Answering the Question, "To What End?": Building a System of Enterprise Data Measurement to Track and Assess our Engagement with and Impact on our Communities

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Answering the Question, "To What End?": Building a System of Enterprise Data Measurement to Track and Assess our Engagement with and Impact on our Communities

Abstract
This was presented at the Florida Campus Compact held February 8-10, 2016.

Keywords
community engagement, community, engagement, higher education, data measurement, community-engaged research, CEnR, impact

Disciplines
Higher Education

This conference proceeding is available at VCU Scholars Compass: http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/community_resources/41
Answering the Question, “To What End?”: Building a System of Enterprise Data Measurement to Track and Assess our Engagement with and Impact on our Communities

Valerie Holton, PhD, LCSW, Director for Community-Engaged Research

Florida Campus Compact
February 8-10, 2016
Learning Goals

Through this workshop, we will:

• Discover how to tell the community engagement story
• Understand the national context
• Identify key data on community engagement related activities and outcomes
• Identify institutional partners for collaboration
• Identify strategies to use existing enterprise data collection mechanisms to obtain reliable and comprehensive data
Agenda

• Welcome and Introductions
• To What End?
• State of the Field
• Strategies
Hello
my name is
We are a premier urban, public research university focused on academic success.

Established in 1838

Located in Richmond, Virginia

More than 171,000 alumni worldwide
Campus life and athletics

NCAA Division I men's and women's athletic teams

More than 1 million hours of community service

More than 500 student organizations

About Richmond

» Virginia’s capital city
» Home to six Fortune 500 companies
» Growing innovation ecosystem
» Thriving arts community
The VCU population

» 31,288 students
» 100 countries represented in student population
» 11,388 employees
» 2,170 full-time instructional faculty
Academic programs

13 schools and one college

222 degree and certificate programs

64 baccalaureate degree programs
74 master’s degree programs
40 doctoral degree programs
3 first-professional degree programs
41 post-baccalaureate and post-master’s certificate programs
Theme I
Become a leader among national research universities in providing all students with high-quality learning/living experiences focused on inquiry, discovery and innovation in a global environment.

Theme II
Attain distinction as a fully integrated urban, public research university through contributions in human health, research, scholarship and creative expression that advance knowledge and enhance the quality of life.

Theme III
Become a national model for community engagement and regional impact.
Mission

The VCU Division of Community Engagement mobilizes university-community partnerships that generate innovative solutions to societal challenges and prepares the engaged citizens of tomorrow.

Vision

VCU is a community of engaged citizens, working together, changing lives.
Why are engagement data important in higher education?

• At your tables identify 5 main reasons.
• Draw a picture to capture each.
• Volun-told a member of your group to describe your picture.
Why do (we) need institutional data on community engagement activities and impact?
Carnegie Foundation
Elective
Community Engagement Classification
What are you working to collect?

What obstacles are you facing?

What is working well?
State of the Field

• Agree there is a need for this kind of data
• No consistent measures
• No ONE way to collect the information
• Largely focused on understanding the landscape
University-Wide Data: Challenges

- Decentralized, large & complex institutions
- Going broad vs. deep
- Feasibility
- Sustainability & Responsiveness
What needs to be collected?

Who else would like this information?

What systems are already in place?

What is the operational definition?

Who would be good partner(s)?

How can the information be gathered?
VCU’s Most Important Discovery

This is not a linear process
VCU’s Discoveries

Existing resources and processes

Being central to mission requires integration

Key Strategies

• Internal collaborations
• Adapt university-wide tools, *whenever possible*

Find Internal Partners

- Who else has or wants this information?
- Who is collecting similar information?
- Who understands institutional data?
- How are they using data?
- Formal vs. informal?
Who are potential partners?

- Student Affairs
- Office of Research
- Human Resources
- Libraries
- Development
- Academic Affairs
- Government Relations
- Public Affairs
- Finance and Administration
- Police

And who else?

