



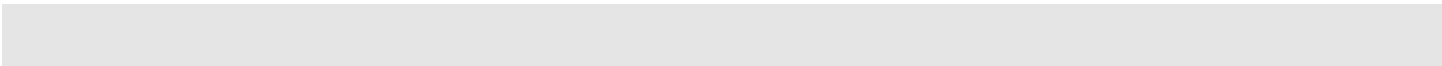
New England Resource Center
for Higher Education
Graduate College of Education
UMass Boston
Boston, MA 02125-3393

NERCHE

Swinging Doors: Making Community- College Partnerships Work



*Project Colleague's guide to helping
community partners navigate
colleges and universities*



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The New England Resource Center for Higher Education

The New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE) was created in 1988 to fill the need for information, interpretation, analysis and technical assistance regarding issues in higher education that affect colleges and universities in New England. NERCHE focuses on colleges and universities as workplaces and organizations and brings to this mission a clear commitment to collaboration, community building, and support for institutional change and innovation. Over the last ten years, NERCHE has built a closely connected constituency of nearly a thousand individuals from most of New England's institutions of higher education. Its research projects, think tanks, visiting fellowships, conferences and workshops, and collaborations with national organizations, serve hundreds of academics every year. Its bi-annual newsletter, think tank briefings and working paper series reach thousands more.

While NERCHE's constituency is a microcosm of the range of colleges and universities nationally, special attention is given to regional and locally oriented institutions that are relatively invisible compared to the high profile colleges and universities in New England.

College and universities are under a number of pressures, both internal and external, that call for significant changes in how they implement their educational mission. Among those pressures is the challenge to prepare students to respond effectively to complex social issues and to ground student learning in "public" problems and solutions. The quality of civic life in America is deteriorating, warn social commentators. We have become "a nation of spectators," where Americans feel disconnected from political, social, and economic structures to the extent that our democracy may be at risk. Colleges and universities must respond to these concerns through civic education and engagement with their communities. Over the past five years, NERCHE has worked extensively on these issues in a series of projects within the Program on Faculty Professional Service and Academic Outreach. For more information about these projects or NERCHE, contact us at the address below.

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*New England Resource Center for Higher Education, Graduate College of
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www.nerche.org

NERCHE is committed to quality and collaboration. We welcome the opportunity to talk with you about the use of this workshop and how it might be tailored to fit your needs.

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A Facilitator's Guide

An introduction to Project Colleague and "Swinging Doors"

Project Colleague

Over the past decade, an increasing number of people who work in colleges and universities have peered outside the ivory tower and discovered the rich possibilities of partnering with others in their communities. These partnerships represent a return to the founding civic ideals of many colleges that were created to serve particular communities and to promote the common welfare. However, life has become somewhat more complex during the past three centuries. Colleges are no longer small institutions run by a handful of community leaders and scholars. The needs of the communities are far more complex and there is an almost endless variety of community based organizations that serve them. Since its inception, NERCHE researchers have collaborated with practitioners to understand the changing nature of their professions and organizations and to develop the skills to deal with these changes.

In 1997, NERCHE began Project Colleague to identify faculty skilled in working collaboratively with community organizations and to develop their ability to help other faculty to be successful in their institutions and as community partners. Project Colleague brought together faculty from a range of institutional types, disciplines; what they had in common were the skills and expertise to develop and support successful collaborative service projects with community groups and organizations. Project Colleague Faculty Associates began meeting to share ideas, to support one another, to reflect on their practice and to discuss ways of reaching out to others interested in changing their institutions through college-community partnerships. They developed a "toolbox" of exercises and workshops aimed at faculty and administrators on topics that ranged from initiating a project, to sustaining a partnership, to building campus support and recognition for this work. As they continued to meet, they realized that while it is important to help faculty and staff develop the skills necessary to work with community partners, a similar effort needed to be launched to help administrators of community based organizations and agencies understand the context and environment within which their campus partners operate. In an effort to fill this need, Project Colleague Associates developed "Swinging Doors: Making Community-College Partnerships Work," a comprehensive workshop on accessing colleges and universities. The goal is to develop the capacity of community based organizations to form sustainable partnerships with colleges and universities.

