

TRANSFORM

THE JOURNAL OF ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP



CAN THE CRITICALLY ENGAGED UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE
FIND UNITY IN DIVERSITY?

TRANSFORM

The Journal of Engaged Scholarship is an open-access, peer reviewed, multi-disciplinary platform for engaged scholars and practitioners. We welcome submissions from the research, conceptual, theoretical and practice domains across the breadth of the engagement agenda in higher education.

The journal provides a space for critical inquiry, reflection and review published online and in hard copy by Engagement Australia.

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Publisher:

Engagement Australia Ltd
PO Box 411, Drayton North QLD 4350

ISSN Numbers:

Online Version: ISSN 2207-4651
Hard Copy ISSN: 2207-3876

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Acknowledgement of Flinders University for their generous work in the design and printing of the Issue.



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Universities themselves have become semi-detached from the communities they claim to serve whilst simultaneously failing to develop a curriculum which addresses key problems.





| INTRODUCTION CAN THE CRITICALLY ENGAGED UNIVERSITY FIND UNITY IN DIVERSITY?

PROFESSOR JIM NYLAND – EDITOR



INTRODUCTION

This edition is challenged by Professor Glyn Davis' notable valediction in response to

receiving the AFR Higher Education Lifetime Achievement Award to get to the next emerging stage of engagement for Australian universities.

The emerging theme is that 'engagement' is a very diverse concept (research, teaching, learning and social analysis are all involved); it is more a framework or a 'field' of action and analysis than a single conceptual entity.

Nevertheless it must have form and shape, and its own intellectual definition and integrity, which can bind the diverse and varied content within a focussed perspective. Whereas some single institutions have managed this, often as a function and consequence of outstanding leadership (pace Davis and Melbourne) we



Critically engaged universities must address such questions of what kind of communities they are intended for? How will their community of interest be defined? What kind of knowledge is appropriate for a different university?

now face the need to scale up and broadcast what has been learned and to define what needs to be done. This is important if change is to be brought about in a coherent way potentially for the sector as a whole. A number of key themes have emerged from Davis' reflections over his

career as Vice Chancellor that highlight the importance of finding 'unity in diversity' and these issues are some of those that face us as we seek to mould the critically engaged university of the future.

WHO IS NEEDED?

Well, VCs probably, but also the whole institution, which should surely have democratic and not just patriarchal authority. A figurehead is a deeply symbolic role and can be used for transformative as well as conservative purposes. A university should be a collegium with co-operative and collaborative ethics at its core. As Davis

argues, 'strategy' is key and it must be adequately represented symbolically. How to do so for engagement is our question and here the 'triple helix' of research, education and engagement, morphed with colliding disciplines, symbolises a strategy which is good and right and proper! Firth's piece shows what some of the engagement processes and issues are looking like as engagement evolves in Australia, and previous contributors to this journal (Nyland and Davies, 2017) have stressed some of the educational and curriculum issues that are emerging. The challenge for Engagement Australia is to find unity in such diversity. Welch and Saltmarsh's important contribution to this issue of the journal points the way to the possible use of an inventory as a strategic planning tool for Australian engagement. Such an approach could provide us with an evaluative and critical framework, give us a coherent focus for action, and it could demonstrate realities on the ground in each HE institution that we can manage and develop. What must be acknowledged, however, is the pressing need for social analysis and critique, which must underpin our work at Transform. Firth's article suggests we need to have the right strategy in place (highlighting the fact that a major pilot project involving nine Australian universities is underway to potentially adopt and adapt the Carnegie Classification Engagement system for the sector), whilst Bell argues for an engaged university centred on notions of the public good, an agenda which addresses the 'disruptions' of globalisation. She goes on to offer us a visualization of different models which portray what she sees as the emerging and damaging diversity.

TRIPLE HELIX AT A CROSSROADS?

As a result we find ourselves at a crossroads, what Bell refers to as a 'tipping point' where we must re-imagine what it means to be a critically engaged university. However, there are problems, firstly with the concept of engagement. We are not sufficiently clear about the things we are supposed to be engaged with, including the idea of 'community' itself. And yet universities think of themselves as being part of 'the community'. The learning and teaching we now have in conventional universities is not sufficiently engaged with the critical issues facing our society. At the personal level, for many people learning and education as well as politics fail to address the big questions such as what makes a fair society, who belongs in a society or community and who gets left behind in a global world where older communities seem to be abandoned. Universities themselves have become semi-detached from the communities they claim to serve whilst simultaneously failing to develop a curriculum that addresses key problems. These issues raise questions that test our humanity and our politics, and raise questions about the curriculum universities might offer to their students if we were to take a different starting point.

Critically engaged universities must address such questions as: What kind of communities are they intended for? How will their community of interest be defined? What kind of knowledge is appropriate for a different university? Jones, Rosing and Pink seek to provide useful answers to these and other relevant questions in terms of two large urban faith-based universities. A seeker choosing to search more widely may also stumble on John

Berger's insightful notion of a persistence of a 'longing for community' - which provides a necessary challenge to the market-led systems so that relationships in work, in social life, in communal life and in social labour can be the basis for university engagement. This is the building of social capital to meet the needs of communities.

CIVIC EXISTENCE

In fulfilling its role of building social capital, the civic existence of universities always needs to be stressed, yet there are differing and contentious forms of civic life, not always in agreement with each other. Bell argues forcefully that we need to reclaim and restate our public good role by generating our own powerful narratives of our future. Jackson asserts that these narratives need to inform the government of the day as well as the general public at every opportunity. Our relationship to government is problematical, as Davis points out, and is likely to remain so, which, given the existence of government-determined fee levels, means that partial deregulation and a quasi-market for fees is likely to be the emerging norm for some time into the future. How does this shape future opportunities and access to HE for Australians? How is it that in Germany, with a population of more than 80 million people, and other parts of Europe university tuition is a state obligation and the costs to the individual (domestic or international) are minimal?

As Bell points out, the idea of university engagement for the public good has been her standard mantra and prominent in the discourses surrounding higher education in recent years. However, the reality is that universities compete with one-another for places in a hierarchy of league tables.

Higher education is now part of the hyper-capitalistic growth of mass-production of goods and services involving mass-distribution and consumption through consumer networks. The university experience has become a commodity; it is largely monetised and it can be bought by those who have the funds. Of course, it is also more than this, and for many it is the best if not the only way to a fulfilling life and well-paid work where qualifications and learning bring justified rewards. It represents the high water mark for social democratic and meritocratic achievement; mass higher education is the signal for a more equal and fair society.

A 'MARKETISED' SYSTEM

The fundamental shape and characteristics of our HE system raises some important questions for engagement. Davis reflects on his decision to lend support for deregulation in the context of a constrained funding environment, reluctantly opting for a systemic change that was thwarted only by the fixer's inability to fix the Senate. Similarly, Holmes and Bell in their contributions to this edition are opening up a debate about the fundamental

attributes and characteristics of our HE system, describing the fundamentally competitive character of our 'marketised' system of institutions. Yet the system itself is not a level playing field. The market has been and remains 'rigged' and unequal. The danger is that in accepting a form of dual or binary system of institutions (for example research-led AND teaching-intensive) we may be in danger of making losers as well as winners and enshrining the distinctions in the institutional structures and funding methodologies (this is the actual practice as it now exists even if in theory it is other than this). As long as we attempt to use a marketised rather than a co-operative model, we stand in danger of recreating precisely those forms of divisive and segregated institutions that George Orwell referred to as the 'graded snobberies of the English.' As George Holmes says, we want a race to the top not to the bottom. Left to itself, the best education possible for individuals harnesses

the ambition of families for their children, but this ambition is limited by its nature and by the unequal access people have to material and cultural capitals. This is why the question of harnessing and



Significant players and persons are beginning to question the future role of universities - with engagement being at the heart of future models. Without such a development we are likely to get a university acting as a professional services company which primarily serves its own needs rather than those of the public good.

capturing SOCIAL CAPITAL argued for by Bell and Firth in this edition is crucial for Engagement Australia. Under the present dispensation for some to succeed, others must fail. What Holmes is alluding to is the failure of those who do not get into the "right" universities or fail to study the "right" subjects, the result of which is an increase in inequality without a corresponding increase in quality at the top. The benefits for the few at the so-called elite universities are connected to the relative impoverishment of the greatly expanded "modern" universities. We must face up to strictures and ensure that the incentives for universities based on teaching are not themselves based on a zero-sum game whereby competition makes us all poorer as a result.

'BIG MAN CHARISMATA'

This issue of the Engagement journal suggests then in summary:

Significant players and persons are beginning to question the future role of universities - with engagement being at the heart of future models. Without such a development we are likely to get a university acting as a professional services company, which primarily serves its own needs rather than those of the public good.

There is a need to bring into public discussion what key stakeholders in HE actually want and need from their learning. The future of the critically engaged university is a BIG social issue for our time. If we thought we had determined this for all time, we were very wrong, as recent social changes have demonstrated.

The role of leadership should not be underestimated (nor over-estimated). Davis' reflections do show the dangers of 'big

man charismata' and that leadership is available to the many and can be used to question stereotypical gendered roles; and that at the end of the day a little humanity and humility goes a long way in an institution funded by the people for the people! That's quite a legacy.

We are perhaps finding our way, somewhat uncertainly but in good faith and without acceding to the dystopian future that may await us if we fail, to defining an authentic diversity for a university. We must be alert to the dangers of division, which would set one group of colleagues and institution against others. We must ensure that diversity of experience and outcomes are rooted in equal opportunities and access for all as a founding and decisive principle for all publically funded institutions. Engagement Australia needs to cross the threshold to this democratic engagement: a step from agency to action.

Transform is not just a journal of reportage but of critique. In the next edition we are calling for contributions that address and expose key issues and problems in our society and its higher educational sphere. The questions surrounding social cohesion or division, migration and control, identity politics and the continuing issues of nationalism, the role of religion as a moral force, and the centrality of the First Peoples of Australia may all figure. We should like to call to you as readers to respond and share the evolving agenda for the journal.

Nyland, J. and Davies, D. (2017). *Re-imagining the engaged university as a cultural project. Transform: the journal of engaged scholarship. 2, 10-16*



| VIEWPOINT

RAISE THE SCARLET STANDARD HIGH

PROFESSOR GLYN DAVIS



To be valued by peers is the most important recognition possible, and I am deeply grateful for this AFR Higher Education Lifetime Achievement Award.

In accepting the award, I have been asked to reflect on being a Vice Chancellor after three years in the role at Griffith University, and nearly 14 at the

University of Melbourne. Every vice-chancellor's experience is different. Circumstances change, the possible one day becomes unimaginable the next. Context is everything, and few people listen to advice anyway. So if I offer five observations drawn from my time as a Vice-Chancellor, it is in the certain knowledge they will be no use to you whatsoever!

1

THEY DON'T NEED YOU

The professors at the University of Melbourne fought off suggestions of a professional full-time Vice Chancellor for nearly its first 80 years. The issue came to a head when the last part-time Vice Chancellor – Sir John Monash no less – quit in frustration, famously declaring that he found it easier to lead an army on the Western Front than to run a university. But the Melbourne professors had a point. They could happily make curriculum and manage resources without a Chief Executive, and subsequently hounded the first full-time Vice Chancellor, Raymond Priestley (1935–38) from office in just three years.

Sentiment has little changed in universities. They don't need you, with your fancy title and extravagant benefits. So to endure, a vice-chancellor must show she brings some benefit to justify the inconvenience.

Of course, much vice-chancellorial work is external and therefore largely invisible to the professors – representing the university to government and business, enthusing the alumni, asking donors for money.

But one responsibility matters for everyone within the university. This is strategy: guiding the priorities that mean we do some things but not others, that we ensure the university articulates, and lives by, its aspirations.

Strategy requires a full armoury of skills – values, vision, clarity, communication, an implementation plan, evaluation, reporting back. It means sharing with colleagues a sense of purpose, why this place matters.

Strategy is glorified as leading, but it must be equal part listening – understanding who we are and giving this practical voice.

My first experience of setting an institutional strategy came with *The Griffith Project*, a plan for the University released in 2002, my first year as a Vice Chancellor.

It paid attention to the big concerns for the institution, but also – importantly – to the symbols, those visible projections of our purpose and meaning.

Symbols can matter. They express, better than words in a plan, what we are about. The early Griffith, for example, saw itself as a challenger, the original home of environmental studies and Asian knowledge, a radical Brisbane alternative to the staid conservatism of the University of Queensland and the applied focus of what was then QIT, now Queensland University of Technology.

Yet Griffith began life with a traditional shield and iconography, as though suffering a medieval hangover. So

alongside the new strategic plan here was an opportunity to capture the spirit of the place, by commissioning young artists to design something contemporary and confronting, using the boldest shades of red available. If you are going to be red, be very red.

Strategy means doing something different – and sharing that with the world. You must do, not show – programs that matter, curriculum that challenges, a chance for students to change the world. And you have to find symbols that tell your audience why this matters. We found one such at Griffith in the legendary musical artist Ray Charles <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9la7JpfMHv8>.

Ray helped remind the community – and staff – that a university is more than the professors, more than the students. It is a civic institution with a mission that lasts longer, and matters more, than anyone currently on campus. We are just here for a short time in a university that will still be young when we are old. A vice-chancellor with a strategy to express that vision might, just, earn their keep.

2

GOVERNMENT IS NOT SALVATION

Strategy is made more challenging by frequently changing Commonwealth policy. When policy shifts it reveals that our organisational decisions do not rest on reliable foundations.

Government can, at times, be our friend but it is never our salvation. Keeping our distance, maintaining independence, is always wise.

I tried to count the higher education ministers during my 17 years as a vice-

chancellor. It is surprisingly hard to do. The portfolio name changes often, as research or science or employment slide in and out of the frame.

Staying with just primary higher education responsibilities, I served with Ministers Brendan Nelson, Julie Bishop, Julia Gillard, Chris Evans, Craig Emerson, Simon Crean, Chris Bowen, Bill Shorten, Christopher Pyne, Simon Birmingham and now Dan Tehan – 11 in all, each with their own priorities, serving on average 18 months in the portfolio.

Almost all worked hard in the portfolio, and a handful made important contributions.

I mention two. Brendan Nelson and Julia Gillard each brought original thinking and tested these through influential expert review of key issues. As Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (but not Education) Senator Kim Carr made farsighted steps toward full costing of research. Alas his innovations were quickly overturned by subsequent ministers.

For some politicians, higher education is an unwelcome portfolio, filled with ungrateful vice-chancellors, protesting students, pointless trivial controversies, and little opportunity to shine. Higher education ministers can become increasingly testy, worried their career is sinking without trace amid the quagmire of this portfolio.

But whether caring or inattentive, good or bad, ministers move on quickly, usually leaving unfinished business, reviews that are never implemented, difficult issues passed on to an unwitting successor.

A brief stay in the ministerial office is never enough time to create a stable, workable

policy framework for higher education. So universities must never pin their hopes on transient political masters.

It is why I have long advocated a post-school education commission, to encourage long-term policy stability. And it is why I was a reluctant but public supporter of the deregulation proposed by Christopher Pyne. After cuts to funding imposed by both sides of politics, Minister Pyne at least offered a trade: yet more cuts but also greater control over our own fees. Less than ideal, better than the alternatives then on offer.

But it turned out the fixer could not fix the Senate. The deregulation moment passed, never to return. And, of course, we got the cuts anyway. So yes to working with government whenever possible, but institutional autonomy is crucial. In good moments ministers can be our friend, but only we can take responsibility for our own future.

3

IT AIN'T PERSONAL

Leadership has practical requirements,

but there is also necessary symbolism. Getting frocked up in a black and silver gown, sitting at high table, solemn occasions – these are obligatory parts of human commerce. Someone has to fill the robes, preside, praise, provide a sense of continuity in a university community.

In truth, it little matters who walks across the stage, as long as someone does. As so often, the novelist David Malouf captures this impersonal fulfilling of office that is part of any ceremonial role, including a Vice Chancellor. In his brilliant 2009 novel Ransom, Malouf channels the King of Troy, Priam, reflecting on his duties:

My role was to hold myself apart in ceremonial stillness and let others be my arm, my fist ... To be seen as a man like other men – human as we are, all of

us – would have suggested that I was impermanent and weak. Better to stand still and keep silent, so that when old age came upon me, as it has at last, the world would not see how shaky my grip has become, and how cracked and thin my voice.

A Vice Chancellor is not a monarch, but she is a symbol for the institution, and sometimes must be a ceremonial figurehead.

The job also requires a measure of elegant acting. David Derham was a long-serving and very successful Vice Chancellor at the University of Melbourne. He was also a smoker, and eventually this led to emphysema. As public speaking became more and more difficult, Professor Derham



A vice-chancellor is not a monarch, but she is a symbol for the institution, and sometimes must be a ceremonial figurehead.

wrote the Vice Chancellor out of active roles in university ceremonies. He would sit and preside, fixed and permanent, apparently unchanging. By the time he retired in 1982, vice-chancellorial silence at public ceremonies had become the tradition at Melbourne. So it remains.

Such random customs become in time the character of a place. Much we do as a Vice Chancellor is not personal but necessary for the life of the institution. This can be harmless, like sitting wordless in splendid

gowns at long graduation ceremonies. It can be aggravating, when abuse directed against the university is made personal.

It means the Vice Chancellor earns praise she does not deserve, and criticism that is misdirected and unfair. You can even end up, as I did, a character in a stage musical put on by students to mock the administration.

Flattering or annoying, tedious or engrossing, you must remember it is



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There are few other roles so worth cherishing. This is hard to leave, but leave we all must.



not personal. You are, for a time, the figurehead. Someone has to be, and someone will be again when you go.

So don't take it personally. Vice Chancellors are not absolute rulers, but the desire for a court and the customs of courtiers, a sense all revolves around some central personage, runs deep in our culture.

When this attention ends, as it must, remember it was never about you.

4

NEVER LISTEN TO PRAISE OR GOSSIP

Which brings us to the key piece of personal advice I would share. Praise is kryptonite. Gossip is equally undermining.

Both must be avoided.

When a colleague tells you there is some rumour about yourself you really need to know, the only acceptable answer is “no I don't really need to know. Do not tell me.”

There is a whole narrative out there about every one of us. You can't influence it. You can't answer whatever wild inaccuracies people say about you. So make it your business never to know.

You're the vice-chancellor. You must keep your views about others hidden. You must treat everyone equally, professionally. You can never trade in gossip.

Rather, you have reached that point in a career when your job is encourage and praise others, to ensure credit falls where

it belongs, to recognise and celebrate the work of colleagues. You are there for everyone else, not for yourself.

You can never trade in rumour, in speculation, in innuendo. You are the ceremonial head of an institution, the fixed and unchanging point of authority.

In becoming leader you forfeit the right to be one of the crowd. You must leave every function early so that others can relax. You must endure people telling you things you already know, show patience amid tedium, grace when criticised. You distribute praise but can accept none in response.

This is what people mean by the loneliness of command. It is a necessary price for the role you sought so eagerly.

5

IT DOESN'T LAST LONG – TREASURE, ENJOY, AND LEAVE

One cold night in August 2015, I stood with hundreds of other people in the Old Quad at the University of Melbourne. Under the direction of the brilliant Lara McKay we were filming an ambitious cinema advertisement. Our aim: to make human the intellectual aspiration of the university to be a place where ideas collide.

Alongside the production crew were students from Melbourne's Faculty of Fine Arts and Music and many of my colleagues in senior management, keen to be involved.

Our aim: to present in three dimensions the strategy guiding the university – the commitment to a triple helix of research, education and engagement, the idea that in a great institution disciplines collide, so one branch of knowledge influences others.

