2017
CIVIC ACTION PLAN

Western Carolina University

2017 CIVIC ACTION PLAN

Partnership is a strong concept and the foundation for community engagement. At Western Carolina University (WCU) it is considered the highest level of engagement, reciprocation, and collaboration that is possible between two or more entities. This Civic Action Plan (CAP) seeks to articulate and frame the alignment and partnership that exists between WCU as a community-engaged regional comprehensive university and Campus Compact as a leader for advancing and supporting the public purpose of higher education institutions. Moreover, the CAP is aligned with WCU's current mission, vision, and strategic plan and seeks to stretch our imagination and our pursuit of deeper, intentional, and more mutually beneficial partnerships across and beyond campus. The CAP is also designed to stretch and advance our conceptualization and application of community-engaged practices in and out of the classroom and on and off campus where the real-world work, learn, and impact lives.

The CAP principles:

- **We empower** our campus to **create mutually respectful partnerships** for a just and sustainable future for our communities.
- **We prepare** our students for **engaged citizenship** to deliberate and lead **for public good**.
- **We embrace** our responsibility to **contribute to** the health/strength of **our communities**.
- **We harness** institutional capacity to **challenge prevailing inequalities** in our democracy.
- **We foster** an environment affirmative of the **public purposes of higher education**.

From October 2016 – May 2017, our team included representatives from the student body, community, faculty, and administrative staff:

- Ms. Kelsey Woodford, Higher Education Student Affairs (HESA) Masters student, Graduate Student Association (GSA) President
- Mr. Kevin Trudell, HESA Masters student
- Mrs. Rebecca Mathis, Director of Community Engagement, Blue Ridge Health and WCU alumna
- Dr. Patricia Bricker, Associate Professor, Teaching and Learning
- Dr. Beth Wall-Bassett, Associate Professor, Nutrition and Dietetics
- Dr. Ricardo Nazario-Colon, Chief Diversity Officer
- Dr. John Carzoli, Assistant Professor, Physical Therapy
- Dr. Amy Murphy-Nugen, Assistant Professor, Social Work
- Dr. Lane Perry, Director, Center for Service Learning (CSL)

The CAP is organized as follows:

- **PLAN RATIONALE: CAP PRINCIPLES MATTER NOW.**
- **INSTITUTIONAL BASELINE: INFRASTRUCTURE, ALIGNMENT, AND STRETCHING OURSELVES.**
- **TIMELINE AND ACCOUNTABILITY: WHEN, WHO, AND HOW?**
- **OUTCOMES ARTICULATED THROUGH STRATEGIC AREAS.**

PLAN RATIONALE: CAP PRINCIPLES MATTER NOW.

WCU was established as a normal (teaching) school in 1889 to bring education and career/social development opportunities to the western region of North Carolina (southern Appalachian mountain region). Like many institutions founded in rural areas, WCU was established to infuse one of the most important components and resources for community development and social stabilizing – education, specifically higher education. The founders of WCU recognized the importance of formalized higher education for their community's and state's development and continue to invest on these fronts today. This regional institution quickly outgrew its facilities and increased its faculties, but never lost its roots and purpose. That purpose is boldly stated and pursued through the 2020 mission, vision, and strategic plan (addressed in this section) created in 2012.

The CAP principles matter now as they serve as a set of stars, and together a constellation, for assisting institutions in navigating both charted and uncharted waters by illuminating a core purpose of higher education – *preparing an engaged citizenry for a lasting democracy*. At WCU, citizenship and civic/social responsibility are perceived and pursued as crafts that can and should be learned within a higher education context. Imperative to understanding learning as a process is recognizing how learners' beliefs, values, and experiences influence how meanings and perspectives are constructed. This particular point seems to be a primary concern of experiential educators and practitioners who align with pedagogies that work directly with local communities, and have the greater intention of 1) creating relevance in student learning, 2) addressing collaborative opportunities within a local community, and 3) cultivating a culture of community and civic engagement.

