As We Make Our Road by Walking

Perspectives on Community-Based Research, Practice and Learning

UB

The Urban Design Project
School of Architecture and Planning
University at Buffalo
Contents

Foreword
William R. Greiner
Mary H. Gresham

Preface
Acknowledgments

page 1 On Practice in the Academy
Robert G. Shibley with Gloria J. Brennan

page 3 Perspectives: Faculty Workshop on the University Community Initiative

page 5 Service Learning as a Vehicle for Revitalization of Educational Institutions and Urban Communities
Ira Harkavy

page 15 Perspectives: The Current Status and Future Potential of Service Learning at UB

page 19 Community-Based Research, Practice and Learning at the University at Buffalo: Six Projects
Gloria J. Brennan

page 22 Perspectives: Student Forum on Service Learning

page 23 The University Community Initiative
Center for Urban Studies

page 26 Perspectives: Making a Relationship with the University Community Initiative
Foreword

From the President

In recent years, UB, like all public universities, has faced a growing community need for our resources and know-how. Western New Yorkers have been investing in UB for a century and a half, and the past half century has seen additional investments from New York State and the nation as a whole. As we look ahead to the twenty-first century, our publics now look for our support, counsel, and assistance as a return on their investment.

UB has fostered the active community involvement that our neighbors both seek and expect; we are doing so in ways consistent with our franchise missions of scholarship, creative endeavor, teaching, and mentoring. Faculty, staff, and students have increasingly developed initiatives that both address community needs and advance their own academic endeavors. The result is what has become known throughout higher education as “service learning,” a concept in whose development UB has had a significant role.

Service learning not only advances faculty, staff, and student activities, but also helps our neighbors see the range and importance of UB’s work, and stimulates the public and private sponsorships that are increasingly essential to us. Some projects, like the University Community Initiative, also contribute in a long-term way to UB’s growth and competitiveness. The University Community Initiative brings UB expertise and various municipal energies on issues in the neighborhoods around our south campus—housing, commercial activity, safety, health care, and quality of life. In so doing, we help to rebuild a UB neighborhood that can attract new students, faculty, and staff to work with us.

University service and service learning provide unmatched resources for the community that shapes UB; they also become another kind of resource for the university itself. Please consider how you might take part in the University Community Initiative, and other UB service learning endeavors. They are the partnerships on which the shared future of our university and our community rests.

—William R. Greiner

From the Interim Vice President for Public Service and Urban Affairs

The University of Buffalo is committed to expanding its service learning activities. Service learning has become more important to higher education as universities respond to a growing demand from students and neighbors to renew the social contract between the university and its community. Indeed, service learning is a form of public service, a central component of UB’s mission, which has the potential to enhance the quality of our teaching and research.

Service learning provides faculty, staff, and students with direct experience in working on projects that address community problems. Using service as a vehicle for both research and teaching also creates important opportunities for individuals to work across disciplines. Moreover, the academic enterprise benefits collectively from a broadened conceptualization of teaching and research that often results from the practical application of theoretical concepts.

While there is still much to do to make service activities more visible in terms of faculty rewards and scholarship, there are a number of public service projects that have been successful in this regard, for example, the University Community Initiative (UCI), a neighborhood revitalization project; the Hamlin Park/School 74 Project, an initiative involving curriculum infusion and capacity building in reading, writing, and science; the Governance Project, a forum for the consideration of regionalism; and the America Reads pilot project, a tutoring initiative which utilizes students as literacy volunteers.

There are myriad exciting opportunities for interested students, faculty, and staff to become involved in service learning projects at UB. I wholeheartedly encourage and applaud all those who take advantage of this particular form of scholarship.

—Mary H. Gresham
Preface

During the 1996–98 academic years, we worked with faculty, staff, and students to facilitate more participation in service learning, with specific emphasis on the communities surrounding UB's South Campus. As a first step in the process of more formally organizing and coordinating our efforts, we invited faculty to attend an initial meeting to define how best to proceed. Advice from faculty and staff called for clear examples of success in service learning and research, the engagement of student populations, and a review by faculty of both the strengths and limitations of a service learning and research approach to the university mission. As a result, a series of faculty/staff workshops, faculty forums, and student workshops were convened to review the potential relationships between the University Community Initiative and the research, teaching, and service mission of our full service university.