How to convey this abstraction at the heart of the university mission? We made a minute-long film: <https://vimeo.com/140389075>. It took most of the night to film. The advertisement went on to win a string of international awards. It allowed Melbourne to pivot from explaining the Melbourne Model to showing how our model of education imagines new possibilities for students and society.

The advertisement encapsulated the next stage in the strategy. Like most university advertising it was as much aimed at our own staff as at the world.

What an extraordinary privilege to be part of this moment.

These jobs are fun. They provide an

opportunity to work with the best minds, to experiment, to argue a case. To be a Vice Chancellor, anywhere, is to be part of a place that matters. Through skill and hard work you might even make it better.

To be a Vice Chancellor is to stand as one in a long chain of scholarly leaders who cherish ideas, love education, who are passionate about this university, keen to walk it toward a bright future.

For every frustration of the job there are a hundred boundless moments of pleasure: launching a new literary review, winning a medical school, watching talented colleagues develop a new undergraduate curriculum, pitching an ambitious development idea to an American donor, acquiring a new engineering campus so researchers can work alongside industry.

Each moment is shared with others, made possible by the team, celebrated by a community. An important announcement is gratifying. So too is sitting quietly in University House late Friday afternoon with Provost Margaret Sheil, eating chips and discussing the week just finished.

There are few other roles so worth doing, so worth cherishing. This is hard to leave, but leave we all must.

If you have done the job well, there will be talented colleagues ready to step up, people keen to lead in their right. Leaving when the time is right is your last great duty.

All too soon it is time for someone new to convince the university it is better off with a Vice Chancellor, someone else to navigate fickle government, to balance the ceremonial and the active, to praise others, and to enjoy the brief stretch of leadership allocated to any of us.

Clarity in setting a vision. Humility about the role. Invisibility once gone. Leadership is always momentary – a dazzling, brief chance to contribute.

Only one single sentence survives from Sophocles' lost play, *The Loves of Achilles*. This speaks of happiness as an icicle held in the fist of a child, brilliant but fleeting. A pleasure that lasts but an instant.

So too leadership. It is temporary and transitory. But it's more than enough.

*At the time of writing Professor Davis was the Vice Chancellor of the University of Melbourne. A teacher and researcher in public policy, he previously served as Director-General of the Department of Premier and Cabinet in Queensland. His books include *The Australian Idea of a University*, *The Republic of Learning* and (as co-author) *The Australian Policy Handbook*.*



| LEAD ARTICLE

THE CRITICALLY ENGAGED UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE

PROFESSOR SHARON BELL



It is tempting to argue that despite decades of neo-liberalism and the associated

corporatisation of the higher education sector, Australian universities remain

fundamentally public good institutions engaged in social transformation in tandem with the generation of equitable opportunities for an increasingly wide range of individuals. This is a well-established public position and my standard mantra, but in this article, as others have done before me, I suggest we need to more closely interrogate and test this proposition. I question whether our organisational objectives, cultures, language and even our leadership and governance structures are taking us on a path that increasingly diverges from the public good and erodes our potential to contribute to civil society. As large and complex institutions, have we lost the ability to define the path we are on and even to find the time to check our compass? Are we at a tipping point when we need to ask whether we should radically change our institutional 'ways of being' to refocus on being an engaged and sustainable sector with a critical civic role that frames our purpose?

If we are profoundly public good institutions¹, why is our public good role not always given prominence in our institutional narratives, our strategic plans, in the partnerships we forge, our branding or indeed the appointment of our leaders and governance committees? And why, when our public good role is given prominence, does it generate an ambiguous set of expectations because we simultaneously send mixed messages about who we are as institutions, our place in the education 'market' (Marginson and Considine, 2000) and whether the public can access our considerable resources or whether they can only do so through payment of a range of fees and charges,

Should we be questioning whether our metamorphosis as a sector has been more profound than we like to imagine - a compounding set of changes that play off one another to transform us and our relationships with our students, our staff and our communities?

¹The conceptual framework for this paper was developed as a contribution to, and has been informed by discussion at, the UTS Symposium Advancing the Public Benefit of Universities, Sydney December 2017.

² Deloitte, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Ernst & Young and KPMG. According to Professor Ian Gow in 2016 these firms employed almost one million staff globally (Gow and Kells, 2018).

³ Shore and Wright (2018: 4) argue that audit firms have aligned themselves with the 'heartbeat of capitalism'.



or only in economic relation with us as business, commercial or philanthropic partners (Bell, 2017, 16-18).

Should we be questioning whether our metamorphosis as a sector has been more profound than we like to imagine — a compounding set of changes that play off one another to transform us and our relationships with our students, our staff and our communities? Have we become passive players in a larger politic in which we fail to exercise the agency expected of institutions that harbour such significant social and intellectual capital and have such a huge role to play in addressing social and economic inequality and in promoting social pluralism? Have we, like the 'Big Four' accountancy companies², aligned ourselves with the generation of economic capital at the expense of social capital and contribution to civil society?³ Should we interrogate our trajectory to examine whether we are similar to the 'Big Four' who trade on their status as guardians of property while increasingly blurring the boundary between their public watchdog role and their commercial interests (Shore and Wright, 2018: 1-3)? Do universities trade on our status as public good institutions whilst increasingly blurring the boundaries between our role as public providers and entrepreneurial institutions driven by commercial imperatives? Are we not formally 'for-profit' but, in the context of declining and increasingly contested government funding⁴, pre-occupied by revenue generation and promulgation of the case for the economic contribution of the higher education sector as our cause célèbre'.

As has been noted elsewhere⁵, in Australia

the 'Big Four' consultancy companies have been active in the higher education sector since the early years of this century when the conservative federal government commitment to 'small government' and competitive tender processes saw expenditure on consultants rise as Australian Public Service staffing levels fell. These companies bring political capital to the higher education sector as ties to government have become deeply embedded along with rapidly growing business opportunities. They also generate confidence in university governing boards, especially as in Australia these boards are now dominated by corporate leaders⁶.

Peter Drucker (1991) has observed that:

Outside advisors brought specialised knowledge, not otherwise available, into organisations that faced problems that internal staff members could not easily resolve. In particular, executives decided whether or not to employ external advisors based on two distinct pre-conditions. Firstly, that the underlying problem be brief, specialised and nonrecurring, thus making the alternative – an internal analysis of the topic – both slow and costly. Second, that the potential consultants had experience with similar cases through

⁴ Revenue sourced from Australian Government grants (excluding HELP) has declined from 41 per cent in 2004 to 39 per cent in 2016 (Universities Australia (2018)).

⁵ Howard Beale, 'Administration expertise at university VC's fingertips' in The Australian Higher Education Supplement, August 29 2017.

⁶ The Howard government introduced federal governance protocols under the Higher Education Support Act (2003) which universities needed to satisfy to qualify for moneys under the Commonwealth Grant Scheme.





“

An alternative narrative might be that, as path dependency is most likely to occur when there is complementarity in structural and cultural systems, perhaps Australia's public universities are diverging from that established path, the public path – owned by the state but self-governing – with the attendant responsibility to contribute to the public good of the nation, or at least their local region?

previous assignments in the industry, either because of the consultants' knowledge of a functional speciality, or because the consultants had performed a similar study for a competitor. Thus management consultants were, in this first incarnation, idea- or knowledge-brokers who solved administrative problems, not through their innovative solutions to unusual questions, but rather through the application and reformulation of existing knowledge to known problems (cited in McKenna 2006:13).

For the professional services companies, higher education in the 21st century arguably offers a similar remarkable opportunity to that afforded by governments attempting to define themselves as 'small' – with one caveat – universities meet none of the pre-conditions that underpin the need for external consultants. Universities are large and complex institutions housing a huge amount of intellectual capital and professional expertise, and most of the problems they face could effectively be resolved by drawing on the collective intelligence and extensive experience of staff members and students.

What then is the attraction of the large professional services companies? Apart from the political capital and 'business acumen' they bring, is it that the structural form and collegial governance structure of the academic departments of universities, where resident 'experts' reside, does not mimic, or only partially replicates, the business structures and managerial repertoire that the professional services companies sell? Do university leaders and managers find it difficult to ascertain how to tap in to

their organisation's intellectual capital in ways that would generate confidence that institutional priorities would be better articulated and informed? Are they also skeptical about the possibility of outcomes being generated and problems being solved within timeframes suited to managerial imperatives?

THE EMERGENT IDEA OF AN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY

Professor Glyn Davis (2018) argues that a series of ideas for an Australian University circa 1850 proved intelligent responses to local needs and understanding that has endured, evidencing 'path dependency' that speaks to Australian metropolitan values:

In time, those founding ideas have been reinforced by the preferences of Australian students for professional programs, by academic norms about the character of a university and by public policy that imposes homogeneity...A single idea of a university has ensured that any new public university resembles those already operating. (2018:30-31)

An alternative narrative might be that, as path dependency is most likely to occur when there is complementarity in structural and cultural systems, perhaps Australia's public universities are diverging from that established path, the public path – owned by the state but self-governing – with the attendant responsibility to contribute to the public good of the nation, or at least their local region⁷. Over the past three decades have an unsympathetic policy environment and unstable funding regimes, together with the dominant neo-liberal zeitgeist, taken us off that path?

Professor Margaret Thornton, drawing from

her Australian Research Council project on the impact of corporatisation of the university on the legal academy, argues that:

Instead of higher education being regarded as a public good, which is provided by the state, we have moved to a quasi-private user pays system. I say 'quasi-private', because it is the state that is orchestrating the change and transforming education into a commodity; there is no invisible hand at work here⁸.

The higher education sector is now characterised by clashing cultures, more likely to generate change than continuity⁹.

Some, universities, perhaps the lean and hungry, will follow paths of adaptive change; some will draw on their massive social capital and status to entrench their powerful position and retain a mode of operation that resembles the status quo; and others may fragment to cater to the very different learner needs that have emerged within a high participation system. Some, the essentially scholarly, may even be able to continue to support 'the life of the mind'.

Are these nascent divergent paths, why, much to our chagrin, we can be depicted

in Ernst & Young's most recent foray into imagining the University of the Future (2018:5) as a value chain¹⁰, subject to

'unbundling' to maintain competitive advantage.

Is this metamorphosis and resulting ambiguous status also why the case for the development of the Commercial University is seen by Ernst & Young as 'the most likely case':

...evidencing greater specialisation of providers who "play to their strengths", whether that be in particular research,

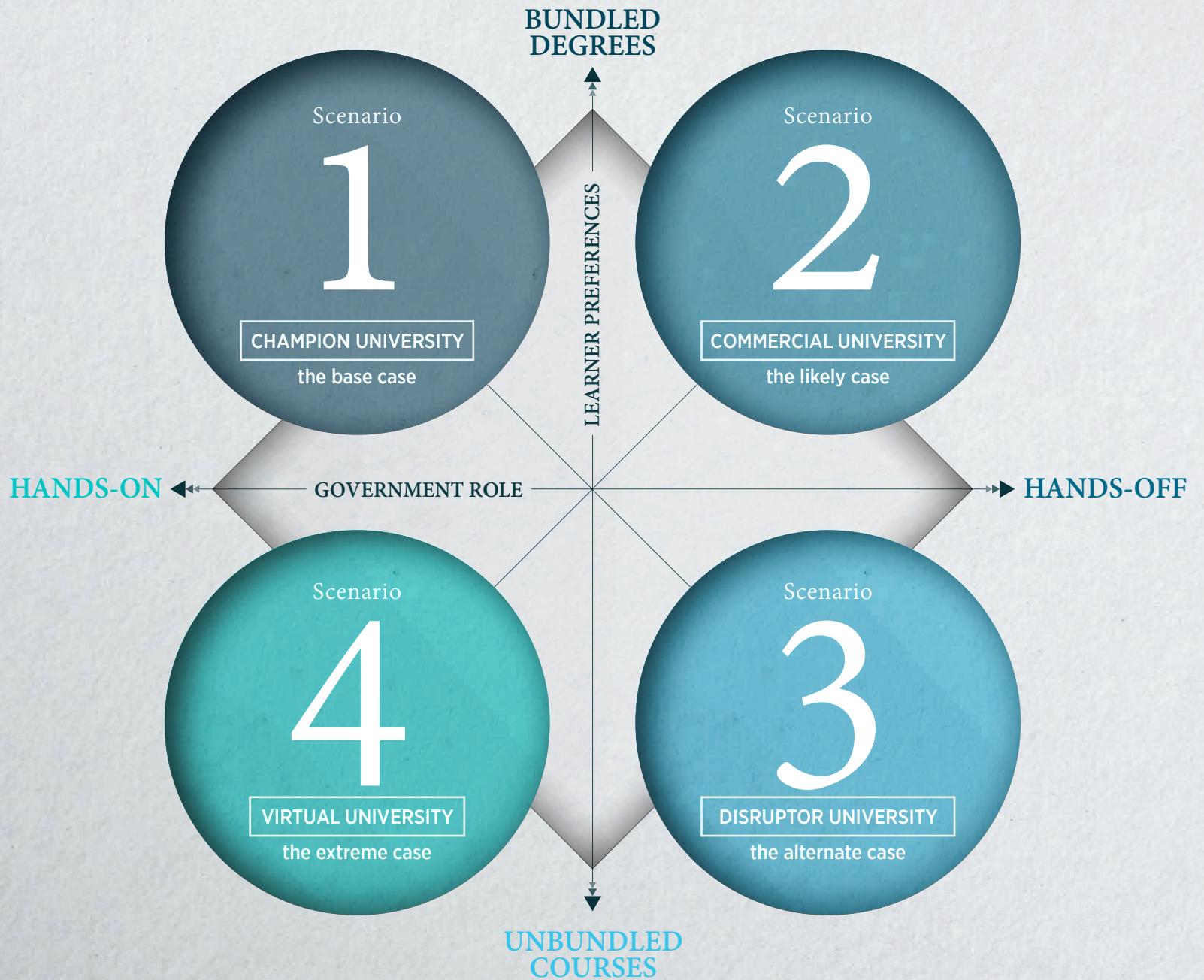
⁷ A responsibility formally enshrined in university Acts of incorporation.

⁸ Thorton, M. (n.d.)The Governance Trap And What To Do About It, https://www.fabians.org.au/universities_the_governance_trap_and_what_to_do_about_it

⁹ Peters et al (2005:1276) argue that political conflict is a means of initiating change in an institutionalist framework. In particular, conflict over ideas and policy is important for motivating change.

¹⁰ A process view of activities by which a company adds value to an article or service for the market and through which it may gain cost advantage or gain competitive differentiation (Porter 1985). More recently Hartley (2004) has argued that the source of value is no longer to be found in the scale and organisation of manufacturing but in the 'uses and creativity of consumers' and 'partnership with customers' (2004:131).

¹¹ Speaking on Research in the Age of Brexit <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/Media-and-Events/HIGHER-ED-ITION/Articles/2016-2017/Research-in-the-age-of-Brexit-and-the-opportunities-for-Australia>



RE-IMAGINING THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE AS A ‘VALUE CHAIN’

Source: Ernst & Young , 2018:12

teaching, subject area focus or teaching/learning models. Students favour degree programs that offer work-integrated learning. Universities reposition by drawing closer to industry to collaborate on teaching and research (2018:16).

THE CRITICALLY ENGAGED UNIVERSITY

If, as engaged institutions, we are to reclaim and restate our public good role we must address and capitalise on our essential incompatibility with the neo-liberal imaginary (Marginson 2016:220) and generate our own powerful narratives of our future. As Dame Anne Glover reminded us at the 2017 Universities Australia Conference:

The rate of change is enormous and we forget this at our peril.

If we stand still, then we're left standing. And everybody else overtakes us.

So we must imagine what the future could be like and then invent it.

If you don't imagine the future, if you don't seize opportunities, if you are not quick on your feet, someone else will be there before you¹¹.

Allowing someone to be there before us seems to be precisely where we find ourselves as a sector. We have allowed a range of think-tanks and the large professional services companies to fill the gap, producing narratives of disruption that serve their own needs, and collectively contribute to a dystopian narrative that paints an uncertain future for the higher education sector (Rizvi et al 2013; Deloitte 2015; Ernst & Young 2018; KPMG 2018). Some of this is driven by globalisation, some by the impact of digital technologies,

in particular rapid developments in artificial intelligence, some by projections regarding the future of work and some simply by the inevitability of change. Genevieve Bell reminds us that it is over 200 years since Mary Shelley gave us Frankenstein, which tapped in to a set of cultural anxieties¹² — we need to stop and ask what is it that we are imagining and why is the future dystopian, especially as a sector we have proven highly adaptive and we have arguably been 'educating for a world we cannot yet imagine' since the 1930s.

It may be because a raft of common theme reports have been produced increasingly frequently over the past decade by the professional services companies, some more brazenly than others seeking to satisfy their expanded commercial consultancy remit. These reports, based on easy-to-understand narratives of massive change and disruption, were in part a response to the 2008 Global Financial Crisis and the impact of this on major universities within the US system. But 10 years later the massive change and disruption narrative persists and grows, simultaneously opening up significant new business opportunities for the professional services companies, from strategic planning and change management consultancies to the 'co-design' and delivery of 'unbundled' professional education. We have even seen the re-emergence of the refashioned imperative for 'life-long learning', seemingly forgetting that this concept dates back to the 1990s (the Delors Report), and depending on the way in which provenance is traced, to the 1970s with the work of Faure (1972) and Tough (1979).

Audit and compliance have gained new political power, used to exercise control when the lever of government funding is reduced and the principles of accounting are applied to ever-wider domains of professional and social life. Shore and Wright (2018:3-4) pose the question: 'What are the implications for democracy and society when 'gamekeepers' turn 'poachers' and turn 'gamekeepers' again in a revolving door between governments and accounting firms?'

I think we can assert with confidence that in higher education the narrative of disruption and attendant new higher education formations has proven attractive to governments who are struggling to address the demands of funding the growing higher education sector and increasingly sophisticated and costly research and research infrastructure through conventional means. It is important that we generate a more authentic and effective narrative about our sector and organisational capacity, the nature of 'disruption' we face and the degree to which we, as innovators, seed 'disruption'. We also need to generate understanding of the nuanced 'future of work', understanding that, especially for the tertiary educated, this represents change, but also opportunity rather than fear and anxiety:

The technologies will continue to have positive and negative impacts for employment. Some jobs will be in less demand as machines play a greater role. But most of the impact of automation will

¹² Interview 'Genevieve Bell: Humanity's greatest fear is about being irrelevant', The Guardian, 27 November 2016.

involve augmenting labour, rather than replacing it. Two-thirds of automation-generated change will be within jobs, affecting how people do their work, rather than erasing jobs entirely. For many workers, particularly high-skilled professionals, this impact will be positive. Automation will further reduce the proportion of time spent on repetitive, routine tasks and increase the proportion of creative, interactive and problem-solving work. This increases wages and makes work safer and more satisfying. However, a third of the change will result in changes between jobs, and automation will contribute to an increasing number of people undergoing workforce transitions. Managing this sensitively will require an understanding of the different impacts on different categories of workers, and tailoring services and policies accordingly (Alpha-Beta, 2018:6).

Regardless of, and sometimes despite the policy and funding environment, the higher education sector in Australia has evidenced adaptability, agility and resilience. The transformation from an elite to a high participation and highly internationalised sector with an increasingly strong research profile has demanded that the sector both create and embrace potentially ‘disruptive’ pedagogies and technologies (Becker et al, 2018). Yet, economic analysis of the return on investment in the higher education sector and the relevant multipliers and spillover benefits, including fiscal externalities such as graduate tax revenue (Cadence Economics, 2016) fails to generate such a heightened level of interest or a funding paradigm based on long-term investment rather than short-term, budget and political cycle imperatives.

