

Final Report

Task Force to Develop Best Practices for New Brunswick Community-University Research Partnerships

Introduction

President McCormick charged the Task Force for New Brunswick Community-University Research Partnerships with two responsibilities: first, to define the factors that characterize effective community-university research partnerships and, second, to propose guidelines and best practices for conducting research and outreach within the city. The president's charge grew from conversations with the New Brunswick community and the recognition that a history of misconceptions, miscommunications, and missteps had created distrust in the relationships between university researchers and community organizations. "The outcome of the Task Force's work," instructed President McCormick, "should strengthen our mutual capacity for developing and responding to research agendas that result in new knowledge and address community needs" (**Appendix I**).

To fulfill this charge, the Task Force held five face-to-face meetings and conducted follow-up discussions via email. As background for these discussions, task force members—representing both Rutgers and the New Brunswick community—had access to a bibliography of selected readings on university-community engagement (**Appendix II**). Additional insights came from the on-the-ground experience of task force members, many of whom are currently engaged in successful university-community partnerships.

We agreed to define a community organization as a nonprofit group or public entity residing in a local community and providing local services. And we agreed to define community-based partnerships broadly, to include not only research but also community engagement and service learning. This definition recognizes that such partnerships range from the simple (e.g., a classroom assignment requiring Rutgers students to survey community members) to the complex (e.g., a grant-funded clinical research project conducted by Rutgers researchers with the participation of community organizations).

As our deliberations progressed, the Task Force quickly recognized an opportunity for the university, as a land-grant institution with a mission of service to the community, to change its culture from one of doing research *on* the community to one of doing research *with* the community. This is a shift in the way community research is presently conducted at Rutgers, and the potential outcomes are beneficial for both researchers and community members.

Combining the unique resources and perspectives of the university and the community and focusing them on joint partnerships would advance the goals of each. Researchers would further the creation of new knowledge, and community partners would use that knowledge to build

positive change within their community. As neighbors equally committed to the welfare of our home city, the community and the university also share many mutual goals. Among them is the health and wellbeing of its citizens, which is paramount. Working together, we can make even greater strides toward a better New Brunswick for all.

Toward a New Model: Community-Based Participatory Research

The Task Force's faculty members spoke persuasively of the benefits that ensue when universities and communities collaborate on research that results in both scholarly publication and community action. This new approach, called community-based participatory research (CBPR), can effect real change in the community. CBPR is also an effective mode of teaching, learning, and empowerment for everyone involved. Students who participate in such research engage in active learning and problem-centered pedagogy while building respect for the strengths and talents of the community. Through training and the sharing of university expertise in these collaborations, the capacity of community organizations, schools, and social agencies can be strengthened, so they are better able to collect, analyze, and use data for their own work.¹ Over time, effective CBPR can build capacity within the community and make future university-community partnerships more productive.

Our deliberations also uncovered a number of challenges that compromise our current ability to create successful university-community partnerships. The two most significant are, first, an understanding of the processes that effect successful partnerships and, second, an understanding of the two entities' very different cultural perspectives, organizational structures, and constraints.

Several specific issues were also identified that, if corrected, could lead to increased collaboration and more effective outcomes. Among those most frequently cited were:

- confusion within both communities about how—and who—to approach at the university when a research need is identified;
- uncertainty as to how the university can best identify community needs in order to define and create a mutually beneficial research project;
- the right of community organizations to control the volume and scope of requests they receive from the university;
- the difficulty in designing university-community projects that can be sustained over time;
- confusion about how the university can pool interdisciplinary resources to address a community issue;
- how to identify a point of contact within the community when a research topic includes multiple community organizations;
- inadequate turn-around periods and quick deadlines for community partners to respond to requests; and
- the lack of an effective channel to learn whom at Rutgers is working on similar projects.

Each partnership presents challenges that can impede success. If not carefully addressed, these challenges may ultimately jeopardize the willingness of the community or the university to engage in future projects and partnerships. As the interests of Rutgers and the New Brunswick

¹ Strand, K. et al. *Community-Based Research and Higher Education: Principles and Practices*. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 2003. p.10

community are inextricably intertwined, the Task Force has focused this report on framing relationships of mutual benefit and reciprocity and on identifying practices that will move us towards establishing sustained, collaborative relationships. With these goals in mind, the Task Force makes its recommendations for improving community-university research partnerships in three areas:

- characteristics of effective partnerships;
- best practices within these partnerships; and
- new structures to support community-university engagement.

In addition, the Task Force presents a set of objectives for implementing and assessing the above strategies. While the Task Force's efforts have been focused on relationships within the New Brunswick environment, members hope their work will create a dialogue on these issues with Rutgers' Camden and Newark campuses, and beyond to mutually learn from and enhance our efforts.

I. Characteristics of Effective Community-University Research Partnerships

The university engages in community partnerships that are many and diverse, simple and complex. Some are based on instruction or service; others are focused on research. Despite these differences, the Task Force has identified a number of characteristics that should be developed in all partnerships, large and small, to make them respectful and successful.

Mutual trust and respect

Trust and respect are critical components of an effective community-university partnership. For a successful collaboration, each partner must trust the other to act in good faith, value both sets of interests equally, and refuse to sacrifice the other's objectives in favor of one's own.² Mutually respectful relationships begin with the recognition that each party brings valuable knowledge to the partnership: the experiential, local knowledge of community members complements the specialized, academic knowledge of university faculty and students. Therefore, every member of the partnership is both a researcher and a learner, with the research process itself becoming a means of change and growth.