As We Make Our Road by Walking chronicles the information, ideas, questions, suggestions, and recommendations that resulted from these meetings. The first “Perspectives” section, which follows a brief introduction on service learning, summarizes the initial meeting with faculty. Next, Dr. Ira Harkavy, a renowned scholar and practitioner of service learning and research, presented a historical overview of the concepts. His paper and the UB faculty panel discussion which followed is reprinted in our publication. Dr. Harkavy’s presentation and faculty comments form some of the intellectual foundations for further exploration of service learning and research as part of the University at Buffalo’s strategic focus on its neighboring community and region, and with specific respect to the University Community Initiative. To increase student awareness and involvement, six successful service learning and research projects were described during a student forum on service learning. A final workshop explained ways in which individuals can get involved in UCI projects. Reflections from the audience following these presentations are summarized in the last two “Perspectives” sections.

It is our hope that this publication further the goals of these discussions, by furthering our goal of effective service learning at UB that benefits everyone involved—community, faculty, staff, students, and the university as a whole.
Acknowledgments

Many people helped to pull this modest publication together from all parts of the University at Buffalo community of faculty, staff, students, and administrative leadership. Robert Shibley, the Director of the Urban Design Project at the School of Architecture and Planning, led the forums, workshops, and publication production with assistance from Gloria Brennan, a graduate student in the Department of Planning. The Center for Urban Studies, led by Dr. Henry Louis Taylor and his staff provided the background writing on the University Community Initiative and they met regularly with Shibley and Brennan during the conduct of the campus wide investigation. Funding for the publication and intellectual leadership for both the University Community Initiative and this investigation are from the Office of the President including President William Greiner and the Interim Vice Presidents for Public Service and Urban Affairs, John Sheffer and Mary Gresham.

There is a long list of participants in the student, faculty, and staff forums, in addition to those listed above. Those who have specifically contributed to the text or case study accounts of work include the following:

Professor R. Nils Olsen
Director, Clinical Education Program, School of Law

Dr. G. William Page
Chair, Department of Planning

Dr. Hugh Petrie
Dean, Graduate School of Education

Professor Alfred Price
Department of Planning, Faculty Senate, Public Service Committee

Dr. David Triggle
Vice Provost for Graduate Education, Dean of the Graduate School

Professor Stephen Halpern
Department of Political Science

Professor Ann Sidel
School of Nursing

Associate Professor Beverly Foit Albert
School of Architecture and Planning

Professor George Hezel
Affordable Housing Clinic, School of Law

Sandra Sheppard, Graduate Student
School of Social Work and the East Buffalo Community Ownership Program

Gwen Howard, Alumna
Department of Architecture and Revival Downtown, Inc.

Jayme Williams, Graduate Student
Department of Planning and the Center for Urban Studies

Jason Hagi, Alumnus
Department of Architecture and the Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access (IDEA) in the School of Architecture and Planning

Professor Lawrence Southwick
Department of Management

Professor Catherine Emihovich
Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology and the Buffalo Research Institute on Education for Teaching (BRIET), Graduate School of Education

Officer John Grada
Department of Public Safety

Jacqueline Bascom, Staff
Student Life Workshop

Danis Gehl, Project Director
University Community Initiative

Keith Lucas, Project Manager
University Community Initiative

Denise Raymond, Graduate Student
Center for Urban Studies

Michele Rogers, Undergraduate Student
Center for Urban Studies

Kevin Schultz, Undergraduate Student
Center for Urban Studies

Daniel Buyer, Graduate Student
Center for Urban Studies
On Practice in the Academy