Universities are too often cast, particularly

by our political leaders and sometimes the media, as focussed on internal institutional politics or the aspects of politics that have the greatest potential to impact on us. This is not always a bad thing. We should be concerned about education reforms that are framed by human capital theory – unduly focussed on individual private benefit and economic outcomes. We should be concerned that the costs of higher education are increasingly being slanted back to students. We should be concerned about casualisation of our sector and the fact that the shock of the new is that Australian universities have now become serious players in the ‘gig’ economy – dependent on a contingent workforce of at least 67,000 individuals (May et al, 2013: 258-275). We should be concerned by continuing calls for deregulation of higher education, particularly given what we have learned from the corrosive impact of ‘for profit’ imperatives in the vocational education sector and what we are learning about the unintended consequences of deregulation in the Australian banking and financial

services sector. We should be concerned because critical policy settings come to frame what is possible, to define priorities in our sector and to define the path for our developmental trajectory.

Within this pressured environment, all too rarely do we focus our gaze on that which really matters: the long-term benefit to society that comes with educational opportunity, and equitable access to that opportunity and the long-term benefit to society of the research we undertake. How often do we ask, are we getting the balance right between meeting individual student aspirations, graduate employment outcomes and the needs and expectations of our communities, our regions and our nation?

We need to ask are we being bold enough, as Gough Whitlam exhorted us in a time that is now almost unrecognisable, ‘bold to achieve what matters’? (Bell, 2017: 4). Can we be bold when our priorities reflect the mores and

language of economic rationalism and are powerfully shaped and constrained by meeting the demands of a culture of audit and compliance? Can we be bold when we increasingly frame our knowledge



Beyond funding attached to growth Australia has not yet seen the increased investment that would enable significant expansion of engagement or the equivalent of Third Stream funding which in the UK was introduced specifically to support Higher Education Institutions to increase their capability to respond to the needs of business and the wider community.

production in the language of audit: inputs and outputs, quality assurance, cost-effectiveness, key performance indicators, benchmarks and standards, timelines and target audiences? Can we be bold when students see us as providers of educational commodities and the Federal Minister responsible for the Education portfolio sees ‘value for money’ as a defining feature of private/for profit institutional success in educational provision:

You understand the need to respond to what students want to learn, the way in which they want to learn, and when they want to learn. You see students as clients who expect value for money, and you've been operating with that type of mind frame for many years, hence your growth and success¹³.

Is it unrealistic for us to create the University of the Future centred on the concept of engagement for public good, that encompasses selective commercial imperatives, does not shy away from addressing or indeed generating disruption, is a virtual as well as a physical entity; and as a ‘champion’ university embraces continuity and change. Sound familiar?

As I have previously noted in this journal, we should not forget that the engagement of universities and their communities received attention in the Australian Government 2002 Ministerial Discussion Paper Higher Education at the Crossroads (Nelson, 2002). The Minister, under the Howard Coalition Government, invited the university sector to provide input to the development of a ‘Third Stream’ funding model similar to that which had been introduced in the UK. A number of strategies were canvassed,

including: payment of a ‘social premium’ to universities to deliver community service obligations within their region; state governments to contribute to the cost of some activities on a fee-for-service basis; and funding of community bodies to purchase the higher education services they need (IRU, 2005:2).

These issues were overtaken by the Bradley Review (2008) which recommended that ‘A separate stream of funding should not be provided for community engagement or ‘third-stream’ activities given that these activities are an integral part of an institution’s teaching and research activities. But the Bradley Review did recommend a new financing framework with improved competitive funding for the core activities of teaching and learning and research including funding to advance the social inclusion agenda.

Beyond funding attached to growth, Australia has not yet seen the increased investment that would enable significant expansion of engagement or the equivalent of Third Stream funding, which in the UK was introduced specifically to support Higher Education Institutions to increase their capability to respond to the needs of business and the wider community.

The persistence of the importance of the equity and engagement agendas (Harvey et al 2016), although impoverished and rendered less visible by the necessity of these activities being embedded in learning and teaching and research in order to be sustained, provides evidence of the agency being exercised within institutions in tandem with their communities to counteract the market

focussed policy environment and instrumentalist perspectives to sustain civic engagement and contribute to the common good. We are exercising agency, drawing on the commitment of our staff and students ‘to make a difference’ and we must continue to do so. We must speak the language and author the narratives that confirm this exercise of agency for the public good.

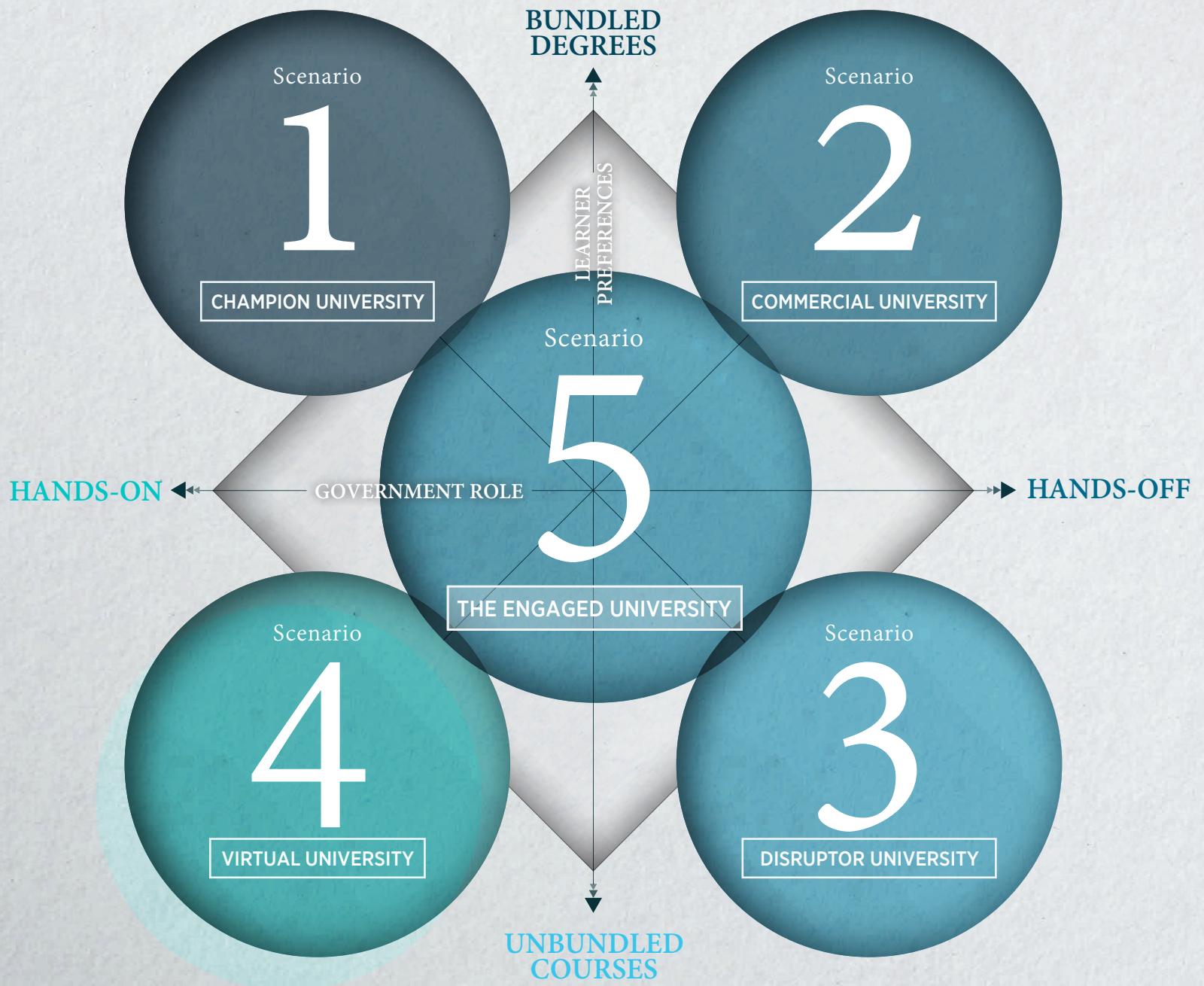
This will only occur if the sector seizes the moment for greater engagement and the greater good, and invokes what was once the bi-partisan Menzies-Whitlam consensus in which universities were understood to be ‘...spaces of public scholarship in which claims to expertise can be tested transparently and made available for the good of the entire society’. (Etheringham 2016)

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RE-IMAGINING THE UNIVERSITY
OF THE FUTURE AS A ‘CRITICALLY
ENGAGED UNIVERSITY’

Source: Ernst & Young , 2018:12

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| VIEWPOINT

TOWARDS A TEACHING INTENSIVE CRITICALLY ENGAGED UNIVERSITY: FITNESS FOR PURPOSE IN A KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY.

PROFESSOR GEORGE HOLMES



In a post-industrialised modern world there can be little doubt about the importance of creating a highly-skilled and educated

workforce. The ever improving economies of China and India are producing degree graduates at an exponential, if not alarming, rate.

The ability of the former economic powers of the west to maintain their position at the top of the world's economic league tables relies heavily upon their ability to compete in a knowledge economy where research, development and innovation in cutting edge ideas and technologies provide the key to growth and prosperity. Modern universities are a fact of life in developed economies; they target high quality teaching, underpinned by appropriate scholarship and research. These new leaders in the mass higher education system have to take a different approach to the delivery of their services compared with those of the traditional, elite, higher education providers. When less than 5% of a developed economy's 18-year-olds gained access to universities, pure 'self-actualising' higher education for the elite relied upon time for independent study and reflection; honing and refining, as those elite selective universities did, and do, some of the finest minds on the planet. In a mass higher education system where participation rates of 18-year-olds exceed 40% and are rightly rising, old methodologies and elite academic discourse are entirely inappropriate vehicles for educating those with the potential but without the aptitude of the traditional scholar. In fact, business, industry and the future economy relies upon having an extensive provision of well-educated individuals who will not themselves seek to achieve the



modern equivalent of splitting the atom. They will instead ideally seek to spin out new business ventures, create new mass markets and enhance society as a whole. Graduates, it is a fact, make better public citizens as they participate more effectively in democracy, have better health records and are less of a burden on the State. The graduates to which I refer are not the elite code-breakers of MI6 but are, rather, the essential, valuable, modern citizen of a developed world. The forward looking modern critically engaged university seeks to recruit, retain, educate and make employable this specific cohort. It is the modern universities which, above all, will provide the economic sustenance of the developed world and will enable the once world-leading economies of the west to compete with those emerging in the Far East and the Indian subcontinent. So, the case is made,

the race to the top is on and only a whole new cadre of modern, critically engaged universities will meet this demand. The elite, the research intensive, Ivy League and Russell Group (as they are known by varying descriptors across the world) will undoubtedly continue to do an excellent job in their market segment; and whilst they might cure cancer, or create artificial consciousness with the downstream impact equivalent to the invention of the internet, or prolong life beyond reasonable expectation; they will not, by themselves, be sufficient to sustain our economies. A mass higher education system requires mass production methods — methods which are efficient and effective in delivering specific services and needs to a large and diverse client group. This client group has not necessarily experienced traditional, university style, higher education provision before, they are

unlikely to have parents who attended a higher education facility and are unlikely to have either realistic or well-founded expectations of what studying for a degree will entail. In some cases, they may have even been subject to peer group and societal pressure that “university is not for them”. Of course, this ill-informed pressure often emanates from those who have in their mind a model of a university which in the future, if not already, is out-dated, if not irrelevant.

So what is the new breed of Teaching Intensive (TI) modern, critically engaged university for? A TI university should seek to provide the best possible learning opportunities for its specific client group or professional field. A modern TI university should be focussed, above all, upon high quality teaching and learning opportunities. This would involve access to the latest educational mediums and a



trained professional workforce of those skilled in educational methods; not simply experts in an academic discipline which they teach. Each member of staff needs to have a heightened awareness of their vital role in supporting those new to higher education. This requires highly-skilled individuals, who are themselves far more educationally savvy, who are able to understand the learning styles of each of their students and adapt their teaching and learning strategies accordingly. This is a mass system uniquely where one size does not fit all but the individual and peculiar needs of each learner have to be both identified and catered for on a mass scale in a way in which the old elite universities could never envisage. In essence, the elite universities have an intake of homogenous, elite academic athletes who are capable of jumping through hoops in examination and thus

have the bar continuously raised in their pursuit of world leading excellence. The modern TI universities of the future are about providing the relevant gym mats to break a fall, the relevant physiotherapy to put right an academic injury and pre-habilitation academic specialists who are able to identify an academic injury before it happens and know how to put in place systems to prevent students falling by the wayside. The TI university that provides intensive care for its vitally important learners, who themselves will provide the economy of the future with its essential driving force, has to be underpinned by the most advanced andragogy and pedagogy. World-leading subject research, whilst important, is less essential to this type of TI university and its students, save in the field of education itself of course. The modern TI university will provide the learning infrastructure and

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honours degree — unless that honours degree indicates absolute competence? In which case, if the 2ii honours level is evidence of competence, why is it not categorised as first class? Classifying degree outcomes is simply a label to reinforce elitism.

Creating a TI university of the type described in this paper is not a simple journey. For decades, if not centuries, the academic staff of universities has been trained to copy the model of the elite universities. The so-called university league tables themselves prioritise academic excellence, high entry grades, research standing and citations in internationally refereed journals. Many staff take the route to tenured professor for promotion; this is one which almost universally requires elite research activity and publication of learned papers; in all honesty, very few truly at the heart of the sector acknowledge teaching as the most challenging, rewarding and important aspect as the role of an academic in higher education. Few academics clamour to teach 1st year undergraduate introductory level programs, preferring in the main to supervise final year undergraduates, Masters students and PhDs. So the journey for the modern TI university is uphill, the first problem being to recruit, retain and motivate the very best academic staff who choose, above all else, to work in such a context, but moreover have a passion for teaching underpinned by, but not dominated by, subject specific research. Winning hearts and minds in a university system populated traditionally by those whose hearts were in elite research and whose minds are ironically often found to be closed to such new ideas, rather than

open, is a major leadership task faced in creating a TI university. Clearly the articulation of a vision of the system of the future and the importance it plays to the population and economy is the first step. It may, in truth, take generations for mindsets and attitudes to really change, the dominant elite in society having a vested interest in maintaining their position and thus they espouse the values of a boutique elite system of higher education. This needs to be broken because, without it, China and India will undoubtedly rule the economic world; itself possibly not a bad thing intrinsically. But, if the formerly world-leading developed nations are to try to retain their position of economic pre-eminence, they have to challenge their existing assumptions and the elite have to recognise that presiding over the decline of the Roman Empire in the name of 'standards' does them no good whatsoever. Teaching Intensive, Research Informed universities are without question the way forward, they will provide opportunities and challenge assumptions, create the workforce of the future and break the hold of the elite in a productive and effective manner for all. My own university in the UK leads the way as the first truly Teaching Intensive modern university where staff are engaged actively in supporting our learners in the manner described in this paper. The University of Bolton has unique links with further education (FE) in the UK through its own large general FE college and in many ways the FE college system has cracked the code for delivering quality teaching, albeit that the FE sector in the UK itself is woefully under-resourced. With the resource envelope for higher education in the UK being so much fuller, there can

be no excuse for poor quality teaching or poor student satisfaction with that teaching, and yet evidence from student surveys demonstrates that dissatisfaction is widespread in the elite research intensive universities.

Student satisfaction is a measure of how well the customers feel the provider is doing in helping them to achieve their aim with their valuable time and money. Evidence in the UK shows the research intensive universities to be failing even their elite students in respect of their levels of satisfaction. The converse is often true in the UK's modern universities. So, one is able to conclude that times need to change and are changing, that opportunities must be ever widened and that access should be encouraged to all who are willing to participate. The TI critically engaged university is the answer for the economies of the future, but achieving academic respectability thanks to the woefully conservative snobbery of the sector, if not society itself, will remain an uphill task for the foreseeable future. I for one relish that task. My passion is shared by the outstanding staff of my own university whom I am proud to work alongside in this endeavour.

Professor George Holmes is President & Vice Chancellor of the University of Bolton. When appointed to the position in 2005 he became the youngest University Vice Chancellor in the United Kingdom.



So the journey for the modern TI university is uphill, the first problem being to recruit, retain and motivate the very best academic staff who choose, above all else, to work in such a context, but moreover have a passion for teaching underpinned by, but not dominated by, subject specific research.



A: Universities are engines of hope and prosperity. They have the power to transform the lives of individuals and the communities they live in. When someone goes to university, their world expands, and they often see new possibilities. We must never forget how powerful and important that can be, particularly so for people from backgrounds of serious adversity or disadvantage.

All of this adds to the foundational role universities play in the economy, delivering the skilled graduate workforce we need in a rapidly changing economic landscape. And universities are profound game-changers through research. By advancing knowledge, by making discoveries and breakthroughs, universities shift the boundaries, making the impossible possible. And that's as true for blue sky research as it is for all of the industry-engaged activity universities do including collaborative research with business and in internships and work placements for students in the workplace while they continue to study. Thirdly, universities are often the hub of communities. They are a place of community gatherings, centres of local community and cultural activity, providers of low-cost or no-cost community and sporting facilities, and they bring people together to find common ground with each other.

Q: What are you particularly passionate about in the sector, and what would you change?

A: Every day in this job I think about Australians whose lives have

| INTERVIEW

FINDING UNITY IN DIVERSITY AND A FORCE FOR GOOD IN THE WORLD

UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA CHIEF EXECUTIVE CATRIONA JACKSON



Q: As Chief Executive of Universities Australia, you have insight into the breadth of our university sector. What role do universities play in contemporary society?

been transformed by universities. They include people spared painful or fatal health conditions thanks to research breakthroughs achieved by universities. But I also think about the everyday Australians from pretty modest backgrounds whose future is brighter because of a university education. One of those is Chris Mills, who features in a video that Universities Australia made last year. Chris was a blue-collar worker in the steelworks at Whyalla for 13 years. He knew he couldn't do that job forever. So he enrolled in a pathway program at the University of South Australia. He's now doing a social work degree with the aim of helping others in his community cope with the major economic transition underway in this heavy-industry town. His life has been changed and you can hear the growing confidence and sense of hope for the future as he tells his story. Another of these stories is Edith Cowan University graduate Shari Pilkington, who was inspired by her Nan – one of Australia's earliest Aboriginal nurses and author of The Rabbit Proof Fence, whose degree took her into a career as a midwife. There are literally thousands more stories like theirs.

Q: There seems to be a sort of resignation in the sector that the public good role of universities isn't always widely recognised. What are your reflections?

A: Rather than talking ourselves into a funk, we should take every single opportunity to remind people about the public good that universities deliver. Many

already know much about the profound contribution their local university makes. When I'm advocating on behalf of our universities in the media, I always try and shine a spotlight on the benefits that universities deliver in their communities. And I think the public gets this. There is significant understanding among the Australian public about the value of universities, the value of our research, the huge benefits to Australia of having international students study here, and the very high quality of our globally competitive university sector.

Q: How should universities communicate their institutional narratives and tangible outcomes around engagement to ensure their public good role is given greater prominence to Government and the wider public?

