

“ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY” WHITE PAPER

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Engage the Community: Preparing the Way

Introduction

Nationwide, in higher education and continuing education circles, engagement is at the forefront of a significant discourse on the relevance and value of educational institutions. Rooted in the 2006 Wingspread Conference debate on how to best create linkages amongst higher education institutions committed to engagement, authors Sandman, Holland and Bruns argue the following:

Community engagement is a movement—a movement that is transforming higher education and communities across the United States and around the world. The knowledge and expertise necessary to address the critical issues facing the world reside both in academic organizations and across local communities; they must work together to generate powerful and effective strategies that ensure a brighter future for all.¹

In a society and economy experiencing complex challenges, the traditional concept of educational outreach might be behind the times. The newly constituted Engagement Committee, one of the pillars of President Mark B. Rosenberg’s “Hit the Ground Running” strategy and commitment, probed the issue of conducting “God’s work”—admirable and rewarding—in a period of financial constraint. A pragmatic engagement strategy was considered important. The Committee envisioned engagement within the context of multiple ‘rings,’ embedded within multiple layers of society—as opposed to a linear progression or a ‘corridor.’ When writing about engagement, the social and economic progress brought about by regional integration schemes can provide a valuable lesson. Historically, integration has been the result of an evolutionary process, advanced through negotiations and compromise, the bundling of resources and shared risk-taking, a deep understanding of the needs of diverse participating members, and an abiding commitment to cooperation and ideals.

Community partnerships must be based on shared social responsibility, shared dialog, and shared commitment to lead change and progress. *Reciprocity* is integral to engagement; a vision, strategy, and yes, even in a highly austere financial environment, *investments* are required. A number of questions beg to be asked. How do we measure the impact of engagement on our institution, South Florida and the global community? What investments would be required to have a significant impact on the quality of life of a broader society in view of scarce resources and, for the most part, a zero-sum game?

¹ “Creating a Federation to Encourage Community Engagement,” Lorilee R. Sandman, Barbara A. Holland, and Karen Bruns, *Wingspread Journal*, 2007, page 25, www.henceonline.org/resources/institutional. (Based on the Johnson Foundation’s 2006 Wingspread Conference “Engagement in Higher Education: Building a Federation for Action.”)

At the same time, let us also not overlook the significant convener leadership role that FIU could play in addressing societal challenges and opportunities.

Before defining engagement, it is important to set the backdrop for this story—when talking about engagement at Florida International University, there is a compelling story that could already be told, as well as one that is unfolding within the context of a possible new era of engagement! Miami is a city of stark contrasts—on one side, you have the ‘Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous,’ and on the other, you have a case study in poverty, foreclosures, income inequality, double-digit unemployment, and low educational levels. The US Census survey places Miami’s poverty rate at over 26 percent, double the national average.² Miami has the undesirable distinction of being the fifth poorest big city in the US. More than a third of Miami residents living below the poverty level have less than a high school education.³

Poverty and a lack of education are intertwined. In a globally competitive knowledge-based economy, education and business know-how serve as the catalyst for economic growth, development, and prosperity. With the anticipated retirement of baby boomers impacting South Florida, a smaller workforce must become more skilled and versatile to meet the needs of a competitive global services economy. South Florida (Miami Dade and Broward counties) is particularly vulnerable due to the following factors:

- Only 22 percent of those age 25 + in Dade County have completed a bachelor’s degree; Broward County has 28 percent of their adult population with at least a bachelor’s degree—compared to D.C. with 46 percent and Boston with 42 percent.⁴
- Miami-Dade County School District, the fourth largest school district in the nation, has a 55 percent graduation rate.⁵ (It is also important to bear in mind that the number of English language learners in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools is 50,826.⁶) The Broward County School District has a 57 percent graduation rate.⁷ (The national average is 69 percent.)
- Florida ranks 37th in the nation in managerial, professional and technical jobs, 31st in workforce education, 26th in entrepreneurial activity, and 49th in the nation in the percentage of scientists and engineers in the workforce.⁸

Compounding these vulnerabilities is the fact that the *2007 State New Economy Index* reveals that *fewer than 40 percent* of students attending four-year institutions have

² “Miami’s poverty rate among the highest in US, Census report says,” by Wayne Tomkins, *Miami Today*, August 30, 2007.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ 2005 American Community Survey, US Census.

⁵ “High school graduation rates rise in some cities, but significant work remains to curb dropout crisis,” Reuters, April 22, 2009, Washington, D.C.

⁶ Miami-Dade County Public Schools Communication, Division of Bilingual Education and World Languages, September 3, 2009.

⁷ “Highest to lowest graduation rates in the Nation’s 50 largest school districts (Class of 2006),” Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, 2009 (<http://www.americaspromise.org>).

⁸ Kauffman Foundation’s *2008 State Economy Index: Benchmarking Economic Transformation in the States*.

proficient skills to compete in the global knowledge-based economy.⁹ Thus, engagement *begins* by ensuring a *quality education* for our students and future leaders. Engagement cannot be separated from the discourse on the value of education, accountability and the need to demonstrate strong student learning outcomes and ongoing quality improvement! Engagement should be seen within the prism of a) quality talent creation and broadening access to educational attainment, b) across-the-board participation by faculty, students and administrators in partnerships, c) an imperative for engaging with the K-12 school system, and d) regional, state and global leadership in economic development and quality of life issues. Based on research conducted in 2008 by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, University of Florida's David Denslow estimates that "one more 'college graduate' working in Florida would lift the state's output by \$120,000 a year."¹⁰ (Although there is some debate regarding the characteristics of the 'college graduate,' we cannot underestimate the direct and indirect economic benefits tied to degree completion.)