Robert G. Shibley
with Gloria J. Brennan

Practice is essential to every profession and academic discipline in the university, but is often lost in the research, teaching and service trilogy used to evaluate faculty for tenure, students for advancement, and the university as a whole for its responsiveness to social need. When the University of North Carolina (UNC) School of Public Health sought to improve on this situation, the result was a dramatic reconceptualization of academic expectations. The School of Public Health rewrote its tenure and promotion standards calling for faculty to do research, to practice, to teach, and to serve. Research at UNC is traditionally defined in their system as the generation of new knowledge for publication in scholarly journals. Practice applies knowledge to “advance the state-of-the-art” in institutions, organizations, and communities and relies on a diverse set of publication or “profession” vehicles. Teaching then is defined as preparing people for practice in both traditional classroom and nontraditional “practice” settings. Finally, service is then framed as serving both the profession or academic discipline as well as the university. As such, service is a necessary but secondary criteria and primacy is given to research, practice, and teaching.

The UNC approach offers a new system that sidesteps the denigration of practice as “service” and invites “three-for-one” thinking that would combine practice, teaching, and research in real-world settings. It does not, however, address what some argue is a badly needed strategic focus to work by universities in their respective communities and regions.

Combining research, practice, and teaching is almost always good teaching, can be good research, and often facilitates the development of community and organizational capacity. Working with such combinations are not, of course, for everyone, but such work also is very valuable to everything discipline and profession in the university. There are many simplistic and perhaps even exploitative stereotypes that draw on the vocabulary of service learning and service research where the subjects of study are seen as not part of the larger community including the university. The projects described in these pages are, however, about how the university has joined with its region in mutually beneficial practice relationships, teaching and doing research through (and on) practice. Participatory action research (PAR), service learning, and expert models of intervention and investigation are all possible in the domain of engaging the experience of the world-as-lived as a site for critical inquiry and action. The central ideology for the work described here is grounded in the origins of the modern American university and continues to frame the future potential of such institutions.

The call for a strategic approach to service learning at the University at Buffalo is an implicit part of the results of faculty, staff, and student inquiry captured in this publication. Participants in the fifteen months of workshops, seminars, and forums seek strategic programs engaging the region and the communities immediately adjacent to the university. Such programs, they suggest, need to span several years, help to realign faculty reward systems, and, for example, help to reestablish (if not redefine) the role of the modern university. Participants, it would seem, agree with the University at Buffalo’s goal to be “heralded in New York and across the nation for a successful linkage of research and scholarship to the provision of quality public service.” In fact, they go one better by suggesting the method to achieve this goal should involve using research, scholarship and teaching per se as the vehicle by which such service is to be delivered. It is not so much teaching, research and service done to the community as it is fundamentally teaching and research through practice with the community.

“Everybody wins” is a much discredited concept in today’s modern research university. It is the kind of “smiley face” slogan that few of us believe is really possible or perhaps even desirable. After all, some of us deserve to win, others do not. And sometimes even winning is overrated. It just sets expectations for the future that one suspects can not be supported with the available resources and supplies of personal energy. However, the concepts and ideals that underpin the research, practice and teaching described here have caused me to reconsider the utility of the “everybody wins” goal in the pursuit of the university’s own most legitimate self interests. The text of this brief booklet illustrates that faculty, staff, students, and community all benefit from a well designed and administered practice of research and teaching with regional and community constituencies. “Everybody wins” goes to the core of why the university exists and how it might position itself in the twenty-first century.

---


On Practice in the Academy

Robert G. Shibley with Gloria J. Brennan

Practice is essential to every profession and academic discipline in the university, but is often lost in the research, teaching and service trilogy used to evaluate faculty for tenure, students for advancement, and the university as a whole for its responsiveness to social need. When the University of North Carolina (UNC) School of Public Health sought to improve on this situation, the result was a dramatic reconceptualization of academic expectations. The School of Public Health rewrote its tenure and promotion standards calling for faculty to do research, to practice, to teach, and to serve. Research at UNC is traditionally defined in their system as the generation of new knowledge for publication in scholarly journals. Practice applies knowledge to “advance the state-of-the-art” in institutions, organizations, and communities and relies on a diverse set of publications or “profession” vehicles. Teaching then is defined as preparing people for practice in both traditional classroom and nontraditional “practice” settings. Finally, service is then framed as serving both the profession or academic discipline as well as the university. As such, service is a necessary but secondary criteria and primacy is given to research, practice, and teaching.

