

A Brief History of a Movement: Civic Engagement and American Higher Education

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Next generation engagement scholars and their scholarship are part of a broad, rich, and complex history of American higher education. What follows is a concise overview of the last 30 years as seen through the lens of the civic mission of higher education. In particular, it features the emergence of a civic engagement movement that has reinvigorated and advanced the democratic purposes of higher education. As contributors to this movement, we have been part of its history and offer our perspective as a way of understanding the past in order to empower those who now shape—and those who will shape—the future of civic engagement and the future of higher education.

Part of this history represents a contest over language. In any attempt to affect momentous change, words and meanings matter. The term “civic engagement” is fraught with contested meaning. The “civic” in civic engagement, as we use it in this chapter, is shaped by the history of a movement seeking to reclaim the importance of political and democratic participation as a cornerstone of what it means to be a citizen and as a central purpose of higher education. The “engagement” in civic engagement underscores the critical importance of authentic reciprocity in partnerships between those working at colleges and universities and those in the wider community. Engagement-as-reciprocity sees non-academic knowledge as not only legitimate, but also necessary in the generation of new knowledge aimed at solving public problems. It positions experts without academic credentials as peers in the generation of new knowledge (Saltmarsh & Hartley, 2011). At its heart, the civic engagement movement has

sought to reclaim the core democratic purpose of higher education and to direct its core activities—teaching and learning, and knowledge generation—toward addressing the pressing issues that face society locally, nationally, and globally.

The civic engagement movement has been shaped by certain activities, strategies, and efforts focused on specific constituencies at different points in time. In the 1980s, the movement was defined largely as a “community service movement” (Liu, 1996); in the 1990s, as a “service-learning movement” (Stanton, Giles, & Cruz, 1999; Zlotkowski, 1995); and more recently as a civic engagement movement encompassing student service and pedagogical practices as well as larger issues of organizational change that operationalize the qualities and values of engagement in relationships between higher education and communities aimed at building a public culture of democracy. As with any movement, the civic engagement movement comprises particular issues, controversies, and characteristics that demarcate distinct periods within the larger movement. We explore four distinct periods of the movement beginning in 1984 and ending in 2012.

Reclaiming a Civic Mission: 1984-1989

Discontent drives movements, and the early 1980s were troubled times for American higher education. The U.S. economy was weak, and a projected demographic decline in college students led some experts to predict that as many as one third of colleges and universities might face merger or closure (Keller, 1983). Many institutions responded with an increasingly market-centred approach, and what the “customers” wanted were jobs. In 1971, half of all students (49%) indicated they were attending college “to be able to make more money;” by 1991 that proportion had climbed to three-quarters (74.7%) (Astin, 1998). Pre-professional majors outpaced traditional liberal arts majors on many campuses (Breneman, 1994). This shift in academic mission created significant problems at some institutions, producing faculty discontent

(Chaffee, 1984; Hartley, 2002). In an interview in 1986, Ernest Boyer (1987) summarized the mood on numerous campuses he had visited: “[W]e didn’t find dramatic examples of failure; rather, we found a loss of vision, of vitality, a sense of marking time” (as cited in Marchese, 1986, p. 10).

During this same period, the political disaffection of young people emerged as a significant social concern. The media frequently compared the idealistic students of the sixties with the materialist and career-minded college students of the 1980s. In 1982, the American Association of Colleges¹ and the Kettering Foundation co-sponsored a special issue of *Liberal Education* on “the civic purposes of liberal learning.” David Mathews, then president of Kettering, summed up the collective mood in the introductory article: “As I listen to the more perceptive among us diagnose the civic order, I find a common thread of disquiet that relates to the underpinnings of the civic enterprise—to our capacity to act together as a people” (Mathews, 1982). Amidst this growing concern about civic fragmentation, public and community service emerged as a response.

Public and community service. One of the earliest efforts to kindle civic engagement began inauspiciously in January 1984 when a recent Harvard graduate, Wayne Meisel, initiated a “walk for action” starting at Colby College in Waterville, Maine, and ending in Washington, DC. Meisel believed that the characterization of college students as apathetic was wrongheaded. As he introduced himself on campuses, Meisel argued that rather than being apathetic, students were the victims of “a society that unknowingly and unintentionally fails to inspire, tap, and channel

¹The organization renamed itself the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) in 1995.

their resources.”² Meisel encouraged “a lifelong commitment to community service, and...promote sensitive, thoughtful and effective citizenship and leadership.”

He was also careful about avoiding political activism. Recalling his time at Harvard, Meisel explained, “I saw a group of politically active knee-jerk liberals on the one hand and on the other hand there was a group of people who just wanted to head off to Wall Street to make money. I wanted to try to reach that big group of students in the middle, between the knee-jerks and the jerks.” On campus after campus, Meisel invited students to become leaders, and his message resonated. When his walk ended on May 29, 1984, having visited 67 campuses, Meisel had the beginnings of a network. He and his classmate, Bobby Hackett, founded the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL) (Meisel & Hackett, 1986). Over the next five years COOL staff members continued campus organizing. By 1989, the organization was working with student leaders at more than 450 institutions and hosting an annual meeting that drew together thousands of students.

The idea of promoting public service was emerging elsewhere. In 1985, Frank Newman, the president of the Education Commission of the States, wrote the influential *Higher Education and the American Resurgence*, in which he argued, “if there is a crisis in education in the United States today, it is less that test scores have declined than it is that we have failed to provide the education for citizenship that is still the most significant responsibility of the nation’s schools and colleges” (p. 31) The report caught the attention of the presidents of Stanford, Georgetown, and Brown Universities. Together they formed Campus Compact, a coalition of presidents personally committed to promoting civic engagement.³ To their great surprise, 110 presidents

² Quotations without citations are taken from interviews conducted with leaders of the civic engagement movement conducted by Matthew Hartley with the support of a NAE/Spencer post-doctoral fellowship in 2006-2007.