As we know, the economic *malaise* has not been contained within the United States and Florida. As Z. Joe Kulenovic, director of Enterprise Florida's Marketing and Strategic Intelligence informs us in the spring 2009 *Florida Research Economic Network Newsletter*, "The world economy is now in the grips of its first synchronized downturn in sixty years."¹¹ Education and engagement should be seen as a vital stimulus package, contributing to the development of the most valuable common *currency*—human capital. FIU's degree programs in five countries¹² abroad catalyze international business opportunities, research, cross-cultural exchanges and a better understanding of the issues, and opportunities that interconnect the global economy.

Our analysis of community trends and challenges can lead to a considerable shortcoming if we do not learn about needs *directly* from the community! Let us begin by acknowledging that the community brings strengths and foresight to any engagement proposition—collaboration is key.

Engagement—The What and the Why

As a leading public research university located in a vibrant international urban center, Florida International University must foster and sustain a substantial commitment to community engagement. Engagement should be seen within the context of the discovery, application, and preservation of knowledge and artistic or scholarly creativity that can improve and serve the regional community and greater society. Moreover, engagement is at the core of the vision of an urban public research: faculty, staff, and students should intentionally collaborate with community and global partners to address critical societal and economic issues. This commitment is embedded in the nature of

⁹ Kauffman Foundation's *2007 State New Economy Index: Benchmarking Economic Transformation in the States*, p.10.

¹⁰ "The recession and structural change in Florida," David Denslow, University of Florida Bureau for Business and Economic Research, *Florida Economic Research Network Newsletter*, Spring 2009. (Based on the July 2008 report by J. Abel and T. Gabe of the New York Federal Reserve Bank.)

¹¹ "Florida's international trade: What next?" Z. Joe Kulenovic, Marketing and Strategic Intelligence, Enterprise Florida, page 15, spring 2009.

¹² These countries are the following: China, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Mexico, and Panama.

the instructional, research, and service roles of the faculty, students, staff, and alumni. As the previous section richly attests, given the particular needs of the regional and international communities, FIU has an important role to play in engaging with community partners to address genuine and pressing social challenges. This engagement is important not only because it is a moral imperative, but also because community engagement engenders a valuable reciprocity to the University. Collaboration paves the path towards reciprocity!

Increasingly universities are not only reinvigorating their commitments to community engagement, but many are endeavoring to measure and evaluate their engagement activities. Indeed, there are several national programs which provide guidance and criteria for the assessment of an institution's level of community engagement. In an era of fiscal challenges and under-funding it would, on the surface, seem inappropriate for FIU to seek membership in one of these organizations, but these initiatives may nonetheless assist us. The well-being of the University is tied to the well-being of a broader community

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement for Teaching characterizes 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.¹³

Its voluntary Classification Scheme for measuring an educational institution's level of community engagement includes three categories:

Curricular engagement: identifying institutions “where teaching, learning, and scholarship engage faculty, students, and community in mutually beneficial and respectful collaboration. Their interactions address community-identified needs, deepen students’ civic and academic learning, enhance community well-being, and enrich the scholarship of the institution;”

Outreach and partnerships: identifying institutions that provide “compelling evidence of one or both of two approaches to community engagement. Outreach focuses on the application and provision of institutional resources for community use with benefits to both campus and community. Partnerships focuses on collaborative interactions with community and related scholarship for the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration, and application of knowledge, information, and resources (research, capacity building, economic development, etc.);” and,

Curricular engagement and outreach and partnerships: which includes institutions with substantial commitments in both areas described above.”

The questionnaire used by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement for Teaching to classify educational institutions levels of community engagement is included in **Appendix A**.

¹³ Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching website: <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/classifications>

Another institutional assessment tool for universities to use to evaluate its engagement in regional economic development has been developed under the guidance of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) Commission on Innovation, Competitiveness and Economic Prosperity (CICEP). The categories to be assessed include: 1) engage and assert institutional leadership, 2) create a supportive culture, 3) ensure university activities benefit the public, 4) develop an innovative economy, 5) provide relevant educational opportunities and programs, 6) promote openness, accessibility, and responsiveness, and, 7) communicate contributions, successes, and achievements.¹⁴ The assessment tool is reproduced in **Appendix B**.