Clear communication

Successful partnerships depend on clear understanding, yet each partner enters the relationship with a unique culture, language, and terminology. Academics, for example, may use jargon that is familiar within their discipline but excludes—and even alienates—others. To be understood, all participants must communicate clearly, avoiding inaccessible language and working to develop a common discourse that is respectful, inclusive, and meaningful.³ Meanings should be clarified, assumptions avoided, and expectations expressed. Partners should develop communication practices that respect timelines and schedules, provide indicators of progress and incremental success, and establish a process for feedback.

Flexibility

² Ibid, p.31

³ Ibid, p.35

All projects incur changes; some are unavoidable. No matter the nature of the change, project partners need to remain flexible and keep the channels of communication open. A written document, such as a memorandum of understanding or statement of responsibilities, can help to maintain flexibility by reminding all parties of the project's goals and steps and their interconnectedness.

Cultural understanding

The cultures of academe and the community are very different. Work schedules, time constraints, and levels of authority and autonomy differ widely between the two. Faculty and community structures are often complicated and difficult to understand from the outside. It is important to identify the key values, perspectives, and priorities of each partner's culture. Developing an understanding of and respect for cultural differences is a necessary—and rewarding—part of engaging in research with new partners.

Shared authority

Responsibilities are rarely equal within a partnership, nor do they need to be. They should, however, be clearly defined and approached with an attitude of equality and honesty. Authority must be shared. Decisions about responsibilities and leadership roles should be made with an understanding of individual strengths and interests. This is where trust and mutual respect become crucial; each member of the team must be comfortable deferring to others in the interest of improving the project, respecting each other's commitments, and supporting the wider aims and principles of the project.⁴

Reciprocity

Community-based research often brings together partners whose needs and interests diverge. While academics see new knowledge as an end, community members see it as a beginning. Community organizations are dedicated to creating positive change; they are therefore rightly invested in, first and foremost, research that has lasting benefit for their community. For that reason, community members are unlikely to participate in research they do not understand or value. When designing research projects, it is important to address community goals in a thoughtful way. Such reciprocity builds trust, goodwill, and strong partnerships.

II. Best Practices within Community-University Research Partnerships

Effective partnerships share the characteristics outlined above; they also incorporate practices known to support success and avoid problems. The Task Force has identified a number of best practices that will help university and community partners achieve their mutual goals. Taken together, these best practices provide a framework for cultivating new partnerships and encouraging the ongoing conversations that keep established partnerships strong.

Establish mutually agreed goals and strategies

Partnerships should begin with mutual agreement on the goals of the project. The partners should understand what the research is about and how it will benefit each partner. Strategies to achieve the goals should likewise be mutually developed and agreed upon, with an action plan that

⁴ Ibid, p.34

outlines progress through stated timelines. Such upfront agreement helps both partners to envision how the work will proceed and averts surprises and misunderstandings as the project progresses.

Create effective communication structures

Effective communication is critical to the success of any partnership and requires both goodwill and effort. Partners should develop communication practices that express clear expectations, recognize progress and success, and allow constructive feedback. It is valuable to articulate potential risks and tension points, and helpful to establish a contact person for each partner and an infrastructure to support ongoing communication. As the work progresses, partners should conduct periodic checks to determine what is working well, what is not working well, and what is needed to proceed effectively.

Define roles, responsibilities, and expectations

In every partnership, no matter how small or large, each partner should understand its own role and responsibilities as well as those of others. Without this understanding, disagreements may arise, deadlines may go unmet, and the project may flounder. A written document—for example, a statement of responsibilities or a memorandum of understanding (MOU)—can avert these problems by clearly outlining the expectations for each partner (**Appendix III**). These documents are not legally binding contracts; rather, they are vehicles for talking through a project, anticipating how decisions will be made, and identifying who will be responsible for making them.⁵ The form and content of the document can vary, depending on the needs of the project and the type, size, and scope of the partnership. They can also vary greatly in the level of detail required to clearly document the working relationship.

Project-based partnership agreements. In a small-scale partnership, the document can be brief, although a complex project may require a more extensive document. Written agreements allow partners to outline their visions for the project and establish a clear understanding of where each stands on resources, important decision points, and other power-sharing issues. Such documents can provide for accountability by identifying key markers, activities, and timelines; a written obligation encourages each partner to make a good-faith effort to fulfill their commitments.

Ongoing partnership agreements. Some partnerships are meant to extend beyond a single project and are broad in scope rather than specific. Such cases may require a written agreement outlining a vision for the work and listing the areas in which the partners will focus their activity. Particularly complex partnerships may require agreement between the university, a dean, or a department and the city or a community unit. The MOU should define the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of each partner in all activities to be engaged mutually.

Include letters of community participation for IRB reviews

Proposals for community-based research partnerships that require institutional review board (IRB) approval must include a letter of endorsement from the participating community organization. Researchers should obtain letters of endorsement that are specific to the project,

⁵ Ibid, p.50

contain complete information, and are endorsed by the appropriate representative of the community partner; a checklist can be useful in preparing these letters (**Appendix IV**). Letters of participation, written thoughtfully and endorsed appropriately, can alleviate misunderstandings and timeline difficulties by providing community organizations with a full understanding of their involvement in the research project. They should avoid blanket endorsements, signatures by individuals other than those responsible for such endorsements, and those lacking enough details to ensure a full understanding by participants.

Define ownership and dissemination of research data for each project

University researchers and community organizations should understand the principles affecting the ownership and sharing of all data to be collected in the project. Researchers should also be willing to incorporate questions and analyses that are important to the community partner and relevant to the research. Community organizations, in turn, should inform university researchers about any potential data sources within the community that could be useful in conducting the research.⁶ Partners should also discuss the internal review and interpretation of the data and develop a dissemination plan for sharing research findings with the wider community.