The CAP principles matter now because if our students do not capture the spirit of community and civic engagement during the time they and others are investing so much into their personal and professional development, we are hard pressed to imagine another period of concentrated focus that could generate the passion, knowledge, and commitment demanded by an engaged democracy. Partisanship or political leaning are not the focus of this passion. The focus is about finding the passion (itself), understanding the purpose, and the tuning of their voice to align both foci through whatever partisan perspective aligns with the individual's values.

Mission, Vision, and WCU's Strategic Plan

WCU developed its strategic plan, "2020 Vision: Focusing our Future," in partnership with a number of institutional representatives as well as external community leaders and members who served both at the executive advisory level and in working groups to develop outcomes, core values, and strategic directions. The articulation of the institutional direction was the result of an 18 month-long conversation and collaboration with community and internal representatives. Through the process, community engagement and outreach became core, integrated components of the university's strategic plan (www.wcu.edu/discover/about/wcu-2020-plan/index.aspx).

Mission
Western Carolina University creates learning opportunities that incorporate teaching, research, service, and engagement through on campus, off campus, on-line and international experiences. The university focuses its undergraduate, master's and three doctoral programs, educational outreach, research, creative, and cultural activities to sustain and improve individual lives and enhance economic and community development in Western Carolina and beyond.

Core Values and Guiding Principles
- Excellence, Scholarship, Teaching and Learning
- Collaboration with and Respect for our Communities
- Free and Open Interchange of Ideas
- Responsible Stewardship and Organizational Effectiveness
- Organizational and Environmental Sustainability
- Cultural Diversity and Equal Opportunity

Vision

To be a national model for student learning and engagement that embraces its responsibilities as a regionally engaged university.

Relevant Strategic Directions Advancing Community Engagement

1. Fulfill Educational Needs of Our State and Region – WCU's faculty, staff, and students together make the University's academic mission paramount.
2. Enrich the Total Student Experience – Every WCU student's experience reinforces high standards and expectations, incorporates meaningful external engagement, and instills pride.
3. Enhance Our External Partnerships – WCU is recognized as an active partner within the Western North Carolina region, its communities, organizations, and business.

Relevant Institutional Goals and Outcomes Associated with Community Engagement

WCU has identified the following goals in relation to its commitment to community engaged outreach:

1. Deliver high-quality academic programs designed to promote regional economic/community engagement.
2. Fully integrate into the general education program and into each major and minor at both undergraduate and graduate levels an emphasis on those core abilities expected of all WCU students [including]: to practice civic engagement.
3. Foster active citizenship among WCU students.
4. Strengthen relationships and communication between the University and its external partners.
5. Position the University as a key leader in regional economic and community development efforts.
6. Align internal processes and reward systems to foster external engagement.
7. Adequately support scholarship and creative activities in support of WCU's mission as a regional comprehensive university.
8. Facilitate a shared understanding of [our] strategic vision among WCU's external communities.

Institutional Commitment to Community Engagement

WCU defines community engagement as the "alignment and application of University goals and resources to local and regional issues through the development of reciprocal, collaborative partnerships and exchanges" (engagement.wcu.edu). Community outreach and engagement include the exploration and application of knowledge, information, and resources and are prioritized in university mission and vision statements as well as articulated in university core values.

INSTITUTIONAL BASELINE: INFRASTRUCTURE, ALIGNMENT, AND STRETCHING OURSELVES.

Strategic planning on the topic of community and civic engagement is deeply rooted at WCU. There is a history of well-organized systems, processes, and documents for capturing information and the pulse of our campus and community culture to inform our next steps as a regionally-engaged institution. A brief review since 2012 (which was the year of adoption for our strategic plan) demonstrates the thoughtful and informed work that has framed and inspired new directions, programs, ideas, and partnerships.

2012 - Western Carolina University 2020 Strategic Plan;

2013 - Center for Service Learning Program Review;

2014 - Center for Service Learning 2020 Strategic Plan;

2015 - Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching: Community Engagement Classification;

2016 - SACSCOC Reaccreditation: Effectiveness on Community/Public Service (p. 66-78);

2017 - Western Carolina University Campus Compact Civic Action Plan

The CAP has come at the perfect time for WCU to pause, reflect, and regroup as a collective and inform our next set of *practical* steps for advancing our civic and community engagement mission. The previously mentioned resources, planning processes, and documents have informed this plan.