The UNC approach offers a neat system that sidesteps the denigration of practice as “service” and invites “three-for-one” thinking that would combine practice, teaching, and research in real-world settings. It does not, however, address what some argue is a badly needed strategic focus to work by universities in their respective communities and regions.

Combining research, practice, and teaching is almost always good teaching, can be good research, and often facilitates the development of community and organizational capacity. Working with such combinations are not, of course, for everyone, but such work also is very valuable to every discipline and profession in the university. There are many simplistic and perhaps even exploitative stereotypes that draw on the vocabulary of service learning and service research where the subjects of study are seen as part of the larger community including the university. The projects described in these pages are, however, about how the university has joined with its region in mutually beneficial practice relationships, teaching and doing research through (and on) practice. Participatory action research (PAR), service learning, and expert models of intervention and investigation are all possible in the domain of engaging the experience of the world-as-lived as a site for critical inquiry and action. The central ideology for the work described here is grounded in the origins of the modern American university and continues to frame the future potential of such institutions.

The call for a strategic approach to service learning at the University at Buffalo is an implicit part of the results of faculty, staff, and student inquiry captured in this publication. Participants in the fifteen months of workshops, seminars, and forums seek strategic programs engaging the region and the communities immediately adjacent to the university. Such programs, they suggest, need to span several years, help to realign faculty reward systems, and, by example, help to reestablish (if not redefine) the role of the modern university. Participants, it would seem, agree with the University at Buffalo’s goal to be “heralded in New York and across the nation for a successful linkage of research and scholarship to the provision of quality public service.” In fact, they go one better by suggesting the method to achieve this goal should involve using research, scholarship and teaching per se as the vehicle by which such service is to be delivered. It is not so much teaching, research and service done to the community as it is fundamentally teaching and research through practice with the community.

“Everybody wins” is a much discredited concept in today’s modern research university. It is the kind of “smiley face” slogan that few of us believe is really possible or perhaps even desirable. After all, some of us deserve to win, others do not. And sometimes even winning is overrated. It just sets expectations for the future that one suspects can not be supported with the available resources and supplies of personal energy. However, the concepts and ideals that underpin the research, practice and teaching described here have caused me to reconsider the utility of the “everybody wins” goal in the pursuit of the university’s own most legitimate self-interests. The text of this brief booklet illustrates that faculty, staff, students, and community all benefit from a well designed and administered practice of research and teaching with regional and community constituencies. “Everybody wins” goes to the core of why the university exists and how it might position itself in the twenty-first century.


Introduction I
Public service often conjures up the cynical label of "do gooder," applying it to those who are physically busy attempting to alleviate hunger, improve education, and stop crime, for example. Such "do-gooding" is not seen to be intellectually engaged in the root causes of the conditions they encounter or to be strategically involved in correcting them. For this and other reasons, service is not understood as a path to tenure in the university nor is it significantly rewarded. However, Harkavy argues in these pages that modern urban universities "have no choice" but to engage in what he calls "strategic academically based community service." A kind of engagement that goes far beyond (but clearly includes) the doing of good as it engages in the profound intellectual work of understanding and creative problem solving.

We are told we have no choice but to engage in this work because, "the problems of the American city have become the problems of the urban college and university. Since they cannot move, they cannot escape the issues of poverty, crime, and physical deterioration."

Harkavy goes on to argue against the conception of service research and learning as being driven by "exploitive" community-based research, offering instead a way of thinking and working that brings the historic mission of the American university into line with the present imperatives of community building. Here Harkavy is consistent with many other voices in American higher education that seek to understand the role of the university in the struggle for good living.

