty curriculum committee reviews all courses that specify the service-learning designation. In addition, a number of respondents indicated that the director of the center was responsible for course designation.

**Table 4. Institutional infrastructure and Architecture**

|  | Yes | In Progress | Hope to | No | Responses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academic affairs reporting line | 77.6% 107 | 5.8% 8 | 3.6% 5 | 13.0% 18 | 138 |
| Budgeted institutional funds | 95.8% 135 | 3.5% 5 | 0.7% 1 | 0.0% 1 | 141 |
| Campus wide commitment to civic/community engagement | 74.5% 105 | 16.3% 23 | 8.5% 12 | 0.7% 1 | 141 |
| Civic/community engagement in institutional strategic plan(s) | 83.6% 117 | 12.1% 17 | 2.9% 4 | 1.4% 2 | 140 |
| Civic/community engagement in accreditation criteria | 63.4% 83 | 12.2% 16 | 14.5% 19 | 9.9% 13 | 131 |
| Offficial/operational definitions of service-learning, CBR, community engagement | 70.2% 99 | 24.1% 24 | 4.3% 6 | 1.4% 2 | 141 |
| Central coordination center/ office for civic/community engagement | 81.0% 115 | 9.9% 14 | 3.5% 5 | 5.6% 8 | 142 |

## Center Infrastructure

How a community engagement center on campus is structured affects the extent and kinds of programming it can offer. The survey data reveal that a typical community engagement center currently has a physical space on campus but is in need of more space. It has an articulated mission/vision to guide its work, and a staff paid for out of institutional funds that consists of a full-time administrator without faculty status, a full-time administrative assistant, and a part-time administrative staff. It involves faculty through a faculty liaison and an advisory board with faculty representation. It gathers data in a systematic way and reports on its activities through an annual report and newsletter. At the same time, the typical center is evolving: it aspires to greater community partner and student representation on its advisory committee, is moving toward greater faculty involvement in center operations, and is seeking to increase its fund-raising capacity and ability to involve alumni in supporting the center.

Institutional funds typically support program staff, but the level of staffing varies. Over 91% of campuses responded that the center has a full-time administrator, but less than 40% of these full-time directors have a faculty appointment.  More common than a full-time administrator with faculty status is a faculty liaison to the center: 55.9% of respondents report currently having a liaison.  Just over half (53%) of campuses have a full-time administrative assistant; more commonly (82%), a part-time administrative assistant, graduate assistant, or VISTA provides administrative or operational support.

Respondents indicated that an advisory committee/board is an important aspect of center operations, with nearly half of the respondents reporting they currently have such a body. Faculty have significant advisory capacity representation, but community partners and students are less represented. Community representatives are not prominent on center advisory committees, but most respondents report that clear internal/external community access entry points to the center are in place or are in the process of being established.

Over half of respondents indicated that their campuses currently have a database tracking system/software to gather community engagement data. Respondents revealed that 64.8% of their campuses have an annual report and 84% either have a newsletter or are in the process of creating one.  Just under half of the respondents reported that they have a center development officer (either

on staff or assigned to support the center). Only 4.7% of respondents reported having a center alumni association, yet over 45% are in the process of creating an alumni association or hope to in the future.