Develop a plan for reporting research findings

Critical to the success of any community-university research project is mutual agreement on how the research will be reported, where and when it will be shared, and who will present the findings. While university and community partners are equally invested in the research, their visions for disseminating its findings are often very different. This is especially true when the results are sensitive or are perceived as reflecting negatively on the community. A plan for reporting research results and outcomes, in both academia and the community, should respect both partners' goals and concerns.

To community organizations, the most important aspect of a research project is often its potential to effect change or spur actions that will benefit the community. Community organizations are understandably invested in how results—especially sensitive results—are reported, both within their community and to the general public. The form in which results are presented will depend on a number of factors, including the purpose of the research and the nature of the community and the intended audience. Results may be disseminated in a written report, for example, or shared privately within the community. When dissemination to the general public is desired, the community and the university may wish to pursue a press release, news conference, media coverage, or other means of public communication. The partners should work together to develop a plan for disseminating results and addressing sensitive findings.

Academics also typically share the results of their research with other scholars, at academic conferences and in journal articles. Researchers have a responsibility to ensure that community partners are informed about this practice and are given the opportunity to collaborate. Whenever possible, researchers should encourage interested individuals to participate in preparing the publication or presentation; researchers should also acknowledge the contributions of community

⁶ CARE: Community Alliance for Research and Engagement. *Principles and Guidelines for Community Research Partnerships*. New Haven, Yale Center for Clinical Investigation, 2009. p. 4

partners and their key staff members as appropriate. Staff members should be named as authors when their contributions attain the level expected for authors of academic publications.⁷

Joint collaboration on reporting results is just as important as joint collaboration on designing and conducting research. A collaborative research-reporting plan, mutually discussed and mutually agreed, respects both partners' needs and opens avenues for building on the work through future projects.

⁷ Ibid, p.7

III. New Structures to Support Community-University Engagement

The characteristics and best practices of effective partnerships are productive only when partners are able to connect and engage. A critical impediment to community-university engagement, for both sides, is the inherent difficulty in identifying the right contacts for a potential partnership. It seems clear that a process for initiating engagement is necessary; to this end, the Task Force identified several structures that would help partners come together to explore areas of mutual interest. The new structures, if introduced by the university, would provide this process and would likely result in projects that are more reciprocal, less replicated, larger and better-coordinated, more long-term and sustainable, and with more “return” for New Brunswick community organizations and the people they serve.

Start a conversation with the community

New Brunswick’s community organizations have a long history of mutually supportive relationships built on ongoing dialog and collaboration. Rutgers has been part of these efforts for some time. At the same time, it would be valuable at this time for Rutgers to reintroduce itself within the community and reinvigorate its role in this conversation. The university should start this engagement by arranging a series of one-on-one meetings with selected community organizations. The meetings would provide an opportunity for extensive discussions about the organization’s past relationships with the university, its mission, future objectives, whom they serve, what their goals and interests are, and what services—from research to student interns—Rutgers can provide. These introductory meetings would jumpstart personal relationships and create a mutual foundation for building productive community-university partnerships in the future. To be part of the life of a community, task force members pointed out, one must first be part of the dialog of the community.

Create an initial Rutgers contact for community-university research partnerships

Building successful partnerships depends, to a great extent, on university resources being available to both researchers and community organizers who have identified a research interest. Despite the university’s wealth of assets and expertise, community organizations find it daunting to identify the right individual or office to contact at Rutgers. Researchers, too, can have difficulty identifying resources within the university. The problem is magnified when either partner seeks to address a particularly complex issue that requires interdisciplinary resources. On a fundamental level, community and university partners need a mutually accessible contact point—a “meeting place”—for exploring partnerships and reaching resources.

The Task Force therefore recommends that the university assign initial responsibility for community-based research to an individual or office on the New Brunswick campus. In the long run, Rutgers might consider establishing a Center for New Brunswick Community Research that has the resources and skills to more fully engage these tasks. This entity would serve as a repository of relevant information and an outreach center for connecting potential partners in areas of mutual interest. This designated contact point would have the institutional knowledge to field both community and university requests and channel them appropriately. This recommendation assumes, however, that the many Rutgers offices and individuals currently involved in university-community relations will continue to collaborate on and remain engaged in fostering these partnerships.

Establish a website for community-university research partnerships

The establishment of a website dedicated to community-university partnerships would foster engagement and ease much of the current frustration and misunderstanding. Basic information—such as how one goes about establishing a partnership or collaborative project—would be laid out and accessible. Postings on the site would benefit both the community and the university, enabling community organizations to articulate their interests and university researchers to share their assets, interests, and ideas for creating collaborative possibilities. The website could also connect university faculty to colleagues with similar interests and highlight areas in which the university and community are engaged.

Filling in online forms would maximize the website's utility by providing a simple, convenient method for sharing information (**Appendix V**). The forms used by university researchers (faculty, staff, and students) would provide space for information about parameters, such as scope of work, type of community setting sought, responsibilities of the community partner, overall costs-benefits statement, and timeline. Student proposals would require support from a research advisor or course instructor; proposals from independent or loosely affiliated groups (e.g., NJPIRG) would also require a source of accountability. A variety of forms, designed to support a range of projects—from major research proposals to simple classroom observations—should be available.