The current engagement framework includes the collective work of 10 offices that are tasked with implementing community engagement and outreach in its many forms and establish and act on goals and outcomes that support the institutional commitment to community engagement. These offices analyze their progress toward meeting these goals and provide evidence of improvement as part of their annual reports and the strategic planning process. Additionally, these offices range from being focused at the college-level to the institutional level. Select examples of programs at the college level include the Small Business and Technology Development Center (College of Business), the Public Policy Institute (College of Arts and Sciences), and the Center for Rapid Product Realization (College of Engineering and Technology). Select examples of programs at the institutional level include the Center for Service Learning, Center for Career and Professional Development, Office of Community and Economic Engagement and Innovation, and the Division of Educational Outreach.

These principles are very much alive across our campus. The plan seeks to chart a course that is practical, warranted, and valuable in advancing the community and civic engagement message of WCU in a meaningful way.

Key Data Points for 2015-2016
WCU has established many important and valuable measuring, monitoring, and tracking mechanisms to help determine the extent of community engagement across campus:

- **CSL Service Learning Course Designations:** 61 course sections
- **NSSE – Percentage of students engaged in the High Impact Practice of Service Learning compared to UNC-System Institutions:**
  - WCU First Year Students – 74% vs. (UNC-System First Year Students – 52%)
  - WCU Senior Year Students – 77% vs. (UNC-System Senior Year Students – 64%)
- **NSSE Civic Engagement Module**
  - WCU First Year Students – 2 of 14 items measuring civic engagement were statistically significantly higher than the UNC-System comparison group
  - WCU Senior Year Students – 12 of 14 items measuring civic engagement were statistically significantly higher than the UNC-System comparison group
- **University of North Carolina's General Administration Community and Economic Engagement Metrics:** 9,182 students enrolled in community-based learning courses and 918 enrolled in community-engaged learning courses (SLC)
- **Service Learning Course Assessment** (n = 170)
  - Personal Growth Impact Outcome – 3.31 of 4.00 (agree)
  - Community Engagement Impact Outcome – 3.29 of 4.00 (agree)
- **Lily Community Engagement Award Program** (n = 280 across 20 CSL sanctioned programs)
  - Personal Growth Outcome – 4.49 of 5.00 (strongly agree)
  - Community Engagement Outcome – 3.99 of 5.00 (agree)

Annual assessment of WCU's progress toward meeting the established goals and outcomes of community outreach and engagement is accomplished by the University's strategic planning process that incorporates unit level analysis and improvement. For every strategic initiative, including those for community outreach and engagement, a coordinator is assigned the role of overseeing progress toward achievement, documenting improvements resulting from action on the initiative, and ensuring an annual progress report is submitted.

TIMELINE AND ACCOUNTABILITY: WHEN, WHO, AND HOW?

The rough timeline for full implementation of the CAP is scheduled from August 2017 – July 2020. This timeline will focus on each of the three strategic areas associated with the CAP. These areas include: **Student Engagement Strategic Area,** which seeks to develop an emphasis on student leadership, professionalism, cultural responsiveness, and teamwork development as tools for preparing our students for engaged citizenship to deliberate and lead for the public good. This strategic area commits to working towards the best interest of the region and the preparation of educated citizens who can make a difference in their respective fields and communities; **Community Partnerships Strategic Area,** focuses

on the issues and opportunities of our region and the resources we as a university have access to, which represent two different, but inextricably bound points. These two points are bridged through intentionally focused community engagement approaches and processes; **Faculty Professional Development Strategic Area:** While engaging students in community-based projects is paramount, a logical and robust avenue for an exponential and sustainable increase in students' engagement with these types of projects can (and should) be fostered by faculty teaching courses relevant to students' degrees.