**Table 5. Center Infrastructure**

| | Yes | In Progress | Hope to | No | Responses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Adequate office space to meet program needs | 71.9% 92 | 16.4% 21 | 7.0% 9 | 4.6% 6 | 128 |
| Advisory/governing board | 58.6% 75 | 18.0% 23 | 11.7% 15 | 11.7% 15 | 128 |
| Advisory/governing board with community represtntation | 43.0% 55 | 20.3% 26 | 20.3% 26 | 16.4% 21 | 128 |
| Advisory/governing board wtih student representation | 40.2% 51 | 25.2% 32 | 18.1% 23 | 16.5% 21 | 127 |
| Annual report | 64.8% 83 | 21.2% 27 | 10.9% 14 | 3.1% 4 | 128 |
| Center vision/mission statement | 87.5% 112 | 9.4% 12 | 0.8% 1 | 2.3% 3 | 128 |
| Center alumni association | 4.7% 6 | 13.3% 17 | 33.6% 43 | 48.4% 62 | 128 |
| Clear internal/external community access entry points to the center | 69.3% 88 | 18.9% 24 | 6.3% 8 | 5.5% 7 | 127 |
| Database tracking system/ software | 54.7% 70 | 25.0% 32 | 12.5% 16 | 7.8% 10 | 128 |
| Development officer (either on staff or assigned to support the center) | 41.4% 53 | 7.8% 10 | 13.3% 17 | 37.5% 48 | 128 |
| Faculty advisory committee/ board | 56.7% 72 | 18.2% 23 | 9.4% 12 | 15.7% 20 | 127 |
| Faculty liaison to academic units | 55.9% 71 | 16.5% 21 | 9.4% 12 | 18.2% 23 | 127 |
| Full-time administrator | 91.4% 117 | 1.6% 2 | 3.9% 5 | 3.1% 4 | 128 |
| Full-time administrator with faculty status | 39.4% 50 | 3.9% 5 | 7.1% 9 | 49.6% 63 | 127 |
| Full-time administrative assistant | 53.1% 68 | 3.1% 4 | 7.1% 9 | 36.7% 47 | 128 |
| Part-time administrative assistant,, graduate assistant, VISTA | 82.1% 100 | 3.3% 4 | 2.5% 3 | 12.3% 15 | 122 |
| Newsletter/web updates | 72.0% 90 | 12.0% 15 | 7.2% 9 | 8.8% 11 | 125 |
| Institutional funds support programming staff | 91.4% 117 | 0.8% 1 | 3.1% 4 | 4.7% 6 | 128 |

## Center Operations

The survey data reveal that a typical community engagement center currently has responsibility for overseeing campuswide community engagement requirements. In addition to coordinating these requirements, the vast majority of centers serve a significant clearinghouse function by announcing and providing resource materials on service-learning, community service, and community engagement. Centers are now taking increased responsibility for risk management functions, as slightly more than half of the centers have risk management policies and procedures in place. Fewer than half of the campuses have transportation policies or responsibility for coordinating or providing transportation to service sites.

Fund-raising mechanisms are also prioritized, with over two thirds of respondents indicating an existing mechanism or one that is being implemented. Center operations are also heavily focused on providing resources for capacity building, particularly among faculty, and for gathering assessment data for accountability and improvement.

A major focus of center operations is directed toward gathering data for tracking, assessment, evaluation, and research. Nearly 80% of respondents report currently maintaining a database on faculty involvement in service-learning/community-engaged pedagogy as well as conducting student satisfaction surveys. Similarly, 85% of the campuses report either conducting community partner satisfaction surveys or being in the process of creating them.

**Table 6. Center Operations**

|  | Yes | In Progress | Hope to | No | Responses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Center manages/coordinates campuswide community service/ civic engagement requirements | 67.5% 85 | 7.9% 10 | 5.6% 7 | 19.0% 24 | 126 |
| Mechanisms/procedures to assess learning outcomes | 44.5% 57 | 35.2% 45 | 15.6% 20 | 4.7% 6 | 128 |
| Mechanisms/procedures to assess programs | 58.6% 75 | 30.5% 39 | 10.9% 14 | 0.0% 0 | 128 |
| Announce/provide resource materials | 92.9% 118 | 3.9% 5 | 1.6% 2 | 1.6% 2 | 127 |
| Conduct research on faculty involvement in service-learning/ engaged pedagogy | 35.9% 46 | 23.4% 30 | 25.1% 32 | 15.6% 20 | 128 |
| Conduct surveys on student involvement in service-learning/ civic engagement | 64.8% 83 | 15.6% 20 | 14.1% 18 | 5.5% 7 | 128 |