As the University community reflects upon its accomplishments and seeks to refine its vision on its engagement aspirations, definitions from organizations such as the Carnegie Foundation and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities are likely to be useful in helping to chart the course of its community engagements. At a minimum, however, FIU's intentional community engagement would encompass the following dimensions:

1. **Instruction:** FIU will enrich students' understanding of the challenges of regional and global partners and will seek to equip its students with the skills and tools necessary to address these challenges. FIU will offer a curriculum that aligns with changing regional needs. Through its educational programs, students will be prepared for the current and future regional workforce and post-graduation career pathways. Moreover, FIU is committed to providing its students with multiple opportunities to engage in research and direct service activities which allow intentional engagement in activities designed to address the needs of partners.
This dimension directly supports the 2nd pillar of President Rosenberg's "Hit the Ground Running" strategy---achieve results-oriented student-centered academic excellence.
2. **Research and creative activity:** FIU will encourage, promote, and sustain activities which address local needs, long-term regional priorities, and the improvement of society broadly.
This dimension directly supports the 3rd pillar of President Rosenberg's "Hit the Ground Running strategy"---enhance quality and impact of research and creative initiatives.
3. **Strengthen university-industry partnerships for economic development:** Promote significant engagement of its professional schools with the regional economy to address problems and needs identified in cooperation with our partners through continuing education formalized structures (e.g., advisory groups and forums) and applied research/consulting projects.
4. **Health:** Assist and improve neighborhood and community health by active participation in partnerships with local and regional agencies and groups.
5. **Innovation:** Encourage the development and growth of 21st century employment opportunities especially in the biomedical, alternative energy, health, and environmental preservation areas, and

¹⁴ The Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities' website:
<http://www.aplu.org?NetCommunity/Documentdoc?d=1753>

6. Social Services: FIU will actively encourage its faculty, staff, students, and alumni to become pro-actively engaged in activities which assess and address critical social issues in concert with regional and international partners.

As **Appendix C** will show, the university community is already significantly engaged!

Engagement—What is the current status?

FIU students, faculty, and staff, across all colleges, schools, and administrative departments, are actively involved in hundreds of community initiatives that are local, regional, state, national, and international in nature. These initiatives run the gamut from engaging students in community-based projects, to the provision of institutional resources for community use, to collaborative interactions. FIU faculty members are a valuable resource for our community, serving as a source of expertise and community leaders.

This existing culture of engagement is largely invisible to the wider FIU community, in large part because of ongoing skepticism about whether such work will be recognized and rewarded. In the spirit of making this work more visible, we offer in **Appendix C** a partial list of engagement activities conducted by faculty, staff, and students.

Over the long-term, we suggest that FIU become increasingly proactive about publicizing the engagement work that already exists—internally and to communities beyond the campuses. FIU should recognize the accomplishments of those advancing an engagement mission and use their contributions as a springboard for coordinated, future engagement efforts.

Community-Engaged Institutions Recognized by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in 2006 and 2008

Over 100 institutions have been classified as being community engaged by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in its 2006 and 2008 classifications¹⁵. Among these were other public, urban universities like FIU, including University of Cincinnati, University of Houston, Michigan State University, North Carolina State University, and Portland State University. Other state universities included in the classification were Florida Gulf Coast University and the University of South Florida. Miami-Dade College was also included in this classification.

These institutions benefited from the process of documenting their community engagement practices. The universities remarked that the process provided a framework to reflect on structures, systems, and programs to support community engagement. In most cases, the universities found that engagement activities were much more widespread than previously thought. Moreover, the process identified opportunities for more connection and collaboration on community engagement initiatives. The University of Houston summarized the overall benefits accordingly:

¹⁵ The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching website: <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/classifications>

This committee deems the Carnegie Classification and its review processes an excellent nationally-relevant vehicle for describing our relationships and commitments to the communities and constituencies we serve. It sharpens our awareness of important relationships between teaching and learning with faculty and students as we seek to enhance their academic success and their civic-minded preparedness in a world that is growing more mutually dependent every year. Most important, this review process provides clear evidence of how important this city and metropolitan area are to this university and our willingness to share the responsibility and efforts needed for mutual success in the future.

—University of Houston¹⁶

The article “Attaining Carnegie’s Community Engagement Classification” by James J. Zuiches and the NC State Community Engagement Task Force¹⁷ offers a set of recommendations for universities who wish to pursue the classification.

In developing a strategic plan for community engagement, the institutions included in the Carnegie classification can be studied to understand the different ways in which community engagement can be operationalized.

A Five-Year Vision

A strategic plan focused on engagement needs to begin with a vision of what engagement would resemble in the future. The Engagement Committee identified examples of potential initiatives that could be in place within the next five years. These initiatives would demonstrate the commitment of the university to community engagement.

Students

The vision is to create a college experience that develops active and engaged citizens who take responsibility for addressing social issues that affect the local, national, and global community. This experience would be based on opportunities, programs, services, processes, and mechanisms. Students would benefit from the following:

- Opportunities in academic areas to complete service-learning courses as part of programs of study.
- The means and processes for holding open forums to foster public dialogue on problem-solving with multiple stakeholders.
- Participation in university/community oversight boards that address real issues facing the local community.
- Internship opportunities organized with community groups and public sector organizations that serve the public interest.
- Channels (such as university committees and task forces) to contribute opinions and values to administrative offices and program centers.

¹⁶ *ibid.*

- Official transcripts that document civic engagement.
- The ability to pursue mini-grants or seed money to begin sustainable social entrepreneurial projects that benefit the community.
- University-wide systems to recognize engagement accomplishments and efforts.

