REPORT ON THE FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE CARNEGIE TASK FORCE

MAY 2014

On September 19, 2012, the Office of the Deputy Provost established a task force to investigate the feasibility of applying for the Community Engagement Classification through the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and to lead efforts to prepare such an application if it was deemed to be in the best interest of the University. After considerable fact finding and discussion, the Carnegie Task Force, as it became known, concluded that the University would be able to submit a competitive application, and that seeking this classification would be very beneficial. With support from the Provost's Office, the task force then began to work on application preparation, which culminated in the submittal of a completed application on April 14, 2014. Notification from the Carnegie Foundation about whether or not the University will be awarded this classification is not expected until January 2015.

This report summarizes the work and findings of the University of Delaware's Carnegie Task Force. Throughout the almost two-year process of investigating and preparing the University's application to the Carnegie Foundation, the members of the Carnegie Task Force learned a great deal. The most important finding is that the task force's initial hunch was correct — that there is a tremendous amount of activity throughout the University that meets the Carnegie Foundation's definition of community engagement, which is:

> *"…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."*

In addition, the Carnegie Foundation states that:

> *"The purpose of community engagement is the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good."*

SUMMARY OF THE APPLICATION

The online application was divided into three major sections: "Foundational Indicators," "Curricular Engagement," and "Outreach and Partnerships."

The **Foundational Indicators Section** was designed to determine whether or not community engagement has been institutionalized. In this section, the task force identified over 375 examples of community engagement that occur at the local, regional, national and international levels with over 300 unique partners. Fiscal commitments to community engagement were noted in this section as well: In fiscal year 2013, almost $31 million of the University's Operating Budget was dedicated to extension and public service; over $33 million of the University's externally sponsored activities were dedicated to public service; and the Development Office raised $3 million to support community engagement programming.

During fall 2013, the task force designed and fielded the first-ever *UD Community Engagement Survey* to all faculty and staff. With an aggregate response rate of approximately 25 percent, this survey revealed that 58 percent of the responding faculty and staff said they had provided some kind of direct support to a community program, 24 percent reported they were a member of a nonprofit board of directors, 12 percent had served on a government commission, committee or task force, and 12 percent had conducted a public service project. In addition, 27 percent said they had provided expert advice, testimony or professional services to a public, nonprofit or voluntary organization, and 3 percent had sought elective political office.

During its investigations, the task force also learned that 69 percent of departments and schools have departmental level policies for promotion and tenure that specifically reward faculty scholarly work that uses community-engaged approaches and methods.

The second section of the application, **Curricular Engagement**, was designed to ascertain the teaching, learning and scholarship that engage faculty, students and the community in mutually beneficial and respectful collaborations. Here, the task force reported that 43 percent of departments offer at least one service learning course and that 96 faculty taught these courses during the 2012–2013 academic year. This resulted in a total of 3,721 students participating in service learning courses during this period. In addition to traditional service learning courses, the Carnegie Task Force discovered and reported that engagement activities are infused throughout the University's many curricula through student involvement in research projects, co-curricular leadership programs, internships and study abroad opportunities. The task force also provided the Carnegie Foundation with examples of leading faculty scholarship at UD that has engaged students and community partners in problem-solving and that has been recognized through such honors as publication in peer-reviewed research journals to national awards.

The **Outreach and Partnerships** section, the third and last section of the Carnegie application, prompted the task force to describe two different but related approaches to community engagement. The first focused on the provision of institutional resources for community use, and the second focused on collaborative interactions with the community related to scholarship and service activities for the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration and application of knowledge, information and resources. Here, the task force described how community engagement at the University is enhanced through student organizations as well as cultural and athletic programs and events. As required by the application, we were readily able to provide 15 examples of University/community partnerships that meet Carnegie's definition of what constitutes true and sustained community engagement.

OUTCOMES AND CHALLENGES

Overall, the task force found that the process of preparing the Carnegie application was a very worthwhile learning experience. Some information about the University's engagement activities was collected for the first time, while other information existed, but needed to be assembled and aggregated. Clearly, the University is robustly engaged with communities at the local, regional, national and global levels. It is also clear that this engagement happens within a broad spectrum of different departments, centers and programs, and in a very decentralized way.

The work of the task force also helped to raise the profile of community engagement on campus through the fielding of the *UD Community Engagement Survey,* articles in *UDaily,* and through a lunchtime speaker series during the spring 2014 semester entitled *People, Projects and Partners* hosted in cooperation with the DuPont Interdisciplinary Science Learning Laboratories. Also, the Office of Service Learning used the occasion of the Carnegie application process to bring together, for the first time, 18 science and engineering faculty engaged in community projects.

After its many months of work, the Carnegie Task Force believes that the University faces two major challenges going forward. The first is the development of a process for the regular, systematic and standardized collection of information on community engagement activities. The second is to find ways of coordinating, where and when appropriate, the disparate community engagement activities that are happening across the institution. These would not only enhance what is already a strong commitment to community engagement, but would be very valuable for producing reports to donors, foundations and the community about the level and nature of the University's community engagement activities.

A response to these challenges would include:
- Annual collection and interpretation of community engagement data from faculty, staff, students and community partners
- Assisting faculty with the development, implementation, and analysis of community impact and student learning
- Promoting faculty development through workshops and seminars and the development of an ACE Fellows Program (Academic Community Engagement Fellows)
- Reviewing University, College and Departmental faculty promotion and tenure documents in terms of recognition and support for community engagement scholarship
- Developing an annual recognition program for faculty, staff, students
- Serving as a resource for the University's Strategic Planning Committee
- Updating the UD Engage website, which has provided a place for showcasing many UD examples of community engagement. This website also will serve as a virtual space for the new Community Engagement Commission (recommended below) and the campus, community interaction and resources.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATION

As the University of Delaware's Carnegie Task Force looks to the future, we recommend building upon the knowledge gained through the creation of a Community Engagement Commission which would, over the next six months, study models and best practices in order to recommend a structure best suited for sustaining and expanding the work of community engagement at UD.

Membership in this Community Engagement Commission should include faculty and staff from Cooperative Extension, the School of Public Policy and Administration and the Office of Service Learning, representatives from community partnership projects, and student(s) active in community engagement. It might also include a faculty and/or staff representative from the Institute for Global Studies, Student Life, Office of Communications and Marketing, Institutional Research, and Development, as well as other units.

We greatly appreciate the support the Office of the Deputy Provost has provided to the task force, which has enabled us to reach this point in the process.

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