**Table 6. Center Operations cont…**

|  | Yes | In Progress | Hope to | No | Responses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Create/utilize student course assistants | 34.6% 44 | 10.1% 13 | 13.4% 17 | 41.7% 53 | 127 |
| Provide course development grants | 62.5% 80 | 7.8% 10 | 10.2% 13 | 19.5% 25 | 128 |
| Maintain course syllabi file/ database | 41.4% 53 | 23.4% 30 | 16.4% 21 | 18.8% 24 | 128 |
| Database on faculty involvement in service-learning/community-engaged pedagogy | 54.7% 70 | 25.0% 32 | 9.4% 12 | 10.9% 14 | 128 |
| Evaluate community partner satisfaction | 66.7% 84 | 18.3% 23 | 11.1% 14 | 4.0% 5 | 126 |
| Evaluate student satisfaction with SL | 63.3% 81 | 16.4% 21 | 14.2% 18 | 6.3% 8 | 128 |
| Facilitate faculty research on SL/CE | 46.9% 60 | 19.5% 25 | 20.3% 26 | 13.3% 7 | 118 |
| Fund-raising mechanisms (grants & donors) | 54.7% 70 | 14.1% 18 | 16.4% 21 | 14.8% 19 | 128 |
| Involve students in creating SL courses | 27.6% 35 | 6.3% 8 | 22.8% 29 | 43.3% 19 | 127 |
| Presentations at new faculty orientation | 68.5% 87 | 7.1% 9 | 13.4% 17 | 11.0% 14 | 127 |
| Presentations at student orientation | 72.6% 93 | 10.2% 13 | 5.5% 7 | 11.7% 15 | 128 |
| Have/implement risk managment procedures | 53.9% 69 | 25.0% 32 | 9.4% 12 | 11.7% 15 | 128 |
| Recognition of student accomplishments | 72.8% 91 | 17.6% 22 | 7.2% 9 | 2.4% 3 | 125 |
| Student leadership & decisions-making | 60.9 % 78 | 20.4% 26 | 7.8% 10 | 10.9% 14 | 128 |

# Center Programming

Data from the survey indicates that the typical center has academic, cocurricular, and partnership programming functions. Because of a strong academic focus, there is significant programming aimed at faculty (to develop capacity to deliver community-based teaching and learning) and at students (to take advantage of the opportunities for community-based courses). At the same time, centers nurture students' leadership development by providing opportunities for a range of leadership responsibilities. Centers work with both faculty and students around community

partnerships, and they work with community partners as coeducators essential to community engagement as an educational priority.

### Faculty.

The survey responses indicated that center operations have a strong focus on faculty assistance and faculty development, with over 90% of respondents reporting that one-on-one consultation with faculty is part of the work of the center. Additionally, three fourths of the respondents reported that new faculty orientation to community engagement is currently offered or is in process. Over 81% of the respondents reported either that they provide a faculty professional development program or that the creation of one is in process. Providing faculty with course development grants and faculty fellowships is a common practice. Faculty mentoring was less prominent.

In addition to faculty development support, almost 80% of the respondents reported that their centers utilize undergraduate student leaders as assistants to faculty teaching community engagement courses. Many centers also reported providing a faculty award to recognize faculty work associated with community engagement.

### Students.

Students are a core focus of center operations and programming. Opportunities for cocurricular student leadership are widely offered, with nearly all centers reporting that this is either part of their current programs or is being implemented. Likewise, most centers recognize student accomplishments, and over 70% have an established student recognition award or are in the process of creating one. Just over a quarter of the respondents reported that their center supports service-learning and/or community-based research student scholars.

Centers also remain involved in providing community-based curricular opportunities to students. However, the wording of the questions in this part of the survey may have led to confusion that resulted in underreporting of this type of programming. Curriculum-related questions focusing on majors, minors, certificates, internships, student research, and study abroad may have inadvertently indicated center direct responsibility for components rather than center support for individual faculty members in providing opportunities for students in these areas. Thus, the question "Offer service-learning major?" could have yielded responses reflecting that (1) the center offers a service-learning major, or (2)

students are offered a service-learning major and the center has programming in place to assist faculty with the major. Responses appear to be in line with the latter, as community-based internships were reported most often.

Half of the respondents reported that their campus offers majors with service-learning requirements, and 56.7% reported that there are opportunities for students to participate in community-based study abroad. Almost 25% of the respondents reported that a service-learning minor or certificate is in place or in process, but only 4.7% of respondents reported that a service-learning major is offered on campus.

Just over 60% of respondents reported that center operations include opportunities for student leadership and decision-making. A majority of centers (80%) provide opportunities for academic student leadership as part of their student programs. Within this context, one third of the centers indicated that students are involved in creating service-learning courses.