June 2017 – Submitted to Campus Compact

August 2017 – July 2018 – Breaking Ground on Strategic Areas

- Student Engagement Area:
  - o Piloting the **DegreePlus** professionalism competency with select groups
  - o Establishing Student Democracy Coalition as a registered student organization
  - o Adopting and implementing improvements of the Lily Community Engagement Award
  - o Piloting the Medford Fellowship Program
  - o Selecting and training the first class of the Critical Cultural Competence Certificate

- Community Partnerships Strategic Area:
  - o Inventorying campus/community partnerships through the Campus-Community Collaborative Exchange process
  - o Exploring the feasibility of an online space as a Partner Platform

- Faculty Professional Development Strategic Area:
  - o Selecting first cohort of the Faculty Community Engagement Development Institute
  - o Reorganizing and moving online the Service Learning Course Designation process

August 2018 – July 2019 – Building the Foundation on Strategic Areas

August 2019 – July 2020 – Implementing Delivery Points of Remaining Programs

May 2019 – July 2020 – Assessing First Full Year of Implementation

Champions

Individuals and offices that will assist with the implementation of the delivery point programs associated with the CAP are identified within the sections entitled, Outcomes Articulated through Strategic Areas. Proposed champions are identified within the associated Strategic Areas.

OUTCOMES ARTICULATED THROUGH STRATEGIC AREAS

The following strategic areas have been framed to achieve already established goals for civic and community engagement at WCU.

1. **Student Engagement Strategic Area**
2. **Community Partnerships Strategic Area**
3. **Faculty Professional Development Strategic Area**

OUTCOMES ARTICULATED THROUGH STRATEGIC AREAS

1. Student Engagement Strategic Area:

Develops an emphasis on student leadership, professionalism, cultural responsiveness, and teamwork development as tools for preparing our students for engaged citizenship to deliberate and lead for the public good. This strategic area is committed to working towards the best interest of the region and the preparation of educated citizens who can make a difference in their respective fields and communities.

Subcommittee Members: Kelsey Woodford (Graduate Student Association, President), Kevin Trudell (Higher Education Student Affairs MEd Student), Ricardo Nazario-Colon (Chief Diversity Officer), and Lane Perry (Center for Service Learning)

Student Support Initiatives and Delivery Points: These delivery points serve as initiatives designed to operationalize the student strategic area in practical ways.

- Intentionally engage students with structured community-based projects in curricular and co-curricular capacities that respect an order of increasing intensity of experiences.
- Develop initiatives that guide students to make meaning of new learning through the combination of direct experiences, academic instructions, and structured reflection.

▶ *DegreePlus* – Is WCU's Quality Enhancement Plan (2017) and represents an initiative focused on a holistic approach to student education in which students are encouraged to learn transferable skills through participation in extracurricular activities. It is an optional program for all students, but for those who choose to participate, *DegreePlus* will complement curricular learning and build on the premise that learning is not restricted to the classroom.

The four transferable skills associated *DegreePlus* are student leadership, professionalism, cultural responsiveness, and teamwork development, which are directly related to many of the skills necessary for engaged citizenship and employability.

DegreePlus is set up to expose students to each of the four competencies listed previously (Level 1), provide a space for the participants to reflect and articulate their perspective on each competency (Level 2), and finally to integrate and apply one of the four competencies in an experiential way (Level 3). In other words students would be required to attend 5 events related to each competency (e.g., cultural responsiveness) before they would be able to move on to Level 2 of that specific skill. Level 2 is programmed through *DegreePlus Day*. Led by trained faculty and staff mentors, small group-based discussions will revolve around sharing experiences from the 5 activities with the main goal of getting students to think critically about their experiences. The final component (Level 3) will require students to complete a capstone project. Students can choose any experience that they feel exemplifies the application of any one of the four skill areas.

DegreePlus is designed to support students' "whole" university experience in which they focus on the academics of their specific programs while also growing through their involvement in extracurricular activities, and ultimately become prepared to be engaged citizens of the world.

Associated Goals
- Increase students' participation in extracurricular activities that promote transferable skill development.
- Enhance students' cultural responsiveness, leadership, professionalism, and teamwork skills.