Health

- Establish recruitment and retention programs for admissions to the College of Medicine /Health Sciences for underrepresented minorities from South Florida.
- Establish educational and research programs aimed at improving the quality of, and access to, health care in South Florida and to educate physicians for medical practice in South Florida.

Environment

- Promote and practice 'green' on campus and in the neighborhood through sustainable construction, energy preservation, recycling, flexible workdays, car pooling practices, waste management, and water preservation.
- Serve as a think tank for research and development and policy-making on South Florida's environmental issues in the areas of the Everglades, marine environment, water/ground water, sea water rising, CO2 footprint, hurricane, and global warming.
- The new School of Environment and Society (SEAS), based at BBC in a new building, has extensive and growing outreach to the community at local, regional, and global levels. Faculty from the natural and social sciences and humanities (with environmental interests) have extensive engagement within the Miami-Dade and Broward school districts and beyond, interface with government entities at local to federal levels, and continue to develop working relationships with NGOs to ensure that FIU provides not only an understanding of environmental issues but communication to all stakeholders.

Economic Development

- Neighborhood Development: As an urban university, FIU has both the responsibility and the opportunity to engage with its surrounding cities, and play a vital role in developing master plans, setting the agenda for appropriate transportation corridors, revitalizing neighborhoods, and spurring economic growth. Successful examples of such engagements can be seen at the University of Illinois at Chicago and the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. In both cases, the cities embraced the development and growth of the universities into their own planning to revitalize neighborhoods around the campuses. Such initiatives are often accompanied by a strong partnership with the private sector. The partnership would rely on university and mixed use real estate development to anchor local economic growth. FIU can use *healthcare, technology, student/faculty housing, and hospitality* (hotels/restaurants) as the four main elements of its neighborhood development program at and around

each of its campuses. The initiatives currently in place in Sweetwater and the Doral should be extended to other areas.

- **High-Tech Metropolis:** FIU, in partnership with the industry and the other anchor universities in Southeast Florida (FAU, NSU, MDC, and UM) could help plan and establish a network of multi-campus research parks that would help turn South Florida into a high-tech metropolis, such as that of the Research Triangle Park in North Carolina. Each node would act as an incubator and a research park built through public-private partnership. Granting “Economic Development Zone” designation to the research parks would make them more attractive to emerging R&D companies. The research parks would help move firms into sister industrial parks that would bring high tech manufacturing to South Florida. Three potential areas include *biomedical*, *energy*, and *environment*.
- **Workforce Development:** This is a ‘leg’ of economic development. A current initiative entitled Residents Engaged in Neighborhood Enrichment through Workforce and Economic Development (RENEWED) aims to establish a collaborative partnership between FIU, surrounding cities, public schools, and industry to develop re-tooling and re-training in areas of interest to the industry. The partnership embraces a holistic view of workforce development based on the needs of the industry and the strategic plans of the cities—a workforce development program from training to placement in tandem with the revitalization of communities. One area of interest is emerging ‘green’ technologies through training of a ‘green collar’ workforce.
- **Executive and Professional Continuing Education Center:** FIU would have a major continuing education facility on the Modesto A. Maidique campus including residence halls and conference rooms where major conferences and educational programs bring in hundreds of executives, professionals, and community leaders each year.
- **Public Policy:** FIU (and its various colleges) must emerge as *think tanks* to help policy makers set a sustainable economic agenda for South Florida. The agenda would be driven by issues related to transportation, land use development, building regulations, environmental regulations, and the likes.

Social Issues

The South Florida region is home to a significant number of immigrants and refugees, retirees and older adults, returning veterans, and children and families at-risk. With this ever increasing rise in vulnerable populations comes an increase in the social problems and issues that face the community, including mental illness, addiction, domestic violence, crime, and child abuse. Miami-Dade County has been described as home to the largest percentage of people with severe mental illness of any urban community in the United States¹⁸ and Florida’s mental health care system

¹⁸ Miami-Dade County Office of the Mayor, *Mayor’s Mental Health Task Force Final Report*, 2007. Retrieved April 29, 2009 from http://www.miamidade.gov/mayor/mental_health.asp

received a grade of “D” in 2009, down from a “C” in 2006.¹⁹ With the great diversity of this community also comes the need for cultural competence in addressing social problems such as child welfare needs and a lack of neighborhood services.

These examples, along with many other compelling social and community needs, point towards recognition of the need for FIU to partner with community agencies and programs to seek solutions to problems of our shared community. This engagement and collaboration of FIU faculty, staff, students and alumni with the community includes:

- Increased student involvement in the community through internships, field practice, and service-learning requirements.
- Development of annual interdisciplinary forums centered around key social issues (e.g., homelessness, child abuse, addictions) that bring together the community and the university to address the issues and seek solutions.
- Development of a collaborative university/community center that addresses the coordination of mental health, substance abuse, and physical health geared towards the early identification of problems and promotion of resolutions.
- Interdisciplinary student teams (i.e., social work, nursing, public health, medicine, health related majors) working in underserved areas of the community to identify gaps in services and assist in providing necessary resources/referrals to the neighborhoods.
- Collaboration between the Miami-Dade Health Department and the Stempel College of Public Health and Social Work in on-going research regarding community public health issues.