### Community Partners.

More than in any other area, the responses reflect high aspirations for community programming compared to what already exists or is in process. The most prevalent programming reported is in initiating site visits and meetings with partners, with over 95% of the centers reporting this in place. Over half of the centers also provide a recognition award for the community partners.

Similarly, there are opportunities for collaboration and cocreation with community partners in the areas of seeking funding, teaching and learning, and scholarship. Most prevalent is collaborative grant writing, with just over three fourths of respondents indicating that this is something that the center already does or is in the process of establishing. Almost 85% of respondents indicated that the center provides opportunities to educate partners on engaged pedagogy. In the area of collaboration on scholarship, nearly 70% of respondents indicated that the center provides opportunities for collaboration on presentations or publications with community partners. Conversely, far less common is compensation for community partners as coeducators, as less than 10% of respondents reported currently providing funding for community partners to coteach courses.

## Table 7. Center Programs

| | Yes | In Progress | Hope to | No | Responses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Factuly Programming** | | | | | |
| One-on-one constultation/support to faculty | 90.6% 116 | 3.9% 5 | 1.6% 2 | 3.9% 5 | 128 |
| Faculty fellowship/grants | 65.4% 83 | 5.5% 7 | 10.2% 13 | 18.9% 24 | 127 |
| Faculty development programs | 69.5% 89 | 11.7% 15 | 5.5% 7 | 13.3% 17 | 128 |
| Faculty development funds (e.g, to attend conferences) | 68.0% 87 | 7.7% 10 | 6.3% 8 | 18.0% 23 | 128 |
| Faculty mentor program | 22.8% 29 | 17.4% 22 | 30.7% 39 | 29.1% 37 | 127 |
| Established faculty recognition award | 56.7% 72 | 11.8 % 15 | 15.7% 20 | 15.8% 20 | 127 |
| Course support from under-graduate student leaders | 60.3% 76 | 16.7% 21 | 11.9% 15 | 11.1% 14 | 126 |
| Course support from graduate student leaders | 23.6% 29 | 11.4% 14 | 13.0% 16 | 52.0% 64 | 123 |
| **Student Programming** | | | | | |
| Opportunity for student research | 60.9% 78 | 7.8% 10 | 11.7% 15 | 19.6% 25 | 128 |
| Opportunity for cocurricular student leadership | 82.0% 105 | 5.5% 7 | 3.1% 4 | 9.4% 12 | 128 |
| Opportunity for academic student leadership | 74.8% 95 | 5.5% 7 | 6.3% 8 | 13.4% 17 | 127 |
| Opportunity for student com-munity based study abroad | 56.7% 72 | 7.9% 10 | 15.0% 19 | 20.4% 26 | 127 |
| Cocurricular programs | 86.7% 111 | 5.6% 7 | 0.0% 0 | 7.8% 10 | 128 |
| Offer service-learning major | 3.1% 4 | 1.6% 2 | 9.5% 12 | 85.8% 109 | 127 |
| Offer majors with SL require-ment rather than traditional internships/practica | 50.8% 64 | 6.3% 8 | 9.5% 12 | 33.4% 42 | 126 |
| Offer service-learning minor/certificate | 15.7% 20 | 8.7% 11 | 20.5% 26 | 55.1% 70 | 127 |
| Student service-learning/com-munity-based research scholar | 27.6% 35 | 11.0% 14 | 15.0% 19 | 46.4% 59 | 127 |
| Have student leadership recog-nition award | 64.1% 82 | 7.0% 9 | 9.4% 12 | 19.5% 25 | 128 |

**Table 7. Center Programs cont…**

|  | Yes | In Progress | Hope to | No | Responses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Community Partner Programming** | | | | | |
| Presentations/publications with partners | 57.8% 74 | 10.9% 14 | 16.4% 21 | 14.8% 19 | 128 |
| Award to community partner | 47.8% 61 | 7.0% 9 | 19.5 25 | 25.8% 33 | 128 |
| Collaborative grant proposals with community partners | 62.2% 86 | 9.4% 12 | 16.4% 21 | 7.0% 9 | 128 |
| Educate community partners on engaged pedagogy | 64.8% 83 | 19.5% 25 | 9.4% 12 | 6.3% 8 | 128 |
| Initiate site visits/meetings with partners | 89.8% 115 | 6.3% 8 | 2.3% 3 | 1.6% 2 | 128 |
| Community incentives and awards | 43.0% 55 | 5.5% 7 | 21.1% 27 | 61.1% 77 | 166 |
| Provide funding for community partners to co-coteach courses | 9.5% 12 | 4.0% 5 | 25.4% 32 | 61.1% 77 | 126 |

