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This chapter describes how the New Hampshire College & University Council and Campus Compact for New Hampshire have developed a unique multiconsortial alliance to build campus cultures of civic engagement and service-learning.

Enhancing Access and Building a Campus Culture of Civic Engagement and Service-Learning: A Dual Consortial Approach

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The past decade has provided a unique opportunity for the New Hampshire College & University Council (a multipurpose statewide consortium) and Campus Compact for New Hampshire (a state affiliate of a national consortium) to leverage the role of consortia toward building campus cultures of service-learning and civic engagement among our member institutions. This collaboration has also provided an important platform for two independent and distinct higher education consortia to model the very behavior and best practices for which they regularly advocate and promote. This unusual collaboration has resulted in a successful partnership that has enhanced both member appreciation for the value of consortia while simultaneously developing an array of successful collaborative programs in access, retention, and community partnership.

The academic benefits of service-learning and civic engagement initiatives have been well documented in national research studies and are increasingly being acknowledged as a critically important component of the higher education experience. Interestingly, in an era of ever-increasing demand for focused career education offerings, juxtaposed against ongoing trends of high tuition and high student debt, colleges are simultaneously being called on to reassert their longstanding commitment to educating the whole citizen. And high school students are increasingly bringing expectations



to campus for experiential learning opportunities and personal desires for service-learning experiences that higher education institutions can best respond to through both curricular and cocurricular approaches. It is in this environment that consortia can perhaps best assist member campuses by serving as both a convener and a resource in sharing best practices and effectively addressing these competing demands.

New Hampshire's public and private colleges and universities have a forty-year history of working together through the shared programs of the New Hampshire College & University Council. This commitment extends to shared library, admissions, career services, and academic collaboration. Through Campus Compact for New Hampshire, the campuses have developed a ten-year commitment to service and service-learning cooperation, with a network of various stakeholders engaged in expanding service-learning and civic engagement opportunities. Together the New Hampshire College & University Council and Campus Compact for New Hampshire have built on their own affiliation to create an enhanced affinity among and between their member campuses.

This collaborative work is best demonstrated by joint efforts to reach out to diverse populations and build a culture of service-learning and civic engagement that targets diverse populations and invites them onto the campuses and into partnership. With the increasing demands on colleges and universities to be more engaged and accountable, institutions must implement programs that respond in ways that are meaningful to students, faculty, trustees, and the wider community.

In striving to deliver on the promise of enhanced quality of life, engaged citizenship, and personal fulfillment, institutions must also find new opportunities to enhance access to all prospective students. Beginning with a strategic program focused on the emerging Latino community in New Hampshire, the New Hampshire College & University Council's Latino Outreach Initiative was created in January 2002 to improve access to postsecondary educational opportunities for underserved Latino students in New Hampshire. Today the Latino Initiative provides programs such as the Annual Latino Student Convention for Higher Education, a Web site in both English and Spanish with college planning materials for Latino students, the Individual Development Account Program for Higher Education, and one of the largest databases of scholarship for Hispanics in the state. As a result of this initiative, Latino students and families are accessing the opportunity for a successful college education at record levels. Since the inception of the Latino Initiative in 2002, Latino enrollment in postsecondary education institutions in New Hampshire has increased 50 percent, outpacing the Latino population growth for the same period. This is creating educational opportunities for deserving Latino students who otherwise could have been left behind.

The New Hampshire College & University Council and Campus Compact for New Hampshire are now launching a new initiative in diversity programming that promises to enhance access to a much wider segment of

diverse student populations. At the direction of college and university presidents, both consortia organizations are exploring ways to extend the lessons learned through the Latino outreach work to other underrepresented populations.

The Importance of Leadership in Building New Campus Cultures

As with nearly all consortia initiatives, securing the support of campus leaders has proven critical to both the implementation and sustainability of the work. The New Hampshire College & University Council and Campus Compact for New Hampshire have a unique history as consortia partners in that Campus Compact for New Hampshire was founded under the auspices of the New Hampshire College & University Council in 1997. This partnership was a direct result of campus presidents' demonstrating important leadership by promoting the work of both organizations and recognizing their separate but collaborative missions.