Education

- Students: Students completing undergraduate degrees in teacher education would continue to do a minimum of 400 hours of service learning activities at schools in the local districts in South Florida. The field hours would be tied to courses required in each program. The hours would be conducted in low performing schools. The students would initiate case studies with action plans to enhance learning opportunities for children and youth and reduce existing achievement gaps.
- Non-teacher education majors would also provide a minimum of 30 hours of service activities in low performing schools and agencies serving underrepresented/disadvantaged groups.
- Graduate students at the Master’s level would conduct action research projects addressing local problems. These engaged research activities would provide an opportunity to identify issues/problems affecting our community (e.g., the increasing number of D and F schools in Miami-Dade County Public Schools and Broward County Public Schools, the fourth and sixth largest school districts in the U.S.) and design studies to improve existing conditions. Students would

¹⁹ Aron, L., Honberg, R., Duckworth, K., *Grading the States 2009: A Report on America’s Health Care System for Adults with Serious Mental Illness*, National Alliance on Mental Illness, Arlington, Virginia.

collaborate with faculty in the dissemination of these projects via presentations at faculty assemblies, conferences, and scholarly publications.

- Doctoral students would design and conduct dissertations that target societal problems and implement research studies to meet local and global needs. Efforts would be made to build collaboration with partners and formulate research designs appropriate to the context, generating the discovery and application of new knowledge. Doctoral students would collaborate with faculty in the dissemination of their studies through scholarly publications and conference presentations. Studies would be published in journals that focus on the scholarship of engagement.
- The role of the College of Education's Research Conference would be expanded to maximize its potential to address local community issues. We would aim to create new partnerships with community/corporate agencies to present collaborative research projects that exemplify best practices.
- Faculty: The faculty in the College of Education would have an enhanced presence at local schools to address specific problems based on their research and areas of expertise. Teacher education faculty would continue to meet state mandated hours of service at the local schools, targeting low performing schools. Faculty would have an enhanced role in leadership positions on local advisory boards/councils that address local issues, with a special emphasis on local school district committees. Faculty would deliver courses at local schools and community agencies to build greater community connectivity.
- Faculty would conduct forums that address specific problems in the community. We would create working groups to develop strategic and comprehensive action research plans, targeting areas to bring about change.
- Faculty who are engaged in the community would be recognized as engaged leaders. We would extend a special recognition, modeled after the Frost Professorship, to faculty with exemplary research productivity. The faculty would receive financial support for further professional development.
- Faculty would secure increased funding from federal, state, and foundation sources to address specific problems/research areas impacting our community. Efforts would be made to build partnerships with local community sources to develop proposals to address challenges.

The faculty values community engagement and believes it is part of the culture of our institution. The College of Education faculty demonstrates a deep commitment to generating knowledge and applying it to local and global issues affecting education.

Law

- All law students and faculty would participate in at least ten hours of pro-bono work each year. (Students would need to complete thirty hours of pro-bono work before graduation.) Students and faculty together would develop pro-bono projects to meet community needs.
- There would be an active Street Law program through which law students teach about legal rights and responsibilities in public high schools, prisons and community groups.

- Each law student would have the opportunity to participate in a clinical law course. The law clinics would provide free legal services and community education and advocacy to meet access to justice community needs. The law clinics would work with other colleges in the university to meet community needs through interdisciplinary approaches, such as improving health outcomes through addressing legal problems that may affect a child's health.
- Law faculty and students would engage in research on legal problems identified by community organizations.
- Community members and members of the legal profession would regularly speak at the law school to inform law students and faculty about community and global needs for access to justice.

International

- Our international credentials are integral to the university. International programs and activities should stay ahead of the curve in terms of trends related to internationalization of programs and modes of delivery. Offshore degree programs should be expanded via partnerships such as Hospitality's partnership with the Tianjin University of Commerce, in Tianjin, China. Study abroad (both short- and long-term) opportunities should be explored, as well as funding sources. Offshore degree programs have the potential to serve as a bridge to non-credit international soft-skills and contract training.
- The School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) should serve at the forefront of critical thinking and research in areas related to conflict resolution, public administration, and area studies. SIPA should convene regular meetings to brief the university community on issues of international relevance, helping to identify collaborative opportunities between the colleges and international arena.
- Through an expansion of global partnerships, FIU would enhance its leadership role for the betterment of a broader society. The business, health, and environment areas could further pave the way for reciprocal international partnerships for FIU. Alumni living abroad could help identify viable partnerships.
- FIU might consider joining the Seattle International Foundation's Initiative for Global Development. This network of prominent partners could serve as an incubator of other opportunities and funding sources. We envision greater synergies being explored vis-à-vis FIU's international areas and philanthropic entities, such as foundations.
- FIU should host major international conferences on health, development, environment, trade/integration, governance, security, and poverty reduction. Moreover, students should be able to avail themselves of international service learning opportunities.
- Working with governments, foundations and the private sector, FIU should serve as the hemisphere's leading entrepreneurship continuing education institution. Our entrepreneurship programs should reach diverse sectors and populations.
- FIU should consider funding other QEP-type initiatives with an international focus.