# Top Ten List of Essential Components

This study was also designed to determine what center directors deemed the most critical components of community engagement centers as a form of reciprocal validity. In other words, directors of community centers reported the following as "must haves" to coordinate an effective center. At least 17 critical themes or factors consistently emerged from respondents' "Top Ten" lists. Most of the responses fell within operational or infrastructural categories, indicating that these are prerequisites to creating and maintaining programs. Of these, five items fell within the Center Operations (COP) category, four items were within the Institutional Architecture/Policy (IAP) and Center Infrastructure (CI) category, and one item was categorized as Center Programming for Faculty (CPF). Three additional items that were not included in the survey items or categories emerged from the reciprocal validity process. The responses are presented in Table 8, with results ranked in terms of frequency of responses rather than importance. The results are described by category below.

**Table 8. Top Ten Responses for Essential Components for Community Engagement Centers**

| # of Responses | Category | Essential Component |
|---|---|---|
| 49 | IAP | Budgeted institutional funds |
| 47 | IAP | Administrative support |
| 33 | CI | Programming staff |
| 32 | CPF | Faculty Development |
| 24 | * | Faculty leadership/buy in |
| 23 | COP | Student leadership/decision making |
| 21 | COP | Assessment mechanism/procedures |
| 21 | CI | Full-time administrator |
| 21 | IAP | Acadmic affairs reporting line |
| 15 | CI | Database/tracking system |
| 15 | CI | Adequate office space |
| 12 | IAP | Define/designate courses |
| 12 | COP | Fund-raising mechanisms |
| 12 | * | Communication/outreach |
| 11 | COP | Transportation coordination/policy |
| 11 | * | Cross-campus collaboration |
| 11 | COP | Course development grants |

* = responses not included in survey items: CI = Center Infrastructure; COP= Center Operations; CPF = Center Programs for Faculty; IAP = Instutitional Architecture/ Policy

## Center operations.

Student leadership/decision-making and assessment mechanisms/procedures were both viewed as critical elements of campus centers. Respondents value providing opportunities to students that would develop their leadership skills and allow collaborative decision-making for programming. This included allowing students to oversee and coordinate community engagement programs with staff oversight. Likewise, respondents indicated giving students a voice in center operations and activities as a high priority. It is important to note that student leadership and participation in decision-making were evident in both cocurricular and curricular programming. Examples of this included students serving as course assistants in the planning and coordination of service-learning courses as well as advising on policy/procedures to provide a student perspective.

Respondents also indicated that establishing and maintaining procedures for assessing center programs were being critical.

Formative evaluation on program operations and summative evaluation of program outcomes completed by students, faculty, and community partners was viewed as essential. Survey responses revealed a widely held view that centers must incorporate fundraising to help maintain operations and programs. This included grant-writing as well as development efforts to find donors and sponsors. This result suggests that institutional funding alone is not adequate. Directors responding to the survey indicated coordination of transportation to and from service experiences as a key role and responsibility for the center. This ranged from actual logistical coordination of vans transporting students to creating and enforcing campus policy on the use of private vehicles. Finally, respondents noted that providing funds and grants to faculty and departments to develop new courses was an essential task and role of the center.

## Institutional architecture/policy.

Unsurprisingly, directors reported budgeted institutional funds as the top priority. Rather than relying solely on grants, respondents indicated that "hard lines" in the institutional budget were essential for center operation. A close second priority was administrative support, meaning that upper level administrators must publicly acknowledge their philosophical and political support for campus centers to give them legitimacy across campus. This requires administrators' full understanding of the role and function of the center. Survey responses also consistently revealed the pedagogical and political advantage of having the campus center under academic affairs. Comments suggested that faculty afford much more respect and attention to operations of the center if it is on the academic side of the house. Finally, operational definitions for service-learning courses, as well as an official course designation process, appear to be important. Responses indicated significant agreement on the need for operational definitions of service-learning; however, there was considerable variance on how courses were designated. Some campuses reported a committee structure to review course descriptions; others simply allowed instructors to self-designate their classes as service-learning. Despite these discrepancies, directors consistently noted the importance of differentiating service-learning from other similar forms of experiential learning.

