

Executive Summary

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching Elective Community Engagement Classification - 2015 Application

Background

Achieving the Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Classification is an objective in Marquette's strategic plan (under the Social Responsibility and Community Engagement Theme).

Carnegie describes community engagement as: *“the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.”*

Process

The university's Task Force on Community Engagement began gathering data for the application in fall 2013. Dozens of individuals from the colleges and university offices contributed information that was edited to meet the application requirements regarding word limits. The writer used the university's strategic plan, Higher Learning Commission report, written documents and the university's Web site to verify and supplement information. In addition to a spreadsheet describing 15 university/community partnerships in detail, the final 50-page narrative document was submitted in April 2014, with notification of first-time recipients of the classification expected in December 2014.

The application requested data in the following areas:

- Institutional Identity and Culture
- Institutional Commitment
- Curricular Engagement
- Outreach and Partnerships

In addition, a section titled “Supplemental Documentation” sought information on diversity and student retention. A final section provided an opportunity to submit additional background related to the university's community engagement.

The full document is available for review. Request a copy from Rana Altenburg, vice president of public affairs and co-goal steward for the Social Responsibility and Community Engagement theme in the university's strategic plan, or Anne Deahl, associate vice provost for academic support programs and retention.

Institutional Identity and Culture

The application specifically requested evidence of the university's commitment to community engagement in its mission statement, campus-wide awards and celebrations, marketing materials and executive and leadership statement. In response, Marquette cited its Mission Statement, including the phrase “service to others;” the strategic plan adopted in 2013, with “social responsibility and community engagement” as one of six strategic themes; community service

awards presented by the Alumni Association and various colleges and departments; and the stories and statistics about community service in prospective student marketing materials and Marquette Magazine.

This section also required detail its “mechanisms for systematic assessment of community perceptions of the institution’s engagement with community” and “how the information is used to guide institutional actions,” including budgeting and program improvement. The Service Learning Program’s annual Community Impact Survey was an excellent example, and other assessments, including the College of Engineering’s co-op employer survey and the university’s participation in the Avenues West Association, were included. However, there was no evidence of university-wide assessment of community perceptions beyond the one-time interviews of community leaders by an outside consultant in preparation for the strategic planning process.

Institutional Commitment

The 12 questions in this section addressed how well community engagement initiatives are supported by the university’s infrastructure, including campus-wide coordination, financial commitments, fundraising, assessment and policies. The university response described the role and make-up of the Community Engagement Task Force, as well as detailed examples of Marquette’s financing of various community initiatives, particularly its clinics, and community usage of university facilities. Anecdotal and statistical evidence illustrated the impact community engagement activities have on students, faculty, the community and the institution.

Acknowledging that “disparate databases may not provide an inclusive picture of community engagement,” Marquette’s application cited grant-funded efforts underway to develop a comprehensive community engagement database. The efficacy of the database will depend on faculty willingness to opt in so information can be gleaned from the Faculty Activities Database.

This section included specific questions about the importance of community engagement in recruiting, hiring, promotion and tenure decisions. The university’s hiring for mission policy and various online resource for applicants emphasize the importance of service. Promotion dossiers also call for inclusion and evaluation of a candidate’s service; however, service is broadly defined, including both on-campus and community-based activities. Last year the University Academic Senate discussed how community-based research and/or community service activities might be integrated into areas such as promotion and tenure, and the Promotion and Tenure Committee is exploring the topic as well.

Curricular Engagement

Carnegie describes curricular engagement as *“the teaching, learning, and scholarship that engages faculty, students, and community in mutually beneficial and respectful collaboration. Their interactions address community identified needs, deepen students’ civic and academic learning, enhance community well-being, and enrich the scholarship of the institution.”*

This section had five questions related to: the university’s definition of service learning and data related to participation in service learning courses; university, college and departmental learning

outcomes for students' community engagement; assessment of such experiences; and how assessment data are used. In addition to providing details about its service learning courses, the university's application pointed out how the institutional learning outcomes, outcomes for the University Core of Common Studies and capstone and senior experience courses relate to community engagement.

The application also required examples of how community engagement was integrated into for-credit activities involving student research, leadership, internships, study abroad programs, graduate studies, core courses, majors and minors. Limited to 500 words, the responses could not delineate the many examples submitted by departments and colleges. Marquette's application exceeded the requested five examples of faculty research associated with curricular engagement, citing nine publications or presentations.

Outreach and Partnerships

Carnegie describes outreach as *"the application and provision of institutional resources for community use"* and partnerships as *"collaborative interactions with community and related scholarship for the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration, and application of knowledge, information, and resources (research, capacity building, economic development, etc.)."*

Evidence of community outreach at Marquette included information on the university's learning centers, tutoring, non-credit courses, training and professional development, work study programs, cultural and athletic offerings, library services and faculty consultation.

As its definition of community engagement suggests, the Carnegie Foundation emphasizes the mutuality and reciprocity of partnerships. A grid accompanying this section listed 15 (the maximum) examples of community partnerships, with data on the number of Marquette students and faculty involved and information on both the institutional and community impact of each partnership. The application also included seven examples of faculty scholarship associated with community outreach or partnerships.

Additional Information

Marquette used the opportunity to provide additional information to further elaborate on the university's community-based clinics, which had been briefly mentioned in several responses. The impact of dental, law, nursing and speech clinics was described in greater detail.

This section also focused on the partnership between the Department of Public Safety and the Milwaukee Police Department and its importance not only for student and employee safety but for neighborhood safety, stability and economic development as well.

The section on Supplemental Documentation described Marquette's diversity and inclusion initiatives as they relate to community engagement. These included the Educational Opportunity Program, Health Careers Opportunity Program, Youth Empowerment Program, Metcalfe Chair and faculty community-based research with a diversity focus. In addressing student retention and success, the university application cited data about the high percentage of students participating

in community service and the expansion of such high-impact practices as internships, study abroad and learning communities.

Areas for Further Study

As with any self-evaluation, the Carnegie application process raised some questions that require further discussion:

1. How do we best – and systematically – gather information about departmental/college engagement with a community partner? While significant community engagement already occurs, it is not well documented, coordinated and assessed. An objective in the strategic plan calls for: “Coordinate and harness Marquette’s current resources for addressing issues such as community health and K–12 education.”
2. Should there be a single point of contact for community engagement initiatives university-wide? If so, where?
3. How can Marquette systematically assess the community’s perceptions of the university’s engagement with and impact on the community?
4. Are the assessment data related to community engagement used to improve, add or eliminate programs, adjust financial and personnel resources, etc.? Are such changes documented?
5. Where and how is community engagement rewarded in the tenure and promotion process?