Review Tools
- Participation Data
- Event descriptions and student surveys of events
- Level 2 DegreePlus Day Reflections (using rubrics)
- Level 3 DegreePlus Day Presentations (using rubrics)

Champions
DegreePlus Office, Center for Career & Professional Development, Center for Service Learning, and other programming partners across campus.

▶ ***Student Democracy Coalition*** – Has built from the ground up a massive campus-wide operation of voter engagement encompassing every corner of the institution. It was formed to provide a space for engaged students to capture the spirit of community and civic engagement and harness the spirit of youthful members of a democracy. The Student Democracy Coalition (SDC) was created when the Andrew Goodman Foundation and Campus Vote Project brought their organizations and an intentional partnership to WCU and the Center for Service Learning. The SDC achieved their set goals using the REAC(+) MODEL and advance the coalition to organize around engagement.

The SDC created seven goals to achieve during the fall semester of 2016. These goals included;

- Establishing and maintaining an early voting polling place on WCU's campus in the University Center,
- Registering 2,000 voters across campus through TurboVote, tabling efforts, classroom presentations, and other initiatives such as resident hall drives,
- Educating voters through 15 programs, such as debate watch parties and Raise Your VOICE program,
- Developing a one-stop shop website with critical information (vote.wcu.edu) focused on ways to register to vote, for voters to educate themselves on the process and candidates/issues, for voters to learn how (where/when) they vote,
- Collaborating with faculty to incorporate a project-based group assignment to assist with voter registration, education programming, and marketing initiatives,
- Partnering with 22 entities across campus including 17 registered student organizations,
- Developing a strategic and intentional marketing campaign.

In the coming year(s) the SDC will be working to keep the students engaged, and help them to learn about how democracy does not have an off-season. The focus of the SDC in off-cycle election seasons is centered on education, awareness, and advocacy initiatives. The ultimate goal is to embed the SDC into the CSL's organization structure and to clarify, formalize, and align the programming and goals shared between the SDC and the CSL.

Associated Goals
- Increase student engagement in the democratic process.
- Promote a culture of civic engagement and community among the WCU campus.

Review Tools
- Number of programs planned
- Number of students reached through programs
- Percentage of voters from mid-term and presidential election cycles

Champions
Center for Service Learning and the Chair of the Student Democracy Coalition/Lead Andrew Goodman Fellow

▶ ***Lily Community Engagement Award*** – Has been developed to encourage and recognize students who participate in and reflect on a wide range of WCU community engagement opportunities. Students can choose from community engagement opportunities in the following categories; direct community impact, donation/philanthropy, and awareness/advocacy. Students can earn Lily points by participating in service projects and reflecting on them. Each activity within each category has a point value associated with it. For example, an alternative spring break trip would fall into the direct community impact category and is worth 15 points. While if a student participates in the Hunger Banquet event, the event would be under the awareness/advocacy category and is worth 5 points.

Once a student has earned 100 points, they will receive the Lily Community Engagement Award. The student will be awarded with; a green LCEA honors cords for graduation (with a GPA of 3.25 of above), an honorary membership into the Cullowhee Lily Society upon graduation, including a Cullowhee Lily planted in your honor on campus, a LCEA Certificate from the CSL, and an invitation to and recognition at the CSL's Annual Awards Banquet.

Students that earn over 200 points, are eligible to receive the LCEA with distinction. A student must first earn 175 points, then they will have the opportunity to complete a qualifying capstone project (required) to earn the final 25 points. As a LCEA with distinction recipient, they will be honored with the following (in addition to the previously listed recognitions); a

purple LCEA with distinction honors cord (with a GPA of 3.25 or above), a commemorative accolade, and the opportunity to showcase your LCEA capstone project.

The LCEA has been developed to encourage students to participate in a wide range of co-curricular community engagement opportunities.

Associated Goals
- Increase student's participation in community engagement opportunities within the greater WCU region.
- Encourage critical reflection among students on their variety of their community engagement experiences.