There is considerable sympathy within the ranks of faculty, staff and students for the development of a strategic approach within American universities to address the pressing needs of our society. The key infrastructure of rewards related to tenure and promotion, the senior leadership established by a vice-presidential office for public service and urban affairs, and the flexibility to employ alternative venues to the traditional classroom teaching model are all important supports which facilitate the emergence of a collective strategy. However, one suspects from the review of faculty commentary, casework, and the literature, that the top down imposition of "strategy" that directs action will ultimately fail. The tenants of academic freedom and traditions of individual and small affinity group inquiry in the academy require that we construct this strategy from the sum of the vectors of our disciplines and professions. We derive strategy through careful faculty selection, mentoring, and reward systems as well as through student recruitment and the seeking of grant supports. Ultimately, we will make this new read in the American academy by walking and critically reflecting on our progress."

There is still an enormous reservoir of trust and hope (among the public) regarding universities and colleges, a reservoir that can be tapped if we but show that we care about and are willing to engage in the resolution of pressing social needs.5

-William R. Greiner

---


3 The title of this publication is derived from the book We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change by Miles Harbron and Paula Freire. 1990. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
Perspectives
Faculty Workshop on the University Community Initiative

On May 3, 1996 a meeting with faculty was held to discuss an approach for involving university faculty, staff, and students in the University Community Initiative. The workshop was the first step in the process of more formally organizing and coordinating our efforts in the further development of the Initiative.

The meeting resulted in a listing of recommendations from the audience on how best to engage faculty, staff, and students in work within the Initiative. The suggestions, summarized below, addressed specific project ideas, information resource ideas, key process ideas, and the need to work on faculty/staff incentives. A discussion of suggested next steps in the Initiative included reconvening interested faculty, staff, and students; inviting faculty to further identify their interests in the priority areas that they may wish to engage; and, for those ready or already engaged, using the resources of the Initiative at the Center for Urban Studies to add value and coordinate projects toward the achievement of the broad goals of the effort.

Specific Project Ideas
▼ Work on police liaison across jurisdictions (security and police services and volunteer activity).
▼ Public schools education ideas
  • A public high school project that works on leadership and entrepreneurial skills for juniors and seniors.
  • Work with the Buffalo Alliance for Education—involve the "adopt the school" corporate programs.
  • A project that concentrates on transit to schools.
  • Work with the adjoining school district on non-academic training—community education in the region using high school facilities.
▼ The South Campus Master Plan priorities need to be addressed. The university is seen by some as part of the problem, not part of the solution. Adjusting operating policy, lighting, access, and other variables to better relate the campus to the community is a very important first step in the process of building trust in the Initiative and the intentions of the university.
  • A key theme has to be industrial development, bringing jobs and money into the area.
  • Consider research on safe neighborhoods and commercial areas; for example, is the "blue light" life at night concept workable.
  • Consider research on participatory planning, looking at it from several disciplinary perspectives including history, social science, planning, etc.
  • Work on the details of the community: access across Main Street, basic appearance (sidewalks, trash, and the like), signage, etc.

Information Resources Ideas
▼ Develop a catalog of projects related to the Initiative (building on the list in the project prospectus) and make it widely available as a source list for faculty, staff, and students.
▼ Develop a description of good examples that have successfully combined teaching, research and service.

Process Recommendations and Concerns
▼ Each of us cannot interface coordinate with everyone else—it is too complicated. Use the information resources and a simple system of notification and occasional meetings to keep the lines of communication open.
▼ Consider all of the constituencies for the Initiative. It should be: faculty directed; student directed; community directed (block clubs and community-based organizations); staff directed; and governance directed (city, town, UB leadership and staff).
▼ Recognize that there are competing agendas that will need to be mediated as part of the process. Consider an analysis of competing objectives and of how power is vested in the Initiative.
  • Student involvement can/should also be directed (not just through faculty) by engaging the clubs and student organizations. They have strong vested interests in the community, and may be very willing to engage as volunteer service, for example, delivering computer instruction at a basic skills level. It is important to build on the strengths of university student efforts and not reinvent the wheel.
▼ Tell us what is needed and be as specific as possible. For some, we can respond to a "client" request easier than a general invitation to be involved.
▼ Don't interfere with on-going sponsored research except at the invitation of the principal investigators and with the potential to add value to the research through teaching and service, as well as through the use of the community as a laboratory.