### Center infrastructure.

Responses also indicated that a community center must have adequate and qualified support staff to carry out its operations. As centers and their programs evolve and expand, additional staff members are required. Respondents also revealed that centers require at least one full-time qualified professional director with background and experience in higher education. Descriptive statistics indicate that a director with a terminal degree is both common and a critical component, regardless of the academic discipline. Survey results also reveal that a database or tracking system to manage curricular and cocurricular programming is needed to coordinate and manage how many students are placed in a given site as well as how many cocurricular programs and/or courses are in operation at any one time. These systems also track the number of hours, students, and partner sites in operation to provide information for documentation and reports. Respondents reported that effective center operation requires adequate office space. Finally, high visibility and easy physical access to the center by students, faculty, and community partners were deemed essential.

### Center programming for faculty.

Directors clearly and consistently indicated that one critical role of a center was to assist faculty with acquiring the skill and information necessary to develop and implement engaged courses. The responses did not, however, elaborate on the content and scope of faculty development other than mentioning formats such as workshops, retreats, and one-on-one technical assistance. Instead, respondents repeatedly articulated the need for ongoing, quality professional development opportunities for faculty.

### Reciprocal validity findings.

In addition to validating the empirical research by cross-referencing responses to a list of current, essential practices, this process allows new information to emerge that may merit inclusion in the literature or may even contradict premises that were originally posited, indicating a need to revisit or reconsider a topic. In this study, responses yielded at least three themes that were not found in the professional literature and therefore were not included in the survey instrument. These might be characterized as relational factors rather than tangible or structural components.

Faculty leadership or "buy-in" was articulated in one way or another at least 24 times in the respondents' Top Ten lists.

Respondents noted that respected faculty members who had embraced this form of pedagogy had to serve as advocates or "cheerleaders" to their peers and administrators to garner a sense of legitimacy for the center and its work. This response represents a unique relational and/or political element that is outside the structural and operational dimensions in other survey items and open-ended responses. In other words, the survey items derived from the professional literature focused primarily on systemic and operational dimensions of centers, but these anecdotal responses suggest that center directors strategically identify and utilize highly respected faculty members for what might be considered "professional evangelism" or marketing to help promote the center and its programs.

A second finding was related to communication and outreach. Analysis of nearly a dozen comments revealed that this involved more than reporting on the center's work through public relations media such as annual reports, newsletters, or websites. Again, the comments were relational in nature, suggesting the necessity for center administrators and staff to reach out to faculty and community partners not merely to disseminate information and resources or provide technical assistance, but to establish and maintain a relationship. Respondents offered examples that reflected communications of a more conversational nature in which directors "checked in" with instructors and representatives of community agencies to see how things were going and to solicit and/or provide input and feedback.

Finally, 11 respondents also indicated that cross-campus collaboration was an essential component of a successful center and program. Complementing the critical need for a reporting line within academic affairs that the majority of respondents indicated, equally important was the ability to work with other units within student affairs. Directors provided examples and instances in which their offices worked with nonacademic units such as campus ministry and residential life. These responses most likely occurred in the context of cocurricular programming, but may in fact also reflect the necessity of curricular collaboration across academic disciplines to design, implement, and maintain service-learning courses.

## Analysis and Implications

## Institutional Architecture/Policy Context

The results of this investigation suggest that centers play a critical role in coordinating greater institution-wide commitment to community engagement. This appears to have implications for understanding how structures of campus centers not only reflect but influence institutional change. The results of this survey clearly suggest that campus centers have evolved throughout what might be called the first generation of this field. These offices have generally expanded from primarily coordinating cocurricular volunteer service, often within student affairs, to a comprehensive and professional administrative role funded by institutional dollars within academic affairs to coordinate campuswide community engagement initiatives. Roles and responsibilities now include logistical coordination of tracking and assessing programs coupled with management of transportation, implementation of risk management policy and procedures, and additional development and fund-raising.