How To Use This Guide

This guide contains a complete set of materials and workshop curricula. The guide is divided into two sections. The first is a detailed explanation of curricula and the second contains handouts and referenced materials. As you work through the curriculum, specific handouts will be referenced.

The Workshop

Who is it for?

This workshop is designed for representatives from community based organizations that might benefit from a partnership with a local university or college. While the content covers complex issues, it is designed for those who have had little (and perhaps negative) or no experience in partnering with higher education. It will be of most benefit to those who will be directly in the partnership.

What is the design?

This workshop is highly interactive. Mini-cases, small and large group discussions, guided exercises, and private reflection are combined to respond to a variety of learning styles and need for practical information. It works best with an audience size of about 35, but can be tailored for larger groups.

Who are the presenters?

The presenters are Project Colleague Faculty Associates, faculty from a variety of institutions and disciplines, who worked with NERCHE to reflect on and articulate the elements, barriers, supports and issues associated with community partnerships. They are senior faculty and tend to have assumed a number of roles within their institutions. An additional presenter is a community partner who has a sustained project with one of the Faculty Associates.

If you are going to present this utilizing faculty from your own institution, we recommend that you have:

- Representatives from a variety of disciplines, including those disciplines that tend not to be applied.
- Senior faculty who have a history of working collaboratively within your institution, who are institutionally savvy, and who are experienced in talking about, as well as doing, community based work.
- A community partner who has a sustained project with your institution, and who can reflect on the process of, and lessons learned during the partnership.

What equipment and space will we need?

You will need an overhead projector and newsprint. Participants need to be able to work in small groups, so it is helpful if chairs can be moved or if they can sit around small tables (e.g. 8-tops). It is ideal to have one breakout room. You will also need to provide breakfast and lunch.

How do we find community based organizations that might benefit from attending this workshop?

NERCHE's focus is on colleges and universities so we do not work directly with community based organizations. In launching this workshop we found that it was beneficial to partner with foundations that support community-based organizations. This partnering – foundation, community, college – provides a powerful learning circle for all those involved. It also allows those in colleges and universities to expand their knowledge of community organizations, and go beyond the ones with whom they have established ties.



Curriculum

50 minutes

Welcome & Goal Setting

The objectives are to: have people meet one another, begin framing the issues in working with colleges, present an overview of the day, and to model the process of starting a partnership.

You will need:

- an overhead projector or board.
- two sheets of newsprint labeled “General” and “Specific”
- someone to record responses and someone to facilitate

1. Introduction of presenters and workshop (10 minutes)
 - a. Why it is important for higher education
 - b. Why it is important to you
2. Quick show of hands:
 - a. Who has been in a partnership with a college and/or university?
 - b. Who has worked in a college or university?
 - c. Fast once around the room with name and agency
3. Put the following question up on an overhead or board:
What three things do you want to learn more about in creating a partnership with a college or university?
4. Break participants into pairs to answer the question and introduce themselves to one another. (10 minutes)
5. Participants report out answers (i.e. their goals for the day). A recorder is needed. Goals should be placed into two categories: “General ” and “Specific”. General issues are those that have to do with the nature of community-college partnerships. For instance, “how to develop trust.” Specific issues are those that have straightforward solutions. For instance, “who to call about use of the auditorium.” (20 minutes)
6. Debrief exercise by: a) summarizing what is in the two columns and how/if those goals will be met during the course of the day; b) drawing out the parallels between this modest exercise and the process of starting a partnership. These include, learning about what they want to know, listening, summarizing what’s been said for a public audience. Try to note themes that will emerge throughout the day. (10 minutes)

15 minutes

Break

1.25 hours

Parallel Cases

The objectives are to: enable participants to identify issues, unique and shared, that are part of the cultures of community based organizations and colleges, and to begin to identify strategies for partnering.