A: We need to tell those stories. Over and over again. There's an adage in political communication. It's that it is only when you are so thoroughly sick and tired of hearing yourself say the same thing over and over again, can you expect people beyond your immediate circle to begin to hear and absorb your message. So we need to double down on that storytelling. And we need to convey the passion that we feel about what universities do in and for their communities. Economic analysis of the contribution of universities is rightly important. It helps us to make a hard-headed economic case. But it only takes us so far. We also need to

speak to people's hearts as well as their heads. And that's what our team seeks to do with Universities Australia's award-winning public awareness campaign Keep It Clever – especially our videos. And that's also what we have done with our #1inHalfAMillion campaign highlighting why international students are so good for Australia.

Q: The unique role universities have in their own local communities is, to some extent, more highly valued at the individual local level rather than the collective national level. As a sector, how do we harness the goodwill afforded to our universities locally, and leverage this nationally?

A: I agree this role is often most clearly understood at the local community level. And that local understanding can be an asset when we tell the story nationally of university engagement in their local communities. So we should always be thinking about how to deploy those local voices to national audiences. It's terrifically powerful for a local Aboriginal Elder or business owner or not-for-profit service to be able to tell their story to a national audience about how their local university has worked closely with them to the profound benefit of that local community. So those local connections can be some of our most powerful advocates and ambassadors.

Q: Would you like to see an increasingly diverse set of missions amongst universities in Australia, greater conformity, or do we have it about right? How challenging will it be to maintain unity in such diversity?

A: I'd question the assumption that a similar federal funding formula for public universities across the country has led to uniformity of either institutional missions or delivery. Of course, all of our universities strive to deliver high-quality education and research and to play an active role in the lives of their local communities. But if you think about the breadth of what Australia's universities offer – both through their teaching and learning programs, but also in their areas of research concentration – it's actually significantly diverse. So you will see quantum computing research teams in Sydney and Melbourne racing to build the world's first working quantum computer, and you'll see agricultural or marine researchers working with farmers and coastal industries on specific local challenges that affect their local industries and communities. And all of those pieces of research are important. The same can be said of the breadth of degrees and the content they teach. There are some foundational concepts that are taught in similar ways across the country. But there are plenty of examples of how being located in a specific community enables the content of degrees to evolve and take account of the local needs in that community. So a health practitioner student doing their degree in



a community with a specific set of health challenges might find more content about that local context in their course materials and teaching.

Q: How do you see funding cuts affecting future opportunities and access to higher education for Australians?

A: University funding cuts limit opportunity. The current funding freeze amounts to cuts of \$2.1 billion in coming years, which will erode access for some Australians to a university education. So that's a serious concern. It's not just a setback for opportunity – it's also a setback for Australia's economy, and for our future skilled workforce and

productivity. So we have urged a policy rethink because of the social and economic hits that cuts will inflict. Our universities have tried hard to minimise the loss of student places in the first year of the cuts – but they don't have the financial means to do so in coming years. The cuts must end and the demand-driven system and indexation must be restored so that talented Australians don't miss out on a place at university.

Q: Is the university experience now seen as just a commodity, with the popular press on occasions defining it as largely monetised and able to be bought by those who have the funds?



When I'm advocating on behalf of our universities in the media, I always try and shine a spotlight on the benefits that universities deliver in their communities. And I think the public gets this.



A: I don't believe that's the prevailing opinion of everyday Australians. There is very strong aspiration among parents and grandparents for their children and grandchildren to have the chance of a university education. And that's not just because of the lifetime earnings advantage for graduates of \$800,000 for men and \$600,000 for women. It's often about non-monetary value of a university education. They want them to learn the rigour of thought that a great university education imbues, to be able to analyse and problem-solve and acquire the sort of skills that will be even more important in the coming machine age. And they want them to be have the kind of truly international education that comes when they sit in university tutorials with

classmates from the region and all around the world - seeing issues from a variety of viewpoints. The other point to be made is that Australia is blessed to have a well-designed income-contingent student loans scheme that ensures talented students don't face the barrier of upfront fees. Our HECS-HELP scheme is the envy of the world and it is an investment in our social cohesion, prosperity and talent.

Q: What is the 'everyday delight' in your role working with, and representing the sector?

A: Every day I am reminded of what fabulous places universities are. Where else do you get to go to work or study each day

to talk about ideas, wrestle with issues, and work to solve the problems that bested us and uncover vast new opportunities. I am very lucky that I'm able to glimpse first-hand the myriad inspiring things that our universities make happen. Walk onto any campus and you will see for yourself a young person growing before your eyes as they see new opportunities opening up before them. You'll see researchers working in teams to better understand the world around us, to help us all to navigate it, to make life saving breakthroughs and conduct life-enriching work. So there is inspiration and delight every single day. I am very fortunate to work with clever, passionate, inspiring people who work and study in our universities and at Universities Australia. It's a privilege to speak for a sector that is such a force for good in the world.



| VIEWPOINT

SOCIAL IMPACT – A FRAMEWORK FOR CRITICALLY ENGAGED UNIVERSITIES

THE HON VERITY FIRTH



Universities at the beginning of the 21st century face an existential challenge. Do they fully embrace the competitive path spurred on by global rankings and driven by international student income? A path

that shifts the costs and benefits of higher education to those individuals who derive private benefit from it? Or do they forge a different future, building a trust relationship with the public based on their role as custodians of a knowledge infrastructure accessible to all?

Professor Glyn Davis (2017) argued in a recent speech to the UPP Foundation in London, that universities globally are facing a ‘rising tide of hostility’ akin to the hostility shown by Henry VIII when he dismantled the monasteries in the 16th Century. Henry VIII claimed monasteries were elite and wealthy institutions that lacked relevance to the lives of ordinary people – arguments that sound eerily familiar to anyone following the political debate around funding for higher education!

The late 20th and early 21st centuries are not a great era for those of us who believe in public institutions. Abuses of trust have eroded public confidence in institutions such as the Church and Government, and yet as UTS academic Tamson Pietsch points out:

“When the big ruptures come upon us – sicknesses, death, unemployment or desperation – it is to institutions that we still invariably turn, both for practical help and for more existential forms of consolation.”
(Pietsch, 2018).

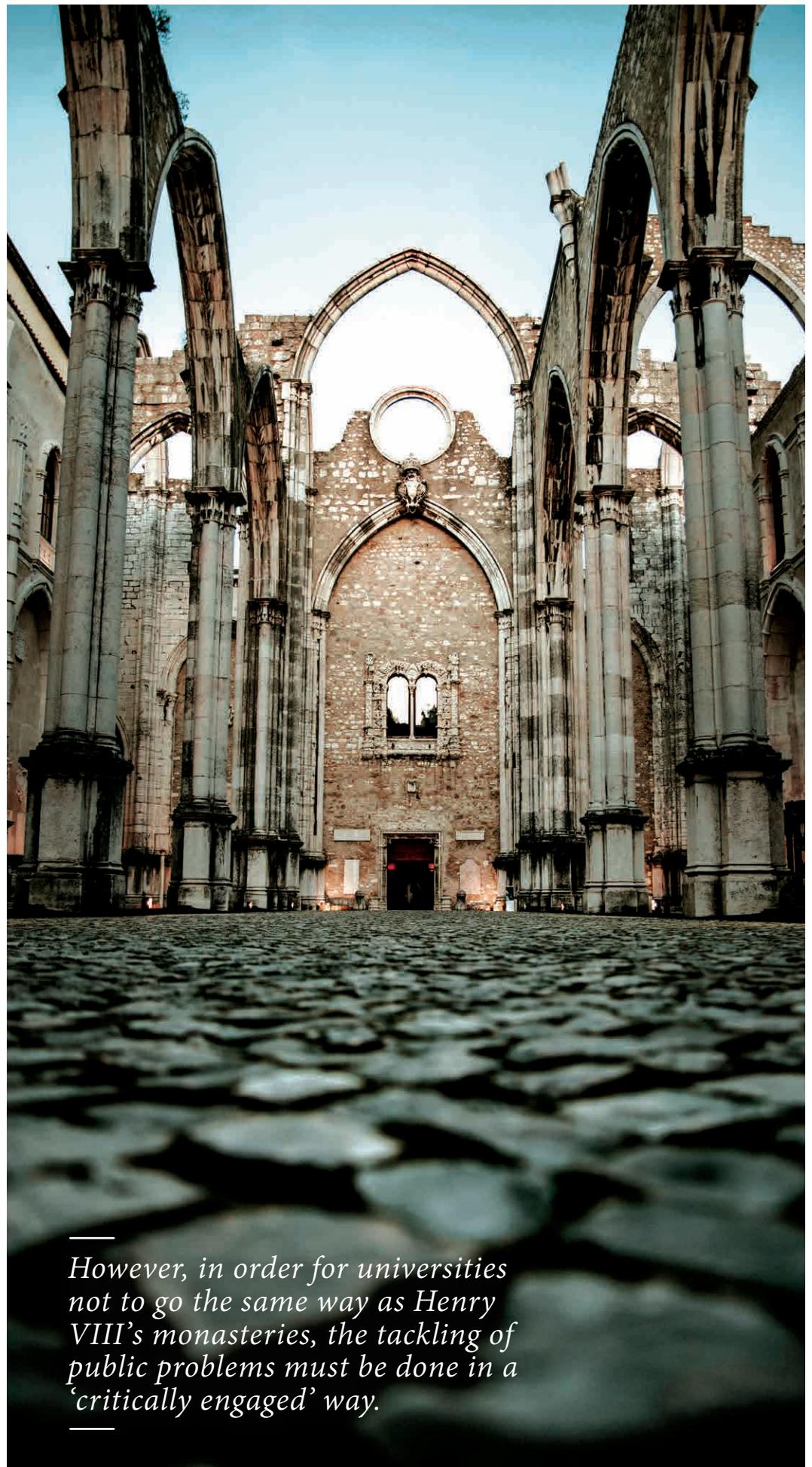
Despite the decline of overall trust, universities have fared better than other public institutions. Although this trust trajectory is on a downward trend.

It's clear that it is time for a new vision of what the university is and who it is for. Although the global terrain of higher education is inevitably "changed by the high tech, information-based knowledge economy, the more localised, public good function of the university must not be lost in the fray." (Rhoads, R. A. Li, S and llano, L., 2014)

For despite all the talk of the private benefit, universities are still public institutions, funded with public money for the purpose of producing public benefit. They educate the next generation, and serve as hot houses of new knowledge through their research. They play a critical role in tackling some of the 21st century's wicked problems - the dislocating impacts of globalisation on local economies, the ever-growing threat of climate change and the emergence of political and religious extremism, being just a few examples. Universities provide research and intellectual rigour to inform public debate and drive public policy.

However, in order for universities not to go the same way as Henry VIII's monasteries, the tackling of public problems must be done in a 'critically engaged' way. Gone are the days of the ivory tower! Universities need to have collaborative, generational, inter-dependent relationships both internally, across disciplines, and most importantly with those outside the university.

The public institution should be like a backbone – a pillar – it should seek to collaborate and influence, but not to own solutions. And despite an increasingly (and worthy) global focus, universities still have a role to play locally, in the



communities in which they are placed, helping to deliver the benefits that should flow to a neighbourhood on the doorstep of a large publicly-funded education institution.

Economic inclusion strategies and engaged community partnerships are all part of what it is to be a modern, engaged and impactful institution. During a recent visit to the US, I saw the concept of the ‘anchor institution’ first hand at the University of Pennsylvania. Penn is located in the heart of West Philadelphia, one of the most economically depressed areas in an already depressed city and State.

In the 1950s and '60s, Penn played a negative role in its community, dislocating many poor, mostly black, residents with its property expansion. However, faced with a growing crime problem in the '80s and '90s, Penn decided to invest massively in its local community. Penn invested in affordable housing, built a public school, rebuilt the local retail strip and implemented economic inclusion strategies for local and minority-owned businesses.

This model, and versions of it, are playing out on other campuses across the US and Canada.

Globally, universities are increasingly recognising their role as convenors and contributors to the ‘building of social infrastructure’ beyond their local communities. Nineteen Canadian universities recently held a roundtable event to collectively focus on the question of how universities can better work together to build social infrastructure, and unlock and maximise capacity both inside and outside their institutions.

What's happening in Australia? I am

pleased to report that the answer is positive. Universities increasingly understand that to stay relevant they need to have relevance. Peak bodies such as

Engagement Australia last year, which brought together all of the G8 universities to consider engagement strategies.

Universities are increasingly recognising that there is a need to make some deliberate strategic decisions regarding how they best maximise their public benefit. A public benefit and social impact focus needs to be intentionally and systemically supported across the university. There needs to be a shared vision amongst staff, both professional and academic, and amongst faculty and senior executive leadership.

At UTS, we've just completed what we believe to be the first project by a university to benchmark and demonstrate its ‘social impact’ as an institution. The Social Impact Framework arose out of a desire to develop a holistic roadmap for our institution to enhance our social impact and to reward and incentivise social impact activity across the university.

Starting more than a year ago and employing Appreciative Inquiry techniques (Whitney, Stavros and Cooperrider, 2018) and Theory of Change methodologies (Funnell, S. C. and Rogers P. J., 2011), over 130 UTS staff and students began work on the university-wide framework. This framework encapsulates the university’s entire, current social justice profile and effort: from the backgrounds of students and how they succeed at university through to recruitment diversity, investments, procurement processes, the choice of research and its social impact, and the contribution UTS makes locally and globally.

The framework allows the university to map a trajectory towards greater



Addressing complex problems requires the connecting of people across sectors and disciplines so a range of experiences and expertise is harnessed towards collective problem solving and improved practice. It requires university-community engagement and sector wide commitment. Most of all, universities need to throw off their shackles of competitive behavior and boldly unite for greater social impact.



Engagement Australia exist to promote university-community engagement and practice and many universities are hosting events such as the University of Melbourne’s recent Global University



Economic inclusion strategies and engaged community partnerships are all part of what it is to be a modern, engaged and impactful institution.

social impact and contribution to its communities. It also allows the university to internally incentivise and reward social impact activity, to enhance existing efforts and identify opportunities for innovation and fresh contributions.

UTS is by no means alone in thinking about how it maximises its public benefit. Griffith University has been intimately involved with the Logan Together collective impact project since its inception, with the ‘backbone’ team hosted at the Griffith

University, Logan Campus. Charles Sturt University has a widely revered Indigenous engagement program, the University of Melbourne’s engagement strategy is ‘united by a shared purpose of creating public value’ and the University of Sydney has recently established a Policy Lab to ‘bring people together to spark new ideas, reframe issues and transform the policy options on the table’.

However, rather than each university orchestrating individual projects, we

should be building a public purpose vision for the Australian higher education sector, seeking to share and benchmark best practice, drive greater engagement and demonstrate our impact as a collective whole.

There are some examples of this collective approach internationally. The Carnegie Community Engagement Classification is a US-based elective classification that involves data collection and documentation of important aspects

of institutional mission, identity and commitments. It is now recognised as the US gold standard for higher education community engagement and is widely understood internationally as a leading evaluation framework.

A small number of Australian universities are joining a pilot project to participate in a national learning community around best practices in university-community engagement, and to use the learnings from this process to collectively forge an Australian community engagement classification. The aim is to be able to launch an Australian Framework by July 2020, based on the findings of the pilot.

The roll out of this classification will be a game changer for Australian higher education. Adoption of the Classification will enable Australian universities to benchmark, reward, incentivise and achieve scaled impact across the sector.

Professor Sharon Bell from Western Sydney University recently wrote that the challenge for higher education leaders is to rebuild relationships of trust both within the university and in our communities in order to reflect ‘authenticity and responsibility and the public good’. To quote Bell (2017):

“...this will only be achieved if we promote equality as a core responsibility; involve colleagues in institutional and policy decision making; liberate the talents and uplift the horizons of those who currently constitute our marginalised and contingent workforces; and in so doing redefine our relationship with those whom we currently interact as clients and customers. We need to become genuine participants in complex institutions that collectively seek

to understand and change our ‘ways of being’.”

With the 21st century upon us, it is up to individuals and institutions to lead processes that encourage the building of shared agendas for change. Social challenges are increasingly porous – seeping across different domains and impacting communities in interrelated ways. Addressing complex problems requires the connecting of people across sectors and disciplines, so a range of experiences and expertise is harnessed towards collective problem solving and improved practice. It requires university-community engagement and sector-wide commitment. Most of all, universities need to throw off the shackles of competitive behaviour and boldly unite for greater social impact.

Verity Firth is the Executive Director, Social Justice and the newly established Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion at the University of Technology Sydney. She is currently spearheading the university’s Social Impact Framework, a first of its kind in the Australian university sector. Other initiatives of the Centre include the Equity & Diversity unit, the award winning Shopfront Community Engagement Program, Athena Swan Equal Futures and the Respect Now Always campaign.

Ms Firth has over 15 years’ experience at the very highest levels of government and the not-for-profit sector in Australia. Over the last 10 years, she has been working in the Australian education sector, first as Minister for Education and Training in New South Wales (2008-2011) and then as the Chief Executive of the Public Education Foundation. Before her parliamentary career, Ms Firth worked as a lawyer and was

Deputy Lord Mayor of the City of Sydney.

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| ARTICLE

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN CRITICALLY ENGAGED CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES: MODELS FROM AUSTRALIA AND THE U.S.

PROFESSOR SANDRA JONES, DR HOWARD ROSING AND DR MATTHEW PINK



Increasingly universities are offering, and students are seeking, opportunities to use

skills and talents acquired through their studies to make a contribution to local and global

communities. The question for educators is “what constitutes academically-driven community engagement in higher education and how does it differ from work experience on the one hand and volunteering on the other?” This article discusses how two universities – Australian Catholic University and DePaul University – define and deliver community engagement experiences. We outline three key stages – preparation, action and reflection – and compare and contrast examples of community engagement activities undertaken by our students. Our goal in this paper is to explore and demonstrate from the perspectives of two large urban Catholic universities the value of diverse types of university-community engagement, facilitating ways of learning while transforming society.

By the time they reach college, many students have learned to refer to the larger society beyond the walls of academe as the “real world”. The separation this reflects is perhaps one of the most ironic, and tragic, aspects of traditional educational models – we isolate learners from the very culture we profess to be preparing them for. Yet

for many students, a deep encounter with those in need may be the most educational thing that ever happens to them (McPherson, 1991: p.50).

Community engagement is becoming widely accepted within the academy as a central component of higher education. As described by Holland (2017), the 2006 Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching defines community engagement "as a method of teaching, learning and research [that] describes interactions between universities and their communities (business, industry, government, NGOs, and other groups) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity".

As Catholic universities, ACU and DePaul are driven by their faith-based missions that are embedded in their respective histories; building community partnerships and capacity for marginalised populations is always the priority of engagement activities and, consequently, the institutions share a particular perspective on ways of engaging

with those who experience disadvantage and/or marginalisation. As part of this Catholic tradition, both institutions

recognise the need to apply a critical lens to how community engagement experiences are structured and implemented.

It is important to acknowledge that there are barriers to meaningful community engagement – for students, for staff, and for community partners. These barriers, such as scheduling engagement in accordance with academic terms or taking time to orient students to working in communities, should not prevent universities from fulfilling the key teaching role of a university. Given the educational

mission of higher education, especially of our two universities, integrating community engagement with formal academic learning must be done with care and concern for both students and the community partners with whom they engage. As two universities with a primary focus on teaching, but that also focus on positively transforming society through

service, careful consideration is given to the processes by which community engagement programs are administered. This article offers a comparative analysis of how each of our institutions prepares, orchestrates and reflects upon collaborative work with communities.