Review Tools
- Number of students receiving Lily Award
- Number of students receiving Lily Award with distinction
- Number of programs/initiatives associated with points

Champions
Center for Service Learning and Higher Education Student Affairs Master's Program Graduate Assistant

▶ ***Jacob Medford Fellowship Program*** – The family of Jacob Spencer Medford, a Western Carolina University student from Marion who died in July 2002 from injuries received in a hit-and-run accident, contributed more than $126,000 to endow a scholarship fund in his memory. The Jacob Medford Service Scholarship will provide five $1,000 awards annually. The scholarship is intended for student leaders with an interest in continuing their leadership development and involvement in civic engagement. To be eligible for the scholarship, applicants must document significant previous involvement in community service activities, submit an essay on the importance of community service, and indicate a willingness to participate in service learning programs during fall and spring semesters.

The students selected to receive the Jacob Medford scholarship will become Jacob Medford Fellows. The goal of the fellows is to develop the participants into servant leaders on Western's campus and beyond. The fellows will have opportunities to develop as individuals and as a team and help foster an environment at WCU that promotes service, inclusion, and helping others.

Requirements of the fellowship program are: fellows must be enrolled full-time; have a 3.0 GPA; be active in community engagement; attend a fall weekend leadership retreat, participate in at least one student organization on campus, read and engage in a required leadership reading, and attend one leadership seminar per semester. Fellows will also be encouraged to participate in peer-to-peer mentoring, apply to present at the annual Whee Lead Conference, as well as seek out leadership roles within a student or community organization.

The scholarship and fellowship program are intended for student leaders with an interest in continuing their leadership development and involvement in civic engagement.

Associated Goals
- Medford Fellows will gain an understanding and be able to apply the servant leadership model both personally and professionally.
- Medford Fellows, as both individuals and a group, work towards advancing a culture of service among the Western Carolina community.

Review Tools
- Number of Medford Fellows obtaining the Lily Community Engagement Award
- Number of Medford fellows attending semester leadership programs
- Number of Whee Lead conference presentation from Medford Fellows
- Number of Medford Fellows involved/holding leadership positions in student organizations

Champions
Center for Service Learning and Higher Education Student Affairs Master's Program Graduate Assistant

▶ *Critical Cultural Competence Certificate (CCCC)* – The Certificate in Critical Cultural Competence will help students to develop an understanding and appreciation for their own identities and become critically reflective of their lenses in relation to other identities as defined by, for example, gender, class, sexual orientation and race. The certificate provides students with the foundation, knowledge, demeanor and skills to improve their ability to relate across differences in an increasingly diverse global setting.

The Critical Components are: The Foundations of Diversity and Inclusion, Queer Community, Mental and Physical Health, People with Disabilities, Global Perspectives, Military Experiences, and Spirituality, which are necessary for engaged 21st century citizenship.

The Certificate in Critical Cultural Competence is set up to expose students to the aforementioned competencies. Each competency will have a dedicated workshop designed to expose, discuss, articulate and reflect on and manage implicit biases.

Students will be required to complete all competencies and a capstone project. For the capstone, students can choose an activity which requires them to engage with a community related to one of the competencies and develop a presentation about that experience.

The Certificate in Critical Cultural Competence is designed to enhance students' complete university experience. They will focus on the academics of their specific programs while developing skills necessary to critically and competently engage as global citizens.

Associated Goals

- Engage students with diverse communities on and off campus.
- Enhance students' cultural responsiveness, leadership, and professionalism.

Review Tools

- Number of participants
- Number of participants who complete it within 12 months
- Number of participants who complete it within 18 months
- Number of participants who engage in multiple projects
- Number of participants who volunteer to be mentors

Champions

Office of the Chief Diversity Officer and Higher Education Student Affairs Master's Program Graduate Assistant

2. Community Partnerships Strategic Area:

The issues/opportunities of our region and the resources we as a university have access to represent two different, but inextricably bound points. These two points can be bridged through intentionally focused community engagement approaches and processes.