You will need:

- a breakout room, or a way to divide the group into two
- two facilitators
- newsprint
- the parallel cases on the Community Mentoring Program
- the handout, “Issues in Community-University Partnerships”

1. Divide the participants into two groups. One group is given the “Metropolitan University” case and the other is given the “XYZ Boys and Girls Club” case. There should be a facilitator for each group, and newsprint. (45 minutes)

After participants have had a chance to read the case, briefly summarize “the story.”

Questions:

- a. “What are some of the issues in this partnership?”
 - b. “What does this partnership have going for it?”
 - c. “How can Frank and Marta make this work?”
2. Record “issues” (a), “assets” (b), and “strategies” (c) on newsprint
 3. Bring the groups back together and post the newsprint.
 4. Explain that each group had a different view of the same situation: a “university view” and a “community view.” Pass out copies of all the cases (i.e. every participant should have both cases).
 5. Refer to the newsprint. Note which issues are similar, and which are unique to each setting. Process assets and strategies. Pass out “Issues in Community-University Partnerships” to show what others have identified. Turn issues, assets and strategies into generalizable talking/teaching points. (30 minutes)

1.25 hours

Lunch

Facilitators check-in with one another regarding progress on goals.

30 minutes

Decoding the University Culture

The objective is to give participants practical information on how colleges and universities are structured with regard to policies, resources, power, etc.

What you will need:

- handout “Decoding the University/College”

1. Present ideas and observations on the culture of colleges and universities. Tie remarks into issues generated by the cases and participant goals.
2. Use handout as an overhead. Set this up as a discussion.
3. Ask for their observations, experiences. Add to the categories on the handout.

45 minutes

Community Partner Perspective

The objective is for participants to hear about a successful, on-going partnership from the perspective of someone from a community-based organization.

What you will need:

2 facilitators: 1 faculty member, 1 community member

1. This is a dialogue between a community partner and a faculty partner. They should reflect on:
 - a. What’s worked
 - b. What’s been problematic
 - c. Systems they’ve developed to deal with conflict
 - d. Unresolved issues
 - e. How they establish trust, make decisions, etc.
2. Leave time for open discussion and questions.

45 minutes

Effective Partnerships & Wrap-up

The objectives are to identify specific tools in building successful, sustained partnerships, and to have participants commit to a next step(s).

You will need:

- the handout “Tools for Building Community-University Partnerships”
- business sized envelopes and paper
- the “Follow-up Form”

1. Synthesize the day’s discussions identifying teaching points about how to set up and maintain an effective partnership.
2. If needed, use the question “How can we make effective partnerships happen?”
3. Pass out and refer to the handout “Tools for Building Community-University Partnerships.”
4. Divide participants into groups of 2 or 3 to discuss a personal partnership goal and one required action. Think very strategically about action steps – who’s involved, what’s needed, what’s unknown, etc.
5. Participants are given envelopes. They are asked to write a note to themselves as a reminder about their next step.
6. Collect their sealed, addressed envelopes. Indicate that the envelopes will be mailed back to them in 2 months.
7. Check-in on any unfinished business.
8. Pass out “Follow-up Form” and encourage participants to use it.
9. Close with talking about your learning and theirs.



Materials

These are the handouts that are listed in the curriculum, as well as some that provide additional information.

Workshop Handouts

1. Parallel Cases: “Metropolitan University Community Mentoring Program” and “XYZ Boys and Girls Club Community Mentoring Program.”
2. “Issues in Community-University Partnerships”
3. “Decoding the University/College”
4. “Tools for Building Community-University Partnerships”
5. “Follow-up Form”

Supplemental Materials

1. “Defining Campus-Community Partnerships”
3. “Community Partnership – What Do You Think?”
4. “Decoding the Community”

Metropolitan University Community Mentoring Program

Frank Smith, a new African American faculty member in the Psychology Department at Metropolitan University, is genuinely concerned about the dropout rate among inner city youth. Frank's dissertation, which he completed three years ago, explored the relationship between self-esteem and academic success. Frank's findings suggested that mentoring is a way of boosting the self-esteem (and therefore the academic success) of high school students. He is excited about applying these findings in a mentoring program at the XYZ Boys and Girls Club. Frank has enjoyed working with Marta Garcia, the Director of Community Outreach.