Preparation is critical for successfully integrating community engagement with curriculum. Students lead increasingly busy lives, often balancing employment and family responsibilities with their studies. Increasingly, students infrequently attend campus; listening to recorded lectures online, accessing library resources through online databases, and communicating with lecturers and tutors by online video and email. For these students, fitting community engagement activities into their schedules is difficult, and requires creative solutions – such as offering the choice of block placements or weekly participation and sourcing opportunities close to where students live and work. The homework support program offered at a primary school near ACU's Melbourne campus, for example, addresses this issue by timetabling the sessions into the students' class schedule, ensuring that all students are available to attend. At DePaul, service learning assignments in the community are carefully crafted in accordance with a short ten-week

¹At ACU we use the term 'subject' to describe a single unit of study, at DePaul the term 'course' is used; in this paper the two terms are used interchangeably.

²At ACU we use the term 'academic staff' to describe those who are employed at a university to undertake teaching and research, at DePaul the term 'faculty' is used; for clarity in this paper we use the term 'instructor(s)' to refer to those teaching community engagement/service learning.



Regardless of our institutional differences, the community engagement experiences our students find themselves in must challenge them in real and meaningful ways. An encounter with their own humanity helps them to reflect, learn and grow as people of compassion and initiative.

academic term. In a time of user-pays education, some students will question the value of community engagement, querying how it contributes to their education in their chosen profession and perhaps objecting to paying fees for a subject (or course)¹ that requires them to work in the community. This is particularly the case at most U.S. universities, including DePaul, where the high cost of a college education is challenging for many students who work full or part-time to attain a degree and yet still graduate with significant debt.

The above challenges underscore the importance of preparation in order to derive well-planned (and mutually meaningful) action by students in the community; the latter is followed by reflection and a return to preparation in a cyclical process. Most well-structured higher education community engagement programs practice some form of this process, variably derived from the experiential learning model popularised by David Kolb in the 1984 article *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Yet the ways in which students' community engagement experiences are planned, the ways in which reflection is facilitated, and the ways in which learning occurs (whereby students conceptualise and explore their experiences in the abstract), are also distinct to a university's culture, geography, history and mission.

Given their primary role as educational institutions, universities need to assist students to understand *how* community-based activities benefit them directly by increasing their knowledge and skills, and *why* it is incumbent on them as global citizens to contribute to the

common good. At ACU, community engagement is the third component of the Core Curriculum, building on two formation subjects that engage students with these issues. At DePaul, in addition to the instructor-driven application of service learning pedagogy throughout the curriculum on a more selective sense, taking a course with community engagement is one of the primary options for fulfilling an Experiential Learning Requirement completed as part of the undergraduate Liberal Studies curriculum. Given that thousands of students are guided into these community engagement experiences annually, there are clear demands for support of instructors.² Instructors may feel poorly equipped to provide meaningful community engagement opportunities for their students. Barriers for faculty include both identifying community partners and suitable projects, and providing the effective formation and reflection components of the course. Addressing these logistical issues precedes the skills needed to facilitate deeper discussions and learning that guide students to challenge existing structural and systemic social problems (Mitchell, 2008). In this regard, both ACU and DePaul work with community partners to source placements and support academic staff in the development and delivery of preparation and reflection activities. The alignment of curricular demands with community interests is a dance embedded with questions of institutional power and privilege in respect to how universities develop expectations for what and how students learn in communities. Shining a critical self-reflexive lens on the potential

imposition of the university on the community for the sake of student learning is essential to preparation.

Community partners can find it challenging to take on student placements or projects. It is often difficult to find meaningful and respectful ways for students to interact with community members within the time constraints of university terms and class timetables. Universities need to ensure that the provision of community engagement placements does not become an imposition on partners and that the time required for them to induct, supervise and debrief students does not exceed the benefits of the students' participation. For this reason, ACU and DePaul provide a range of placement options for students and community partners (see 'Action' section), recognising that 'direct service' is not the only way that students can make a meaningful contribution to communities. Each institution has developed unique community engagement initiatives and support units that seek to overcome the logistical barriers through providing support so instructors can teach in a way that facilitates students' learning in and outside the classroom while contributing to the capacity of community partners.

ACU AND DEPAUL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MODELS

The above challenges necessitate considerable funding and planning if universities like ACU and DePaul are to apply their missions in ways that are more than nominal; that is, in ways that offer students and community members mutual benefit as agents for transforming society.

As the two largest English-speaking Catholic universities in the world, both

ACU and DePaul share a similar philosophy of service that goes beyond one-off acts of charity or occasional volunteering. Central to their missions as Catholic educational institutions, both universities seek to build meaningful engagement initiatives through long-term partnership-building, particularly with those organisations that support people living on the margins. Seeking to address the barriers to inclusion and dignity for all, ACU and DePaul practise community engagement with an explicit focus on supporting social justice among the most marginalised. In other words, the universities do not shy away from engaging students in highly political issues such as those involving immigration, workers' rights, incarceration and equity in housing and education. Working on these issues as universities requires an approach to working in the community that involves partnership building where there are expectations for incremental progress or change; that is, that change may be seen over multiple years rather than a single academic term. In turn, the universities are faced with helping students understand how their relatively short time working in the community is both part of their formation as human beings, thus incremental to a Catholic education, and part of a longer-term project to employ the resources of the university to change society.

"Engagement gives students and staff greater understanding of themselves, of others, and of the settings in which their learning can have a positive effect. It offers concrete examples of their moral and ethical obligations as citizens

and human beings, and of the relevance of the Gospel in their lives."

Professor Greg Craven,
ACU Vice-Chancellor and President

ACU explicitly uses the term "community engagement" for its student placements linked to curriculum, whereas DePaul use the term "academic service learning" for such placements or projects embedded in coursework. Whilst the terminology is different, students at both institutions undertake immersive community service opportunities with a similar approach and learning objectives. Students benefit from the relationships they build working with people outside the university in non-profits and often with those who experience marginalisation. In some cases, students come from disadvantaged backgrounds themselves, complicating the reflection on such experiential learning, and thus making it necessary to plan curriculum and partnerships that engage with, and draw upon, students' diverse backgrounds and that views knowledge as not only a product of the academy.

As Catholic institutions, developing partnerships with community organisations involves recognising the value of local knowledge and respecting community partners as purveyors of that knowledge. In practice, that means working in solidarity with those local institutions that work directly with those who are marginalised or oppressed in some manner. Given such external partnerships as learning environments, instructors need to be comfortable acknowledging that there may be local knowledge brought into the classroom by students with diverse backgrounds that contradicts the literature

and/or perspectives of well-respected scholars. The seasoned instructor knows that the unknowns of such community-engaged curriculum are often the richest and most critical forms of learning. In this way, students learn from the opportunity to develop and utilise discipline-specific skills in real world environments, even in the short period of their university-guided community-based activities. At our institutions, institutionalised, academically-integrated community engagement is thus constituted by a vision that is bigger than a temporary volunteering experience or merely a transactional experience; it is a vision that expects mutual benefit between student and community partners that is not unidirectional or simply an opportunity for students to feel good about doing service, but gradually leads to long-term systemic changes in the communities where we work and in the ways our graduates lead their lives.

Ideally, for our students, academically-embedded community engagement provides opportunities for them to grow intellectually, personally and socially. For community partners, such collaborations can provide enthusiastic student participants to assist in activities designed to strengthen communities through the local institutions that serve the population. Such partnerships can provide an opportunity to interact with students and demonstrate their own skills and capacities as they contribute to the students' education. For those university administrators and instructors that are privileged to have roles that enable us to develop, teach about and nurture these community-based forms of learning, such partnerships provide enormous personal fulfilment as we watch students grow as caring, empathic and engaged citizens.

FIGURE 1:

ACU'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES³

Building connections	ACU community engagement builds genuine connections with community through respectful and mutually beneficial partnerships.
Acting with humility	ACU community engagement acts with humility, looking 'outward' with equality to work collaboratively with community, not 'on' or 'for' community.
Developing understanding	ACU community engagement responds with empathy, aiming to understand the people we work with and interact in a considered, compassionate, and respectful manner.
Affirming dignity	ACU community engagement recognises the fundamental rights and worth of all human beings and is committed to affirming the dignity of all people in a holistic manner.
Pursuing Justice	ACU community engagement stands in solidarity with the most disadvantaged and marginalised, and works to realise a fair and just society for all.

FIGURE 2:

DEPAUL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES³

Co-Educators	At DePaul, community partners are not considered solely as recipients of services or resources, but as equal. We view them as co-educators who have an equal stake in exchange of resources.
Mutual Transformation and Cooperation	At DePaul, partnerships develop out of relationships resulting in mutual transformation and cooperation between parties. Well planned and transparent collaboration creates a sense of shared purpose that serves the common good.
Asset-based Community Development	DePaul employs a capacity building approach to community engagement by beginning with the premise that all communities have people with talents and skills; that all communities have assets.
Critical Self (Institutional) Reflection	DePaul asks partners to provide systematic critical self-reflection on the university's support in order to improve our efforts to build partners' capacities to serve members of the community.
Social Justice	DePaul is committed to community engagement that works for social justice. Working for social justice begins with affirming human dignity and through subsequently building connections to resources that challenges systemic inequality.

³These are brief summaries of our underlying principles. Please contact the authors for the full statement of principles



At the outset, curriculum needs to have clear learning goals for students – including knowledge and applied skills but also goals in relation to ethical formation, interpersonal skills, empathy, communication and leadership.

However, as with all great privileges, these roles come with great responsibilities.

Embracing our university missions in the planning of community-engaged learning is central to how we operate our respective community engagement units. That means designing community engagement in a manner by which meaningful student learning occurs without imposition on communities. We also need to be ever vigilant that our service learning, or community engagement, does not slip into being just about “service” or just about “learning”. Community engagement that is solely focused on “service” is synonymous with volunteering and can reinforce marginalisation by positioning the student as an altruistic giver and the community member as a passive recipient. Community engagement that is solely focused on learning is synonymous with work experience such as through a practicum or internship, positioning the student as a passive recipient of knowledge from an organisation.

While exclusively “service” or “learning” models are “easy” options for busy students and staff, they do not provide the potential for student growth or meaningful contribution to the community that are the cornerstones of mutually beneficial and reciprocal community engagement in a manner aligned with the underlying social justice ethos of our universities. Operationalising community engagement that integrates service and learning in higher education requires resources in the form of staff who have the time and expertise to build relations that connect instructors and curriculum to community-based participants. Each institution structures such support in a unique way, given

resources and the level of commitment to embedding community engagement within the processes of teaching and learning. Such units (ACU Engagement at ACU, and the Steans Center at DePaul) act as liaisons between universities and communities in a way that implements an overall set of guiding principles for how community engagement is applied institutionally. As noted in Figures 1 and 2, we outline some of the approaches to community engagement at our respective institutions with the goal of explaining how our community engagement initiatives are configured in accordance with our distinct faith-based backgrounds, institutional structures, culture and practice.

ACU AND DEPAUL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STAGES

1. Preparation

Through our respective community engagement offices, ACU and DePaul plan and implement community-based learning activities and link them to curriculum. Given numerous potential pitfalls that can result from obligating students through curriculum to work in communities, ACU and DePaul seek to ensure that our students are prepared for their community engagement experience. Not only do we need to select appropriate community partners, but students also need to understand their goals and expectations; we need to ensure that what we and our students are able to offer is consistent with those expectations of community partners. At the outset, curriculum needs to have clear learning goals for students – including knowledge and applied skills but also goals in relation to ethical formation, interpersonal skills, empathy, communication and leadership. Perhaps most important, we need to

adequately and rapidly prepare students for their interaction with the community so that they approach people with whom they engage from the starting point of their common humanity.

For community engagement to be a truly reciprocal and mutually beneficial experience in line with our respective institutional missions, our students need to be empathic in their work with communities. They need to seek to understand the causes of inequity and disadvantage and to be motivated to address social, economic, environmental and structural factors and to work with communities to address the root causes of inequality. Moreover, given the missions of our respective faith-based institutions, we hope to guide students toward developing increased empathy through listening with their hearts and minds and then critically reflecting on people’s circumstances, history, dispositions, needs, and worldviews (Dawson, 2000; Passmore, 1985; Segal, Cimino, Gerdes, Harmon, & Wagaman, 2013). Indeed, scholars highlight that listening and critical reflection with a humble disposition and open heart and mind is the key to this learning and development (Dawson, 2000; Pink & Butcher, 2014). Developing empathic understandings means students use their intellect, and their hearts to “see the world through the eyes of the other” (Segal et al., 2013). As Passmore (1985) argued however, this isn’t a simple task when groups are culturally, socially and economically remote, and such a challenging process needs to be supported before, during and after student engagement experiences.

FIGURE 3:

CATEGORIES OF SERVICE LEARNING/ COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

DEPAUL		ACU	
Direct service	Students engage in service that directly benefits a community organization's existing programming (e.g., tutoring, providing health screenings)	Direct community engagement	Students interact with community members through an existing program offered by ACU and/or an external partner organisation (e.g., tutoring youth from refugee and migrant backgrounds).
Project-based service	Students produce a tangible product by the end of the term (e.g., creating a website, PR plan, assessing organizational recruitment strategies).	Project-based community engagement	Students (individually or in groups) work on a project with a tangible outcome for a community organisation (e.g., develop a website for a community organisation, develop a strategic plan).
Community-based research	Students contribute to a research effort defined and driven by a community partner.	Community-based research	Students conduct or contribute to a research project needed by a community organisation.
Advocacy and Solidarity	Students support an ongoing campaign to address a critical social, economic, and/or environmental issue in Chicago or internationally. It involves valuing the dignity of all people, respecting them as individuals, in the pursuit of justice, community-building and peace.	Advocacy	Students participate in/support one of ACU's partner organisations with an ongoing campaign to address a social issue.

At ACU, all undergraduate students complete the core curriculum, two university-wide coursework units and a school-specific community engagement placement. UNCC100 (Self and Community: Exploring the Anatomy of Modern Society) focuses on the principles of Catholic Social Thought, encouraging students to think critically about how issues relating to the dignity of the human person and the realisation of the common good may be addressed in their personal and professional lives now and in the future. The unit aims to equip students with knowledge and understanding of the ideas of “self” and “community” as interrelated concepts, and develop basic skills to enable them to contribute to a more just society. UNCC300 builds on UNCC100, and the call from Pope Francis for a renewed emphasis on the dignity of the human person as the basis of all action, advocacy and solidarity. This unit provides students with the skills and knowledge to become an active agent for change in an interconnected and interdependent world. Importantly, it also prepares students’ hearts and minds for the action, reflection,

and experiential learning that is to come in their community engagement placements.

At DePaul, all undergraduates complete an Experiential Learning (EL) requirement as part of the university’s Liberal Studies curriculum. One of the four ways to fulfil

this requirement is to enrol in an approved course that integrates service learning pedagogy. This occurs for about 20 to 30 of the 60 courses on average per term that incorporate service learning. The courses approved as EL come from a wide array of disciplines but are mostly taught through the humanities and social sciences. For students who otherwise would not take such a course, the EL requirement guides them out of their curricular and experiential comfort zone and into communities throughout Chicago

where they learn about issues of power and privilege and how and why social inequality exists. Equally important, through EL courses, students begin to see the types of solutions crafted by

local residents and non-profits to address systemic inequality. For many students in majors that have little to do with such a topic, the EL courses offer a profound example of how the university lives out its Vincentian mission – to respect the dignity of all people regardless of their situation, manifested through solidarity with those who live in the most dire circumstances – through curriculum.

2. Action

Planning community engagement in curriculum requires foresight into the types of work that students can logically and meaningfully undertake. Community engagement, or service learning, has often been seen as synonymous with direct service – that is, that “real” community engagement requires individual one-on-one interaction between the student and the disadvantaged community member. While this is an important form of engagement, it is not the only form of engagement that is beneficial for our community partners and our students. An over-emphasis on direct service as the only, or best, form of community engagement overlooks some of the real barriers to this form of interaction that some students experience.

First, some of our students may not have the capacity or the desire to engage in such direct interaction; while we may argue that requiring them to do so will force them to confront their prejudices and grow as a person, this ignores the potential harm to the community recipients of such reluctant service. Second, the increasing numbers of students enrolled in our universities means an ever-increasing need to provide “opportunities” for direct interaction that risk seeing the



For community engagement to be mutually beneficial - for the student, the community and the institution – it must be a critically engaged process at the institutional, curricula and individual level within universities. Deep engagement is reflective, open and realistic within the structure and function of the university and prioritises community interests.

marginalised and disadvantaged as a resource rather than a partner. Third, an insistence on direct service may put community engagement/service learning out of reach of students who themselves experience barriers to direct service, such as those with a mental or physical health issue, those who have caring or work responsibilities, and those who are unable to obtain a police clearance due to a previous criminal conviction. Finally, the underlying principles of community engagement are partnership and mutually beneficial exchange; if our partners are regularly asking for assistance with projects and research (which they are) then refusal to provide anything other than direct service is not honouring their needs, and a mutually beneficial partnership. Further, we argue that through carefully structured learning and reflection activities, students can develop rich, empathic understandings of community members through several modes of community engagement. In recognising the need for – and value of – different categories of community engagement, the Steans Center provides four types of service learning for DePaul students, and ACU has recently adopted these four categories (see Table 1).

The fourth category, advocacy and solidarity, is one that causes anxiety among some university faculty and administrators out of fear of being politically controversial. However, it is this type of engagement that will in the long-term provide the most benefit for the student, the community, and society at large. Further, universities have traditionally been places where youth challenge orthodoxy as the next

generation to effect social change. Our universities are training students for future professional careers, providing them with the skills, knowledge and confidence to be leaders in their communities. If we, as a global community, are to address the social, economic, environmental and structural factors that create systemic inequality we need to be training our future leaders to use their skills and resources to work with communities to reduce the barriers to equal access, participation and shared human dignity. Sometimes this means we need to challenge the status quo and “stand beside” those most in need and advocate loudly for change.

To illustrate the value of the four categories, the following section provides examples of current and recent community engagement activities from both institutions.

Direct service

Homework Support: On ACU's Melbourne campus, undergraduate students, particularly those enrolled in education degrees, participate in The Atherton Gardens Homework Support program. This program – a partnership between ACU, Sacred Heart Primary School and The Smith Family – offers weekly after school homework support to local primary school students from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and refugee backgrounds. Based in Fitzroy, the program began in 2002 with 18 students and has grown to supporting more than 100 students each year. ACU students work as dedicated one-on-one tutors to enhance school-based learning and encourage the development of literacy and numeracy skills through a variety of

learning activities. The program has been developed to:

- provide a safe learning environment where children are supported by tutors to improve their literacy and numeracy skills
- raise children's educational aspirations and promote positive relationships between the children from the estates and ACU students
- build the capacity of parents to support and encourage their children's learning at home
- support the Social Emotional Literacy Education Model used by the school's teachers.

ACU students receive training and induction prior to commencing as a tutor and ongoing support is provided onsite by staff from ACU, Sacred Heart Primary School, and The Smith Family. Throughout the course of the program, tutors are encouraged to reflect on their professional practice to complement their university studies.

Intercambio: Established in 2002, intercambio integrates a social justice-based curriculum and critical reflection through popular education to raise awareness of social issues while providing students and community members with the opportunity to exchange in language acquisition. A year-long program offered as a result of collaboration between DePaul's Department of Modern Languages and the Steans Center, Intercambio involves students enrolling in an intermediate level, year-long sequence of Spanish classes with a service-learning component. Through the service-learning component, students fulfill their Liberal

Studies Experiential Learning requirement in a unique program that offers the opportunity for English and Spanish-speakers to build conversation skills while learning about each other's lives, cultural backgrounds and common issues impacting society. Intercambio works by partnering a DePaul student (Spanish language learner) with a community member enrolled in English as a Second Language class (English language learner). Students and community members meet in an informal space outside of a classroom that allows participants to practice what they learned in their respective language classes. The program includes eight, three-hour sessions at a community-based organisation serving the Latino communities of Chicago. The program was built from the popular education theories developed by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire that stress collective learning and empowerment of community members. As they practice their language skills, participants critically reflect on important social justice issues occurring every day in Chicago and globally. Topics include issues such as health, immigration, and the environment; all designed to encourage conversation



Community engagement is increasingly seen as a central component of higher education - as universities acknowledge their capacity to serve the community, and their role in education students to be global citizens.

through structured activities and lively interaction.