³ The transcript of the proceedings of the association on January 16, 1986, names the group the “Coalition of College Presidents for Civic Responsibility.”

joined their effort in the first year. At the inaugural meeting of the coalition on January 16, 1986, Newman argued that its purpose was to teach students to “see the larger issues as a citizen. [That] is the first task of the institution and ... how to achieve that has to be at the head of the list.”⁴

The question facing the nascent Campus Compact was how best to achieve that aim. The organization chose to advance “public service” through volunteerism: serving in soup kitchens, cleaning up trash in a local parks, tutoring at local schools. A transcript of that first meeting offers a window into the group’s mind-set at the time. “I’d like to ask a question—and this is probably dangerous—how many in the room either give or think it would be alright to give some form of academic credit for service? [Some hands go up.] How many would be opposed? [Some hands go up.] And the rest are just in the middle waiting for leadership. It looks like a real minority.” Very few faculty members nationwide were experimenting with integrating community-based activities into their courses to enhance learning outcomes (otherwise known as service-learning.) It is not surprising that some of the presidents expressed concern over the propriety of “giving academic credit for service.” They saw service activities as worthy but could only imagine them as extra-curricular activities. Unfortunately, the nature of these experiences fell short of providing the “education for citizenship” that Newman had advocated; many were short-term, and few offered students meaningful opportunities to reflect on the complex socioeconomic factors that caused the problem.

Linking service and the curriculum. In addition to Campus Compact, the National Society of Experiential Education (NSEE),⁵ also championed community-based activities. A

⁴ From the transcript of the meeting of the Coalition of College Presidents for Civic Responsibility, Georgetown University, January 16, 1986.

⁵ In the 1980s the group was called the National Society for Internships and Experiential Education. It later dropped the word “internships” from the name.

number of faculty members and practitioners who were highly experienced in linking service and learning were among its relatively small membership (i.e., 600 in 1980). In the late 1980s, a group of faculty and staff with close ties to NSEE became concerned about Campus Compact's emphasis on volunteerism. With its burgeoning membership of college and university presidents, Campus Compact had the capacity to influence significantly the national discourse about civic engagement. However, this small group worried that volunteerism would become the accepted standard for civic engagement and, as one of them put it, "[institutions] could get on the bandwagon for cheap." They had a bolder agenda: they wanted to see civic engagement incorporated into the core work of colleges and universities. They arranged a meeting with Campus Compact's director, Susan Stroud, in 1986 to discuss their concerns. As it turned out, a few members of the Campus Compact leadership had begun to raise these issues as well. Subsequently, Stanford's President Donald Kennedy and staff member, Tim Stanton, and David Warren, president of Ohio Wesleyan, conducted a study examining links between service and faculty work which resulted in a seminal report written by Stanton (1990). That report had a significant influence on the debate over the academic rigor of community service and the curriculum. It also represented a decisive shift from volunteerism and "public service" to service-learning within both Campus Compact and the burgeoning civic engagement movement.

The Rise of Service-Learning: Operationalizing Engagement in the Curriculum, 1990-1997

A number of efforts aimed at demonstrating the efficacy of service-learning and its academic rigor occurred in the late 1980s into the 1990s. In May of 1989, a Wingspread meeting brought together a group of experienced scholars and practitioners to develop a set of principles for service-learning. These principles were captured by Ellen Porter Honnet and Susan J. Poulson (1989) and published as the highly influential "Principles of Good Practice for

Combining Service and Learning.” The principles argued that service-learning was a highly effective and legitimate teaching strategy; it allowed students to grasp the complexity of real-world problems and to develop skills in collective problem solving; it deemphasized personal charitable acts (community service) and helped students understand the root causes of social problems; and it ought to be conducted in a spirit of reciprocal partnership with the community.

It is worth noting that the authors also underscored the civic purposes of the pedagogy. The statement’s preamble claims, “We are a nation founded on active citizenship and participation in community life. We have always believed that individuals can and should serve.” Within a few years, however, this expressly civic emphasis would be challenged.

In 1990, Jane Kendell published a three-volume set entitled *Combining Service and Learning*. It proved to be one of the most important early resources for the growing number of faculty members constructing service-learning courses. The volumes offered practical advice as well as readings that raised important questions about community involvement.

That same year, Ernest Boyer (1990) contributed to a growing civic discourse in the academy through *Scholarship Reconsidered*, offering a broadened conception of faculty work. Boyer recognized the value of the “scholarship of discovery”—traditional forms of research that produce disciplinary peer-reviewed articles. However, he saw its dominance as highly problematic. “Beyond the campus, America’s social and economic crises are growing—troubled schools, budget deficits, pollution, urban decay, and neglected children.... Can we define scholarship in ways that respond more adequately to the urgent new realities both within the academy and beyond?” (p. 3). Before long, Boyer argued, “what is needed [for higher education] is not just more programs, but a larger purpose, a larger sense of mission, a larger clarity of direction in the nation’s life” (Boyer, 1996 p. 20). By 1996, Boyer (1996; Saltmarsh,

2011) would shift his thinking about the application of academic knowledge to “the scholarship of engagement,” a more complex view of the dynamic two-way relationship between campuses and communities for public problem solving. He advocated recognizing and rewarding the application of scholarly expertise “to pressing civic, social, economic, and moral problems” (1996, p. 14). The American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) took up Boyer’s message and launched an annual Forum on Faculty Roles and Rewards in 1991, convening administrators and faculty members from hundreds of colleges in order to re-conceptualize the work of the professoriate. A number of the state-based Campus Compacts also launched initiatives throughout the 1990s aimed at promoting service-learning and encouraging community-based research. Many institutions sought to advance institutional change efforts around Boyer’s ideas (O’Meara and Rice, 2005).⁶

In 1991, Campus Compact’s director, Susan Stroud, secured a major Ford Foundation grant to promote service-learning through its Integrating Service with Academic Study (ISAS) initiative. ISAS funded 130 service-learning workshops nationwide. It also generated a renewed sense of purpose for Campus Compact’s leadership. ISAS’s director, Sandra Enos, recalled, “I almost felt like one of the apostles taking this gospel out and trying to convert [people].” By 1996, ISAS had worked extensively with over 160 campuses through its summer institutes and other programs (Liu, 1996).