Strategic Issues Impacting the University's Ability to Fully Embrace Engagement with the Community as Part of our Mission

Advancing a vision of an “engaged institution” requires the careful examination of the various dimensions that impact its final institutionalization. The notion of an engaged university poses challenges stemming from the need to re-conceptualize aspects of the value system embedded within the academy. They involve changes in the ways that we perceive our mission, and how we value and reward, new roles for faculty, administrators, staff, and students vis-à-vis the community. This new era creates opportunities to reflect on new paradigms that expand the vision of scholarship and validate Ernest Boyer’s “scholarship of application/engagement.” It must be realized that although the missions of our institutions – teaching, research, and service – remain constant, the context in which these missions are carried out are very different in today’s urban environments²⁰, and thus, pose a new set of realities that must be confronted if we are to remain viable entities within the larger society. Furthermore, engagement must have academic legitimacy if it purports to become part of the culture of the institution, and efforts to achieve greater alignment between the scholarship of engagement and the scholarship of discovery must be realized for this vision to be actualized.²¹

A commitment to realizing the goal of community engagement for our institution must include a dialogue addressing important questions impacting its implementation. Several reports have identified important areas for consideration that assist us in formulating questions for discussion.^{22,23,24,25,26,27}

These include:

1. How do we define community engagement? Is community engagement part of our value system and is it integrated within the fabric of our institution? Is it an element of our tripartite mission of research, teaching and service? Is it embedded in the culture of our university or is it relegated solely to a service perspective?
2. Have we achieved a level of maturity as an institution when we can assume a greater civic role toward our local and global communities and engage in

²⁰ Hyman, D., Ayers, I.E., Cash, E.H., Fahline, D.D., Gold, D.P., Gugevich, E.A., Hermann, R.O., Jurs, P.C., Roth, D.E., Swisher, J.D., Whittington, M.S., and Wright, H.S. (2000). *Uniscope 2000: A multidimensional model of scholarship for the 21st century*. University Park, PA: The Uniscope Learning Community. Retrieved on September 3, 2009 from

<http://scholarshipofengagement.org/benchmarking/bei.html>

²¹ American Association of State Colleges and Universities. (2002). *Stepping forward as stewards of place: A guide for leading public engagement in state colleges and universities*. Washington: DC. Retrieved September 3, 2009 from http://www.aascu.org/pdf/stewardsofplace_02.pdf

²² *ibid.*

²³ Boyer, E.L. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. Princeton, N.J.: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

²⁴ Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) Committee on Engagement. (2005). *Engaged scholarship: A resource guide*.

²⁵ *ibid.*, Hyman, D., Ayers, I.E., Cash, E.H., et al.

²⁶ Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities. (1999). *Returning to our roots. The engaged institution*. **National Association of State Universities and Land-grant Colleges, Washington, D.C. Retrieved September 2, 2009, from**

http://www.nasulgc.org/publications/Kellogg/Kellogg1999_Engage.pdf

²⁷ O’Neil, H. F., Bensimon, E. M., Diamond, M. A., & Moore, M. R. (1999). Designing and implementing an academic scorecard. *Change*, Nov/Dec. Retrieved September, 1, 2009 from <http://scholarshipofengagement.org/benchmarking/bei.html>

- efforts to help problem-solve critical issues facing them? How can we as an institution best contribute to the democratic principles of social responsibility?
3. How do we address selected faculty's and administrators' resistance to the notion of valuing community engagement activities as scholarly work, stemming from traditional interpretations of what constitutes valued activities in the academy – the oftentimes competing frames among Ernest Boyer's scholarship of research, teaching and application?
 4. To what extent will community engagement permeate all levels of the institution – integrated into its policies, salary and reward structures, strategic priorities, university, units and department mission statements, personnel hiring and evaluation processes? Will community engagement become a systemic element of the framework of the institution?
 5. Do we as a community of scholars place value on the “scholarship of engagement” involving the application of knowledge and not solely its discovery?
 6. Are community engagement initiatives aligned with our research efforts and valued as research that focuses on problem-solving activities impacting local and global communities?
 7. What role will community engagement play in curricular approval decisions and pedagogical practices? Will community engagement be tied to required didactic and experiential activities for our student graduates?
 8. How will community engagement contribute to the marketability of faculty within a national and international landscape? How will we negotiate the institutional versus individual goals when community engagement is promoted as a valued indicator of performance?
 9. To what extent is our leadership providing examples of community engagement? Will these play a role in their annual evaluations?
 10. What will constitute professional standards/indicators for the scholarship of application? How should those activities be documented? What are exemplars of community engagement? What level of professional development will deans, chairs, and other administrators receive in understanding and evaluating outstanding community engagement activities? How will tenure and promotion guidelines reflect this new vision for the university?
 11. Are there institutional mechanisms/infrastructure in place that recognize/reward evidence of community engagement efforts on the part of faculty, administrators and staff? Do we honor the work of those who give to the community and engage in research efforts that have local and global impact?
 12. Have we begun to give value to sponsored projects that do not generate the high F&A associated with purely research-based initiatives but offer important services to the community and impact our local landscape? (E.g., work with children and families in the local schools, preparation of local teachers for urban schools, work with early childhood education providers to enhance the provision of services offered in our local communities, preparation of special education leaders to assume critical roles in local and national school districts). How do we negotiate conflicts between university priorities?

13. Should we create an organizational structure/office that coordinates the various aspects of community engagement activities at the levels of research, teaching, and service?