Frank looked forward to working at Metropolitan University. The University's new president had been quoted in the newspaper as saying "service to society is the central work of the University." The University also received positive press when it announced a mandatory service requirement for all students.

In thinking about ways of applying his research, Frank contacted the Executive Director of XYZ Boys and Girls Club. The Executive Director was enthusiastic about developing a collaborative relationship. Frank applied for, and received, a \$5,000 University grant to support the new program. The stated goal in the grant proposal was to pilot a program to reduce the dropout rate among high school students. The Executive Director asked Marta Garcia, Director of Community Outreach at XYZ, to work with Frank on the project.

Frank can apply for up to \$15,000 for a subsequent University grant once he has demonstrated the success of the program. This could enable him to pay for a reduction of one of his courses, which would give him more time for the project. However, during the pilot phase he has to continue teaching a full load.

Frank's department neither stood in the way of the project, nor gave Frank any support. At a recent departmental meeting, Frank tried to convince the faculty that participation by psychology majors in such a project would be an important integrating experience - allowing students to apply their theoretical knowledge in the field. He received only a lukewarm response. One senior faculty member quipped that the new mandatory service requirement for students could be fulfilled in other classes. After the meeting, the department chairperson pulled him aside and pointed out that such service is

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commendable but that it would not count very much toward achieving tenure at the University. He gently advised Frank to concentrate on publishing research and improving his teaching evaluations.

Frank had lunch the following day with the Service Learning Coordinator, who informed Frank that investing time in such a program was a professional risk. Last year two faculty members failed to achieve tenure after several years of hard work on similar community-based projects. He advised Frank to wait until he received tenure before getting further involved in the project.

Frank wants to make a difference in the community. He would like to see the high school students be given the same chance to succeed as he had. However, he is also eager to make a career at the University and wonders whether he should take such a risk. He has already put in a great deal of time into the administration of the program, training the college students, and supervising their mentoring work. He knows that he will end up feeling good about his contribution, but without a secure teaching position he would be limited in what he could do for the community in the future. Frank believes that the project could lead to publishable “action research.” He is also increasingly concerned about Marta’s insistence that the program involve into a more generic “homework help” program.

XYZ Boys and Girls Club Community Mentoring Program

Marta Garcia is Director of Community Outreach for XYZ Boys and Girls Club. Among her many responsibilities, she is also responsible for a mentoring project co-sponsored by the Psychology Department at Metropolitan University. Last year, the University awarded a \$5000 grant to support the program. The Executive Director did indicate that a much larger grant might be possible if the program is successful. Marta has enjoyed working with Professor Frank Smith, a young African American faculty member.

The children in the neighborhood love the program and look forward to the activities conducted by the university students. A parent of one of the children participating in the mentoring program mentioned that her daughter has started talking about going to college and is working harder in her math course. However, among the four major projects Marta is overseeing, the mentoring project seems to require more attention and direct supervision of her staff than the other programs. Marta feels she should be concentrating on XYZ's larger adult literacy program which is floundering because of State cutbacks. XYZ is short staffed and many of the other projects she oversees need volunteers.

Three times a week, 22 students "descend" from the University and conduct group activities for high school students. Usually, it is great having these young people because of their enthusiasm. Marta had hoped that this program would enable XYZ to obtain better access to the university for the older teenagers living in the neighborhood. Although the university is very close, few students from the neighborhood apply and college attendance rate overall is very low. Recently, she talked to Frank about the University hosting a special visitation day for some of the high school students. Frank mentioned that he thought admissions handled those sorts of events and the matter was dropped.

Marta has also begun to think that Frank spends too much time discussing the influence of reinforcing positive behavior and fostering self-esteem. She thought that he would have a better understanding of what kids in this community need – discipline. Frank seems resistant to creating a more formal homework center as she had hoped. Besides, XYZ is too small for the type of rough play some of the male college students and boys get into.

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Sometimes there are too many students for the number of children. She would like to transfer some of the college students to the literacy program but this mentoring program is a requirement for the students in Frank's adolescent psychology course.