Institutional Research
More on Institutional Research

Integrated Information Delivery

Adapted from 2Tevolutions and Educause 2015
Data Optimized

Seeing the whole picture

Leveraging data for informed planning and decision support
Identify your top 3 to 5 existing or potential partners
Identify and Adapt Data Collection Mechanism(s)

Considerations:

• Level of data collection and dissemination
• Existing vs. new system
• Systematic vs. episodic
• Quality and type of the infrastructure
• Resources
Examples of Existing Data Collection Systems

• HR and student information systems (e.g. Banner)
• Institutional Review Board
• Sponsored Programs
• Human Resources
• Publications (Web of Science, PubMed)
• Faculty reporting
• Internship databases
Identify your top data collection mechanisms

- 3 to 5 currently using
- 3 to 5 need or would like to use
Identify and define what to collect
CE Data Collected at VCU

- Service-Learning
- Community-Engaged Research (CEnR)
- Student Community Service
- Faculty/Staff Community Service
- University-Community partnerships
- Impact as an anchor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>A group of people external to the campus who are affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, similar situation or shared values. Communities may share characteristics such as age, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership</td>
<td>Sustained collaboration between institutions of higher education and communities for the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration, and application of knowledge, information, and resources. Examples are research, capacity building, or economic development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Outreach</td>
<td>The application and provision of institutional resources, knowledge or services that directly benefits the community. Examples include music concerts, athletic events, student volunteers, public lectures, or health fairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Engagement</td>
<td>The collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in the context of partnership and reciprocity. It can involve partnerships and coalitions that help mobilize resources and influence systems and serve as catalysts for initiating and/or changing policies, programs, and practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-Engaged Scholarship</td>
<td>The creation and dissemination of knowledge and creative expression in furtherance of the mission and goals of the university and in collaboration with the community. Community-engaged scholarship (CES) addresses community needs through research, teaching and service in a mutually beneficial partnership. The quality and impact of CES are determined by academic peers and community partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-Engaged Service</td>
<td>The application of one’s professional expertise that addresses a community-identified need and supports the goals and mission of the university and the community. Community-engaged service may entail the delivery of expertise, resources and services to the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-Engaged Teaching/Learning</td>
<td>A pedagogical approach that connects students and faculty with activities that address community-identified needs through mutually beneficial partnerships that deepened students’ academic and civic learning. Examples are service-learning courses or service-learning clinical practica.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Service-Learning: Partners and Process
Service-Learning: Operational Definitions

Community-Engaged Teaching/Learning

A pedagogical approach that connects students and faculty with activities that address community-identified needs through mutually beneficial partnerships that deepened students’ academic and civic learning. Examples are service-learning courses or service-learning clinical practica.

Service-Learning

Approved service-learning courses, which meet following requirements:

- 20 hours of student service
- Service meets community-identified need
- Student reflection connects service & learning
# Service-Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection tool(s)</th>
<th>Web-based Report*</th>
<th>Centralized database</th>
<th>Banner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

## VCU definition
An intentional teaching strategy that engages students in organized service activities and guided reflection

## Operationalized as
Approved service-learning courses, which meet following requirements:

- 20 hours of student service
- Service meets community-identified need
- Student reflection connects service & learning

Course syllabi reviewed & approved by DCE. Once approved, course is tagged as “SRV LRN” in Banner.

## Data collected
- Enrollment figures (# of courses, faculty, students, service hours)
- Data filtered by unit
- Faculty & student demographics available

*Student & faculty surveys to assess impact.*

---

## Service-Learning Continued

### Data collection tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection tool</th>
<th>Student Survey</th>
<th>Centralized database</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Data collected

- **Process Outcomes**
  - Reflection activities
  - Integration of service

- **Learning Outcomes**
  - Cultural diversity
  - Civic engagement

- **Behavioral outcomes**
  - Intention to continue serving @ partner site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection tool</th>
<th>Instructor Survey</th>
<th>Centralized database</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Data collected

- **Supportive Climate**
  - President & Provost
  - Dean
  - Department chair
  - Colleagues
  - Students

- **Process Outcomes**
  - Use of various supports provided by DCE
  - Helpfulness of used supports

- **Impact on**
  - Scholarship
  - Teaching skills
  - Research innovation
  - Job satisfaction
  - Sense of community
CEnR: Partners and Process

1
2
3

PROUD OF MYSELF

SCHOOL
Community-Engaged Research

A collaborative process between the researcher and community partner that creates and disseminates knowledge and creative expression with the goal of contributing to the discipline and strengthening the well-being of the community. CEnR identifies the assets of all stakeholders and incorporates them in the design and conduct of the different phases of the research process.