At the New Hampshire College & University Council, which has a long history of undertaking a multitude of programmatic responsibilities, the college presidents and other campus leaders have developed an appreciation for the efficiencies to be obtained through the scalable nature of shared programs. At Campus Compact for New Hampshire, the presidents have simultaneously committed to a more defined and targeted mission of consortia work. Together these two organizations have found an efficient and effective mechanism to build and expand campus cultures committed to service and engagement.

This partnership is perhaps best demonstrated in the evolution of the chairperson's role for both consortia. Initially when Campus Compact for New Hampshire was separately incorporated from the New Hampshire College & University Council as an independent 501(c)(3), the structure of both organizations called for separate and distinct board leadership and committee structures. Under this operational structure, the presidents of the member institutions were asked to commit to serving on a number of committees and in multiple positions. It was originally believed this would allow greater leadership opportunities for more presidents. However, New Hampshire is a small state with relatively few institutions, and this structure placed too heavy of a burden on the presidents and their limited availability. It soon became evident that this organizational configuration was too time intensive and inefficient. The two consortia directors, in consultation with key presidential stakeholders, devised a new structure that modeled the benefits of collaboration.

Governance and Strategic Realignment

In 2004 the New Hampshire College & University Council and Campus Compact for New Hampshire Boards reorganized the governing board so

that the leadership of the two organizations was closely aligned. Specifically, the chair of the New Hampshire College & University Council also assumed responsibility for chairing Campus Compact for New Hampshire. Together the two organizations undertook being more thoughtful and intentional in using their collective resources.

This transition also led to important collaborative changes in the staffing of the New Hampshire College & University Council and Campus Compact for New Hampshire. With limited resources and recognizing the need to be more intentional in the collaborative work with a common objective, ways to share limited personnel resources were identified. Simultaneously the staff resources of both consortia were reallocated to ensure the delivery of quality services. These changes reflected the interest in systemically aligning the missions of the organizations and addressing a shared commitment to enhanced access through consortia partnerships.

As part of this transition, it became evident that there was a wide array of opportunities to leverage this alignment of the organizational structure beyond the singular action of sharing the chairperson's position. This led to a deliberative dialogue between the executive committees of the two organizations to consider a tighter alignment and alliance. The organizations are close to successfully achieving a new level of alignment and anticipate a more highly defined alliance in the near future. As the organizational memberships evolve and expand, this transition to near total alignment will surely become a reality.

Broadening Stakeholder Investment for Enhanced Outcomes

Beyond the critical element of presidential engagement was the need to broaden the stakeholder investment of other campus players. Both the chief academic and student affairs officers were identified as the natural next audience to engage in this transformation. Specifically, the chief academic officers had enjoyed a long history with the New Hampshire College & University Council of sponsoring professional development programs for faculty. With cooperation with Campus Compact for New Hampshire, it evolved that much of the work of both organizations intersected around similar topics such as civic engagement, enhanced recruitment, and retention of students and building pathways to access. Conferences featuring Robert Putnam, author of *Bowling Alone* (2000), and Andrea Leskes, author of the American Association of Colleges and Universities' study, *Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College* (2002), provided opportunities to explore interinstitutional dialogue on creative approaches to serve students from diverse populations. Thus, it was natural to involve Campus Compact for New Hampshire in these New Hampshire College & University Council programs for broader impact and delivery of these professional programs to multiple campus constituents.

Ultimately, the New Hampshire College & University Council's Academic Affairs Committee became the joint New Hampshire College & University Council/Campus Compact for New Hampshire Academic Affairs Committee. This transition resulted in the development of a broader approach to the work of both organizations and the identification of civic engagement and service-learning as a common focus and content piece that created a new common agenda around access for students. These new foci were also instrumental in drawing the attention of the academic officers to the benefits of a more highly engaged student population. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* (Wasley, 2006) reported that the benefits of civic engagement programs for underrepresented students are particularly strong and highlighted a recent study by George D. Kuh, director of the National Survey on Student Engagement at Indiana University Bloomington. In the *Chronicle* article, Kuh stated, "at 18 colleges [we] found that once African American students attained an average level of engagement, the odds that they would return for a second year of college at the same institution surpassed those of white counterparts" (Wasley, 2006). The *Chronicle* also reported that "students who participate in collaborative learning and educational activities outside the classroom and who interact more with faculty members get better grades, are more satisfied with their education, and are more likely to remain in college" (Wasley, 2006). The gains from those practices are even greater for students from underrepresented racial and ethnic backgrounds or who come to college less prepared than their peers. These data have been replicated in New Hampshire and have created an important intersection of interests among various campus partners.