The program needs more supervision than she has time to give. Marta believes the kids would feel better about themselves if they improved their reading and writing skills. University students also leave for final exams and semester break just as relationships are beginning to form. There is no mechanism for keeping the university students involved, even though several have expressed an interest. Less than half return the next semester.

Marta has raised some of her concerns with the Executive Director. The Director informed her that there is potential for a new university grant and it is quite likely that XYZ would get more funding that would double the size of the program. Although there is a need for this program, Marta is concerned about space, supervision, program content and whether this program as constructed will make a difference encouraging more young people to attend college.

Issues in Community-University Partnerships

1. Trust
2. Defining the problem(s) the partnership is supposed to address
3. Differences in values and missions
4. Ownership of project
 - How it's negotiated
 - Who owns products coming out of the project, how they're used
 - Who's involved in the planning and implementing
5. Assumptions that knowledge is unidirectional
6. Power
7. Differences in goals and expectations among stake holders
8. Communication – including how needs and expectations are communicated
9. Environmental contexts
 - How the legitimacy of the work is acknowledged, in what contexts
 - Assumptions about the way(s) we conduct business:
 - Place
 - Size of groups
 - Language(s)
 - Comfort with speaking
10. How “failure” and “success” get handled
11. Results
 - Higher ed.'s tolerance of impractical results
 - Community's need to see results...**something!**
12. Sustainability Issues
 - short term vs. long term
 - how lessons get used in planning
13. Influence of powerful funders and their expectations and issues

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Decoding the University/College

Elements of a University/College culture:

- There is a lot of diversity within the university e.g. peoples' roles, power, comfort with community involvement, disciplines, etc.
- Sometimes there is an overestimation of the degree of coordination within the institution, even by those within it
- There are numerous levels of bureaucracy
- The faculty reward system is complex
- The calendar is based on units (semesters, trimesters, etc.)
- Faculty workloads include teaching as well as meetings, and research and professional activities

Universities/Colleges can bring...

- a knowledge of process
- how we work on professional development, issues of education and knowledge
- technical expertise
-e.g. research skills, leadership development skills
- access to people with skills
-e.g. economic development knowledge
- access to physical resources...sometimes
-technology
-buildings
- multiple perspectives to the web of issues facing community agencies
- our teaching skills - can ask the "right questions" and help people focus
- conflict resolution skills
- an independent and fresh perspective...sometimes
- the next generation of staff, workers, administrators, etc.

Faculty in Universities/Colleges can't..

- act quickly
- act alone
- quickly change curriculum
- change cycle of activities
- provide unlimited resources
- ensure stable/supportive leaders
- change their reward system

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Tools for Building Community-University Partnerships

1. Be conscious about who initiated the partnership and why. Do as much work on establishing the partnership as you do on setting up the project.
 - Establish the ground rules for the partnership.
 - Be clear about assumptions, check out perceptions
 - Identify potential barriers/road blocks
2. Define what community issues are important and the larger issues connected to them.
3. Spell out the “resources” of each partner – what do they bring? What’s off limits?
4. Ownership of project – decide upfront:
 - how this is negotiated
 - who owns products coming out of the project, how they’re used
5. Recognize that all parties have particular knowledge and need to be contributors.
6. Mutuality vs. unbalanced power
 - Discuss areas of reciprocity: how to recognize what participants have to gain, what each will be responsible for
7. Be aware of diversity (sub-cultures, various constituencies).
8. Don’t overestimate the internal coordination/collaboration of the other
9. Acknowledge differences in goals knowing that interests may be different among stakeholders. Set clear goals/expectations and be clear about priorities.
10. Be flexible. Acknowledge that different vehicles are needed to communicate and include participants e.g. location, language of meeting.
11. Stay aware of the environmental context
 - Be sensitive to these issues and make partners comfortable with each other’s setting
 - Acknowledge legitimacy of the work, in a variety of contexts
 - Check assumptions about the way(s) business is conducted:
 - Place
 - Size of groups
 - Language(s)
 - Comfort with speaking
12. Communicate: needs, expectations, goals *throughout* the project
13. Discuss possible “unanticipated” outcomes.