Project-based service

Needs Mapping: ACU Engagement often receives requests from partner organisations for donations of much-needed items, and requests from staff and students looking for suitable organisations to donate good-quality items that are no longer needed. Over the recent summer break, an ACU undergraduate Arts student undertook a "needs mapping" project, contacting organisations near our six Australian campuses to ascertain what types of goods and resources they are looking for. He then developed a searchable spreadsheet of organisations' needs, including any specific requirements or limitations on the types of goods they are able to accept. While this was a largely desk-based activity, by directly contacting the organisations he was able to develop a deep understanding of the needs of the communities they serve and the issues faced by charitable organisations (such as well-intentioned donations that are not usable and actually incur disposal costs for the organisation). Whilst some would argue that community

engagement requires capacity building at individual level, we believe that community engagement can also be about bringing capacity to organisations that serve those who experience disadvantage and/or marginalisation. This student developed deep and rich understandings through helping to develop the capacity of the organisation, serving the common good by affirming the dignity of those most in need through the provision of goods. The resulting report and database has since been used regularly to match donations to needs. For example, when the university found itself with a large over-supply of UHT (long-life) milk, we were instantly able to identify organisations near each campus that were looking for milk, and get the supplies delivered to them within the day.

Nonprofit Website Incubator: DePaul offers "Software Projects for Community Clients" to assist small community-based non-profits in building, rebuilding, or improving their websites. Computer science students engage in real-world problem solving for organisations that are working on critical social, economic and political issues while non-profits gain essential communication tools. The students use software applications that are new to them and they work in teams, essentially as website development companies for their non-profit client. In addition to learning and applying technical skills, students practice intercommunication skills and learn how to work on a team and how to listen. They also learn how non-profits with limited resources operate; and how human and social service organisations operate on narrow budgets that don't always permit the affording of website development services. Students build or rebuild websites

for organisations that don't usually have anyone with information technology (IT) skills. The students thus take on a role of being their own IT organisation, giving them a window into how organisations juggle information from various constituents and then how their project can develop a web-based application to help make the organisation's work more streamlined so they can save time and better serve community members. The students also train their clients so they are able to make changes to their websites, leaving them with a product they can edit and that is easy to manage. DePaul then hosts the website on its server for up to a year.

Community-based research

Housing co-operatives: Housing co-operatives have the potential to provide stable housing for those with limited income, an important social issue in a time where housing affordability is reaching a crisis point in many cities. In addition to providing a home, this form of housing is also believed to provide social support and improve the wellbeing of residents. However, there is limited research data on these outcomes. At ACU, we were approached by a local housing co-operative seeking to document the benefits gained by their residents, but without the budget to pay for a commercial evaluator. We were able to attract a postgraduate psychology student to undertake a small qualitative study with residents to begin to document the outcomes for residents in the housing co-operative. While the project is still underway, preliminary results show that the members report receiving emotional, instrumental and informational social

support, leading to increased well-being. Future student research projects will build on this initial study and provide an ongoing partnership between the university and this not-for-profit organisation.

Community-based Research Faculty Fellowship: The Steans Center awards two-year Community-based Research Faculty Fellowships to fund faculty to conduct collaborative research projects with community partners throughout Chicago. The research project must be driven by the interests of a community/community organisation and thus benefit community and must be integrated into curriculum taught by the award recipient. For example, one project recently worked with a homeless services organisation that assists people in attaining employment. An instructor in the Masters in Public Health (MPH) program and her students evaluated the effectiveness of the organisation's job skills training for individuals experiencing homelessness. Specifically, their research explored how career counselling intervention impacts employability, hope, well-being, use of strengths and employment. They collaboratively defined research questions such as "How does a strength-based career counselling intervention impact participant self-perceived employability and full-time employment status?" The research team administered pre and post-test surveys and MPH students enrolled in a Career Counseling course learned how to evaluate a career counseling intervention with individuals experiencing homelessness. Students learned about the challenge of collecting data with participants who have difficulty using

computers for surveys and how human service organisations experience high attrition rates especially when working with homeless populations.

Advocacy and solidarity

The School of Science and Mental Health Awareness Week: For the past three years, the School of Science at ACU has taken a special focus in advocating for, and "standing beside", those who suffer from a mental illness. This has been built into a course work unit where students develop posters that can be used to educate on the prevalence of mental health conditions and the stigma surrounding these. Additionally, students in the course organise guest speakers who have a mental health condition to raise awareness on campus and actively raise funds to support the Australian mental health awareness week initiatives. Through advocating for awareness and the reduction of stigma, and providing a platform for the voices and stories of those with a mental health condition, students are affirming the dignity of these people, while increasingly learning to see world through their eyes. These learnings are then linked with the field of neuroscience specifically, and social justice broadly, as in keeping with the principles of Catholic Social Thought.

Inside-Out Prison Exchange: In 2012, DePaul launched the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program, a project started at the Inside-Out Center at Temple University in Philadelphia. In the U.S., more than 2.3 million people are currently incarcerated. DePaul trains faculty and students to learn together with students on the inside of the prison system as a direct reflection of the university's Catholic identity and Vincentian mission. This personalism is

manifested through solidarity with those who live in the most dire circumstances, including prisons. The university's Community Service Studies Minor in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences engages the inside (incarcerated) students as equals through facilitating the offering of courses onsite at two Chicago area prisons. The classes bring DePaul students and inmates together to learn as peers, engaging in a variety of topics depending on the faculty member and the course offering. For the outside students, the experience is very different than a traditional classroom and distinct from other service learning courses they may have taken. The focus is not the transfer of resources to a community from the university but on connecting students — inside and out — in learning about restorative justice methods through a variety of disciplines such as philosophy, political science, gender studies and critical community studies. Outside students travel to the prison and join the inmates to learn these topics together through readings, discussions and written assignments. The course is therefore not about serving others in the traditional sense, but more about transforming lives of students on the inside and out. It provides an academic space where, in solidarity, DePaul's Vincentian values are lived out.

3. Reflection

While many of our students are not Catholic, community engagement is aligned with our universities' respective Catholic missions of promoting knowledge, human dignity and the common good.

To approach all strangers we meet with respect and dignity (and thus equal

worth) to a person, is a core Christian value that underpins the design of our engagement programs (Byron, 1999). This means the students, regardless of their faith, are encouraged to reach deep within themselves to find genuine human connection in the experience, to discover their capacity for approaching people facing challenging circumstances, and not just see it as an uncomfortable token gesture, a troublesome academic obligation undertaken with gritted teeth, or an insincere feel-good exercise. At our institutions, the first step to doing this type of reflection is to base our work in community engagement on principles grounded in Catholic Social Thought; principles that highlight "ways of doing and being" in community engagement. For example, Figure 1 shows the principles underpinning community engagement at ACU, which were developed in collaboration with the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy. These principles highlight to the students the importance of forming connections, developing understanding, acting with humility, affirming dignity, and pursuing social justice. Communication of these ways of doing and being in community engagement sets a foundation for the students' action and learning. DePaul is in the process of forming its own set of principles for community engagement that follow similar sentiments to those of ACU.

Regardless of our institutional differences, the community engagement experiences our students find themselves in must challenge them in real and meaningful ways. An encounter with their own humanity helps them to reflect, learn and grow as people of compassion and initiative. If they are not provoked to

reflect deeply from the experience, then the exercise has fallen short.

Therefore, both our institutions seek to create structured opportunities for reflection for our students – acknowledging that their service learning may have been challenging as well as rewarding. At ACU, reflective tasks are built into discipline specific community engagements units at the micro level (i.e., after an individual community engagement experience) and the macro level after a semester's community engagement placement has completed. At both institutions, reflective tasks can include written assignments such as online blogs, reflective journals and reflective assignments, and oral tasks such as group debriefing circles and reflective presentations. Typically, these tasks are based on sound pedagogical frameworks such as Gibbs' (1988) reflective cycle, Kolb's (1981) experiential learning model, or Dawson's (2000) See, Judge, Act model from a Catholic perspective. Regardless of their origins in scholarship, these frameworks all highlight the importance of reflection after a concrete experience. Within such frameworks, there are carefully constructed reflective questions that challenge students' hearts and intellects to understand the personal and social influences on the behaviour and dispositions of community members. Such reflective questions and tasks can be clearly mapped to the Catholic intellectual tradition, the universities' institutional missions and principles of community engagement. In doing this, students are supported and disciplined to embark on a transformational learning process that requires analysing the disequilibria and challenges to their frames of reference,

which can occur after a rich community engagement experience (Mezirow, 2012). In this sense, the development of empathic understanding is a holistic, person and context bound, and rigorous process that enables work with community members in a respectful considered and effective manner. Once learned, students can apply this to personal and professional situations in their ongoing lives. Such an approach seeks to develop students who are global citizens with a critical habit of mind, an empathic disposition, and who are connected to issues of contemporary society.

CONCLUSION

Community engagement is increasingly seen as a central component of higher education – as universities acknowledge their capacity and responsibility to serve the community, and their role in educating students to be global citizens. As Catholic universities, ACU and DePaul have a deep commitment to working with those experiencing marginalisation or disadvantage. Integral to an ACU education is giving students time to reflect on ways we can change the world by applying the principles of Catholic Social Thought, emphasising the dignity of the human person and our role in working to achieve the common good. Integral to a DePaul education is the Vincentian mission, asking students to understand the values of St. Vincent de Paul as they relate to respect for human dignity and service to others.

Thus, community engagement is part of the fabric of both institutions and clearly tied to our missions and core philosophies, which are built into the students' education. However, community

engagement has an equally important and integral role in students' education at secular universities. The purpose of this article was not to suggest that as Catholic institutions we have a superior or unique role to play in educating tomorrow's leaders to work for the good of all humanity. This is a task incumbent on all universities as institutions of citizenship; to harness the power of their mission, culture and cohorts to these ends. Rather, we have sought to describe our processes, considerations and outcomes as examples of community engagement in action; and the challenges we have faced and will continue to face in the rapidly changing higher education environment. In sharing our experiences we hope to contribute to the broader discussion, understanding and integration of community engagement in the curriculum of all Australian universities and universities internationally.

For community engagement to be mutually beneficial – for the student, the community and the institution – it must be a critically engaged process at the institutional, curricula, and individual level within universities. Deep engagement is reflective, open and realistic within the structure and function of the university, and prioritises community interests. Importantly, we must always be critically engaging with our own community engagement processes so we can remain agile and responsive to changing higher education and community landscapes.

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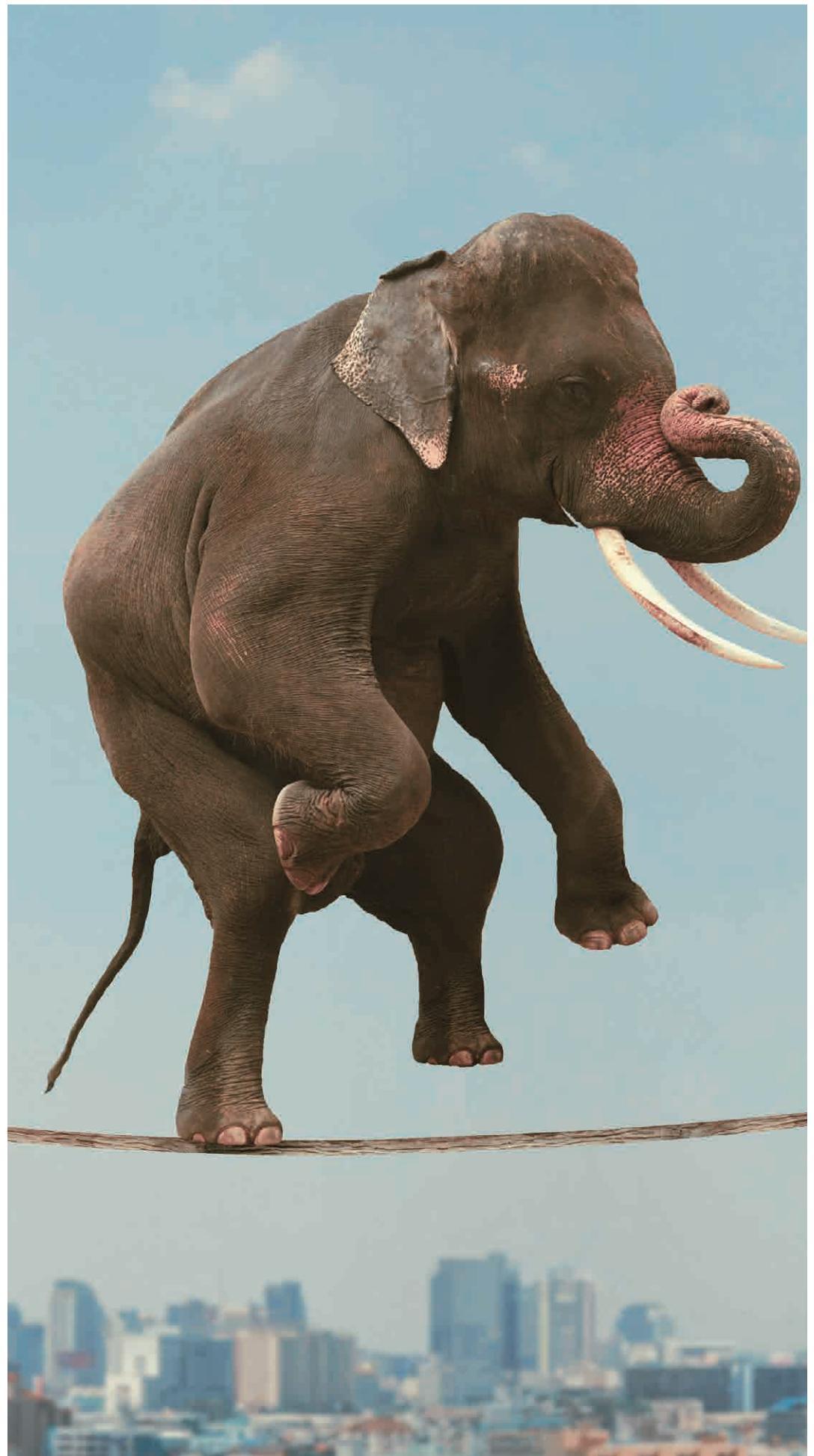
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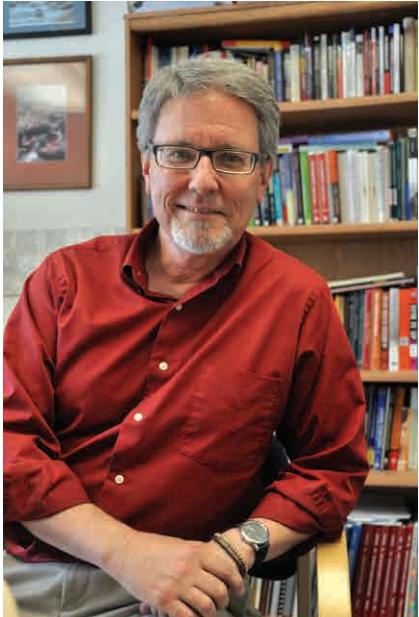
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Engagement (NIIICE) used in the United States as a strategic planning tool to advance community engagement in higher education. The authors also describe how the tool has been utilized during two-day institutes to promote dialogue and networking for community engagement professionals. This article also serves as an invitation for collaborative efforts to adapt the NIIICE for use in Australia.

A comprehensive study of infrastructure and common practice for campus centers of community engagement was conducted in the United States in 2013 (Welch & Saltmarsh, 2013a - <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1018631.pdf>). Following the publication of that study, directors of campus centers frequently sought permission from the authors to utilize the results of that study as either a tool for strategic planning or “leverage” in requesting additional resources. As a result, the original survey was adapted to create the National Inventory of Institutional Infrastructure of Community Engagement (NIIICE – pronounced as “nice”) as an on-line inventory that could be used as a tool that campus centers and their institution could utilize for strategic planning.

Five years after the publication of the original research article, nearly 170 institutions have completed the inventory, creating a rich database. The growing database that emerged allows comparisons with comparable institutions and a “best

ARTICLE

A N.I.I.I.C.E WAY TO ASSESS BEST PRACTICE FOR CRITICALLY ENGAGED UNIVERSITIES IN AUSTRALIA

MARSHALL WELCH

JOHN SALTMARSH



ABSTRACT

This article describes the evolution and development of the National Inventory of Institutional Infrastructure on Community

practice” metric based on the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement and the professional literature.

The framework and context of the inventory, however, is for American institutions of higher education. As such certain terminology and constructs of the existing tool would not necessarily apply in Australia. The growing interest and effort to advance community engagement in Australia provides an opportunity to consider possible partnerships to explore ways the NIIICE might be modified and utilized in this country. This article continues with a brief review and background of the original study followed by a description of the inventory development and use over the past five years.

Next, we describe institutes that have been conducted for campuses that have completed the NIIICE to “unpack” their profile results in a retreat setting to identify priorities for strategic planning. We conclude with an invitation to Australian colleagues to consider ways they might participate in reviewing and revising the inventory for use in Australia.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

By the mid 1990s, as American campuses were integrating community service with academic study, campus infrastructure emerged to support the institutionalization of service-learning. If campuses were going to institutionalize service-learning, they would need what Walshok called “new kinds of institutional mechanisms” (1995, p. 275) to do so. By the end of the decade, models of the structure, staffing, functions and funding of service-learning on campuses of every

institution type had been compiled in a widely read book, *Successful Service Learning Programs* (Zlotkowski, 1998). As the infrastructure evolved into the first decade of the next century, the purposes, roles and complexity of the centers changed, often with a civic engagement agenda broader than service-learning, and often with a mission that was aimed at wider institutional transformation. What was missing, beyond case studies, was an empirical understanding of how centers had evolved, where they fit in the organizational reporting charts, and how they were structured, staffed, and budgeted. Our original study used a survey to investigate the following questions:

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

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

The survey was designed to provide an overview of critical components and essential infrastructure to guide campus administrators and center directors as they establish and continue to advance community engagement as part of the college experience. The survey was comprised of items derived from a

comprehensive review of the literature cited in the article. Additionally, the authors incorporated reciprocal validity (Welch, Miller, & Davies, 2005) by inviting respondents to provide additional information and insight from their own contexts and experience. This information gleaned from this process provided a significant contribution to the extant knowledge of current and best practice from the perspective of center directors.

The results from 147 respondents were initially reported in a chapter (Welch & Saltmarsh, 2013b) in an edited volume, *Deepening Community Engagement in Higher Education: Forging New Pathways* (Hoy & Johnson, 2013). However, due to limited space, the findings reported in the chapter were expanded in an article (Welch & Saltmarsh, 2013a). The findings were organized into six broad categories: 1) institutional architecture and policy, 2) center infrastructure, 3) center operations, 4) center programming for students, faculty, and community partners, 5) center director, and 6) institutional information consisting of descriptive and demographic data. The results of the study concluded that campus centers have evolved through what might be called the first generation of this field, expanding from primarily coordinating co-curricular volunteer service to a comprehensive and professional administrative role funded by institutional dollars within academic affairs to coordinate campus-wide community engagement initiatives. Roles and responsibilities now encompassed logistical coordination of tracking and assessing programs coupled with management of transportation, implementation of risk management

policy and procedures, and additional development and fund-raising. The findings also suggested that the creation of an infrastructure to support community engagement is an evolutionary process. As the operation of a center develops, the work becomes more complex and expansive. The study suggested the evolutionary direction of centers included: 1) a need for more staff, more space, larger budgets, and more intentional fundraising; 2) deeper affiliation with academic affairs and faculty roles and responsibilities; 3) better data gathering and reporting/communicating the work of the center and its outcomes; and 4) greater community partner voice and student voice in center planning and operations.