Another significant role that has emerged over the past 25 years is providing faculty development opportunities to instructors who teach these types of courses. These data do not, however, include qualitative or detailed information on the content, format, or duration of the professional development, which will be important information to gather in the future. Survey responses indicated that most centers have at least three full-time staff members, with the director typically holding a faculty appointment. However, the professional pathway that brought these directors to this role is unclear and warrants further investigation.

Most of the respondents indicated that their institution either has a campuswide definition of community engagement or is in the process of establishing one. This raises a number of questions for further consideration: What is the role of creating an operational definition of community engagement activities in advancing community engagement as an institutional priority? Do established centers resist official definitions as a way of providing a broad umbrella of community engagement activities by many units on campus? Or are centers excluded from the process as a result of faculty-driven policy- and decision-making in which academics may or may not have the necessary expertise and background? Is a single official definition an obstacle to the development of disciplinary definitions of community engagement and thus a detriment

to encouraging departments to commit to community engage-ment? Is there a process that serves to open up space for many definitions on campus that then evolves into a move to conceptual clarity for the campus as a whole?

This study reveals widespread use of institutional funds, or "hard dollars," instead of grant monies, or "soft dollars," suggesting that these centers have become institutional priorities and that they are part of the longer term identity of the campus. It seems that if community engagement efforts are part of the core academic work of the campus, these centers are less likely to be to eliminated or reduced. The campuses in this study are independently recognized for their commitment to community engagement and are likely to overrepresent this core academic commitment. A comparative study of Carnegie classified campuses with those that are not clas-sified could help determine whether institutions where community engagement is not tied closely to faculty work and the curriculum are more likely to scale back on a community engagement com-mitment in tight economic circumstances than campuses where community engagement is established as central to the academic enterprise.

The data on the background of the director deserves further study. What the survey does not reveal about career pathways into a center director position is potentially significant information. For example, a community leader may have received an advanced degree, taken a faculty position, and moved into directing commu-nity engagement, and may have checked multiple boxes. It would be useful to know more about the career pathway of community engagement center directors.

Finally, results from the reciprocal validity Top Ten lists reveal the important role of informal faculty leadership in promoting this work. This is related to yet separate from the topic of faculty development; however, the need for a critical mass of influential faculty has both cultural and political implications. Consequently, center directors must be cognizant of this factor and use it as an approach to garner support for programming. Similarly, the Top Ten responses revealed the important role of institutional adminis-trators in publicly advocating centers and their mission to establish legitimacy across campus.

## Center Infrastructure

These findings also suggest that the creation of an infrastruc-ture to support community engagement is an evolving process. As

the operations of a center develop, the work becomes more complex and expansive. This investigation suggests that the evolutionary direction of centers includes (1) a need for more staff, more space, larger budgets, and more intentional fund-raising; (2) deeper affiliation with academic affairs and faculty roles and responsibilities; (3) better data gathering and reporting/communicating the work of the center and its outcomes; and (4) greater community partner voice and student voice in center planning and operations. Thus it appears that centers are in flux, which may indicate a growth and shift of the field as a whole.  This suggests a growing level of importance of community engagement in higher education at a time of significant challenges and change.   These results may indicate a trend in the structure and organization of  campus centers that could be useful in program planning.

## Center Programming

Because the sample in this study consists of highly engaged campuses, it should not be surprising that there is strong emphasis on community engagement as a core academic enterprise as part of the work of faculty. Significant effort is focused on faculty for building capacity, creating wider curricular options, and providing recognition. The emphasis on faculty development within the center's programming is critical in ensuring high-quality pedagogical practices. The greater the capacity of the faculty to deliver high-quality community engagement courses, the more curricular options for students an institution can offer. As a result, community engagement minors and certificates are emerging curricular options. There is also growing effort to recognize faculty who participate in community engagement through fellowships, grants, awards, and through making their work visible. Some aspects of recognition, however, are beyond the scope of this study. If faculty are not being recognized and rewarded for community engagement though the official reward structures for promotion, is there an effort to provide other forms of recognition being offered by the centers? If community engagement were rewarded as part of the scholarly work of faculty, would centers be focused as much on providing recognition for community engagement work?