Faculty/Staff Incentives
▼ Work with the Faculty Senate Committee engaged in the question of community service at the university and explore the role of service in tenure and promotion.
▼ It is clearly going to take more than just the president saying service can be a vehicle for research and teaching to make it happen.
Service Learning as a Vehicle for Revitalization of Education Institutions and Urban Communities
Dr. Ira Harkavy

Introduction
The problems of the American city have increasingly become the problems of the urban college and university. There is no escape from the issues of poverty, crime, and physical deterioration that are at the gates of urban higher educational institutions. Our choice is to return to the mythic image of the university on the hill, and suffer for it, or to become engaged in an effective and proactive fashion. No urban university has developed the model for working effectively with its environment. A number of excellent experiments are being undertaken, but they all represent partial attempts that do not mobilize the broad range of university resources and expertise.

Partial attempts simply will not do for either the university or society. A full-hearted and full-minded effort is needed—one that defines the problem of the city as the strategic problem for the American urban university. Ernest Boyer's extraordinarily influential call for creating the "New American College" has relevance here. Deploring the "crisis in our public schools" and the desperate condition of "our cities," Boyer challenged American higher educators to change radically their priorities and act effectively to meet their civic and societal responsibilities: "Do colleges really believe they can ignore social pathologies that surround schools and erode the educational foundations of our nation?" Specifically, Boyer called for creating a "New American College...[which]...will extend the capacity to connect thought to action, theory to practice...The New American College, as a connected institution, would be committed to improving, in a very intentional way, the human condition."1

Calling for creating the New American College is one thing, creating it is something else indeed. To put it mildly, it is very hard to do. Since World War I, a strong tradition developed that separated scholarly research from the goal of improving the human condition in the here and now. Disconnection from, rather than connection to, society became the operational style of the vast majority of America's colleges and universities.2

After 1945, of course, higher education did connect. It connected, however, to distant, not local, problems. The Cold War became the defining issue that led to the development of the vast American "university system." Propelled by fear of and competition with the Soviet Union, American politicians, with significant support from the American public, unquestionably accepted requests from the "military-industrial-academic complex" for increased aid and support to higher education.3 The collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the crack-up of the Soviet Union in 1991 signaled the end of the "Cold War University." Long ignored internal problems, including those Boyer identified, could be ignored no longer. Over 45 years of looking outward had its costs as unresolved domestic problems developed into unresolved, highly visible crises.4

But crises alone will not undo a nearly 100 year history of universities' functioning as if they were in, but not of, their communities. Moreover, ignoring pressing societal problems was accompanied by a fragmentation of mission that separated service from research and teaching and spurred the development of self-contained, self-referential disciplinary "communities," making effective engagement all the more difficult.5

Tradition and fragmentation are certainly significant barriers to creating connected institutions. An additional barrier, however, may be even more formidable. There is a fundamental contradiction in the structure of the American research university itself, a contradiction that was built into its very creation. Daniel Coit Gilman, the founder of Johns Hopkins and central architect of the nineteenth century research university, claimed that one of his proudest accomplishments was "a school of science grafted on one of the oldest and most conservative classical colleges."6 Although referring specifically to the merger of the Sheffield Scientific School with Yale College, Gilman felt that this achievement exemplified his contribution to American higher education.

As a product of a merger of the German research university and the American college, the American research university was bound to develop severe tensions and contradictions from a joining of two markedly different entities. The research university was dedicated to specialized scholarship; and the university provided service through specialized inquiry and studies. For the American college, on the other hand, general education, character building, and civic education were the central purposes. The college provided service to society through educating young people with, to use Benjamin Franklin's phrase, "an Inclination joint with an Ability to serve."7 The research university has, of course, dominated this merger, creating an ethos and culture that rewards specialized study rather than more general scholarship and the education of the next generation for moral, civic, and intellectual leadership.

---

1 The text of this presentation was originally presented to the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, August, 1990.