Subcommittee Members: Rebecca Mathis (Blue Ridge Health), John Carzoli (Doctor of Physical Therapy Program), Amy Murphy-Nugen (Social Work), and Lane Perry (Center for Service Learning)

Community Partnerships Support Goals & Delivery Points: These delivery points will serve as initiatives designed to operationalize each strategic area in practical ways.

- Establish and implement a system for inventorying, assessing, refining/prioritizing, engaging, and reviewing campus-community partnerships with the region.
- Establish and develop space within online platforms, for community partners to create a presence for connecting with faculty and students in order to facilitate the management of volunteers and the co-creation of mutually beneficial partnerships.

► **Campus-Community Collaborative Exchange** – This initiative will focus on the development of an inventorying system platform for determining and connecting campus and community resources and opportunities. The focus will initially center on a systematic approach to inventorying current initiatives within the community and the many ways the campus is engaged within these initiatives. After inventorying is completed an assessment of the information will help identify already established campus-community focus areas, areas where the community is already organized itself, and untapped areas for collaboration between the university and the community. These untapped areas will then be refined and strengthened to pursue new initiatives where a strategic partnership could help address needs and connect resources for campus-community impact. Through this strategic, evidence-based approach, the alignment of opportunities, partners, and resources will be made and goals will be collaboratively established. An iterative review process will be established to determine the impact of the partnership on the focus area. Simplified, this process will seek to systematically achieve the following:

- Inventory Campus & Community Partnerships
- Assess and Identify Focus Areas
- Refine and Strengthen Efforts to Address Focus Areas
- Intentionally Engage the Campus & Community
- Review and Assess Process

This initiative is scheduled to take place between fall 2017 – fall 2020.

There are established systems and platforms for managing these types of relationships (e.g., The Collaboratory, OrgSync, Collegiate Link, etc.). WCU uses OrgSync currently.

Associated Goals
- To identify opportunities, resources, and gaps existing within the community and campus.
- To establish a space for exchanges to occur.
- To intentionally and strategically strengthen relationships with current engagement work and the community.
- To establish a baseline of partnerships so there is a clearer understanding of what is going on, where, and who is involved.

Review Tools
- Human review tool focused on process and impact
- Number of new relationships and institutional partnerships attributed to this space
- The identification of clear focus areas that need attention

Champions
Executive Director of Community & Economic Engagement, Center for Service Learning, Academic Community Engagement Board, and two Community Partner Representatives

► **Online Partner Platform: Integrating the Community and Campus Online** – With the integration of a new online platform across campus with our students, faculty, and staff in conjunction with the recently approved *DegreePlus* program (Quality Enhancement Plan), the opportunity to integrate our community into this space is evident and timely. In order to bring community partners into the online space where the campus is, there will need to be an effort to connect the two.

This initiative will primarily focus on developing a Community Partner training module for a pilot group of community partners (5-7 partners). This training module will introduce a pilot group of community partners to the online platform, help them set up their organization's online profile/page, and help them use the platform to connect student volunteers with community opportunities. Simplified, this process will seek to systematically achieve the following:

- Develop the Community Partner training module.
- Identify 5-7 partners interested in participating in the training module and piloting the online/platform space in practice.
- Modify and expand the partners included in the online/platform space for greater student, faculty, and community collaboration.

Associated Goals

- To explore feasibility of an online platform to better link faculty, students, and the community.
- To integrate community partners into an online platform for better, more streamlined student volunteer engagement and access.

Review Tools

- Number of community partners who participate in the pilot training program
- The community partners' evaluation of the training program and experience within the online platform
- The number of student volunteers and faculty members who connect with community partners through the online platform

Champions

Center for Service Learning, Academic Community Engagement Board, and two Community Partner Representatives

3. Faculty Professional Development Strategic Area:

While engaging students in community-based projects is paramount, a logical and robust avenue for an exponential and sustainable increase in students' engagement with these types of projects will be fostered by faculty teaching courses relevant to their degree.

Subcommittee Members: Patricia Bricker (Teaching and Learning), Beth Wall-Bassett (Nutrition and Dietetics), and Lane Perry (Center for Service Learning)

Faculty Support Goals & Delivery Points: These delivery points will serve as initiatives designed to operationalize each strategic area in practical ways.