Service-learning’s fortunes rose dramatically in 1993 when President Clinton established the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). The Learn and Serve America Higher Education (LASHE) program within CNCS became a major funding source for service-

⁶ A survey of 729 chief academic officers (CAOs) conducted by O’Meara and Rice (2005) found that two-thirds (68%) indicated that their institution had engaged in efforts to encourage and reward a broader definition of scholarship, and a third of that group (32%) said that the ideas in Boyer’s *Scholarship Reconsidered* were a “major influence” in the decision to do so.

learning initiatives, which the Corporation actively sought to promote. A 1999 RAND report⁷ indicated that LASHE had awarded \$100 Million to approximately 100 institutions of higher learning from 1995 to 1997 and had emphasized sub-granting to over 500 campuses (Gray et al., 1999). Additional federal funding came from the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of University Partnerships. From 1994 to 2002 this office ran a program called Community Outreach Partnerships Centers (COPC) that aimed "to create enduring partnerships between academic institutions and communities in order to build capacity for more effective responses to the needs and problems of distressed neighborhoods and to enhance the research and teaching capacity of participating colleges and universities" (Vidal et al., 2002, p. 4). The COPC program invested approximately \$45 million in more than 100 colleges, universities, and community colleges to support community engagement. (Vidal et al., p. i)

This funding, along with significant philanthropic support, fueled the growth of a distinguishing feature of this period: the creation of campus infrastructure to support the institutionalization of service-learning. While there were a handful of offices, centers, and institutes on campuses by the late 1980s, hundreds existed by the late 1990s. Nearly every campus that was advancing service-learning as a curricular strategy had supporting infrastructure to assist faculty in course revision, pedagogical preparation, and in partnering with local communities. If campuses were going to institutionalize service-learning, they would need what Walshok (1995) called "new kinds of institutional mechanisms" (p. 275) to do so. Over the course of the 1990s, the Campus Compact annual member survey showed a marked increase in the number of member campuses that had created infrastructure for supporting civic engagement. The survey also indicated a shift in reporting structure: in the early 1990s, offices or centers typically reported to student affairs; by the end of the decade, the trend was to report to academic

⁷ http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/2005/MR998.1.pdf

affairs, signifying the shift from community service to service-learning. By 1998, models of the structure, staffing, functions, and funding of service-learning on campuses of every institution type had been compiled in a widely read book, *Successful Service Learning Programs* (Zlotkowski, 1998).

The expansion of service-learning throughout the 1990s is in part reflected in the growth of Campus Compact. The organization had 202 members in 1989; within five years, its membership doubled to 520. Establishing state-based Campus Compacts drove this growth significantly. State Compacts fostered networks of geographically proximate institutions that could share ideas and resources and compete more effectively for federal funding. Campus Compact advocated the establishment of campus offices or centers dedicated to coordinating and supporting service-learning. This strategy brought to the surface the on-going debates about the nature of this work: Should it be led by student affairs or academic affairs? Should the work emphasize student development or academic learning? While some centers focused on broader work (for example, developing university-community partnerships), the vast majority were dedicated to promoting service-learning. By the end of the 1990s, service-learning had moved from being a strategy of the civic engagement movement to an end in itself. In addition, several academic journals were launched in the 1990s, providing an outlet for research on service-learning and community-based research, and elevating the national discourse about its place in the movement.⁸

As more faculty members began teaching service-learning courses, ideological differences began to emerge among its proponents. Early advocates tended to see service-

⁸ These included the *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* (University of Michigan, 1994); *Metropolitan Universities Journal*, (the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities, 1995); and the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* (originally the *Journal of Public Service and Outreach*, University of Georgia, 1996).

learning as a means of transforming students and the academy in the interests of promoting a just society.⁹ Later adopters often saw it as a practical and effective means for conveying disciplinary learning. Nowhere was this tension more evident than in a faculty-focused initiative called the Invisible College, founded by John Wallace, a philosophy professor at the University of Minnesota. Wallace envisioned that the group—comprising faculty and staff from across the country with significant experience in community-based teaching, learning, and research—would highlight and disseminate the most current and promising practices in the field. A significant ideological rift quickly emerged, though. As one participant noted:

It didn't take long to see that there were two very, very different visions of what the Invisible College should be. One vision was that this organization could provide the concrete resources that would legitimize faculty concerned with community-based work... [Then there was] a group that saw the Invisible College as almost like a confraternity of people who share a certain spiritual vision of higher education as a moral-ethical force.

One of the most thoughtful advocates of the former position was Edward Zlotkowi, who wrote in 1995:

Until very recently the service-learning movement has had an “ideological” bias; i.e., it has tended to prioritize moral and/or civic questions related to the service experience. Such a focus reflects well on the movement's past but will not guarantee its future. [...] Only by paying careful attention to the needs of individual disciplines and by allying

⁹Such debates continued into the next decade. As Denson observes: “There is not agreement within the service-learning field that social justice ought to be an intended outcome of service-learning participation” Denson, N., Vogelgesang, L.J. & Sanchez, V. (2005) Can Service Learning and a College Climate of Service Lead to Increased Political Engagement After College? *American Educational Research Association* (Montreal, Canada.)

itself with other academic interest groups will the service-learning movement succeed in becoming an established feature of American higher education. (p. 123)

The March 1997 issue of the *American Association for Higher Education Bulletin* announced a monograph series focused on service-learning and the disciplines funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies. Zlotkowski served as senior editor of the 21 volume series that described the uses of service-learning in a range of academic disciplines. Predominantly, the series illuminated disciplinary concepts, not the use of disciplinary expertise to address and alleviate problems facing communities or to advance civic and democratic competencies.