The form completed by community organizations would outline their research or project interests, specific requirements (e.g., maximum number of projects, no availability on Fridays), any necessary approvals and associated timelines, and their openness to unsolicited proposals, among others. The community organization should also be able to post to the website the required sign-off form endorsing participation in any research proposal submitted to Rutgers' institutional review board.

Host meetings to connect partners and explore research interests

Regularly scheduled meetings—perhaps on the model of a research symposium—would stimulate partnerships and foster mutual understanding by bringing together university researchers and community members in face-to-face dialog. University researchers could share their research interests with potential community collaborators while also becoming familiar with important community issues that might be appropriate for study. Partnerships might even develop on the spot: A Rutgers faculty member who has developed a graffiti-resistant paint, for example, might connect with a community group actively engaged in neighborhood beautification projects. A community struggling with high rates of diabetes might welcome the chance to participate in a nutritional intervention study. Whether held annually or several times a year, the meetings would also be an important opportunity for community organizations without easy access to the Internet to share their interests and meet with university contacts. Over the long term, these regularly scheduled meetings would create a continuum for fostering sustained relationships.

Establish a review process to connect partners in a timely manner

The structures proposed above provide the means to share information and initiate connections. Also needed is a structure to ensure that these initial overtures develop in a timely manner. In

creating a partnership, accommodation needs to be made for the timelines and urgency levels of all parties. Academic calendars and student requirements are primary concerns for the university, but budget cycles are likely to be important for both the community and the university. Mechanisms should be established to expedite review, channel requests to and from Rutgers and community organizations, and allow procedures to operate efficiently. The office designated as the university's initial point of contact might determine if an advisory board, or some other mechanism, is appropriate for the timely connection of university researchers and community partners.

IV. Implementing Best Practices and Assessing Effectiveness

A best practice document, no matter how thoughtful and comprehensive, will be ineffective if its requirements are not implemented and assessed. The Task Force has agreed on several objectives to attain in support of mutually beneficial community-university partnerships.

Objective 1: Educate Rutgers and the community about best practices and the process of engagement

Rutgers is a large and decentralized institution. Policy information known to vice presidents, deans, or department chairs is often unknown to individual faculty members. Policy statements that are emailed or sent via campus mail to the faculty have little meaning to individuals who are not currently involved in relevant activities. Should these faculty members become involved at some future date, they are unlikely to remember a policy document received in the past. In cases where a faculty member learns that an activity in which she or he is engaged is covered by a particular policy, it may be very difficult for that person to locate the relevant document.

There needs to be an effective implementation mechanism to educate members of the Rutgers community of the existence of these policies and the reasons they are necessary. University researchers should also be educated about practices that create and avert problems in community-university partnerships.

Rutgers has already created successful mechanisms for educating faculty about critical issues; two useful examples are the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) Human Subjects Certification Program and the Ethics at Rutgers Training Program. Both programs include online workshop components that teach participants about the importance of proper actions and the problems that may arise from violations. Unlike rote announcements and random policy statements, this kind of purposeful training creates a lasting impact by concentrating the mind on the importance of the issues to be learned.

The Task Force recommends that Rutgers create a similar online training module focused on university-community partnerships. The online training should include real-world scenarios and provide guidance on the best practices for successfully managing common partnership situations. The tutorial should be linked from the proposed university-community research partnerships website. A check-off box on IRB forms should indicate that faculty members involved in community research have taken the tutorial. President McCormick or Vice President Furmanski should email a notice to Rutgers personnel announcing the website and the online training.

Similarly, community organizations could announce the training opportunity and place links on their own websites.

Objective 2: Enhance the use of existing structures for communications

Existing offices and mechanisms within the university can be used to communicate new initiatives in community-university partnerships. These include the offices of the academic deans, the vice president for public and private partnerships, the vice president for public affairs, the associate vice president for corporate and foundation relations, the vice president for research and graduate and professional education, and the vice president for university relations. These offices should be made aware of all elements of the engagement process—including this report, the proposed website, and the online training module—as well as their role in communicating the value of community-based research partnerships and disseminating relevant information to their constituents.

Objective 3: Assess the effectiveness of new strategies through follow-up study

Effective university-community research partnerships are important to both sides, and the recommendations in this document are meant to strengthen and advance these partnerships. While the Task Force believes its recommendation will enhance the process of engagement, they also acknowledge the importance of assessing the effectiveness of any new strategies and structures. After an adequate pilot period, the university, jointly with the community, should undertake a review of these strategies to assess their effectiveness and make changes as needed.

Summary

The Task Force recommends that Rutgers move toward a community-based participatory research (CBPR) model in its research and engagement partnerships with our home city of New Brunswick. We believe that this model—built on respect, collaboration, and reciprocity—will bring multiple benefits: more-productive partnerships between university researchers and community organizations; a better relationship between the university and the city; and, ultimately, a greater and stronger New Brunswick for us all.

If the recommendations presented in this final report are accepted, Rutgers should quickly move forward with strategic implementation. It is important that momentum not be lost and commitment not be doubted. The university should set a timetable for achieving major goals and incremental progress toward them, assigning responsibility to individuals or offices to ensure continuous progress toward those goals. Many members of this Task Force stand ready to assist Rutgers in strengthening its research relationships with the New Brunswick community.

Creating a genuine research partnership with our host community will bring benefits to Rutgers, our faculty, staff, and students, and to the residents and wider interests of the City of New Brunswick. As partners, we can create a proud legacy of engagement that will be a model of university-community collaboration for New Jersey and the nation.