- Prepare and develop interested faculty (who are at differing levels) on teaching methods associated with community-based learning pedagogies (Community Engagement Academy, workshops, and development sessions).
- Through faculty development designed to cultivate faculty leaders in community engagement, create a campus culture that recognizes the value and advocates for the use of community-based approaches in courses.

▶ *Faculty Community Engagement Development Institute* – Plan, implement, and evaluate a Faculty Community Engagement Development Institute. Framed by the five Campus Compact principles guiding the Civic Action Plan, a Faculty Community Engagement Development Institute seeks to provide professional development activities focused on understanding and application of community engagement, networking, and leadership opportunities for faculty related to scholarship and teaching. The institute will recruit a faculty cohort of 9-12 participants. Professional development sessions will take place throughout the academic year with initial and capstone experiences at the Spring Civic Engagement Institute/ Pathways to Achieving Civic Engagement conference. Pathways will exist for faculty working on a new or significantly revised community engagement project and for faculty focused on scholarly output connected to community engagement. In the first year, a team of faculty experienced in community engagement will plan the Institute to begin in the Spring semester; these faculty will serve as mentors for the first cohort. Some possible topics for the professional development sessions include defining service learning, course design, partnership development, diversity, and scholarly output. Faculty will develop and implement a Service Learning/Community Engagement plan or project. Outputs for the first year include: Institute Toolkit with workshop and evaluation plans; SLCE course designations/applications; and faculty scholarship. Stipends will be provided.

Integrated into the institute will include the creation of two Community Engagement Faculty Fellow positions, available through a competitive application process. Fellows should have significant experience with community engagement activities at WCU and demonstrated ability to work well with colleagues. The fellows will help plan the Faculty Community Engagement Development Institute, coordinate mentoring, and support scholarship efforts. Included will be incentives to fellows such as a stipend or course release.

Associated Goals

- Increase support for faculty interested in community engagement.
- Establish community engagement leadership roles for faculty.

Review Tools

- Institute-related metrics including number of participants, professional development contact hours, number of faculty activities connected to community engagement (new projects, service learning course designations, presentations, publications)
- Professional development content analysis
- Number and type of mentoring activities conducted by Institute participants
- Survey and/or focus group for planning team
- Survey and/or focus group for Institute participants

Champions

Center for Service Learning, Coulter Faculty Commons, Executive Director of Community & Economic Engagement, and the Faculty Fellows

▶ **Service Learning Course Designations** – Review and improve the service-learning course designation process. Ensure that criteria for SL course designation are clear, high quality, and achievable; that the course designation process is efficient and meaningful; and that faculty are both supported and incentivized to participate. Outputs include: increased number of SLCE course designation applications, SLCE designated courses, updated web resources for faculty on the SLCE designation process and forms; online submission and review process.

Associated Goals

- Recruit and support faculty efforts to integrate course-based service learning.
- To continue to increase the number of SLC designations across campus (see Community Engaged Program Designation description)

Review Tools

- Number of courses officially designated as service learning
- Qualitative description and analysis of course-based service learning taking place
- Survey and/or focus group of faculty involved in course-based service learning.
- Survey and/or focus group of students involved in course-based service learning.
- Survey and/or focus group of community partners involved in course-based service learning.

Champions

Academic Community Engagement Board subcommittee on SLC designations and the Center for Service Learning

▶ **Community Engaged Program Designations** – The CEP designation subcommittee of the Academic Community Engagement Board will develop criteria for this designation. The CSL will provide support to programs with this designation. Through this process an examination of the value in having a CEP designation, which would be based on the number of faculty teaching SLC designations and have an associated incentive program for departments to apply to be recognized as an CEP.

Associated Goal

- To establish community engagement program criteria and designation process.

Review Tools

- Number of programs officially designation as community engaged programs.
- Qualitative description and analysis of course-based service learning taking place.

Champions

Academic Community Engagement Board subcommittee on the Community Engaged Program Designation and CSL