Operational Definition

Approved human-subjects IRB protocols with at least one community partner* involved in the proposed study?

*A community partner is an individual or organization that is not affiliated with VCU or VCU Health Systems (e.g. VA Health Systems, a non profit or NGO, a business) but who is engaged with VCU or VCU Health Systems in this proposed study.
CEnR: Name and Location of Partner

Please provide the following details about each community partner. If there are more than 5 community partners, please provide the following information on the 5 most significant community partners. If a community partner is a collaboration of multiple partners, please indicate the name of the larger collaboration and the zip code or country of the location where the majority of the research is taking place.

- Name of the organization
- Zip code or Country of the organization

CEnR: Role of Community Partner

Which of the three statements below best describes the role of the community partner in the study?

• **Access**: Community partners only provide access to study subjects or project sites. They are not involved with study design, subject recruitment, data collection, or data analysis.

• **Guidance**: Community partners do not make decisions about the study design or conduct, but provide guidance to the researcher about the study design, subject recruitment, data collection, or data analysis.

• **Decision-making**: Community partners make decisions with the researcher(s) about the study’s research activities and/or help conduct those activities (i.e. study design, subject recruitment, data collection, and/or data analysis).

# Community-Engaged Research (CEnR)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection tool(s)</th>
<th>IRB protocol</th>
<th>Centralized database</th>
<th>IRB database</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### VCU definition
A collaborative process between the researcher and community partner that creates and disseminates knowledge and creative expression with the goal of contributing to the discipline and strengthening the well-being of the community.

### Operationalized as
Approved human subjects research IRB protocols that indicate the involvement of a community partner.

### Data collected
- # of CEnR IRB protocols
- # of partners involved

### Data filtered by:
- Unit
- Engagement levels (access, guidance, & decision)
- Partner demographics (Name & address)
- # of CEnR IRB protocols that had external funding
Community-Engaged Scholarship

Defining

- Scholarship on CE
- Scholarship produced from CE methods/activities

To identify articles

- Library databases
- Search by VCU
- Query keywords

Keywords

- “Community Engaged Research” or “CEnR”
- “Community-Based Participatory Research” or “CBPR”
- “Participatory Action Research” or “PAR”
- “Action Research” or “AR”
- “Community Based”
- “Service Learning”
- “Patient Centered”
- “Translational Science”
- “Community Engagement”
- “Civic Engagement”
Faculty, Staff & Student Community Service: Partners and Process
Employee community service is reported and collected in accordance with Virginia’s state policy “School Assistance and Volunteer Service Leave” known as “Community Service Leave” (CSL) at VCU.

**Operationalized as**

Approved community service leave. 12 month employees can use up to 16 hours in paid leave annually to volunteer at:

- Organizations & schools within or outside their communities
- Organizations must engage in meeting human, educational, environmental, or public safety needs

Supervisors must approve CSL requests before granted. Part-time 12-month faculty and part-time staff have pro-rated CLS hours.

**Data collected**

- # of Employees
- # of Hours
Student Community Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection tool(s)</th>
<th>Email requests</th>
<th>Centralized database</th>
<th>RamServe in development*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

US President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll definition

Activities designed to improve the quality of life of off-campus community residents, particularly low-income individuals

Operationalized as

Following activities are included as student community service:

- Service-learning
- Co-curricular activities
- Internships (unpaid & paid)
- AmeriCorps
- General community service

Data collected

- # of Students
- # of Hours

Data filtered by:

- Service type
  (SL, internships, & general community service)

*RamServe is a mobile app that students can use to enter & track their service in real-time. Target rollout started Fall 2015.
RamServe Collaborators

- University Career Center
- University Student Commons & Activities
- Division of Community Engagement
- Technology Services

(2014- Present)
Background

President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll

The President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, launched in 2006, annually highlights the role colleges and universities play in solving community problems and placing more students on a lifelong path of civic engagement by recognizing institutions that achieve meaningful, measurable outcomes in the communities they serve.