INVENTORY

Due to the response to and use of the 2013 article, the authors adapted the research survey as an inventory or checklist that centers and institutions could use to assess their current programming and infrastructure for program review and strategic planning. The original survey of 66 items within the six categories was expanded by including salient information derived from the reciprocal validity results reported by respondents, resulting in nearly 120 items to comprise an inventory known as the National Inventory of Institutional Infrastructure for Community Engagement (NIIICE). The inventory was also intended to be both a “measuring stick” by which campus centers could compare their inventory results with the full database of campuses and with comparable institutions. That said, the inventory was never intended for or used to rate or rank centers and institutions. A

simple response metric was developed consisting of three response options that could be used to calculate and derive a score for each of the six categories on the inventory. Each inventory item asked respondents to report to what extent a particular practice or program was being implemented ranging from “Yes,” it is operational, to “Hope To” (it was planned but not implemented), and “No,” it does not currently exist.

Each of these were given a weighted score ranging from 2 for a “YES” response to a 1 for a “Hope To” response to a 0 for a “No” response rendering a cumulative “maximum” score for each of the six categories. This allowed for calculating both a raw and mean score that could be used for comparison with results from institutions with the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement and comparable types of institutions. Results were presented in table (see Table 1) and bar-graph chart (see Figure 1) formats for easy review and analysis. Thus, it was relatively easy for an institution to literally “eyeball” where they stood in each category to determine specific areas of strengths and areas for continued development.

Other demographic and descriptive information pertaining to staff size, budgets, number of faculty teaching service-learning courses, number of departments implementing service-learning, and number of service-learning courses taught on campus was collected. These data were presented in table and pie-chart formats so respondents could compare their results with the overall database.

It is important to remember that, in its

current form, the NIIICE is not a validated survey instrument but an assessment inventory and planning tool. As such, response validity is not a significant methodological issue. It is, however, important to have as accurate data as possible. A center director is most likely the most knowledgeable respondent to independently complete the inventory. However, a collective team response by a center staff not only increases response validity, but serves as an effective exercise to promote reflective dialogue in the process of responding. If an institution has more than one center coordinating community engagement, it is recommended to convene knowledgeable representatives from each center to collectively complete their own individual inventory responses as a way to promote a conversation to compare operations and programming.

INSTITUTES (A MEETING OR ENCOUNTER OR ‘RETREAT’ TO DISCUSS AND REFLECT)

While the authors knew the value of an empirical and comparative inventory of community engagement infrastructure, we also recognized the potential benefit of providing the “gift of time” in a retreat setting in which the results of the inventory could be reviewed and discussed in a meaningful and strategic way. A half-day pre-conference workshop at the annual conference of the International Association for Research on Service-learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE) in 2015 served as a pilot. A total of 10 participants comprised of campus center directors completed the inventory in advance and received their

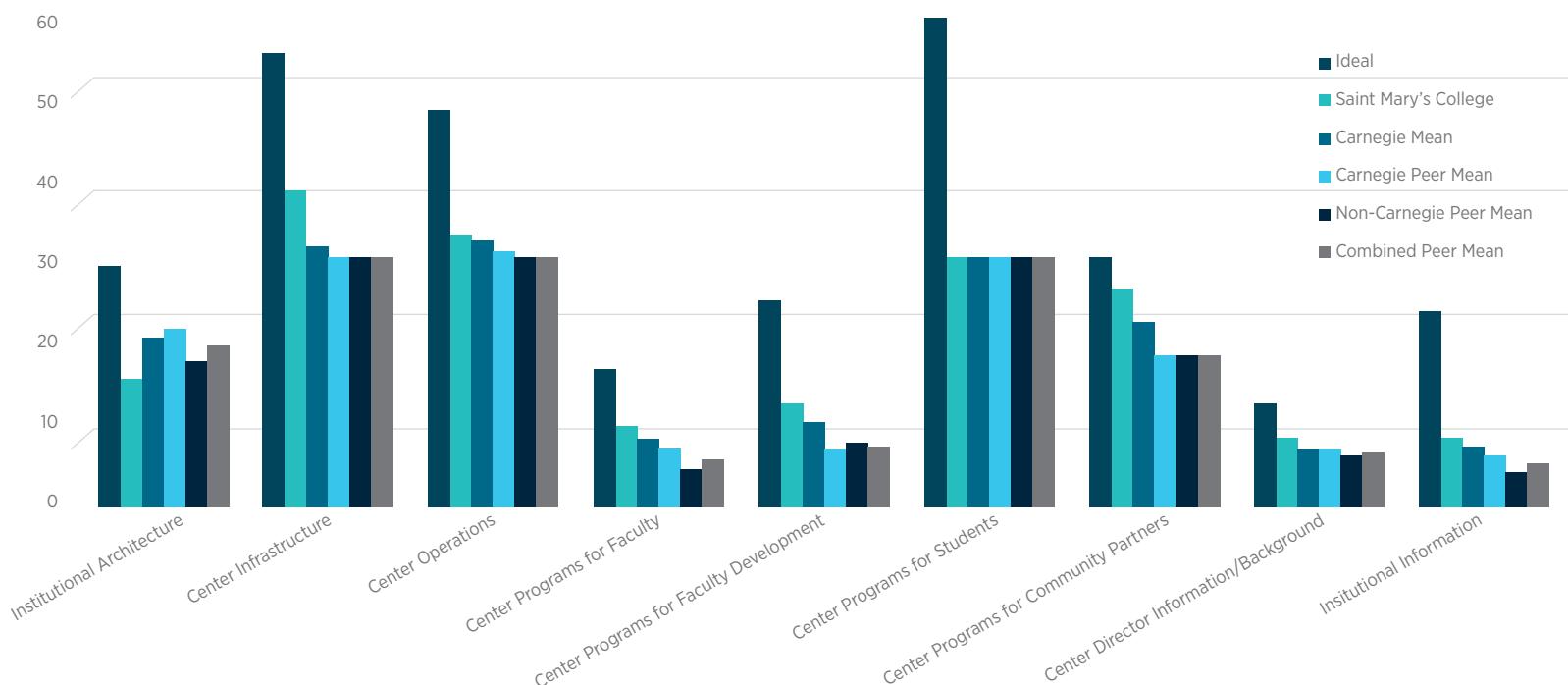
TABLE 1.

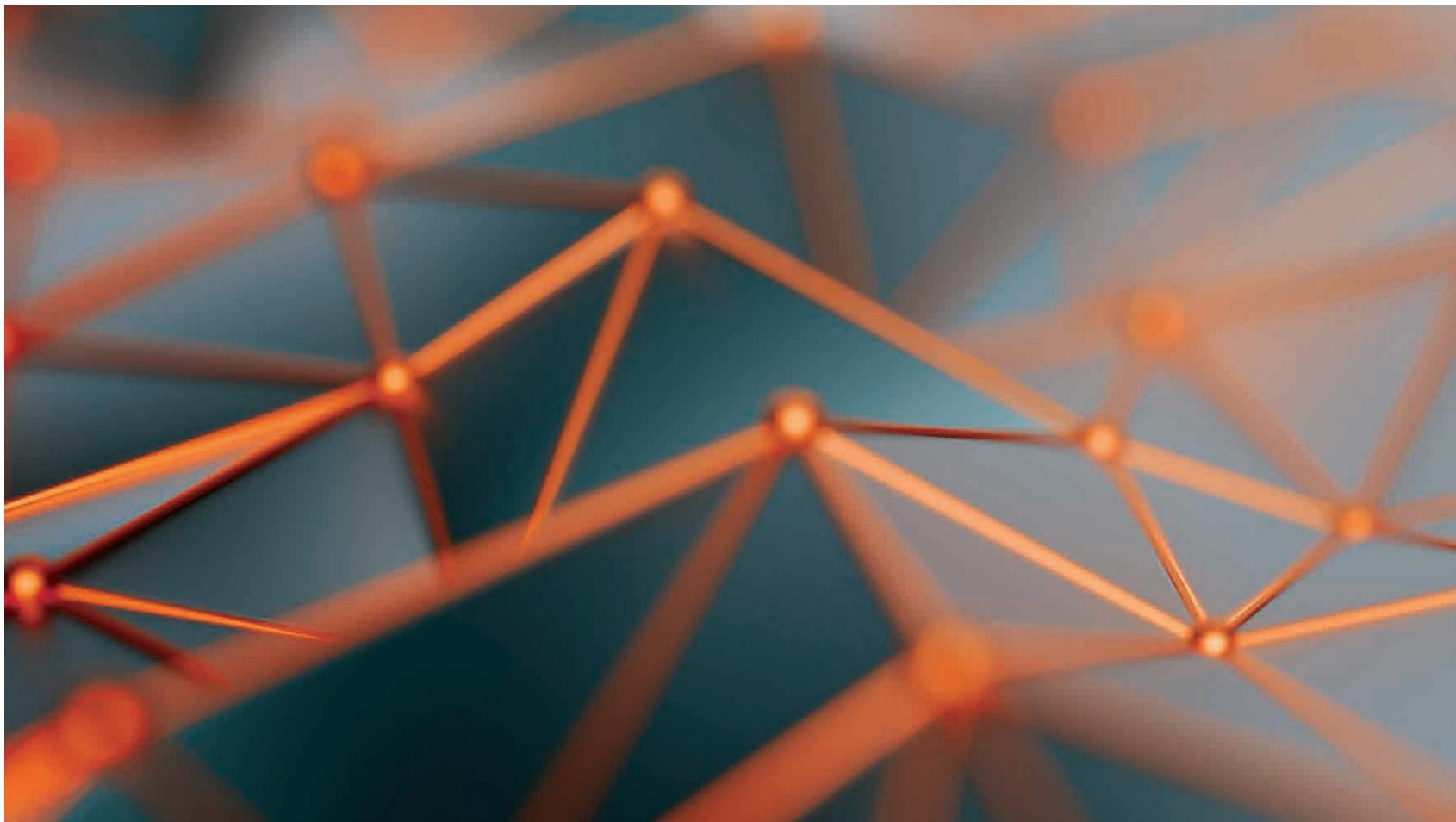
INDIVIDUAL SURVEY RESULTS + COMPARISON MEAN SCORES

SCORES FOR ALL SURVEY CATEGORIES	IDEAL	SAINt MARY'S COLLEGE	CARNEGIE MEAN	CARNEGIE PEER MEAN	NON-CARNEGIE PEER MEAN	COMBINED PEER MEAN
Institutional Architecture	25	15	18.77	19.42	16.66	18.04
Center Infrastructure	53	41	36.01	32.71	34.82	33.77
Center Operations	48	37	36.59	35.57	33.83	34.7
Center Programs for Faculty	16	11	9.81	9	7.16	8.08
Center Programs for Faculty Development	22	13	11.31	8.85	9.5	9.17
Center Programs for Students	56	33	34.83	28.14	33	30.57
Center Programs for Community Partners	28	23	20.11	17.14	17.16	17.15
Center Director Information/Background	13	10	8.94	9	8.33	8.66
Institutional Information	21	10	9.29	8.42	7	7.71
TOTAL:	282	193	185.66	168.25	167.46	167.85

FIGURE 1.

INDIVIDUAL INVENTORY RESULTS + COMPARISON MEAN SCORES





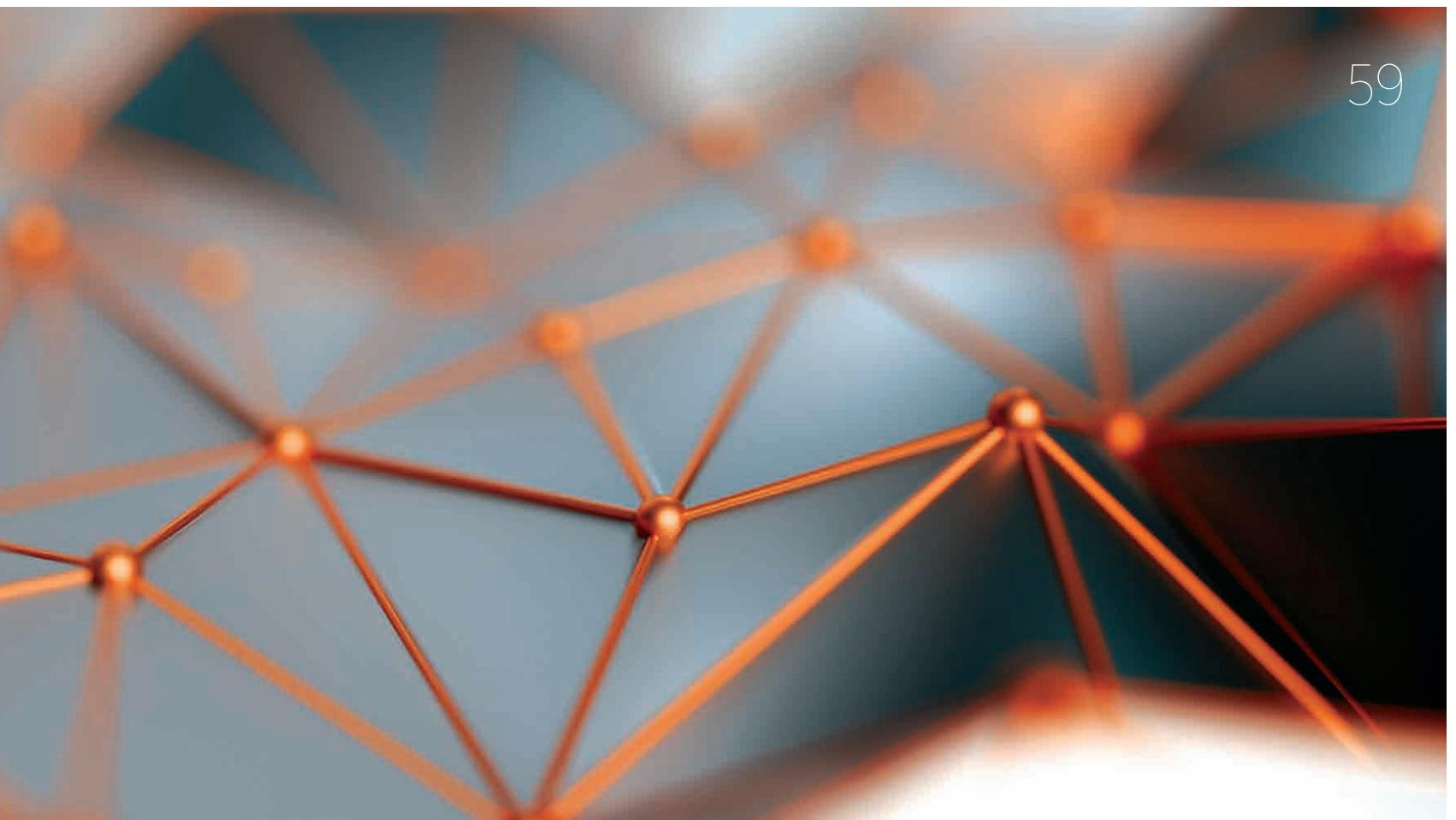
results at the pre-conference workshop. The pre-conference workshop began with an overview of the original study and how the survey was adapted to create the inventory. The results were then “unpacked” with the participants and discussed collectively as a group. A rich discussion ensued, revealing not only an interest in the topic, but a need and desire for networking and exchanging information among participants. A closing debriefing discussion was conducted to identify effective aspects of both inventory and the workshop as well as what might be changed. Participants indicated that a half-day was not adequate and recommended at least another half day be allocated for strategic planning. Finally, those participants suggested that future institutes include a team of two consisting of center director and their immediate

administrative supervisor.

Based on this pilot, another institute was developed and hosted on a college campus during the summer of 2016 in partnership with Campus Compact, where teams of center directors and their immediate supervisor could devote a day and a half in dialogue with each other and colleagues from other participating institutions. Interested participants were invited to apply for participation by submitting a brief written statement articulating their current infrastructure and programming coupled with their goals and aspirations for participating. The authors reviewed the applications. After reviewing a total of 19 applications, 9 teams committed to participating in the day and a half institute. The institute began with introductions of participants

and an overview of the agenda. The afternoon was devoted to reviewing the inventory results. As was the case in the IARSLCE pilot institute, the presentation of the data and reports resulted in a robust conversation about specific items on the inventory, often introducing new practices and strategies to participants. A key activity throughout the afternoon reporting was pausing to allow each individual team an opportunity to identify one specific inventory item in each of the six categories that was noteworthy. These six identified items distilled from the 122 inventory items served as an initial starting point for targeting strategic planning priorities and goals.

Later, the authors provided an overview of the action planning process and template that would be used by each team on the



following day to begin strategic planning. Participants were instructed to review their six identified priorities and select one to two items to become strategic planning goals. The overview included a discussion and example of how to develop observable and measurable goals as well as how to conduct a task analysis of the necessary steps to achieve those goals. A basic template of an action plan was provided and explained. The next morning, participants dispersed to various areas across the hosting campus to spend the entire morning developing their action plan. Teams reconvened during the day to report on their goal and action plan, soliciting a friendly critique and input from colleagues in the room.

The institute concluded by devoting another hour debriefing on the inventory

as well as the event and generating suggestions for future gatherings. Through the course of the discussion, participants, especially the supervising administrators, reported the information was very valuable. They also indicated the retreat format and setting allowed them to devote significant time and attention to strategic action planning in ways that would not be possible back on their campus due to daily affairs and interruptions. Likewise, participating administrators reported how much they had learned about the field of community engagement, coupled with the necessary infrastructure to effectively implement it on campus. Finally, participating center directors commented on how much they appreciated the time and energy they had with their supervising administrator. The following are two examples of

written feedback by two of the institute participants:

The NIIICE is a valuable tool and we appreciated the opportunity to reflect on our strengths and challenges. The retreat offers information and expertise, while also ample time to reflect and plan for the future. Two days well spent.

What was perhaps most valuable about this institute was the opportunity to get away from the daily hustle on our own campus to spend time with one another doing

purposeful, intentional, research-driven planning for our campus. In addition, the chance to share our ideas with a small group of colleagues and receive feedback, as well as offer our own suggestions with their plans, was essential to our walking away feeling like we have a good idea of where we are, and what we want to accomplish moving forward.

Since then, three other institutes with similar formats and components have been conducted in various parts of the United States. Participant evaluations consistently validate the importance and value of an institute that provides adequate time and space for meaningful and strategic planning. As such, the participants acknowledge the value of the NIIICE and indicated that the institute was the “bow on the package”.

REVISED INVENTORY AND RESEARCH AGENDA

As reported above, a portion of each institute was devoted to debriefing, which included an opportunity for participants to provide suggestions and comments regarding both the inventory instrument and the institute. In partnership with the Swearer Center at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, where the inventory is now housed, the NIIICE has been revised (Welch, Saltmarsh, Johnson, & Manok, 2018). Based on feedback and input gleaned from institutes described

above, the number of inventory items has grown from 122 items to nearly 200 items. The response metrics have also been revised from the original format of three response options to provide a more discrete and accurate levels of program and center implementation. The response options range from “Yes – Currently Fully Implemented” to “Partially In Place,” to “Plan to Implement,” to “No Plan to Implement,” to “Not Applicable.” Each response is weighted for calculating a program implementation profile score as previously reported and displayed in table and bar graph format (see examples above) in seven categories: 1) Institutional Architecture and Policy, 2) Center Infrastructure, 3) Center Personnel 4) Programming for Students, 5) Programming for Faculty, 6) Programming for Community Partners, and 7) Assessment. This format allows respondents to compare their responses with comparable institutions.