December 20, 2010

Appendix I

Charge and Membership

Context:

Rutgers has a long history of involvement with New Brunswick and its surrounding communities. Ideally, each of our research and service efforts would be launched with mutually beneficial goals and in full collaboration between the community and the university. However, we know this has not always been the case. Issues such as the demands of meeting different institutional and organizational missions, time, scholarship, funding cycles, the mobility of faculty and students, and ever-evolving community needs make forming and sustaining partnerships complex and challenging. With this in mind, Rutgers is assessing how to facilitate and improve its community engagement practices. We would like to begin by establishing some optimal processes and practices to advance effective research and community engagement.

The Task Force on Best Practices for New Brunswick Community-University Research Partnerships is charged with:

- Defining the factors that characterize effective community-university research partnerships
- Proposing guidelines and best practices for conducting research and outreach within the city

The outcome of the Task Force's work should strengthen our mutual capacity for developing and responding to research agendas that result in new knowledge and address community needs.

The Task Force's report should address the following:

- What principles will help foster collaborations with community groups, civic leadership, and key stakeholders in New Brunswick and at Rutgers?
- What guidelines and best practices will assure accountability and respect between New Brunswick and Rutgers and promote adequate levels of commitment for both partners in advancing research, service, and civic engagement?
- What checks and balances are needed?
- How do we share the results of research projects so that they benefit New Brunswick and Rutgers communities?
- How do we communicate the principles and guidelines to our constituencies?

Meeting schedule and time commitments:

- Tuesday, September 21, 2010, 1:30-3:00 pm, Winants Hall Board Room
- Wednesday, October 6, 2010, 9:00-10:30 am, Brower Commons, 2nd floor conference room
- Tuesday, October 19, 2010, 1:30-3:00 pm, Brower Commons, 2nd floor conference room
- Monday, November 15, 2010, 2:00-3:30pm, Alexander Library, 3rd floor conference room
- Tuesday, December 7, 2010, 9:00-10:30am, Alexander Library, 3rd floor conference room
- Recommendations are due by December 5, 2010

Task Force Co-chairs:

Marianne Gaunt – Rutgers vice president for information services and university librarian
Richard Kaplan – New Brunswick superintendent of schools

Membership:

Linda Bassett – senior director, Rutgers Office of Community Affairs
Erica Boling – associate professor, Graduate School of Education
Jim Boyd – director, Rutgers Trenton Academic Center
Robin Davis – executive vice dean, School of Arts and Sciences
James DeWorken – special projects coordinator, New Brunswick Board of Education
Maurice Elias – academic director, Rutgers Civic Engagement and Service Education Partnership Program, professor, Department of Psychology, School of Arts and Sciences
Yakov Epstein – professor, Math, Science & Computer Education Center
Lisanne Finston – executive director, Elijah’s Promise
Sheryl Goldberg – director, Rutgers Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
Daniel Goldstein – associate professor, Department of Anthropology, School of Arts and Sciences
Peter Guarnaccia – professor, Department of Human Ecology, School of Environmental and Biological Sciences
Jack Humma – director of support services, New Brunswick Board of Education
Radha Jagannathan – associate professor, Department of Urban Planning & Policy Development, Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy
Kevin Jones – senior pastor, Sharon Baptist Church
Larry S. Katz – senior associate director, New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, director, Cooperative Extension
Mariam Merced – director of community health promotion program, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital
Isabel Nazario – associate vice president for academic and public partnerships in the arts and humanities
Esther Nkrumah – assistant director, Research Management, St. Peter's Healthcare System
Bonnie Petrauskas – director, Corporate Contributions & Community Relations, Johnson & Johnson
Jorge Schement – dean, School of Communication & Information
Greg Trevor – senior director, Rutgers Office of Media Relations
(to advise when media outreach is under discussion)
Mario Vargas – executive director, Puerto Rican Action Board
Jeffrey Vega – executive director, New Brunswick Tomorrow

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Appendix II

Bibliography

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<http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=LeDxoTVTsmYC&oi=fnd&pg=PR11&dq=community-based+research+and+higher+education&ots=mzvQZuM1LT&sig=Cs1bbwS0TgWkKLGjyw7ume9UzmY#v=onepage&q&f=false>

University of California, San Francisco, Clinical and Translational Institute (CTSI). *How can I best work with community members to enhance my research and its impact on the community?*
<http://ctsi.ucsf.edu/research/community-faq>

University of Washington, School of Public Health. *Community-Based Research Principles*.
<http://sph.washington.edu/research/community.asp>

Appendix IIIa

Memorandum of Understanding

A Memo of Understanding (MOU) or Statement of Responsibilities is a useful tool to provide a guide to a partnership or an outline of work and responsibilities in a project. It can be written at a very high level for an overarching partnership or at a detailed level for a specific project.

An MOU defines a relationship but is not legally binding.

The samples in Appendix III include a variety of MOUs. They may be customized as appropriate for any partnership. The sample below includes a variety of elements that may be included or not, as needed.

Purpose

Goals/Objectives of the partnership

Guiding principles

Responsibilities of each partner (scope of work/deliverables)

Access to data

Process evaluation

Timelines

Date effective

Signatory authority for partners

Appendix IIIb

Memorandum of Understanding for UNC-CH Department of Health Behavior and Health Education and AGENCY NAME/S

Purpose

The UNC-CH Department of Health Behavior and Health Education will partner with AGENCY NAME/S to conduct an *action-oriented community diagnosis* (AOCD). AOCD provides MPH students in the Department of Health Behavior and Health Education with the opportunity to experience public health in a real world setting. AOCD provides AGENCY NAME/S the resources needed to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the designated community's strengths and needs, and to identify and prioritize action steps based on identified needs.