Engaging Chief Student Affairs Personnel

The development of strong civic engagement and service-learning programs depends on campuswide collaboration. It became evident that engaging the academic and student affairs administrators was necessary to ensure the full engagement of students, staff, and faculty and to support student-learning outcomes at the campus level. New Hampshire colleges and universities, similar to campuses across the country, are offering a plethora of service experiences. Some of these are offered through classes as service-learning opportunities and others through student government organizations as part of spring break trips, volunteer centers, residence hall programs, or Greek and other fraternal associations, but unfortunately these activities too often lack the intentional integration that can lead to progressively challenging, developmentally appropriate experiences that build on each other. Central to this approach is the notion that learning is developmental; to achieve student learning outcomes, programs need to be designed that respect the cumulative nature of service experiences that integrate new with prior experiences and build on previous knowledge. And because one of the most

significant deterrents to developing campuswide programs is the isolated and fragmented delivery of programs, bringing the chief academic and chief student personnel administrators together to discuss student engagement and create a road map for shared ownership became an important role for the New Hampshire College & University and Campus Compact for New Hampshire.

In recognition of the need to build this dialogue, Campus Compact for New Hampshire and the New Hampshire College & University Council collaborated on an institute: Advancing Student Civic Engagement Partnerships Between Academic and Student Affairs. This collaborative venture brought together for the first time the chief academic and student affairs officers for a two-day retreat, off-site, that facilitated a conversation about the importance of developing on-campus partnerships to support student engagement. Participants shared their perceptions on their individual and shared roles as campus leaders and identified current examples of partnerships between academic and student affairs. They also discussed supports and barriers relative to the development of academic and student affairs partnerships and explored their leadership roles. Potential areas of collaboration and common ground were identified and included student learning goals, attracting and retaining students, increasing access, and connecting student engagement with institutional missions and the public purposes of higher education.

Civic engagement was identified as a potential strategy to attract and retain underrepresented student populations. This agreement led to a roundtable discussion on developing common language and to consensus on the essential elements of quality programs. Each campus leader described civic engagement on his or her individual campus, and an important outcome of this initial effort was recognition of the value of a conversation between the two campus leaders and the importance of developing follow-up campus-based action steps. A follow-up institute with staffs from both sides of the cocurricular departments is in the developmental process.

Developing Effective Tools and Strategies to Build the Campus and Community Culture

Developing effective strategies that can help campuses build strong networks and develop their capacity for this work has been a primary objective for both the New Hampshire College & University Council and Campus Compact for New Hampshire. Central to the nature of consortia work is the reality that each campus has a unique culture, challenges, and resources. And consorial initiatives are always challenged with the continuum and range of preparedness and engagement presented by each college and university. Given this array of factors, it is critical for consortia to develop strategies and tools that recognize these diverse challenges and help move them along the continuum.

Student Leadership Development

Student leadership development has become a key strategy to success in building a culture of service-learning and civic engagement in New Hampshire. Primary to this effort is the groundswell of students coming to New Hampshire campuses with high school service experiences and expectations. According to a recent study by the Corporation for National and Community Service (2006), the number of sixteen- to nineteen-year-olds who volunteer in their community has doubled in the past fifteen years, and 38 percent of all teenage students participate in school-based service. These students arrive on college campuses with previous volunteer experience and a keen interest in developing their leadership skills further. Students who have engaged in service in high school are likely to continue to volunteer in college, but colleges are seeing huge increases in their service programs regardless of previous service. Approximately 3.3 million college students volunteered in 2005—an increase of approximately 600,000 from 2002—and the number of college students who volunteer is up by approximately 20 percent since 2002 (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2006). A student-planned and -led regional conference, which attracts not only students from New Hampshire but also students from other New England states, fosters students' responsibility for their own learning and builds a strong student network. Conference sessions accommodate a variety of interests ranging from basic to complex. The conference agenda helps students understand the impact that their volunteer activities may have on increasing student access to higher education and the value their engagement has on addressing important community needs.