Centers in this study seem to incorporate a great degree of student leadership in all aspects of community engagement. Students appear to have a voice, input, and an active role in the delivery of curricula and cocurricular community engagement. Students working with instructors embody reciprocity and the cocreation

of knowledge and reflect "students as colleagues" as described by Zlotkowski, Longo, and Williams *(2006)*.

Conversely, the results also suggest that programming around community partners and partnerships lags behind programming for faculty and students. However, the high number of the aspirational "hope to" responses indicates recognition of the need to improve this balance of offerings.

Finally, results suggest that campuses distinguish between service-learning as a pedagogy and service-learning as a distinct body of knowledge. Service-learning as a major is rare, but service-learning as a pedagogical practice integrated into courses across majors is common.

Three factors or components emerged from the reciprocal validation in this study that were not included in the professional literature (faculty leadership, outreach/communication, cross-campus collaboration). These results suggest a need for further research in these areas.

Center directors might consider convening an advisory group consisting of students, faculty, representatives from community agencies, and midlevel administration to review and consider the results presented here. Such a review may assist in identifying which of these critical factors are in operation and in determining priorities for adding other components to a strategic plan. Directors of new centers might consider presenting the results of this study to administrators as a "wish list" to help implement and maintain the center and its work. Finally, this preliminary investigation should serve as a foundation for creating an assessment tool that campus centers could use to identify strengths and weaknesses in planning for improved operation and growth.

## Conclusion

This investigation was conducted to identify defining features of campus centers for community engagement. Likewise this study attempted to identify purposes and goals of campus-community partnerships evident in the systemic structure of the centers. Finally, the survey was designed to determine which activities of these centers are directly related to collaborative work between campus and community agencies. The descriptive statistics and open-ended responses seem to reveal essential components for community centers on campus. These findings provide an important foundation for continued work.

However, additional research is needed to fully understand these data. Results of this study present a "brushstroke" of information regarding operations and programs, but the scope and structure of the survey did not provide adequate depth for a complete picture of operations and issues. The respondents are from centers and institutions that have received the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement and thus represent a unique sample pool; therefore, it is not possible to compare these programs to others. Likewise, it was not possible to ascertain whether certain practices and characteristics are associated with specific types of institutions, as the investigation did not include a mechanism for identifying and differentiating institutions. Continued research addressing these limitations is warranted and planned. This will broaden the scope of the results and allow for comparative analysis to identify common features unique to specific types of institutions (e.g., faith-based institutions, public research universities). A multiple regression analysis could be employed to identify components that predict or correlate with the Carnegie Classification.

These results provide an overview of essential features and practice. However, the data do not give us a detailed view of specific features. For example, the vast majority of respondents reported faculty development as a key component of their programming and operations, but detail regarding structure, content, duration, and delivery cannot be derived from these responses. Additionally, the professional pathway of center directors is unclear and thus an area of interest and further study. Therefore, the initial information gleaned from this investigation provides a compass point for future study.

In sum, the initial findings of this study should be of interest and value to campus administrators and center directors. The information presented here can be used to take inventory of current structures and practice to determine strengths and areas of need. This type of review and assessment will be a useful tool in creating goals in strategic planning that will enhance and support community engagement on college campuses.

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## About the Authors

**Marshall Welch** is the Director of the Catholic Institute for Lasallian Social Action at Saint Mary's College of California since 2007. Marshall has been in higher education for 25+ years as a faculty member and Director of the Lowell Bennion Community Service Center at the University of Utah. He earned his doctorate in teacher education at Southern Illinois University. Marshall has taught service-learning courses and has been involved at the

local, regional, national, and international levels with publications, presentations, workshops, and consultation. Marshall has leadership roles with the International Association of Research on Service-learning and Community Engagement and Campus Compact.

**John Saltmarsh** is the Co-Director of the New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE) at the University of Massachusetts, Boston and faculty member in the Higher Education Administration Doctoral Program. He leads the project in which NERCHE serves as the partner with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching for Carnegie's Community Engagement Classification. He holds a Ph.D. in American History from Boston University and taught for over a decade at Northeastern University and as a Visiting Research Fellow at the Feinstein Institute for Public Service at Providence College. John has numerous publications in the field of service-learning and community engagement.