Through the AOCD process, students gain and document: 1) an **outsider's view** on the status of health and well-being of a given community through data sources collected and maintained by professional organizations, and primary data elicited from local service providers; and 2) an **insider's view** of what it is like to live in a given community on a daily basis through primary data elicited from community influentials, service users, and non-service users.

The AOCD process consists of four distinct but related parts: 1) a secondary data examination of social and health indicators; 2) an analysis of health and human service organizations serving the community; 3) an identification of perceived needs, assets and community dynamics through qualitative interviews with community members; and 4) the planning and implementation of a community forum. The purpose of the community forum is for service providers and community members to arrive at a consensus on priority needs and motivations for change, examine possible causes and consequences of a priority problem, and establish a partnership between communities and local agencies to develop a plan of action.

Specific Responsibilities

The Department of Health Behavior & Health Education will provide:

- Meeting space and conference call capability for student teams
- A private voicemail with a toll-free phone number for each student team
- Use of department equipment—tape recorders, an LCD projector, laptops—for student teams
- Secure, locked space for storing original data

http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/pdf_files/MOU11.pdf

- Use of department-assigned state vehicles or reimbursement of mileage when state vehicles are unavailable for travel to, from, and within the community
- Basic supplies for conducting AOCD activities, such as pens, notepads, blank business cards, audiotapes, batteries, etc.
- Snacks and beverages for focus groups conducted by student teams
- Photocopying for AOCD-related materials
- Postage for participant thank you notes and forum invitations
- Beverages, paperware, and \$100 for each community forum

The Teaching Team, in addition to the basic responsibilities of teaching the course, will be responsible for:

- Meeting with preceptors as a group twice during the Fall semester and 2-3 times in the Spring Semester to provide updates on course activities, discuss issues of relevance to the AOCD process, and provide support for challenges encountered during the AOCD process.
- Meeting with each student team at least once during the Fall Semester and at least twice during the Spring Semester, as well as advising student teams via e-mail and meetings requested by students.
- Maintaining regular communication with preceptors and students related to AOCD activities.
- Facilitating the resolution of conflicts that may arise between preceptors and students or within the student team regarding AOCD activities and materials.
- Assessing the performance of individual students and student teams as a whole.

The student team will be responsible for:

- Meeting regularly as a team to decide on activities and tasks to be completed as part of the AOCD process.
- Ensuring that applicable practice and research ethics guide their activities in the community and as part of the AOCD process.
- Facilitating team development (e.g., establishing team ground rules, providing constructive feedback, division of labor) and decision-making.
- Providing constructive feedback to the preceptors as needed, and completing an evaluation form of their preceptors towards the beginning of and at the end of the Spring semester.
- Identifying a departmental liaison to serve as the primary person for communicating with the course TAs about department policy and procedure related issues.
- Identifying a preceptor liaison to serve as the primary person for communicating with the preceptor for scheduling meetings, relaying other important information, and soliciting feedback on AOCD activities and materials.
- Identifying a teaching team liaison to serve as the primary person for communicating with members of the teaching team.
- Conducting a driving or walking tour of community with preceptors as guide.
- Participating in community events and activities to become better acquainted with the community.

http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/pdf_files/MOU11.pdf

- Compiling secondary data analyses on the community.
- Conducting individual and/or focus group interviews with and analyzing the data from 1015 service providers and 15-20 community members.
- Convening an advisory group/planning committee of service providers and community members to plan the community forum.
- Planning and conducting, with the assistance of the planning committee, a community forum to present findings back to the community. Tasks include coordinating forum publicity, soliciting donations for forum, overseeing forum logistics, facilitating small group discussions and development of action steps.
- Preparing a written document to be provided to preceptors and other key agencies or community groups.

The Preceptor/s will be responsible for:

- Meeting with the AOCD teaching team and other AOCD preceptors twice in the Fall semester and 2-3 times in the Spring semester.
- Meeting with the student team in person or by conference call at least twice per month, and maintaining regular communication with students outside of scheduled meetings.
- Providing constructive feedback to the student team as needed, and completing an evaluation form for the student team towards the beginning of and at the end of the Spring semester.
- Introducing the student team to their community by:
 - accompanying the team on a driving or walking tour of the community, and
 - identifying volunteer activities, community events, or other activities that will provide students with opportunities to get to know the community.
- Assisting in identifying agency documents or other local secondary data sources. Identifying key resource people, both service providers and community members, and providing introductions as necessary.
- Offering guidance on cultural and political sensitivity to the community with respect to the activities of and the materials developed by the student team.
- Respecting the student team's obligation to uphold Federal and University guidelines on conducting research, and hence the student team's need to protect the confidentiality of service providers and community members interviewed as part of the AOCD process.
- Assisting in planning the community forum and helping to ensure community involvement and follow-up on findings and identified action steps.
- Attending the community forum and debriefing with the team afterwards.
- If unable to continue as a preceptor or unable to fulfill any of these specific responsibilities, identifying a suitable replacement to serve in the role of preceptor.

Signatures

By signing below, the parties listed enter into this memorandum of understanding for the 20062007 academic year.

http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/pdf_files/MOU11.pdf

Eugenia Eng
HBHE 740-741 Co-instructor

Date

Kate Shirah
HBHE 740-741 Co-instructor

Date

Name
Co-preceptor (Primary)

Date

Name
Co-preceptor

Date

Name
Other Agency Representative (if applicable)

Date

Appendix IIIc

Memorandum of Understanding



Sample Terms of Reference Contract

A *Terms of Reference Contract* is a kind of ‘memo of understanding’ that you can use to guide the work of your CBR project. It is a document that should be co-created with all of your project partners. Creating a *Terms of Reference Contract*, gives your team an opportunity to ask: What does Community-Based Research mean to us? Why are we working together? What principles are underlying our partnership? And, how will we work together? Your Terms of Reference Contract should be something that each partner signs on to – but it should also be considered a “living document” – one that you can come back to and revisit throughout the life of your project.