Recognition and Reward as a Key Strategy

Recognition is another key strategy to support service-learning and civic engagement. Yearly, each campus is asked to put forth the names of three key stakeholders for recognition: Most Outstanding Student, Steward (for either faculty or staff), and Community Partner. Posters of award winners describe the volunteer project and its impact. Several college alumni magazines have featured stories and photos highlighting the recognition and project.

Tenure and reward systems at the campus level are an important component of advancing this agenda. In partnership with the Campus Compacts in Maine and Vermont, the Northern New England Faculty Consulting Corps was developed. The thirty Faculty Consulting Corps members from a variety of disciplines and institutional types assist colleges and universities in implementing high-quality, academically based service-learning as a teaching and learning strategy; support campuses in their efforts to infuse civic engagement into their curriculum; and provide

technical assistance and developmental training designed to meet the needs of faculty, administrators, and community service directors. The Consulting Corps serve as brokers for their members by matching the technical assistance or training need with the potential facilitator. While this process is time intensive, it has proven invaluable in providing faculty members with opportunities to develop professionally, document their expertise, provide a forum to share their research, and engage in peer review. Under-scored in all these efforts is a commitment to student success and to enhancing opportunities for students to access higher education in new and engaging ways. The Northern New England Faculty Consulting Corps convenes yearly to support growth and development as a community of scholars.

Small amounts of grant funds are shared among the campuses. Essential elements of all grants include sharing promising practices, documenting and assessing outcomes, developing a sustainability plan, and building a strong network for further conversation.

Accountability, Outcomes, and Documentation

As higher education is being called on to be ever more accountable, the need to be clear on the outcomes of student engagement programs is paramount and likely to expand. Campuses need to explain and document their work beyond anecdotal outcomes, and assessment tools are needed to document impact. Assessment is a particular challenge when looking at service-learning and civic engagement, as student access and learning outcomes are often complex and have an impact over long periods of time. One successful assessment tool is the K–H Partnerships Tool Kit, a publication of Compact for New Hampshire. The Tool Kit contains many exercises and activities that help develop quality reciprocal partnerships between institutions of higher education and K–12 school systems. At the core of this publication are the elements of effective partnerships: trust; stakeholder representation; reciprocity; definition of roles, mission, goals, and objectives; communications; assessment; and celebration of efforts. The rubric seeks to define what these elements look like within partnerships at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced stages. A second tool that campuses have used is the Furco Rubric for Institutionalizing Service-Learning in Higher Education, which has been used by more than two hundred colleges and universities in the United States. The tool seeks to measure the institutions' level of service-learning institutionalization, its strengths and weaknesses, and its effect on student success. Although each of these tools is designed for self-assessment, usually undertaken by a team of stakeholders including administrators, faculty, staff, students, and community partners, conversations among and between campus teams are rich and instructive as a model to share promising practices.

Building Connections to Statewide Stakeholders: Leveraging Access as a Common Concern

Building on these campus-level tools is a shared commitment to creating and sustaining a citizenry committed to our nation's democratic principles. This principle has captured the attention of various important stakeholder groups in New Hampshire, including policymakers, business leaders, and the general public. This attention to civic engagement offers a unique opportunity for postsecondary consortia to serve as a cornerstone for convening and supporting various constituencies and resources. Together, the New Hampshire College & University and Campus Compact for New Hampshire have experienced significant success in expanding the spheres of influence and collaborative leadership roles by leveraging the common interests of the partner stakeholder groups around the topic of building engaged citizenry. Deeply embedded in this effort is the goal of expanding access to higher education for underrepresented populations through civic commitment and engagement. Access has become a key element of a collaborative effort to identify strategies to promote active and engaged student-citizens.

Building Statewide Alliances

The New Hampshire Alliance for Civic Engagement is coordinated through a steering committee of volunteers selected to guide the alliance. The steering committee appoints members to work on various initiatives like sponsoring an annual summit on civic engagement or constructing and updating the Alliance's resource Web site. Both Campus Compact for New Hampshire and the New Hampshire College & University Council are founding members of the New Hampshire Alliance for Civic Engagement. The Alliance has served as an important convener of stakeholders and a valuable resource in promoting civic engagement, enhanced student performance, and student interest in learning.