The leadership of Campus Compact recognized the disparate values and beliefs motivating members of the movement. In 1996, Enos composed a memorandum to the organization's leadership in which she quoted Everett Rogers (1995) on the diffusion of innovations. Enos wrote: "[W]e can generally suggest that the first wave [of service-learning adopters] is motivated by community concerns, sometimes tied to social and civic responsibility and social transformation, while the second wave is motivated by a strong perceived pedagogical value." Strategically, the increased emphasis on the pedagogical benefits of service-learning was (and has been) highly effective, as evidenced by Campus Compact's tremendous growth.

However, while adapting to prevalent academic norms broadened membership, the disciplinary-focused framing was problematic in other regards. By the end of the 1990s, one service-learning pioneer, Nadinne Cruz, a professor at Stanford University, was shocked to find herself having to defend social justice as a *possible* desired outcome of service-learning at an association meeting (Stanton et al., 1999). Many of the early pioneers who championed the transformation of higher education and were deeply committed to promoting social justice began to feel a sense of alienation within the movement. Increasingly, they saw service-learning being

promoted not as a strategy for transformation but as an end in itself—a better way to convey traditional disciplinary content. The movement had reached a crisis of purpose.

A Period of Growth and Dispersion, 1998-2004

With the proliferation of service-learning and the campus infrastructure to support it, hundreds of colleges and universities across the country were promoting community-based teaching, learning, and research by the end of the 1990s. At the same time, concerns about the civic disaffection of society became the focus of two national reports, *A Call to Civil Society* (Council on Civil Society, 1998) and *A Nation of Spectators* (National Commission on Civic Renewal, 1997). The message was clear: the most important crisis facing the nation was a crisis in its collective civic life. However, higher education was largely ignored in the documents' search for solutions. William Damon, a professor of education at Stanford University, responded to this "chorus of concern over the state of our 'civil society,'" in a *Chronicle of Higher Education* opinion piece (1998). He spoke for many who believed that higher education could play a key role, noting "the cursory nature of the authors' mention of higher education speaks volumes about their lack of faith in its ability to do much to redeem civil society" (1998, p. B-4). He pointed out that for students to "participate constructively in civil society" they needed not only "intellectual abilities" and "moral traits," but also "practical experience in community organizations, from which young people can learn how to work within groups, in structured settings" (p. B-5). The solution was for higher education to develop more service-learning programs that would "send students out to help disadvantaged members of their communities or otherwise contribute to the public good," letting students "pursue both academic and social goals" (p. B-5). Damon also highlighted that service-learning needed to be more than an

academic exercise or a means for conveying disciplinary truths; it was a potentially powerful way for higher education to be relevant to the national crisis of civic renewal. To do so, service-learning would have to become part of a broader commitment of civic engagement in higher education requiring significant change in institutional culture and commitment. Damon's response conveyed a widespread sense of urgency and need for action.

That sense of urgency was captured in the first of a series of statements issued as national calls to action. The 1999 *Wingspread Declaration on Renewing the Civic Mission of the American Research University*, crafted at a Campus Compact meeting, focused on "efforts to better prepare people for active citizenship in a diverse democracy, to develop knowledge for the improvement of communities and society, and to think about and act upon the public dimensions of our educational work" (p. 7). Declaring that "now is the time to boldly claim the authority and ability to focus our energy on the civic purposes of higher education," the *Wingspread Declaration* was directed strategically at research universities as the most powerful and influential higher education institutions. It framed these institutions as "agents of the democracy" that would prepare "a next generation of involved citizens ... to do the work of citizenship" (p. 8). A broader civic imperative was at the center of the case for engagement. It argues that the "the challenges facing higher education go beyond the need to add more service-learning experiences or to reward faculty for community-oriented research ... [T]he more fundamental task is to renew our great mission as the agents of democracy" (p. 9). The *Wingspread Declaration* called for a national "movement that reinvigorates the public purposes and civic mission of our great research universities and higher education broadly" (p. 14).

A second widely circulated call to action was *Returning to Our Roots: The Engaged Institution* (1999), developed by the Kellogg Commission on the Future of State and Land-Grant

Universities, a group of 24 land-grant presidents as well as foundation and corporate representatives. The report drew on a rich history of cooperative extension and outreach and argued for a need to move beyond “inherited concepts emphasiz[ing] a one-way process in which the university transfers its expertise to key constituents” to embrace “engagement” that would go “well beyond extension, conventional outreach, and even most conceptions of public service” (p. 27). The document defined “the engaged institution” as one that “redesigned [its] teaching, research, and extension and service functions to become even more sympathetic and productively involved with their communities, however community may be defined” (p. 9). This conceptualization of “engagement” diverged sharply from that of the *Wingspread Declaration*. This was no call for a revival of “active citizenship” or for faculty and administrators to become engaged in public work. With the important exception of an emphasis on reciprocal community partnerships, the “engaged university” looked surprisingly like the traditional university (a fact underscored in the very title of the report).

There are two points of tension embedded in these reports that had broad implications. One was whether civic engagement had core democratic implications for political involvement as well as policy-change implications, and the other was whether campuses could truly be engaged without a commitment to organizational and cultural change. Apolitical engagement that enabled campuses to maintain the status quo was an idea that could be widely embraced, but in the process, civic engagement risked losing its transformative potential.

Perhaps the most cogent call to action came from a group of college and university presidents associated with Campus Compact who issued a *Presidents' Declaration on the Civic Responsibility of Higher Education* in 2000. Rather than promote the continued development and institutionalization of service-learning (as Campus Compact had done throughout the

1990s),¹⁰ this document challenged higher education institutions “to become engaged, through actions and teaching, with [their] communities” and renew their role “as vital agents and architects of a flourishing democracy.” The *Presidents’ Declaration* offered a “vision of institutional public engagement” that would serve as the foundation for “a national movement to reinvigorate the public purposes and civic mission of higher education.”