The following is meant to be a guiding example. Each project and partnership however, is different and may require alternative language and approaches.

1. Purpose of the CBR Project

- **One sentence project description:** This research project is a community-based study committed to identifying/understanding/measuring.....

- **One sentence project goal:** The results of this study will be used to enhance quality of life through mobilizing community, building capacities, identifying programmatic gaps, and impacting social policy.....

- **Project objectives:** The project will achieve this goal by identifying specific factors that impact on quality of life and will put forth strategies for programme enhancement, community-building and policy change.....

http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/pdf_files/MOU6.pdf

2. Guiding Principles for the CBR Project

- This project will engage a set of principles that will foster community ownership and empowerment among team members, including power sharing, capacity building through mentoring and learning exchanges, group participation in all appropriate phases of the research project, and community ownership of the project.
- This project will engage in an open and transparent process where a collective vision of research goals and objectives is shared, and where the roles and expectations of team members are clearly understood;
- This project will be a collaborative and equitable research partnership where members draw upon individual skill sets to meaningfully and mutually work toward the team's vision;
- This project will provide opportunities for capacity building through "learning exchanges" where team members can learn about research skills, community development, and community work;
- This project will engage in data analysis interpretation processes that honour the lived experiences/knowledge of community members;
- This project will employ dissemination strategies leading toward education, advocacy, community benefit, and social change;
- This project will foster a supportive team environment through critical reflection of our work and group process.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of Project Team Members

This project recognizes that roles and responsibilities differ among Co-Principal Investigators, Co-Investigators, and staff, based on principles of equity, empowerment, capacity building, and collective ownership of the project.

- **Co-Principal Investigators' (Co-PIs) Responsibilities:** The Co-PIs will provide leadership in every aspect of the project with support from research partners (Co-Investigators). This includes overseeing the entire project, coordinating research team activities, managing the budget, reporting to funders, supervising staff, and ensuring the dissemination of research findings.
- **Co-Investigators' Responsibilities:** Co-Investigators (some of whom represent agencies and others bring individual expertise) will participate in all aspects of the research project, taking into account individual and organizational capacities, (skills, available human and other resources). Co-Investigators will participate in team meetings, learning exchanges, the formulation of research questions, provide suggestions and feedback on the methodology, and provide input on recruitment, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and dissemination. Co-Investigators may also assist with data collection.
- **Staff Responsibilities:** Staff responsibilities will include team building (e.g., facilitating meetings and learning exchanges, liaising with individual team members), coordinating project administrative activities (e.g. minutes, meeting agendas) coordinating outreach to youth, service providers, and key informants, and setting up and conducting research interviews. Staff will also oversee the transcription of tapes and delivery of transcripts to the Co-Principal Investigators.
- **Other relevant partners, advisory, etc responsibilities**

4. Decision-Making Process for the Project

Our decision-making process in this project aims to:

- encourage the participation and empowerment of all team members;
- be transparent, open and clear;
- provide opportunities for exchanges of learning that draw on the various skills and areas of knowledge of different team members;
- recognize the responsibilities of the Co-Principal Investigators as Project leaders;
- recognize the responsibilities of the Project Coordinator as the Project's staff person.

Differing Responsibilities:

- Team decisions will include those related to the project's overall goals and strategies;
- Project leaders and staff are responsible for decisions related to the management of the research and administration to the Project.

Process for Team Decisions:

- Decision-making at Team meetings will strive first for consensus and then will use simple majority votes

5. Access to/Dissemination of Data

Based upon the project's guiding principles, the Co-PIs and the Co-Investigators share ownership and have access to the research data. Usage of the data will be in accordance with the project goals and will adhere to all requirements of the Research Ethics Board at XXXXX.

Data will be used for:

- advancement of knowledge;
- identification of future research questions;
- making recommendations for policy and service provision.

The data should not be for:

- individual interests that are not related to the goals of the research.

In accordance with CBR principles, we are proposing a model of dissemination that encourages the active involvement of all research team members while taking into account their varying responsibilities and capacities. Research findings will be disseminated in various ways including community forums, conference presentations, agency workshops, newsletters, and journal articles. The Co-PIs, the Co-Investigators, and the Project Coordinator are all encouraged to engage in dissemination of the research findings, and are encouraged to share information about potential dissemination activities.

The Co-PIs will take the initiative in identifying potential journal articles and discussing them with the team. Articles may be written by individuals or by writing groups formed to develop particular manuscripts. All members of a writing group will share authorship on a manuscript. If the paper discusses concerns or issues relating to a particular ethno-cultural community or communities, team members from these communities will be encouraged to participate in the writing group. Order of authorship and mechanisms for feedback on manuscript drafts will be decided up front by writing group members. Groups may also be formed for the development of conference presentations, community forums, and other dissemination activities.

6. Process Evaluation

We will regularly chart our progress against our timeline submitted. We will also provide time at the end of each meeting (15 minutes) to review our process. Twice a year, we will hold meetings specifically to debrief about our work. At these meetings we will both critically reflect on our process/outcome balance and make recommendations for adjusting our work accordingly.