Community Service means activities designed to improve the quality of life of off-campus residents, particularly low-income individuals.

Includes:
• Academic service-learning
• Co-curricular activities
• Internships (unpaid & paid)
• General community service

Service can be:
• Direct
• Indirect
Initial Idea

Career Services
- CSO Research: Internship data

Student Commons
- Collegiate Link: Student Orgs data

VCU
- Banner: Student data

Integrated Hub

Various Reports
RamServe is a mobile app where students can enter & track their community service.

Fun & Simple to Use

- Register organizations in your Service Profile
- Enter hours in real-time
- View & download your service record
- Desktop version available

Getting Started is as Easy as 1-2-3

1. Download App
2. Set Up Service Profile
3. Enter hours as you go!
Why RamServe?

Multiple Ways for Students to Engage in Service

• Community Service
• Internships
• Service-Learning
• Co-Curricular
Why RamServe?

Key Questions

1. What is the impact of these activities on students (i.e., retention, GPA, future employment)?

2. Who are the community partners engaging these students and what community needs are being met?

3. What is the quality of these relationships and can we identify strategic university-level partnerships based on this information?
## Initial Idea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Type</th>
<th>Key Data Points</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>• # of Students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• # of Service hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Engagement activity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Type of Community Needs met</td>
<td>• Identify student engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Impact on community needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Impact</td>
<td>• Student Demographics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• GPA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Time to Completion</td>
<td>• Impact on student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Assess equity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>• # of Partners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• # of Students who have served each partner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Density of Engagement</td>
<td>• Identify key partners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Components

#### Service Profile

**Volunteer Organizations**
- Community-based (i.e., nonprofits, schools, etc.)
- VCU Organizations (i.e., Ramspantry)

**VCU Organizations**
- Student orgs, academic programs

**Service-Learning Courses**

#### Enter Hours

- Hours & Date
- Org. Served
- Need Addressed
- Skill Provided
- Brief Description *(tweet)*
- Satisfaction rating
- VCU Org *(if app.)*
- VCU SL course *(if app.)*

#### Personal Tracking

- Set Personal Goals
- Download report
- Co-Curricular Transcript (automatic)
## Current Status & Next Steps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Status</th>
<th>Next Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target Rollout</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ASPiRE</td>
<td>• USCA activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Service-Learning</td>
<td>• Athletics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Globe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Website</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In development</td>
<td>• One-time promotional giveaways (i.e., t-shirts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Redeemable coupons?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Free or reduced tuition?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(competitive scholarship)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incentives</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• End of year awards for top 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Co-curricular student transcript</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reports</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop reports with collected data</td>
<td>• Evaluate report features &amp; develop access protocols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Evaluate verification process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internships</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Explore Including internship in mobile app <em>(verification is likely barrier)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community-University Partnerships: Partners and Process

1

2

3

…

PROUD OF MYSELF SCHOOL
# Community-University Partnerships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection tool(s)</th>
<th>Unit Survey</th>
<th>Centralized database</th>
<th>Partnership Map</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

## VCU definition

A sustained collaboration between institutions of higher education and communities for the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration, and application of knowledge, information, and resources (VCU).

## Operational as

Partnerships must be between:

- A VCU employee or unit and an external organization
- Activity supports teaching, research, service, and/or patient care
- Currently active
- Has been active for at least 2 years

## Data collected

- # of partnerships & their:
  - # of units
  - # of faculty/staff
  - # students
  - # of partners

## Data filtered by

- Data filtered by:
  - Unit
  - Partnership activity (teaching, research, service, patient care)
- Data filtered by:
  - Geographic reach
  - Focus area (standardized list – economic development, education, etc.)

---

Anchor institutions are defined as, “place-based entities such as universities and hospitals that are tied to their surroundings by mission, invested capital, or relationships to customers, employees, and vendors”

(Dubb, McKinley, & Howard, 2013, p. v)
National Conversation

• The Democracy Collaborative – *The Anchor Dashboard*

• Coalition of Urban Serving Universities

• Initiative for Competitive Inner City (ICIC)

• The Netter Center, UPenn – *The Anchor Toolkit*

• University Hospitals (nonprofit) & Case Western Reserve University's School of Medicine
Starting our VCU Conversation

Collaboration between

• Division of Community Engagement
• Office of Planning & Decision Support

Big picture view

• How to align VCU assets with community needs?