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14. Find ways to demonstrate results.
15. Be clear about the funder's expectations and issues
16. Who is the community partner in a college/community *sustainable* partnership? Define distinct needs of various participants – why might they want to participate? Who we approach e.g. school (teachers, etc) vs. parents makes a difference.
17. Employ participatory action research models.

NERCHE "SWINGING DOORS" WORKSHOP FOLLOW-UP FORM

Name: _____
Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

The New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE) is committed to supporting partnerships between colleges and universities, and communities. To that end, we can provide information, technical assistance, and more. If you need assistance, please let us know.

Yes, please contact me about the following:

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Please return this form to New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE), Graduate College of Education, UMass Boston, Boston, MA 02125-3393 fax (617)287-7747 For more information: nerche@umb.edu or 617-287-7740.

Defining Campus-Community Partnerships

“Good service projects do not happen without community input; the power and right to determine needs, priorities and capacities lies with the community. Together, university and community members can work on a collective plan of action that coordinates resources and interests. There are basically two levels of campus-community collaboration: partnerships between individual agencies and campus departments or offices, and institution-wide commitments to plan and work with the community.

Partnerships with community agencies are formal, long-term relationships founded on collaboration and the clear articulation of needs, capacities, responsibilities and expectations. Regular communication and evaluation and equal say in the design and implementation of projects are its defining features. Most campus service directors agree that partnerships with community agencies are more valuable (and labor intensive) than simple placement arrangements. Partnerships entail making a commitment to the agency, relinquishing control over aspects of the program and accepting new responsibilities.”

Kopek, Tamar Y. *Rethinking Tradition: Integrating Service with Academic Study on College Campuses*. Issued by Campus Compact. Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States, 1993. p 113.

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“Institutions and their leaders can ill-afford to remain oblivious to the needs and problems of their communities or, at best, remain passive observers on the sidelines because business-as-usual-today will bring results-as-usual tomorrow. Already the social, economic and moral costs are exacting and damaging. Conversely, there are social, economic and moral benefits associated with expanding partnerships. Thus, there is just cause for colleges and universities to become active players in their respective communities, collaborating with other s in addressing the new morbidity by connecting with, or helping transform, the systems serving children, youth and families.

Colleges and universities making these related commitments must change simultaneously with these service systems. If higher education institutions wish to become meaningful, permanent partners in this work, the “don’t do as I do, do as I say” doctrine must be abandoned....Explicit recognition of shared challenges and commitments helps lay the foundation for enduring partnerships. To join forces with communities, higher education must enter as an equal partner. The importance of such conditional equality is evident when the implications of its absence are considered. We do not collaborate with superiors; we obey them. Nor do we collaborate with inferiors; we tend to command and direct them....

Early in the learning process persons in higher education will be well advised to announce openly and regularly their need to change. ‘We’re in the same boat here’ is a cornerstone value for interprofessional collaboration and service integration in communities. It also must become part of the discourse in higher education as the challenges of conflicting constituencies and demands are confronted.

Lawson, Hal A. and Hooper-Briar, Katharine. *Expanding Partnerships: Involving Colleges and Universities in Interprofessional Collaboration and Service Integration*. Oxford, OH: The Danforth Foundation and the Institute for Educational Renewal at Miami University, 1994. p16-17.

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1. Partners have agreed upon mission, values, goals, and measurable outcomes for the partnership.
2. The relationship between partners is characterized by mutual trust, respect, genuineness, and commitment.
3. The partnership builds upon identified strengths and assets, but also addresses areas that need improvement.
4. The partnership balances power among partners and enables resources among partners to be shared.
5. There is clear, open and accessible communication between partners, making it an on-going priority to listen to each need, develop a common language, and validate/clarify the meaning of terms.
6. Roles, norms, and processes for the partnership are established with the input and agreement of all partners.
7. There is feedback to, among, and from all stakeholders in the partnership, with the goal of continuously improving the partnership and its outcomes.
8. Partners share the credit for the partnership's accomplishments.
9. Partnerships take time to develop and evolve over time.