The work of Campus Compact mirrored a wider shift away from a focus on service-learning as the driving force of the movement, to a broader focus on the “engaged campus,” of which service-learning would be a part—an issue that had been simmering for years. Before Boyer articulated “the scholarship of engagement” as an institutional commitment in 1996, Russell Edgerton (1994), the president of the AAHE, had issued a call for their national conference around the theme of “The Engaged Campus: Organizing to Serve Society’s Needs.” Edgerton noted that “a useful starting point for thinking about ‘The Engaged Campus’ is to realize that all of the critical tasks we do—teaching, research, and professional outreach—need to change if we are truly to connect with the needs of the larger community”(p. 4). By the end of the 1990s, Campus Compact had embraced this vision of the engaged campus and conceptualized its work as a “pyramid of civic engagement” that required attention to the whole campus and to multiple constituencies, from students to faculty and staff, community partners, administrative leadership, and presidents. This agenda was one that called for fundamental change (Edgerton, 1994).

Part of the change that gained new legitimacy focused on faculty research grounded in participatory approaches that included collaborations with community partners. There was a growing interest in community-based participatory research (CBPR) (Strand et. al., 2003), which gained academic currency as a valid and rigorous means of inquiry, while attempting to produce

¹⁰ Notably, the term service-learning was not mentioned once in this report.

social change (Herr & Anderson, 2005). CBPR as an approach to research, and service-learning as a form of teaching and learning raised issues related to faculty reward policies and whether faculty would be recognized for such activities as part of their core faculty roles. Since *Scholarship Reconsidered* (Boyer, 1990), discussions had occurred about what activities constitute scholarship, and how institutional policies might be changed. Schön (1995) had observed that new forms of scholarship meant that “the rules that govern what counts both as legitimate knowledge and as appropriately rigorous research” (p. 34) would need to be reconsidered. Glassick, Huber, and Maeroff (1997) argued, “documentation must be open to a more eclectic array of materials in order to treat newer forms of scholarship fairly. ...including more genres of published and unpublished work ... It is important to recognize that appropriate and credible reviewers may be found not only among fellow specialist and current students but also among former students, clients, non-academic authorities, and practitioners in the field” (p. 38). Faculty rewards also needed to be reconsidered. O’Meara and Rice (2005), in their national study of provosts, noted the importance of revising guidelines that rewarded community engagement. In sum, for civic engagement to be institutionalized within an engaged campus, the work would need to be recognized with the system of faculty rewards.

By the late 1990s, service-learning had entered the mainstream, with a critical mass of faculty adopting the pedagogy. Landmark research demonstrated service-learning’s efficacy as a teaching and learning strategy, which in turn supported its growth and expansion. In 1999, Eyler and Giles published *Where’s the Learning in Service Learning*, the results of a national study funded by the Federal Department of Education’s Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), providing empirical evidence for an array of positive student-development outcomes attributable to service-learning. Similarly, Astin and colleagues at the Higher

Education Research Institute published “How Service Learning Affects Students,” the results of a national study based on longitudinal data from 22,236 college undergraduates (2000). Their study affirmed the educational and personal growth benefits of service-learning including, an increased sense of personal efficacy, awareness of the world, awareness of one’s personal values, and engagement in the classroom experience. (Astin et.al., 2000).

In addition, the results of the first National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) made clear that if campuses wanted students to be engaged in learning, then service-learning programs represented an effective way to increase engagement (2002). NSSE findings indicated great benefits when “complementary learning opportunities inside and outside the classroom augment the academic program,” and as such, “service-learning provides students with opportunities to synthesize, integrate, and apply their knowledge” (p. 11). The NSSE impacted the civic engagement movement in two ways. First, it further confirmed the benefits of service-learning for student learning. Second, it muddied the engagement discourse because in the NSSE formulation, engagement meant engagement in learning, not necessarily engagement with communities as part of learning. During the early 2000s, engagement language became more widespread, but it did not always mean engagement with local communities. At the same time, the “civic” in civic engagement, aligned with the framing in *Returning to Our Roots*, was applied to nearly every interest or activity under the auspices of the campus that had a wider public purpose.

The early years of the new century were marked by both heightened urgency for greater civic engagement and a tendency toward rhetorical claims rather than substantive commitments. The sense of urgency was reignited with the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Edward Zlotkowski articulated this most cogently in the keynote address at the 2002 AAHE Forum on

Faculty Roles and Rewards. Zlotkowski, a revered figure in the service-learning world, addressed what he called “the academic challenge of September 11, 2001.” He asked,

[How] do we know seize the moment? How do we act on the recognition that the “assumptive world of the academic professional” is no longer capable of meeting the challenges facing American higher education in the twenty-first century? How do we proceed to build something that allows us not only to bring over all that is still vital in the traditional academy but also to reconstitute it in a way that leads to genuine renewal”(Zlotkowski, 2002, p. 22)

Zlotkowski put the need for civic engagement in a broader context. The urgency was not unique to the horrific events of 9/11, but relevant to “the everyday conditions of social injustice and economic need to which we as a nation have almost become inured” (p. 27). The attacks of 9/11 and the response to them brought renewed energy and commitment to those in the academy who sensed that higher education needed to embrace its democratic purpose now more than ever. For example, over 300 academics made their way to Berkeley despite trepidations about travel in the fall of 2001 for the first conference of the International Association for Research on Service Learning and Community Engagement (IARSLC). The 2002 AAHE Forum was the association’s largest conference. For those in the movement, this was a critical moment. However, despite Zlotkowski’s plea to seize the moment, the academy reacted to 9/11 with what can only be called a stunning silence. Absent was an increase in campus dialogues about U.S. foreign policy, and there was precious little discussion or debate about the war in Iraq.