Polly D. Boruff-Jones of the Association of College and Research Libraries has observed, "Civic engagement is increasingly acknowledged as an important component of higher education; research has shown that service-learning and civic engagement yield academic benefits and enhance student engagement overall. Civic engagement activities may be student-focused and take the form of experiential learning, service-learning, internships, or community service projects; or the focus may be on faculty-community collaboration for scholarly research and partnerships in leadership, economic, or social service development. The two approaches are not mutually exclusive and generally both aspects of civic engagement will be incorporated into an institution's goals" (Boruff-Jones, 2006, p. 1). These two models have indeed been incorporated by the New Hampshire Alliance for Civic Engagement in its various activities and have provided opportunities to promote civic engagement as a collaborative initiative that

helps students become better engaged and connected to their educational experience.

The Forum on the Future

A collaborative joint effort by the New Hampshire College & University Council and Campus Compact for New Hampshire is the New Hampshire Forum on the Future, which brings together leaders from higher education, business, and public policy to explore the key question: “What are the future educational, social, technological, environmental, cultural and economic realities, challenges, and opportunities facing the State of New Hampshire, and how can we best prepare for our collective future?” The forum serves as the cornerstone for generating responses to these critical questions in New Hampshire. Embedded in the work of the forum is the question of access for students to higher education and what the future workforce of New Hampshire will look like if certain trends continue and are not addressed. The forum is attempting to build a consistent communication message around the issues confronting New Hampshire and the opportunities to both leverage and enhance the state’s higher education, business, and policy resources to move collectively toward constructive solutions. Measurements of success are being based on accomplishing outreach initiatives and activities and building evidence of ongoing engagement within the higher education, business, and public policy communities. The bottom line for the forum is to be a positive force in helping New Hampshire move into the future with the leadership, policies, and public support that are the marks of any strong state and to do so within the time-honored values for which New Hampshire is known.

The forum’s Web page states, “Staying competitive in a changing and mobile economy requires our state’s educational institutions and businesses to collaborate in new and innovative ways. The fastest growing sectors in the new economy require highly trained workers with continuous lifelong learning needs. Business-educational partnerships lead to more effective, accessible and affordable ways to transfer skills and knowledge, often times outside of the traditional classroom, in ways that allow more people to access learning. Working together makes us better” (New Hampshire Forum on the Future, 2005, p. 1). This commitment to accessibility to higher education is a cornerstone of the forum’s work and serves as a common topic of concern and interest to the various forum stakeholders. Providing and enhancing access opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds are a critical component embedded throughout this effort.

In January 2007, the forum released *Impact and Trends of New Hampshire Colleges and Universities: A 2007 Report to New Hampshire Citizens*. This collaborative document highlights the major higher education trends occurring in New Hampshire and was developed with input from Campus

Compact for New Hampshire on the public good of higher education. Reporting that higher education has a \$4.5 billion economic impact on New Hampshire's economy, the report also pointed out that over 700,000 volunteer hours are provided by students, faculty, and staff at the state's public and private colleges and universities annually. The report goes on to highlight a disturbing age shift occurring in New Hampshire that will create challenges for a number of stakeholders in the years ahead. The topic of access to higher education, especially in a state with high tuition, high student debt, and low state scholarship support, is an important focus in all public dialogues on New Hampshire's future and may lead to a long-term shift in public policy. At the very least, the New Hampshire College & University Council and Campus Compact for New Hampshire have served a valuable role as a consortial resource and convener on this critically significant topic that no higher education institution could likely develop alone.

A Dual-Consortial Solution to Enhancing Access Through Civic Engagement and Service-Learning

Over the past several years, the New Hampshire College & University Council and Campus Compact for New Hampshire have developed a partnership that models the best practices in collaboration. With a deep commitment to delivering quality programs for member institutions, the organizations demonstrate the essential elements necessary in building collaborative partnerships. By identifying common areas of interests, building on the organizational strengths of each consortium, and helping institutional stakeholders focus on collaborative efficiencies, the consortia have experienced enhanced commitment and appreciation for their individual and shared organizational missions.

As higher education institutions confront historic shifts in student diversity, they will undoubtedly need to provide postsecondary education programs that provide greater access for diverse and underrepresented populations. This chapter has reviewed a unique approach to student access through the promotion and implementation of a dual-consortial partnership. This partnership leverages civic engagement and service-learning as a proven strategy for accessing higher education, building interinstitutional cooperation, and enhancing resource sharing.

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