From "Principles of Good Community Campus Partnerships," developed by Community-Campus Partnerships for Health (CCPH), San Francisco, CA.
<http://futurehealth.ucsf.edu/ccph/principles>

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"Opening the research enterprise to broad-based participation involves other challenges as well. Participation with others involves moving over, making space, and in some instances sharing or giving up certain kinds of power. There are many examples of such university-community collaborations, such as grassroots representation on advisory boards for research centers, citizen participation on research teams, co-ownership of data by community research partners, citizen panels to suggest research initiatives and to review prospective grant proposals, and new "equity protocols" ensuring the fair allocation of resources earmarked for community research projects.

These forms of participation affect other institutional procedures, such as the protection of academic freedom, intellectual property rights, confidentiality, and protocols relating to human subjects. Questions about these matters involve recognizing that there are competing rights and values in a democracy - hard issues from which researchers and their institutions should not be immune. Rather than being ignored or routinized through deadening procedures, these challenges should be injected into debates about research in administrative halls, faculty offices and classrooms.

Ansley, Fran & Gaventa, John. "Researching for Democracy & Democratizing Research." *Change*. Jan/Feb 1997, 29(1), p. 53.

NERCHE OUTREACH

Graduate College of Education

University of Massachusetts Boston

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP - WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Great State University (GSU) draws the majority of its 18,500 students from the surrounding area. Founded in 1901, the university began with the College of Arts and Sciences, and later established the Evening College, School of Education and School of Business Administration. Within these divisions a variety of undergraduate and graduate degree programs are currently offered. As a land-grant institution, Great State's mission emphasizes public service, along with educational and research functions. GSU's President tries to make the university more responsive to the surrounding communities by opening events to the public, offering meeting rooms and athletic facilities, and encouraging faculty to engage in professional service.

Lucinda Leon is a tenure-track faculty who teaches lab courses in biochemistry and has an active research agenda with NSF funding. She and one of her graduate students spend one Saturday each month with a group of teenage girls at her church to talk about career opportunities in the field of science. She hopes to hold next month's gathering at her lab, but has never talked with her colleagues in the department about these activities.

James Costa is director of the university's external relations office. He sits on a number of community boards as a university representative. One of those organizations, the Khmer Women's Health Project, has asked James if the university can provide space and logistical support for a conference on domestic violence next summer.

Darlene Mathews directs the university's teacher education program that received mediocre reviews in last year's re-accreditation process, primarily because of the lack of institutional involvement in K-12 school sites. Darlene has called a meeting with several former students who now work in the local school district to discuss possibilities of placing student teachers more systematically.

Reinaldo Yee, a graduate of GSU, is a program officer of the local community foundation that is seeking to fund a coalition of immigrant organizations to develop a citizenship education and advocacy project. He has invited one of his professors from the Legal Studies program to develop a proposal with the immigrant coalition for a three-year project based in the community that utilizes university student interns as the main staff.

NERCHE

The New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE) is dedicated to improving colleges and universities as workplaces, communities and organizations. NERCHE addresses this through policy formulation, research, consulting, and professional development. For more information: nerche@umb.edu or 617-287-7740.

Decoding the Culture of Community Organizations

Elements of a Community Organization's culture:

- There is a lot of diversity within the community e.g. peoples' roles, power, comfort with university involvement, etc.
- Sometimes there is an overestimation of the degree of power one individual has to move something forward.
- There is often little infrastructure to support new initiatives.
- There is always a focus on survival of the agency. Being grant driven can effect implementation, timelines, staffing & resources, program design and the need for tangible outcomes.
- There are often few rewards for individual achievement.
- Agencies often have to pay attention to regulations and liability issues.
- Volunteers are both an asset and a burden.

Community Organizations can bring...

- a knowledge of how to implement and apply theory.
- understanding of complex communities and how to work in and through a variety systems.
- knowledge of public policy.
- access to people with skills.
- practical expertise in working with communities and on complex issues.
- conflict resolution skills.
- an independent and fresh perspective...sometimes.

Staff in Community Organizations can't...

- spend a lot of time in meetings.
- spend a lot of time training and supervising volunteers.
- support new programs without having funding.
- change cycle of activities.
- ensure stable/supportive leaders.
- change their reward system.

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