What Approaches Should Be Employed in Developing a Strategy for Engaging the Community

FIU's history over the past twenty years demonstrates that the university knows how to achieve a goal when it is clearly articulated at the highest level—and students, faculty and staff are rewarded for work towards achieving the goal. In 1986, President Maidique announced that FIU would become a top research university. Great strides have been made towards achieving this status. In 2009, a key approach in becoming a national leader in engagement involves President Rosenberg making this a priority and setting up mechanisms for rewarding engaged faculty, staff and students.

As a first step in meeting this new priority, the President might empower people in each unit to lead brainstorm sessions to explore how to generate quality, cost-effective engagements. At these department forums, those who have experience in engaging with the community can be asked to share their experience, success stories and knowledge. The departments would need to talk about the internal barriers that currently fail to reward community engagement and how to eliminate these barriers. A major challenge involves aligning the institutional goal of community engagement with the individual goals of faculty, staff and students.

The university would need to develop incentives for community engagement and appropriate forms of recognition for such engagement. Successful examples of engagement already exist and these should be publicized and further developed. Examples of possible engagement strategies include:

1. Students: Place community engagement activities on student transcripts. Recognize student engagement at graduation. Provide funding for student-initiated projects and stipends for students to work with community organizations.
2. Faculty and Staff: Reward faculty and staff at appropriate university and college ceremonies and events. Provide money incentives for engaged scholarship and other activities. Train faculty at conferences and workshops on how to conduct engaged research. Provide grants for curriculum development, similar to the Kauffman professor awards for introducing entrepreneurship into courses.
3. Leadership and Coordination: Set up a central office that would become a clearinghouse for publicizing engagement activities by students, staff, and faculty. This office should bring together members of different colleges for interdisciplinary engagement efforts.
4. Community: Involve representatives of community organizations and leaders in the strategic planning process, including grassroots groups, representatives from the school districts, health partners, and foundations.
5. Impact: Analyze the effectiveness of community initiatives that are already in place.
6. Needs Assessment: Define areas of need for engagement.

In addition to such strategies, there must be an effort to raise funds to support these activities and generate ideas. One approach is to organize meetings at homes to discuss community engagement initiatives. Another idea is to co-host community events, such as organizing a joint meeting on engagement sponsored by FIU and the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce.

Finally, the University should decide whether to apply for the Carnegie classification as an engaged university or seek some other national form of recognition. It would be helpful to convene a group to analyze the institutional costs and benefits of a Carnegie application.

Suggested Initiatives

The suggested initiatives have the potential to serve as a forward-thinking action plan to guide the development of FIU as an engaged institution. The following represents a mosaic of ideas to solidify—and calibrate—FIU’s credentials as an engaged institution.

Expand the university’s engagement knowledge base:

1. Conduct a university-wide audit to identify current engagement activities.
2. Conduct a fact-finding mission to learn about best practices of universities recognized as Carnegie Foundation “Institutions of Community Engagement.”
3. Develop and conduct a survey of community needs.

Make FIU’s existing culture of engagement more visible:

1. Build a website to serve as an ongoing and adaptable source of information about engagement activities, along with information on the latest grants being offered by philanthropic organizations and the government to support engagement.
2. Create a self-regulating “clearinghouse” wiki run by faculty, students, and community partners for sharing resources, coordinating efforts, and linking potential partners.

Sustain, expand, and fund FIU’s culture of engagement:

1. Establish an office to coordinate and lead efforts to develop FIU’s credentials as an engaged institution. The office would be responsible for identifying opportunities and funding to engage in community and global development, in collaboration with the colleges and units. The office would serve as a champion of engagement, documenting—and *disseminating news about*-qualitative and quantitative impacts in regards to economic growth and development, job creation, technology transfers, quality of life improvements, pipelines towards higher education and learning outcomes tied to curricular engagement. The office would be responsible for developing PR and marketing collaterals to advance FIU’s engagement commitment. The office would model itself after North Carolina State University’s (NCSU) Office of Extension, Engagement, and Economic Development. The FIU office would advance the *convener* role of the

university, establishing community and global forums to identify challenges, opportunities and creative solutions to enhance community well-being. Students, industry, government and other stakeholders would be invited to attend. Moreover, the office would track and assess engagement activities and assume a key role in coordinating leadership development trainings and opportunities.

2. Revise FIU's mission and vision statements to emphasize the university's commitment to engagement more explicitly.
3. In the vein of FIU's "Strategic Initiatives," allocate a competitive status to engagement activities, funding accordingly.
4. Organize and launch an Engagement Week/Month at FIU, convening students and stakeholders to discuss challenges and solutions through partnerships; bring to the forefront 'impacts' related to engagement. The recommended central coordinating engagement office (please see No. 1 above) would facilitate the events. The initiative would also serve to identify and secure reciprocal partnerships and funding.
5. Maximize opportunities through FIU's "Florida Campus Compact" membership. Currently, FIU has a small grant from this organization. We should pursue further granting support for community-based research, service learning and/or sustainable partnerships.