The accumulative information gathered through the NIIICE will provide a rich database for a research agenda. It is mutually beneficial for centers and their institutions to complete and submit the NIIICE as not only does each center receive a report and profile, but their information contributes to a growing data base that can be used for robust comparisons and research. Tentative research questions include determining if there is a significant difference in various infrastructures and programming between types of institutions. Other questions will focus on a comparative analysis of faculty profiles, as well as determining if there is a correlation between center budget and/or staff size and types of programming. Consult

the Swearer Center website for more information, including a 9-minute video: <https://www.brown.edu/swearer/niiice>

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION

In addition to describing the evolution of the NIIICE, this article is an invitation to our Australian colleagues and practitioner-scholars to consider exploring a partnership to adapt the NIIICE for use in your country. The process would entail reviewing the existing content and terminology of the inventory created for American institutions and revising it for an Australian context. The proposed partnership will include additional conversations regarding logistical coordination, housing of the inventory and database, developing a research agenda, hosting institutes, and other matters that will likely arise.

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| CASE STUDY

PLANTING SEEDS TO GROW THROUGH TO, FOR, WITH, AND BY

UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

BILLY O'STEEN

Through a unique partnership between area residents, the University of Canterbury, and the New Zealand Police, the

seeds have been planted for a community development model that intentionally progressed from to, for, with, and by.

The devastating earthquakes of 2010 and 2011 in Christchurch, New Zealand threatened to fray the bonds between

residents in many communities. A University of Canterbury (UC) student-led response in the form of over 11,000 Student Volunteer Army members provided immediate assistance and relief through cleaning up debris and handing out essential supplies. On the heels of this example of people taking control of their own recovery, a Neighbourhood Police Team (NPT) of eight officers was placed within the Riccarton West area near the UC campus at the beginning of 2012. This location was chosen due to it having the second highest burglary rates in the whole country and a debilitating mix of anti-social behaviour, graffiti, and a general lack of upkeep. Within the neighbourhood, there is a diverse array of residents that includes long-term elderly residents, government housing recipients and university students.

As soon as the NPT was getting situated, a connection was made between its leader, Sergeant Steve Jones, and Associate Professor Billy Osteen, the Director of the UC Community Engagement Hub and instructor of a community engagement course, CHCH101: Rebuilding Christchurch. Our first collaboration was to create a door-to-door survey and administer it as a class activity. The basic survey aimed to find out three things: 1) what do you like about this community? 2) what do you not like about this community? and 3) what are you willing to contribute to make things better? With a healthy response rate to the surveys, the students presented the data to the Neighbourhood Support Group, and the overwhelming results indicated the desire for a neighbourhood clean-up and street party and then a community garden.

The information also pointed to residents wanting to do something about anti-social behaviour in the form of student parties that would often result in police call outs and visits by the fire service to attend to burning furniture. It was determined that this data would be addressed with an intentional progression of: doing to the community, working for the community, working with the community, and done by the community.

So, within a month of presenting the data, a clean-up and street party was organised among the NPT, residents and students in the CHCH101 class. Neighbours were invited to bring large rubbish items to the footpath and trailers were used to haul it away free of charge. A significant amount of furniture, yard waste and general trash was taken to the dump and immediately the area began to look better. We celebrated with a street party that included a dj, face painting, games and a BBQ. It was clear that the residents, NPT and UC students all enjoyed working together, and felt ready to take the next step of creating a community garden.

Prior to the NPT's arrival, both sides of a duplex state house were damaged by a fire, and the earthquakes and this eye sore of a property quickly became a desired space for the community garden. Once the decrepit house was cleared away and after several months of negotiating with Housing New Zealand, the NPT and local residents were able to obtain indefinite use of the vacant space. In early 2013, we created the community garden with a new group of CHCH101 students, residents and the NPT. This initial preparation of the land and the establishment of the garden was a great example of doing things with the



community and transitioning to it being done by the community. Eventually, a leadership group of residents emerged to run the garden with UC students and NPT officers providing support through regular service days every few months but the community members continue to fully manage it.

With these successes of the NPT and UC students responding directly to residents' desires for their community, they embarked on addressing the residents' concerns with anti-social behaviour at students' parties. The Good One Party Register (<http://www.goodone.org.nz/>) was created by Sergeant Jones as a way to create communication between party hosts, the NPT and residents. Hugely popular, there have been hundreds of parties registered through the site, which also includes tips on how to have a safe party. Steve credits the Register with fundamentally changing the relationship between the police and students as evidenced by officers being welcomed into parties and addressed by the first names

because they were already familiar with each other.

This collaboration between the NPT, local residents and UC students demonstrates a progression from a student and police driven clean-up and street party, to a community garden owned by the residents, to a proactive way for students to engage with the police for safe ways to hold parties. The sustainability and impact of these projects has been proven with a 70% reduction in burglary in the area, zero instances of graffiti for two years, and nearly no police and fire call outs for parties. These positive results have continued despite the NPT being reassigned to another area (due to their success) in 2017 and speak to how the local residents have taken ownership of their community development.



| CASE STUDY

CITYSTUDIO BENDIGO: INNOVATION IN CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO &
LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

What happens when you give 16 students free rein to experiment with new forms of community

engagement in a city for five weeks? The CityStudio Pilot 2018 is an innovative collaboration between the City of Greater Bendigo and La Trobe University (LTU) to make the city more sustainable, liveable and joyful.

This partnership generates a unique approach to community engagement for urban and environmental planning because it focuses on inquiry and exploration, rather than solutions. It mobilises student energy to get priority projects off the ground. The CityStudio philosophy recognises that good projects stem from strong relationships. Emphasis is on genuine co-creation, with students and council staff working together to explore and frame a 'problem' to unlock opportunities for action. It starts with a series of listening exercises, site visits, observations and dialogues with Aboriginal elders, council staff and Councillors, other government agencies, private industry, journalists, artists, school children and other community

members. An intense collaborative process between students and teaching staff commences with a two-day retreat focused on place-making, location of self in an environment and the power of place and culture. From the outset, students are immersed in the place-based, personal and often impassioned engagement that will come to define their own projects.

Students then develop and test their ideas through temporary experimental projects. During the process, students actively inspire future possibilities in the community and local government and gain employable skills in a unique study environment outside the classroom.

In July 2018, the student project focused on the Bendigo Creek – an area of significant environmental, cultural and social significance. The Bendigo Creek in total spans over 150

kilometres and its 30 kilometre section through the city's urban area. About 30% of the city's population live within 400 metres of the creek, and 16 schools are located along the waterway.

Students worked 9:00am-5:00pm, Monday to Friday over five weeks. They represented a variety of disciplines that make an important contribution to urban

and environmental planning: urban planning, health promotion, outdoor education, archaeology, IT, psychology, event management, visual arts and international development.

Students developed creative techniques to engage with the community, allowing experimentation outside conventional consultation practices and local government processes. As such, new ways were used to engage residents who might not respond to formal consultation. Examples of these during the CityStudio program included:

I. GIVE THE CREEK A VOICE

This project involved a student group working with the aim of improving the language and identity of the Creek in the community. This involved students displaying images on banners of the Creek at a high profile urban intersection and undertaking a survey asking community members if they recognised how the Creek appeared downstream. 71 responses were recorded over 4 hours, with the majority



Students worked collectively across four groups to prototype, explore and identify four key community engagement concept ideas, all of which worked toward a common goal to reimagine the Bendigo Creek, and help make Bendigo the most innovative and progressive urban centre in Australia.

responding 'no' (59%). The project inspired a song from a 10-year-old that has now been performed by local acapella choirs and is in line to be sung in Dja Da Wurrung as part of the focus on natural resources.

A 'Love Bendigo Creek' Facebook page was also created to engage with the community and share stories and community aspirations around the Creek, attracting over 200 likes and 1,500 engagements. <https://www.facebook.com/LoveBendigoCreek/>

II. CREEKS CONNECTING SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

This project focused on the vision of a 'Creek Week' program of events, with a particular emphasis on education. To prototype the concept, students ran a Creek Day event with a small group of primary school students at the Botanic Gardens to learn about the history of the Creek and its environmental features through games such as a treasure map and PH testing of the water. A Creekulum (curriculum) was developed by students and tested with a Huntly Primary school class, with teachers providing positive feedback on the initiative.

III. GREENING BENDIGO

This project centred on ways to experiment with revegetating the Creek in response to mining and other pollution effects such as strong odours. For their prototype, students used a guerrilla gardening approach to fill a bluestone heritage section of the Creek with native plants. The native plants were used to represent how a bio filtration process could be used to address pollution, along with being an experimental tool in reimagining the Creek in a more natural state. This project

generated significant media interest with the Bendigo Advertiser conducting a live stream of the project at dawn, generating over 4,000 views: <https://www.facebook.com/bendigoadvertiser/videos/10155393667532027/>

IV. BOARDWALK BLUES

Students created a public art representation of how the natural contours of the Creek would look underneath the Bendigo Bank boardwalk area. Students observed how people interacted with the artwork and generated conversations around the Creek. Students followed up with a survey of Bendigo Bank staff, eliciting a range of responses on ideas for the Creek.

Innovative Engagement

The above projects demonstrate how innovative engagement techniques can be used to build new relations between the Creek, council and communities, with the effects anticipated to reverberate into future. Since the completion of the CityStudio program, local councillors and representatives from key stakeholders such as the Dja Dja Wurrung have been in discussion with students around how their ideas can be implemented.

This is the first time that the CityStudio concept, which was pioneered in Vancouver in 2011, has ever been conducted outside of North America. The Council-LTU teaching team was mentored by CityStudio co-founder Duane Elverum, who visited Bendigo in April 2018 and conducted information sessions for community, council staff and university staff and students.

Students worked collectively across four groups to prototype, explore and identify

four key community engagement concept ideas, all of which worked toward a common goal to re-imagine the Bendigo Creek, and help make Bendigo the most innovative and progressive urban centre in Australia.



| CASE STUDY

RELATE, RELEARN, REBUILD: THE COMMUNITY RE-ENTRY PROGRAM AT FLINDERS UNIVERSITY

ERIN RUFF

FLINDERS UNIVERSITY

Since 1992, the Community Re-entry Program (CRP) has operated out of Flinders University, and currently sits within the Disability and Inclusion Unit in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Established by Emeritus Professor Roger Rees, the CRP provides holistic community rehabilitation for adults with acquired brain injury.

Around 1 in 45 Australians have an acquired brain injury, which restricts their ability to participate in activities due to cognitive, physical or emotional challenges. The complex issues surrounding acquired brain injuries often result in individuals feeling socially isolated and experiencing difficulty re-engaging with their communities. Studies show that

people with acquired brain injuries embark on fewer outings, have fewer friends, are less likely to be employed, and do not experience leisure activities as often as they did prior to their injuries.

The only program of its kind in Australia, the CRP combines skill development workshops with social and recreational activities, along with an individual mentoring program that helps clients to develop and achieve their own personal rehabilitation goals. Creative Arts and Skills Development Workshops are held on campus, providing a familiar and consistent space for clients who may have difficulty adjusting to navigating new locations. As three quarters of Australians with acquired brain injury are under the age of 65, the university also serves as an opportunity for clients to interact with people in their own age bracket. Off campus, clients can get active in Movement and Wellbeing Workshops, or build friendships as part of the Heading Out social group, while being supported by the CRP's understanding and non-judgemental staff and volunteers.

The CRP provides an opportunity for Flinders University students studying in areas such as Psychology, Disability and Developmental Education, and Health Sciences to gain invaluable hands-on

experience and professional development by supervising undergraduate practicum placements. Students provide support during group workshops and activities, and the clients themselves are able to play a role in teaching the students how to work with people with impaired abilities. Thirty to forty students per year engage with the CRP during their required practicums, many of whom have stayed on after their placements have ended as volunteers, or having been offered casual staff roles.

Until July 1, 2018 the CRP was awarded block funding by the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion, which capped the number of participants at 40. As a registered NDIS provider, the CRP has now been able to facilitate further adults who were previously on the waiting list, and will continue to grow as clients are able to access their NDIS funding. The future looks bright for the CRP, which after 26 years has never lost sight of its aim to enhance the inclusion, participation and contribution of people with acquired brain injury in their community.

Further information

www.flinders.edu.au/engage/community-clinics/the-community-reentry-program



SPOTLIGHT

ONE UNIVERSITY'S JOURNEY TO BECOMING ENGAGED WITH ITS COMMUNITIES

CQUNIVERSITY

ENGAGEMENT IS OUR DNA

CQUniversity lays claim to being one of Australia's most engaged universities – a statement that some may consider quite bold within the context of today's Australian tertiary education sector. This narrative will explore why CQUniversity makes this claim, and how its engagement journey has unfolded over the past decade.

With its origins in regional Australia, CQUniversity has always played a role in engaging with the communities it serves, however this approach was brought back into sharp focus with the 2009 appointment of Professor Scott Bowman as Vice-Chancellor and President.

With the university struggling with

reputation and financial issues at the time, Professor Bowman was quick to recognise that the future of the university lay within its community and its power of place, and set about transforming the university through strengthening and refocussing its engagement with communities.

In 2009, Professor Bowman was quoted as saying "regionally-based universities have a massive impact on the communities that they serve – from economic and community development to research conducted locally in national and global contexts. Transformation at CQUniversity will be achieved when we – with the community – define our problems jointly, set common goals, develop measures of success and leverage university, public and private resources."

One of his first undertakings was to implement a Renewal Plan that brought about, among other things, CQUniversity's vision to be Australia's most engaged university by 2020, and a role model to other universities wanting to grow and flourish through engagement.

The renewal strategy saw engagement firmly embedded in the vision, mission, values, strategy and organisational structure of the University. Strength was

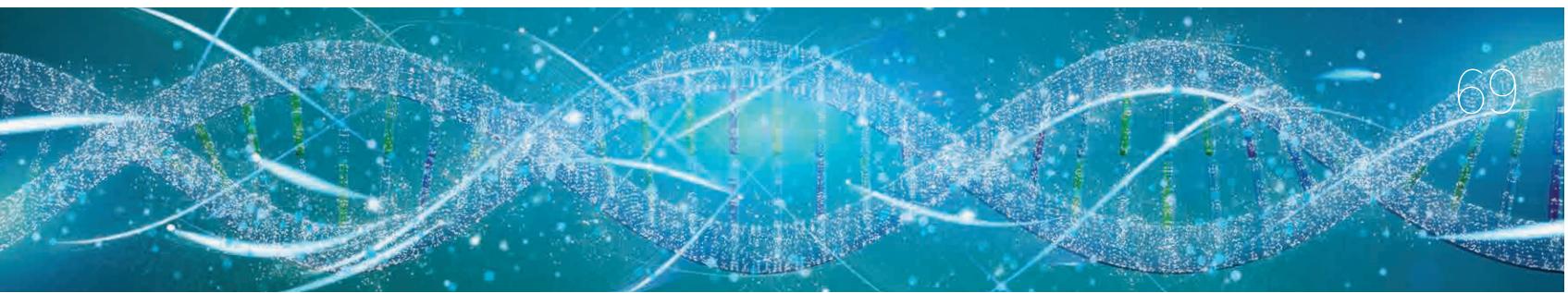
drawn from all levels of governance and management, including the University Council.

From 2009, a new senior position of Pro Vice-Chancellor (Community and Engagement) was appointed to lead the university's engagement agenda. 'Engagement' quickly became the university's motto, both internally and externally, with it being described as the university's DNA. First quoted in 2010 by the then Pro Vice-Chancellor (Community and Engagement), Professor Pierre Viljoen – *"Engagement is not something separate we do, it's the way we do everything at CQUniversity – it is our DNA".*

A number of fundamental initiatives were subsequently introduced, which have seen engagement at CQUniversity evolve and grow from strength to strength.

Among these are:

- The development of an engagement strategy, and positioning document which provided a definition and framework to shape engagement activity and guide organisational units in the role they had to play. Interestingly, 'engagement' was positioned as being part of all day-to-day activities including education and training, research, and service.
- Capacity building was undertaken in the basics of 'engagement' for staff, students and community partners to enhance their understanding and capacity to forge mutually beneficial partnerships and to assist staff in a broad range of engagement strategies.
- The introduction of CQUniversity's



- Regional Engagement and Participation (REAP) Process, and the associated conversion of advisory committees to region engagement committees – led by a member of the community, these committees were empowered to address local issues and support the development of sustainable communities by tapping into collective university and community expertise and resources.
- Engagement was ‘hardwired’ into academic promotion, and performance review and professional development processes to incentivise staff, and the Opal Awards for Excellence in Engagement were introduced to recognise and reward staff and students for outstanding engagement with the community.
 - A stakeholder engagement planning process was introduced to guide staff in maximising outcomes from strategically aligned engagement activity, and a custom-built database, E-DNA (Engagement-DNA), was developed to track and measure engagement activity across education and training, research and innovation, and internal and external service.

Nearly 10 years have passed since the initial introduction of these initiatives, and in that time CQUniversity has rebuilt and enhanced its reputation, and grown into a truly national university with a physical presence in more than 20 locations across regional and metropolitan Australia.

The university’s engagement strategy

is now led by a Deputy Vice-Chancellor, and is strongly supported across the university’s national footprint by 13 Associate Vice-Chancellors who head up region based operations.

The university’s Region Engagement Committee structure has grown to encompass 13 committees, all chaired by an external member, and collectively involve 90+ external leadership roles across Australia, as well as senior staff and members of University Council (where possible), in each region.

Engagement no longer requires a separate strategy document as it organically takes form and function within each of the university’s organisational units, and E-DNA has amassed more than 10,000 unique examples of the engagement activity undertaken by staff across education, research, and service.

The university’s stakeholder engagement planning process currently sees 36 organisational units maintain a plan which maps out the ‘who’, ‘why’ and ‘when’ of strategically aligned stakeholder activity, and these plans are accessible by all staff.

More recently, CQUniversity’s engagement agenda has taken a strong focus towards social innovation, and working with community to address entrenched social issues – a focus which led to the university’s accreditation as Australia’s first Ashoka U Changemaker Campus, and the establishment of an Office of Social Innovation to help guide staff and student engagement and skills development in this space.

Over the past decade, CQUniversity has been driven and guided by a strong set of values including engagement, a can-do approach, openness, leadership, and inclusiveness. Within the university, these values are generally known by the somewhat humorous acronym ‘ECOLI’, and in a recent voice survey more than 95% of staff indicated that they not only ‘know’ these values but actually ‘live by them’ and ‘believe in them’.

From the outset, Professor Bowman recognised that CQUniversity’s strength lay in its geographical location – its power of place. While terminology and themes may have changed over the years, his initial leadership and promotion of CQUniversity as an engaged, inclusive, supportive, and responsive university that believes and invests in its relationships with students, staff and community partners, remains relevant.

With Professor Bowman set to leave the university in February 2019, he will leave many outstanding achievements in his wake, and leading CQUniversity to become one of Australia’s most engaged universities is definitely one of those.

With engagement and social innovation at its heart, CQUniversity looks forward to partnering with its many staff, students, alumni and community to enable them to be what they want to be through changemaking education, research and service for many years to come.

For further information, contact engagement@cqu.edu.au.

NOTES



ENGAGEMENTAUSTRALIA.ORG.AU