Whole picture view

• Including hard resources is new step as an “asset”

Greater Richmond Region

Poverty rate
Richmond: 22%
Henrico: 11%
Virginia: 11%
Developing Anchor Framework

- Revise
- Obtain data

- Key Stakeholders
  - Readily available
  - Suggested Alternatives

- Initial Framework
  - Relevant
  - Plausible

- Literature Review
  - Comprehensive
  - Available

- Obtain Data
Challenges

• To ‘anchor’ or not to ‘anchor’?
• “Whose” impact?
• Breadth vs depth of data
Preparation meets Opportunity

- Presentations
- Community Assessment report
- Focusing Quest & Next Strategic Planning meeting
Next Steps

• Strategic focus on Health & Education (preliminary)

• Anchor Learning Cohort

• Community Engagement Data Joint Task Force
What are 3 ideas you want or need to explore?

What are 3 data collection mechanisms you want to leverage or explore?

Who are the top 3 partners you want to bring to the table?
Break into professional groups

- Institutional Research
- Public Affairs
- Student Affairs
- Academic Affairs
- F&A, HR, police

- Engagement Office*

Report out:
- Who are we and what do we do.
- What data do we typically have that might relate to engagement?
- What do you need to know to best partner with us?

* What data do we need that we don’t currently have or cannot easily access?
Report Out

• Institutional Research
• Public Affairs
• Student Affairs
• Academic Affairs
• F&A, HR, police

• Engagement Office*

Report out:
• Who are we and what do we do.
• What data do we typically have that might relate to engagement?
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Answering the Question, “To What End?”: Building a System of Enterprise Data Measurement to Track and Assess our Engagement with and Impact on our Communities

Valerie Holton, PhD, LCSW, Director for Community-Engaged Research

Florida Campus Compact
February 8-10, 2016
Agenda

• Welcome Back
• Community Engagement Data: Landing It
• Incorporating Partner Perspectives
• Lessons Learned
Learning Goals

Through this workshop, we will:

• Discover how to tell the community engagement story
• Understand the national context
• Identify key data on community engagement related activities and outcomes
• Identify institutional partners for collaboration
• Identify strategies to use existing enterprise data collection mechanisms to obtain reliable and comprehensive data
What’s on Your Mind?
Collecting information from faculty
Take-Aways from Monday

• Communications – Share visuals, focus on impact
• Administrators – Connect with mission
• IR/Assessment – Context matters
• Engagement – Connect community to mission
Considerations: Sharing the Data

• Who is the audience?
• Who can help you share the data?
• What format is needed?
Data Dashboard

University-wide data
- Service-learning
- Student service
- CEnR
WHAT IS COMMUNITY-ENGAGED RESEARCH?

WHO IS THE COMMUNITY?
Community can be defined in many ways
- Groups with shared characteristics
- Organizations & Businesses
- Geographic Areas

WHEN IS THE COMMUNITY INVOLVED?
At any stage of the research process
- Research Question
- Research Design
- Data Gathering
- Data Analysis
- Applying Findings

HOW IS THE COMMUNITY INVOLVED?
In varying degrees at any stage of the process

WHY DO COMMUNITY-ENGAGED RESEARCH?
- Diverse Expertise & Experience
- Improved Quality & Validity
- Timely Application
- Relevance & Usefulness
- Impactful Research

EMPLOYEES AS VOLUNTEERS
VCU COMMUNITY SERVICE LEAVE
Provides employees (with or without children) with paid leave each calendar year.

WHAT QUALIFIES?

**OPTION 1**
Meet with public or private school officials about your children or attend school functions in which your children are participating.

**OPTION 2**
Perform school-approved volunteer work in a public school.

**OPTION 3**
Participate in volunteer community service organizations.

*Please note that "school" applies only to preschool through 12th grade.

HOW MUCH TIME DO I HAVE?

Full-time classified staff and 12 month faculty receive:

16 Hours of paid community service leave on January 15 of each year.

- You do not need to take a full eight hour day at a time.
- Leave not taken in a calendar year cannot be carried forward to the next year.