The rhetorical claims of civic engagement and the lack of a clear definition raised concerns as the term invaded the discourse on campuses (AASCU, 2002). According to the American Association of State College and Universities (AASCU), the overuse of the term, “can

leave some campuses and their leaders with the impression that they are ‘doing engagement,’ when in fact they are not” (p. 8). The lack of clarity also dulled the edge of change, and there was a tendency to claim a commitment to civic engagement without doing anything differently. This was also a time of emerging national projects that sought to bring clarity and substance to the civic engagement movement. Imagining America, a national organization that advances public engagement in the arts, humanities, and design disciplines, emerged from a 1999 White House conference. As noted above, the first annual conference of IARSLC was held in 2001. In 2003, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching launched the Political Engagement Project, and AASCU launched the American Democracy Project (ADP).

With these new projects, the period came to an end with increased activity and great expansion but also a need for clearer focus and purpose, and a new commitment to organizational and cultural change. Movement leaders issued the report, *Calling the Question: Is Higher Education Ready to Commit to Community Engagement?* (Brukardt, 2004) raising their concern that despite all the calls to action of the preceding decade, and regardless of the proliferation of service-learning and campus structures to support it, “engagement has not become the defining characteristic of higher education’s mission nor has it been embraced across disciplines, departments and institutions” (p. ii). For that to happen, there needed to be greater clarity of purpose: “This kind of commitment can only come from a clear understanding of what the truly engaged institution is—and is not” (p. 6). Moreover, it would have to be clear that a commitment to civic engagement would mean “nothing less than the transformation of our nation's colleges and universities” (p. ii). The leaders argued that committing to civic engagement “is an imperative” (p. 18):

If higher education is to serve our students with deep learning, our faculty and staff with opportunities for integrated scholarship, and our communities with our creative and intellectual resources, it will require broad support in making possible the kinds of institutional transformation that only engagement can provide ... Engagement is higher education's larger purpose. (p. 18)

Civic Engagement and Higher Education's Future, 2004-2012

The effort at providing greater clarity and the need to address critical issues around advancing civic engagement resulted in a number of national convenings and subsequent reports. New efforts to address the outcomes of civic engagement emerged during this period amidst increased pressures for greater accountability in higher education. The emphasis on civic engagement outcomes measures was the result of more than a decade of growing assessment trends in higher education. By the mid part of the first decade of the 2000s, there was an explosion in the literature on civic engagement. Books, articles, and the emergence of new journals proliferated, covering service-learning, community partnerships, faculty rewards, institutionalization, research methods, leadership, and every dimension of civic engagement theory and practice.¹¹ Part of this expansion reflected the widening practice of civic engagement, and part of it was due to the increasing importance of globalization and of civic engagement as a major international trend in higher education. 2005 marked the first international Talloires Conference and the release of the *Declaration on the Civic Roles and Social Responsibilities of Higher Education*, signed during the conference of university presidents at the Tufts University European Center in Talloires, France. University presidents who signed the *Declaration* dedicated themselves to “strengthening the civic role and social responsibility of our

¹¹ Included among these were: *Advances in Service-Learning Research*, *Community-Engaged Scholarship for Health*, the *Journal of Community Engagement and Higher Education*, *Partnerships: A Journal of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement*, *Reflections: A Journal of Writing*, *Service-Learning and Community Literacy*.

institutions,” pledging to “promote shared values and universal human values, and engagement by our institutions with our communities and with our global neighbors” as “central to the success of a democratic and just society.”

The International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility, and Democracy (IC) held its first conference in 2008. IC seeks to advance the contributions of higher education to democracy both on college and university campuses and in their local communities. It is a collaboration between the Council of Europe (CoE) and its Steering Committee on Educational Policy and Practice (CDPPE), with representatives of the 50 States party to the European Cultural Convention, and consists of representatives from the United States (the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the American Council on Education, the Association of American Colleges and Universities, Campus Compact, the Democracy Commitment, and National Association of Student Personnel Administrators), Australia (Engagement Australia), and the United Kingdom (represented by the National Coordinating Centre for Public Engagement). The Barbara and Edward Netter Center for Community Partnerships at the University of Pennsylvania houses the executive offices of the consortium. Ira Harkavy, associate vice president and founding director of the Netter Center, is the U.S. chair. The consortium has sponsored three major conferences in Strasbourg, France (2008), Oslo, Norway (2011), and Belfast, Northern Ireland (2015), and has published edited volumes from the ideas generated from these gatherings.¹²

In 2009, a national task force coordinated by the University of Pennsylvania and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) sought to advance the idea of universities and medical centers as “anchor institutions” that could help stabilize troubled urban areas. The mission of the Anchor Institutions Task Force (AITF) is to forge democratic civic

¹² <http://www.internationalconsortium.org>

partnerships involving anchor institutions (Report, date),¹³ and has grown into an organization with over 600 individual members, explicitly emphasizing its core values of collaboration and partnership, equity and social justice, democracy and democratic practice, and commitment to place and community (Brophy & Godsil, 2009). The notion of anchor institutions has garnered considerable attention abroad and is expanding the work of AITF beyond the U.S.

One expression of increased attention to accountability was aimed at measuring how colleges and universities were impacting their local communities. This question was raised in AASCU's *Stewards of Place*, a report that sought a way for public institutions to demonstrate public accountability through engagement efforts. Additionally, a group of campuses formed an "anchor institutions task force" in 2009, and a coalition of campuses affiliated with the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU) developed a focus on "urban-serving universities," seeking to collect and analyze "data across a network of public urban research institutions to create a reliable, factual foundation for the universities' work in cities."

