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Building Community-Engagement Infrastructure at Warp Speed: Leveraging Enterprise Data and Partnerships

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Building Community-Engagement Infrastructure at Warp Speed: Leveraging Enterprise Data and Partnerships

Abstract
This was presented at the pre-conference workshop on November 16, 2015 at the annual meeting of IARSLCE in Boston, Massachusetts.

Keywords
enterprise data, partnerships, community engagement, infrastructure, community-engaged research, vcu, virginia commonwealth university, engagement, community, civic engagement

Disciplines
Higher Education
Building Community-Engagement Infrastructure at Warp Speed: Leveraging Enterprise Data and Partnerships

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Kathleen Shaw, MBA, Vice Provost for Planning and Decision Support

Pre-Conference Workshop, Annual meeting of IRSLCE
Boston Massachusetts, November 16, 2015
Agenda

• Welcome and Introductions
• State of the Field
• Strategies for Developing Infrastructure
• Lessons Learned
Learning Goals

Through attending this workshop, participants will:

• Understand the national context grounding the use of this information
• Identify key data to collect on community engagement related activities and outcomes
• Identify university partners for collaboration
• Learn about strategies to use existing enterprise data collection mechanisms collect reliable and comprehensive data
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
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.

Division of Community Engagement
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
Why do (we) need institutional data on community engagement activities and impact?
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
Carnegie Community-Engagement Classification
President’s Honor Roll
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)
What are you working on collecting?

What obstacles are you facing?

What is working?
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?
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?

• Institutional Research
• Student Affairs
• Office of Research
• Human Resources
• Libraries

• Development
• Academic Affairs
• Government Relations
• Public Affairs

And who else?
Working with Institutional Research

• Who are they (you)?
• What do they (you) do?
• How can you help each other?

Keep in mind ...
Identify and define what you want to collect
<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>
Identify 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
• Internships
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
Service Learning: Partners and Process
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection tool</th>
<th>Student Survey</th>
<th>Centralized database</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data collected</strong></td>
<td>Process Outcomes</td>
<td>Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>Behavioral outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflection activities</td>
<td>• Cultural diversity</td>
<td>• Intention to continue serving @ partner site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Integration of service</td>
<td>• Civic engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection tool</th>
<th>Instructor Survey</th>
<th>Centralized database</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data collected</strong></td>
<td>Supportive Climate</td>
<td>Process Outcomes</td>
<td>Impact on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• President &amp; Provost</td>
<td>• Use of various supports provided by DCE</td>
<td>• Scholarship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dean</td>
<td>• Helpfulness of used supports</td>
<td>• Teaching skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Department chair</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Research innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Job satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Students</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sense of community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CEnR: Partners and Process
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.
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
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
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
With whom are you or could you partner?

What data collection mechanisms are you or could you use?

What is working?
Student Community Service: Partners and Process
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.
What is RamServe?

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

---

**VCU**

*Make it real.*

**VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY**
Share the Data

- Who is the audience?
- Who can help you share the data?
- What format is needed?
Partnership Map

- Connect
- Coordinate
- Collaborate
- Identify areas of opportunity
Focus Areas

Arts, Humanities & Culture
Criminal Justice & Public Safety
Early Childhood Development
Economic & Workforce Development
Education
Education: School-based (pk-12)
Education: Out-of-school Time
Education: College Access & Readiness
Education: Adult Education
Environment & Sustainability

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
Food Access & Nutrition
Health & Wellness
Homelessness & Housing
Immigrant & Refugee Populations
Injury & Violence Prevention
Older Adults/Aging
Public Policy, Government & Nonprofit Sector
Urban Planning & Community Development
Veterans
Data Dashboard

University-wide data

- Service-learning
- Student service
- CEnR
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
Incorporate Community Partner Perspective
Community Engagement Data Joint Task Force

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
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
Resources


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

VCU Data Dashboard (temporary) https://public.tableau.com/s/profile/vcu.decision.support.systems#!/
Questions?
Comments?
Suggestions?
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”