WHERE CAN I VOLUNTEER?

A public or private nonprofit organization representative of a community and engaged in meeting human, educational, environmental or public safety needs.

Visit HandsOn Greater Richmond handservr.org for service opportunities.

TELL US YOUR STORY!

What exciting ways have you used your community service leave?

The Division of Community Engagement would love to know, and may feature your story on our website.

Visit https://goo.gl/gimi0h to submit your story.

CONNECT WITH US!

VCU community.vcu.edu

Facebook: VCU Community Engagement
Twitter: @VCUCommunity

Recommended Citation:
TO WHAT END?

How We Put Your Engagement Data to Work

UNDERSTAND
the range & scope of community-engaged activities across teaching, research, & outreach

1 million+ Service hours

IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES
for university-community partnerships to creatively address community-identified needs

263 Collaborative research projects

1,100+ Partnerships

STRENGTHEN CAPACITY
by understanding challenges & removing barriers to develop quality university-community partnerships

STUDENT SERVICE HRS. = $25 million

SHARE STORIES
that show our values in action, inform & inspire

ASSESS IMPACT
of community-engaged activities on students, faculty, staff & the larger community

Community engagement data will be used to support VCU’s Quest for Distinction & uphold VCU as a university committed to engagement that transforms lives.
Open Online Repositories

http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/cer
http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/cei
http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/community
Collaborative Curiosity: A Connected-Learning Course on Designing Community-Engaged Research
Innovative Ideas for Show and Tell
Partnership Map
Why a Map?

- Connect
- Coordinate
- Collaborate
- Identify areas of opportunity
Partnership Map Collaborators

- Center for Clinical and Translational Research
- University Relations
- Division of Community Engagement
- Council for Community Engagement.

(2012- Present)
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<tr>
<th>Arts, Humanities &amp; Culture</th>
<th>Food Access &amp; Nutrition</th>
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<td>Criminal Justice &amp; Public Safety</td>
<td>Health &amp; Wellness</td>
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<td>Early Childhood Development</td>
<td>Homelessness &amp; Housing</td>
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<td>Education</td>
<td>Injury &amp; Violence Prevention</td>
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<td>Education: School-based (pk-12)</td>
<td>Older Adults/Aging</td>
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<td>Education: Out-of-school Time</td>
<td>Public Policy, Government &amp; Nonprofit Sector</td>
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<td>Education: College Access &amp; Readiness</td>
<td>Urban Planning &amp; Community Development</td>
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<td>Education: Adult Education</td>
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<td>Environment &amp; Sustainability</td>
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The Map as an Assessment Tool

Generate reports
- Focus Area
- Geographic Reach
- VCU Unit
- Activity Type
THRILL OF THE CHASE

A look back at the week the world came to Richmond — and VCU’s doorstep — for the UCI Road World Championships
Click Around

http://communitynetwork.vcu.edu/partnerMap
Don’t Just Cast A Wide Net,

Build the Pond.

© Octavio Aburto
Who would be interested in the data you are collecting?

How can you use the data to inform decision-making?

How can you use the data to tell your story?
Ensure Data Quality

• Universal definitions
• Data governance structure
• Systems integration
• Communications and training
• Compliance
To guide & assist with the continued development of data infrastructure to track and assess impact of VCU’s community engagement activities on students, faculty & staff, and community partners.
**Member Roles & Responsibilities**

**Assistance & Guidance**
To have relevant expertise to provide guidance.

Expertise can include:
- Administrative & technical knowledge about current/potential data mechanisms
- Community engagement knowledge and experience

**Process Improvement**
To assist in evaluating and improving data collection processes.

Includes, but not limited to:
- Evaluation of existing mechanisms
- Operationalization of terms
- Identify key data points
- Identify key units & existing mechanisms

**Feasibility & Prioritizing**
- To assist in assessing the feasibility of proposed data collection efforts
- To provide guidance in identifying and prioritizing future efforts
Incorporate Community Partner Perspective
Approaches

• Surveys
• Focus groups
• Existing community needs assessments (and data)
• Stakeholder involvement
• Others?
Things to consider...
Nonprofit Sector Needs Assessment

Convenience sample with a 6% response rate (n=184)

Key results:
• Fiscal challenges affect capacity to manage fiscal challenges
• Multiple resources predicted to be essential in future
• Common university resources are not always the most valuable
• Nonprofits are ambivalent when it comes to nonprofit training

Focus Groups: ASPIRE

1. In what ways have the services of VCU ASPIRE been helpful to your agency? **Rationale:** To help determine what is working

2. Please complete this statement, “If the ASPIRE students hadn’t been there...” **Rationale:** To help determine the impact of ASPIRE on the delivery of services.