Accountability was also expressed through increased attention to student learning outcomes, in particular, civic learning outcomes. This was an important shift away from a focus on pedagogical inputs by faculty, such as service-learning, to student learning outcomes. AAC&U, in partnership with the Lumina Foundation and others, developed an agenda for articulating and assessing student civic learning outcomes as essential to determining how higher education contributed to civic engagement. As part of the "valid assessment of undergraduate education" project, AAC&U developed a "civic engagement rubric" that could be adapted across courses and disciplines to assess student civic learning. By 2011, the Lumina Foundation (2011) released a "degree qualifications profile" outlining the kind of learning that should be an

¹³ Soon after the Task Force completed its report, *Anchor Institutions as Partners in Building Successful Communities and Local Economies*, it became a formal organization.

outcome of any college degree. One of the five learning categories it identified was “civic learning,” that requires “the integration of knowledge and skills acquired in both the broad curriculum and in the student’s specialized field,” and “civic preparation [that] also requires engagement—that is, practice in applying those skills to representative questions and problems in the wider society” (p. 9).

In 2005, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching piloted a new elective “classification for community engagement.” The Foundation, under the leadership of its president, Lee Schulman, sought to create a “special-purpose classification” that would “open the possibility for involving only those institutions with special commitments in the area of community engagement” (p. 56). The classification’s framework focused on three major areas: foundational indicators such as institutional commitment and institutional identity and culture; curricular engagement; and, outreach and partnerships. Amy Driscoll guided the development of the framework and drew from earlier institutionalization rubrics for service-learning and civic engagement (Furco, 1999; Holland, 2000; Hollander, Saltmarsh, & Zlotkowski, 2001; Kesckes, 1997) as well as the input of leading scholars. Driscoll worked with representatives from thirteen campuses to pilot the framework. The discussions of this pilot group reflected the tensions around the type and amount of emphasis that should be placed on the “civic” in civic engagement. Some felt that the framework ought to capture work aimed at fostering citizenship and advancing democracy, while others felt that such an approach would alienate potential participants, advocating instead for a focus solely on community partnerships. The name of the classification was a compromise that emphasized “the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and

reciprocity” (<http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/>). The classification was seen by some as emblematic of a much broader “counterbalancing” shift in higher education. Gary Rhoades (2009), general secretary of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), wrote that “if the effect of Carnegie’s efforts (and those of Dupont Circle and AAUP) in the first three quarters of the 20th century was to inscribe in academic structures and in the consciousness of faculty a national [and cosmopolitan] orientation, those organizations are increasingly emphasizing the value of the local” (p. 12).

This was also a time when student voice and leadership took on heightened importance in the movement. The understanding that learning takes place most effectively in situations that draw on student experiences and assets brought to the forefront the role of students in deepening campus civic engagement through the curriculum and in the community. The 2001 Wingspread meeting of students organized by Campus Compact fueled greater attention to student leadership in the movement. This meeting led to the student-authored *The New Student Politics* (Long, 2002), in which students refuted the characterization of their community service as an alternative to politics and a form of political disengagement. Instead, they made the case for service as an alternative form of politics and claimed a role for their leadership in the movement. Campus Compact responded with the “Raise Your Voice” campaign, coordinated by Nick Longo and involving more than 270,000 students on over 500 campuses between 2002 and 2005. A study of student leadership for civic engagement, particularly academic engagement, resulted in the book *Students as Colleagues* (2006), a compilation of campus case studies co-edited by Longo, Zlotkowski, and James Williams, finding that “the movement has now reached a point where it needs resources that students alone can supply” (p. 3). Promoting student voice and leadership

reflected a deeper sophistication in the movement for collaboration that extended into communities and the classroom.

All of these efforts pointed to a key issue of cultural change within the university: the need to revise faculty reward policies in order to fairly and appropriately recognize and validate engaged faculty work. The National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good convened in 2005 and issued *Taking Responsibility: A Call for Higher Education's Engagement in a Society of Complex Global Challenges* (2006). Achieving the organizational change needed for establishing an engaged campus would require higher education institutions to reexamine their purposes, processes, and products to assess whether and to what extent they aligned with the democratic and civic mission on which they were established. Changing the culture would require campuses to “identify, recognize, and support engaged scholarship” and “bring graduate education into alignment with the civic mission” (Pasque et. al., 2006, p. 5).

This emphasis on cultural change was echoed at another 2005 national meeting and in the attendant 2006 report *New Times Demand New Scholarship: Research Universities and Civic Engagement*, which focused more specifically on the research university and the preeminence of faculty research in its reward structure. In order to fulfill and advance their civic mission, the report claimed, “research universities must entertain and adopt new forms of scholarship—those that link the intellectual assets of higher education institutions to solving public problems and issues” (p. 5). As with the report from the National Forum, *New Times Demand New Scholarship* stressed that campuses would need to “support and reward faculty members’ professional service, public work, and/or community-based action research or ‘public scholarship,’” which meant specifically that policies would need to “ensure that engaged scholarship is valued in

tenure and promotion decisions, grant awards, and public recognition, regardless of discipline” (p. 6).

Imagining America went further than others in creating a “Tenure Team Initiative” to tackle the issue of faculty rewards and institutional change. In 2008, the organization issued the widely read report *Scholarship in Public: Knowledge Creation and Tenure Policy in the Engaged University*. Written by Julie Ellison and Tim Eatman, the report noted the disjuncture between the fact that while “publically engaged academic work is taking hold in American colleges and universities,” tenure and promotion policies “[lag] behind public scholarly and creative work and discourage faculty from doing it” (p. iv). The authors recognized that to advance the movement, reward policies would need to change. The report boldly took on the issues of broadening notions of what counts as a publication and who is considered a peer in peer review—core elements of academic culture. The report called for recognition of a range of “scholarly artifacts” (p. 12) beyond the narrow scholarly product of a journal article. It addressed the need to “broaden the community of peer review” (p. v) to include community-based partners with academic credentials as individuals with specialized community knowledge and expertise, and noted the importance of changing the campus culture to provide “support for graduate students ...who choose academic public engagement” (p. xiv). *Scholarship in Public* put faculty rewards and cultural change at the top of an agenda for advancing the civic engagement movement.