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Appendix III d

Memorandum of Understanding Between Youth Connection Charter School And (University and/or Other Partners) For Improvement of Instruction/Instructional Leadership

Overview: Founded in 1997, Youth Connection Charter School (YCCS) is the nation's largest charter high school and the only one in Illinois that targets dropouts, at risk, and off-track youth and young adults with the intention of closing the gap between credit and skills acquisition and moving 17-21 year olds past achieving a meaningful high school diploma to post-secondary success and lifestyle change. YCCS will serve 3500 students in 22 small school campuses throughout Chicago in the 2009-2010 school year.

Project description: YCCS is seeking university or other partners to assist YCCS in improving instruction and/or instructional leadership in some or all of its 22 campuses across the City. Contracts will be awarded to one or more such partners to provide content area coaches and/or leadership coaches who will focus on the following objectives:

- 1) Improve classroom instruction in the four core content areas of English, math, social studies and science with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.
- 2) Move the YCCS agenda of standards-based instruction to total implementation by June, 2011 as a means of closing the gap between credit and skills relative to levels of student academic performance and graduation.
- 3) Improve the instructional skill sets of core content teachers across YCCS small school campuses.
- 4) To improve the skills of YCCS principals
- 5) To improve the performance of low-performing campuses relative to YCCS standards by 2010.

Definitions:

- **Content Area Coaches** -Content area coaches will work with YCCS teachers in their content areas relative to YCCS's progression to standards-based instruction, standards-based student progress reporting, and standards-based exit.
- **Instructional Leadership (Principal) Coaches** – Leadership coaches will work with a set of campus leaders that have been identified by a rigorous YCCS evaluation process driven by YCCS-branded Quality School Measures on the basis of sustained low performance that has placed their campuses on a warning list as a step toward eventual loss of their YCCS contract and position in the YCCS charter.

Primary (Direct) Partners:

Youth Connection Charter School

10 West 35th Street

Suite 11F4-2

Chicago, IL 60616-3717

Sheila Venson, Executive Director

sheilvensonyccs@aol.com

(University or other partner TBD)

Improvement of Instruction/Instructional Leadership MOU Alignment of Responsibilities, Scope of Work, Deliverables	
YCCS	(University or Other Partner(s) and “coaches” TBD)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies partners through a clear, competitive, high-quality RFP process which will begin a uniform public informational meeting (bidders’ conference) at which YCCS staff will thoroughly explain the project and the RFP and will make clarifications through a question/answer session • Maintains confidentiality of all information shared through the RFP and rating process. • Determines the start and end dates of the content coaching project • Identifies the major deliverables and benchmarks of the project through analysis of campus data, the SIP, and the campus’ RFQ (Program design). • Provide job descriptions for coaches • Trains coaches on YCCS-branded educational components and relevant campus data that are vital to the successful and high-quality delivery of services ; develop/supply in-service materials • Applies a clear and fair process for identifying the campuses, teachers, and instructional leaders. • Assigns trained coaches to identified campuses and instructors • Participate in monthly meetings • Make intermittent “progress checks”; shares feedback with provider and campus. • Evaluate the coaches and campus status quarterly shares feedback with provider and campus. • Provides reimbursement for services in a timely manner. • Provides options to renew where applicable. • Provides an exit evaluation to the provider. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submits a complete, high-quality, competitive application (RFP) to YCCS • Honors all YCCS intellectual property. • Participates in the required trainings and meeting scheduled by YCCS • Identifies high-quality coaches, subject to YCCS review and intake processing • Demonstrates the ability to know, understand, and apply YCCS strategies and applications to improve the quality of teaching and learning and instructional leadership as identified in the assigned campuses. • Complies with CPS background, security and health status requirements that apply to those who work directly with students in the classroom • Delivers services at the campus-level (defined by the deliverables agreed upon with YCCS and the participating campus) to coach and model best practices in content areas, including literacy and numeracy that is consistent with YCCS branding, expectations, and high standards. across categories of content. • Maintains and respects confidentiality regarding the students, the campus, and the charter • Works within the framework of YCCS baseline, quarterly, and exit accountability measures and analysis of improvement of performance at the identified campuses • Meet all timelines established/negotiated with YCCS.

This Memorandum of Understanding is effective as of the date of the signatures below:

Youth Connection Charter School Representative:

By: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____

(University or Other Partner) Representative:

By: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____

Appendix IV

IRB Checklist for Obtaining Letters of Participation from Community Organizations

Who signed the letter of participation? Title?

Please provide verification that the signatory is authorized to represent the community organization. *(Back-up could be from organization's website or from central Rutgers website or statement in the letter that the individual is authorized to sign for the agency.)*

Does the letter describe the activity fully, using plain English free of jargon?

Does it reflect an accurate understanding of the project?

Does the letter include descriptions of the risks AND benefits to the participating human subjects?

Does the letter include descriptions of the risks AND benefits to the community organization hosting the study?

Draft Sample Language for Letter

I acknowledge that the X organization is being ask to....the study is intended to....the timeline is.....the risks of our participation are....the possible benefits to our organization are....

Appendix V

Online Form for Community Engagement Portal

Community members or agencies and Rutgers faculty or departments are encouraged to place information about their interests in joint research projects or partnerships on the University's community engagement website. The form below is an outline of information that will be useful in establishing partnerships. This outline may be customized as appropriate to suit the particular project/partnerships.

Description of project partnership/interest

Project/partnership goals/objectives

Timelines (lead time required; deadlines, etc.)

Other information

Authority for sign-off on relationships

Contact person for more information

Contact address/phone/email