3. In what ways do you think VCU ASPIRE falls short? **Rationale:** To help determine what can be improved.

4. What are the most critical needs of the population you serve and how has VCU ASPIRE made a difference in addressing those needs? **Rationale:** To help determine whether we are addressing critical community needs.

5. What are your suggestions for ways VCU ASPIRE can make a greater impact for the individuals and communities you serve? **Rationale:** To help set strategic direction in regards to impact.

6. Suppose you had one minute to talk with the president about your partnership with ASPIRE and the impact that ASPIRE is having on the community your agency serves. What would you say? **Rationale:** To determine our impact.
Partner Voice

VCU is interested in doing something like this focus group to hear more about its partners’ experiences.

What is the best way for VCU to ask community partners about their experiences? (select all that apply)
☐ Online Survey  ☐ Focus groups  ☐ Interviews  ☐ Other (please describe)

How often should VCU ask community partners about their experiences?
☐ Annually  ☐ Every 2 years  ☐ Other (please describe)

Is there anything else you’d like to share that we did not talk about today?
Stakeholder Involvement

• Community Advisory Boards
• Representation on existing oversight groups
• Groups specific to initiatives
Moving Toward Impact
Existing Needs Assessments and Data
Potential Focus Areas

Community priorities & opportunities

VCU assets & strengths
Existing Community Assessments

- Readily-available published reports
- Not exhaustive
- Conducted within the past 10 years (2005 - 2015)
- Geographic focus area was Richmond City, Greater Richmond region, or Richmond Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

Our Process

• Retrieved and reviewed reports (n=24)
• Identified common themes and recommendations
Assessment Reports

- Majority (70%) from 2010 – 2015 (17)
- Greater Richmond Region was most frequent geographic focus 42% (10)
- Methods varied
Seeking Focus and Alignment at VCU

- 50-60 attendees from the community and university
- Presented analysis integrating community needs assessments
- Focus areas: health and education
- Continuing the conversations and efforts
Discussion Question:

What are the 2 to 3 focus areas you would recommend where VCU could align our work with the community to make a difference in Richmond?

Criteria:

- Involves collaboration with community partners
- Focuses on identified community need
- Builds on current community goals/strategies
- Has potential for measurable change on selected outcomes within 3-10 years
- Is consistent with VCU assets, expertise and experience
- Can involve multiple departments across the campuses
- Incorporates student learning, research and, when appropriate, patient care
Discussion Questions:

In this area, what specific measureable change could we expect to see in the next 3 to 10 years?

What are potential opportunities for VCU and the community to work together on this issue? How could student learning and research be incorporated into efforts to address this issue?
Lessons Learned

Thanks UNC Greensboro!
Start with the landscape
Be clear about who, what, how and why ... before you ask for information

Incorporate multiple approaches to gathering information
Move towards impact measurement
Jennifer Early, RN, MSHA

Meghan Ressler, MSW

Audrey Trussell

Tessa McKenzie, MPH

Jennifer Jettner, MSW
Resources


Resources


Resources

http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mjcs/3239521.0020.102/1


VCU Partnership Map  http://communitynetwork.vcu.edu/partnerMap

VCU Data Dashboard http://community.vcu.edu/resources--toolkit/community-engagement-dashboard/

Anchor Institutions


Anchor Institutions


Valerie Holton, PhD, LCSW

Division of Community Engagement  www.community.vcu.edu
Virginia Commonwealth University  www.vcu.edu

vholton@vcu.edu

@valerieholton

A Journey in Collaborative Curiosity  
http://rampages.us/collaborativecuriosity/