Similarly, attention to cultural change and the democratic purposes of engagement were at the center of a meeting organized by the Kettering Foundation and the New England Resource Center for Higher Education in 2008 that resulted in the widely read “Democratic Engagement White Paper” (Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton, 2009). In its analysis, the “White Paper”

(Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton, 2009) accomplished two objectives. First, it made the distinction “between civic engagement as it is widely manifested in higher education” (p. 7) and what it called “democratic engagement.” Engagement in a “democratic-centered framework” had “an explicit and intentional democratic dimension framed as inclusive, collaborative, and problem-oriented work in which academics share knowledge generating tasks with the public and involve community partners as participants in public problem-solving” (p. 9). Second, the “White Paper” linked engagement practices to significant cultural and organizational change on campus. Democratic engagement could not happen in higher education institutions as they were; it required fundamental and transformative change. The “White Paper” recognized that “the dominant form of civic engagement that has emerged in higher education is largely devoid of both long-term democracy-building values and higher education’s contribution to the public culture of democracy,” and it offered “an alternative framework” —“democratic engagement”— that could “contribute to the reshaping of higher education to better meet its academic and civic missions in the 21st century” (p. 13).

This notion of advancing democracy was evident when, in 2011, the American Democracy Project (ADP) helped to catalyze a community college equivalent, The Democracy Commitment (TDC), to advance democratic engagement in community colleges. The Democracy Commitment issued a “Declaration” shaped by a political atmosphere of “bitter partisanship,” a lack of “collaborative solutions,” “widening divisions between Americans because of race, economic circumstance and geography,” and “alienation from politics and from the democratic process [that was] dangerous for the nation” (TDC, 2011). The declaration highlighted that nearly half of all undergraduates were in community colleges, that their students went on to earn four-year degrees, that they affordably educated a highly diverse population of

students—much more diverse than their four-year counterparts—and that they were institutions embedded in their communities. The “Declaration” was in part a response, amidst a prolonged recession, to the increasing pressures for higher education, particularly community colleges, to focus on workforce development for economic recovery. While acknowledging this role, the “Declaration” made clear that “American community colleges do more, however, than educate for the job market or for transfer to university”; they have “a critical role to play in preparing our students for their roles as citizens and engaged members of their communities.” The creation of The Democracy Commitment was intended to “provide a national platform for the development and expansion of programs and projects aimed at engaging community college students in civic learning and democratic practice,” with the goal “that every graduate of an American community college shall have had an education in democracy” (TDC, 2011).

This period in the history of the civic engagement movement closed and then set the stage for the future with a “national call to action” issued by one of the most powerful and influential higher education associations, the AAC&U, and the U.S. Department of Education (DOE). In January of 2012, at a meeting at the White House, the report, *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy’s Future*, was released through AAC&U by the National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement. *A Crucible Moment* echoed every previous report during this period and responded to *Calling the Question* with a call to action to do what?. It both captured the essential momentum of the movement and laid out an agenda for its future. Amidst the devastation of the economic recession and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, *A Crucible Moment* declared that American democracy was in crisis and that higher education had to claim its role in educating for “civic learning and democratic engagement” (p. vii).

The focus on “civic learning” and “democratic engagement” was intentional, emphasizing “the civic significance of preparing students with knowledge and for action” (p. 3). It emphasized that “community service is not necessarily the same as democratic engagement” (p. 5) and that knowledge of “civics” in the traditional sense was “essential, but no longer sufficient” (p. 3). Student engagement in communities was needed because “full civic literacies cannot be garnered only by studying books; democratic knowledge and capabilities also are honed through hands-on, face-to-face, active engagement” (p. 3). The report also responded to the pressures being applied to higher education by the economic recession by claiming that “it is time to bring two national priorities—career preparation and increased access and completion rates—together in a more comprehensive vision with a third national priority: fostering informed, engaged, and responsible citizens” (p. 13). *A Crucible Moment* laid out an ambitious and bold change agenda “to reinvent and reinvigorate higher education, our economy, and our democracy ... transformations necessary for this generation”(p. 17).

The Future of the Movement

One way to understand the future of the civic engagement movement is to be attentive to how the next generation of engaged scholars are impacting civic engagement. Those scholars who are now shaping the community engagement movement in higher education have a professional identity and career path that has framed a unique generational narrative. For an earlier generation of academics who found their way to community engagement in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the narrative that resonated strongly was that framed by Parker Palmer in his 1992 essay “Divided No More.” The narrative told of mid-career faculty who reached a disconcerting realization that the way they practiced their profession was deeply and painfully separated from the values that had brought them into their academic work earlier in their careers.

They had reached a crisis in their lives requiring a profound inner healing, a healing that was brought about by connecting their professional practice to their intensely held values, so they would be divided no more. For faculty who had begun their careers in the academy with the ideals of educating for social justice and the belief in the transformative potential of education, now, post-tenure and well into their established careers, they experienced deep angst, rediscovered their formative values, and put those values into practice through community-engaged teaching, learning, and scholarship. This was a powerful narrative explaining the personal and professional experience of a generation.

Next generation engagement scholars offer a very different generational narrative. They do not discover engagement post-tenure; the groundwork for engagement was laid in high school and as undergraduates, and had begun shaping their identities as scholars during their graduate studies. They entered into their faculty careers with an expectation that they would be able to be engaged scholars—that they would be able to do engaged scholarly work in all aspects of their faculty role. They expected that the institution would provide the intellectual space and support to allow them to thrive as engaged scholars. They did not enter faculty careers resigned to delayed fulfillment of their ideals through accommodation to traditional norms only to be able to thrive later in their post-tenure careers. They would not have to heal the divisions in their inner life because they would resist the disciplinary and institutional cultures that fostered such division. They laid claim to lives as engaged scholars as they shaped their professional, personal, and civic identities while seeking academic homes that created space for them to deepen their work around civic engagement, public scholarship, and campus-community partnerships (Saltmarsh, Ward, & Clayton, 2011). It is this next generation of engaged scholars that will shape the next period of the civic engagement movement.

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