Leadership Development:

1. Enable engagement veterans to share their experiences and knowledge with interested faculty who are unsure how to begin to engage. Activities could include regular faculty trainings and university-wide conferences and forums about the opportunities and challenges of such work.
2. Develop engagement advisory committees within departments for experienced faculty to serve as ongoing mentors. Such intra-departmental committees might, in the longer term, produce inter-departmental committees that can coordinate partnerships across disciplines, as well as across communities.
3. Reward and provide incentives for engagement leadership and engagement impacts, such as revising tenure and promotion guidelines.
4. Maximize opportunities through benchmarking and leadership development. FIU should send representatives to the June 7-11, 2010 Engagement Academy for University Leaders, sponsored by Virginia Tech (a Carnegie Foundation classified elective community engagement institution). President Mark B. Rosenberg would need to nominate participants.

Educational Access:

1. Seek to create *pipelines* to higher education (along the lines of "It's the economy, stupid!"). We should facilitate the engagement path through dual enrollment programs and recognize credit for lifelong learning experiences to encourage further educational attainment.
2. Expand community education offerings, including the development of community learning centers.

3. Seek an Osher Foundation re-entry grant and endowment. In order to compete successfully, FIU must demonstrate that it has in place programs and services to promote degree completion for adult students. The programs must be specifically targeted to an older prospective student body.
4. Develop industry consortia as a way to provide technical assistance from University experts to the community and develop pipelines to FIU's continuing education programs.

Local and Global Partnerships:

1. Use BBC and the Engineering Center as platforms to develop a progressive, industry/educational/residential hub similar to NCSU's Centennial Campus. The Centennial Campus brings together government, industry, entrepreneurs, engineering/biosciences and technology leaders (internally and externally), and education as a major research and entrepreneurial center. The Campus represents an ongoing partnership to incubate business and diffuse technology.
2. Develop and strengthen partnerships with veterans' organizations. Seek funds from foundations and government to support these partnerships and the delivery of services.
3. Identify new opportunities for partnerships abroad, including offshore programs (expanding on current initiatives in China, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Mexico) and target trading partners, especially emerging markets.

Charting a Course Toward the Future

Prior to suggesting indicators of success, we set forth the following engagement vision for Florida International University:

As an educational and economic force in the life of South Florida and beyond, we seek through engagement to create a prosperous future for present and future generations. We aspire to create and sustain prosperity through quality education and access, community-based research, service-learning opportunities for students, and innovative—and mutually beneficial—partnerships. We recognize that the well-being of the university is tied to the well-being of a broader community.

Our engagement commitment and practices will enhance competitiveness through the following: talent creation and lifelong learning; job generation/entrepreneurship; active citizenry; generation and application of new knowledge; technology transfers; economic growth and development; the health of the community; and social responsibility and justice.

Our engagement leads to demonstrable impact for the institution and regional, state and global communities. Engagement is a point of pride for the university and broader community.

The spectrum of engagement commitments is wide, depending on the degree of engagement we pursue. We propose the following *indicators of success* to provoke critical thinking on engagement as a *defining principle*:

Institutional Goals and Aspirations

1. Engagement articulated in the vision, mission and strategic plans as an enduring value.

Institutional Leadership

2. Evidence of institutional leadership and commitment from the president, board of trustees, vice presidents, deans, and chairs—as well as promotion of engagement as a priority.
3. Leadership development opportunities for faculty, students and internal community.

Infrastructure

4. Establishment of a central office to lead, coordinate and implement engagement activities and measure results.
5. Campus-wide mechanisms to track and assess engagement and impact.
6. Campus-wide mechanisms to obtain feedback from the community on critical areas of social and economic development and, the converse, mechanisms for the community to learn about university plans, aspirations, and competencies vis-à-vis these areas.

Guidelines/Policies

7. Tenure and promotion and hiring practices that value engagement.
8. Recognition of engaged teaching/research practices.

Internal and External Community Involvement

9. Evidence of student and faculty-led engagement initiatives.
10. Reciprocal community partnerships.
11. Community participation on strategic planning and engagement.

Innovation and Outcomes

12. Curriculum re-design to provide more service-learning opportunities, community-based research and generation of new services and products due to partnerships.
13. Retention increase as a result of engagement activities.
14. Technology transfers.
15. Community-based research and learning across-the-board.
16. Revenues generated from partnerships and net contributions.
17. Generation of impact statements on socio-economic, environmental and technological return of engagement for both the University and the community via tools and instruments. Demonstrate impact of creative problem-solving and ability to 'take the pulse' of the community.

18. Secure Carnegie Foundation's elective classification on community engagement.

Funding

19. Scholarships to support engagement activities.

20. Internal university ongoing investments to advance engagement as strategic and competitive.

21. External funding to support engagement from the community (including donors and alumni) and philanthropic entities.

Branding

22. Evidence of a consistent—and compelling—engagement message in PR, marketing materials and external communications.

23. Convey the ongoing story (in a human interest way) of the university's commitment to enhancing student learning, continuous quality improvement and workforce development.

24. Present engagement as a source of pride for the university (evidenced already in the array of engagement activities and values manifested by the faculty in

Appendix C).

Metrics would eventually need to be tied to these indicators. Moreover, the *alignment* of the engagement vision and mission with the leadership, structures, and systems will determine whether engagement is meaningful and sustainable. *Quality* drives the indicators of success.