2 Historical Overview 5
From Service Learning to Strategic Academically Based Community Service

Given structural contradictions, nearly a century of increasing specialization, fragmentation of knowledge, and separation of scholarship from direct and immediate service to the city and society, what can be done to reinvent higher educational institutions? To put it another way, what steps can be taken to help universities and colleges become connected institutions, exemplifying Boyer’s vision of a New American College in practice?

Given the title of this session, one could logically conclude that I would identify service learning as the key “vehicle for revitalization of education institutions and urban communities.” Although I feel somewhat guilty for engaging in false advertising, my conclusion could not be more different. In fact, I believe that service learning, as currently defined and practiced, is not an effective vehicle for improving our schools and communities. It may even enable universities to evade their responsibility to their local environments, providing half-hearted, isolated gestures, not serious, sustained engagement.

My position springs from trying to answer the question: What is the goal of the “service learning movement”? This is not merely an academic (in the pejorative sense) question. “It is,” as Francis Bacon stated in 1620, “not possible to run a course aright when the goal itself is not rightly placed.” In my judgment, the service learning movement has not “rightly placed” the goal. It has largely been concerned with advancing the civic consciousness and moral character of college students, arguing that service learning pedagogy also results in improved teaching and learning. Although service to the community is obviously an important component of service learning, it does not focus on solving core community problems. The most influential work advocating, what might be termed, a “trickle down theory” of the impacts of service learning is Benjamin R. Barber’s *An Aristocracy of Everyone: The Politics of Education and the Future of America*. In a discussion of mandatory citizen education and community service, Barber asserts:

> To make people serve others may produce desirable behavior, but it does not create responsible and autonomous individuals. To make people participate in educational curricula that can empower them does create such individuals. The ultimate goal is not to serve others but to learn to be free, which entails being responsible to others.

In its “classic” form, service learning is merely the pedagogical equivalent of “exploitative” community-based research. Academics, of course, have often studied and written about poor, particularly minority, communities. The residents of those communities have largely been subjects to be studied, providing information that would produce dissertations and articles that someday, somehow would contribute to making things better. Meanwhile, the poor have gotten poorer, and academics have gotten tenure, promoted, and richer.

Similarly, advocates and practitioners of service learning have tended to agree that the goal of that pedagogy is to educate college students for citizenship. Citizenship is learned by linking classroom experience to a service experience that is at best seen as doing “some” good for the community. The real beneficiaries are, however, the deliverers, not the recipients, of the service. Someday, somehow when we have effectively educated a critical mass of the “best and the brightest” for citizenship, things would be made better. Meanwhile, the causes of our societal problems have remained untouched, the distance between the haves and have-nots has widened, and universities have continued to function as institutions engaged in symbolic actions rather than institutions producing knowledge for (to use Bacon’s phrase) the “relief of man’s estate.”

Urban colleges and universities are in a unique position to “rightly place the goal” and “run [the]... course aright” by going beyond service learning (and its inherent limitations) to strategic academically based community service, which has as its primary goal contributing to the well-being of people in the community both in the here and now and in the future. It is service rooted in and intrinsically tied to teaching and research, and it aims to bring about structural community improvement (e.g., effective public schools, neighborhood economic development, strong community organizations) rather than simply to alleviate individual misery (e.g., feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, tutoring the “slow learner”). Strategic academically based community service requires a comprehensive institutional response that engages the broad range of resources of the urban university (including the talents, abilities, and energy of undergraduates involved in traditional service and service learning activities) to solve the strategic problem of our time—the problem of creating democratic, local, cosmopolitan communities.
Why will urban universities go beyond service learning to strategic academically based community service? Most centrally, they will increasingly have no choice. It is within the American city that the need for communities rooted in face-to-face relationships and exemplifying humanistic values is most acute. As previously asserted, the problems of the American city have increasingly become the problems of the urban college and university. Since they cannot move, there is no escape from the issues of poverty, crime, and physical deterioration that are at the gates of urban higher educational institutions. If universities continue to function as they do (being in, but not of, their communities), faculty, students and staff will increasingly become difficult to attract and retain and communities of scholars will give way to collections of scholarly commuters. To put it another way, the future of the urban university and the American city are intertwined.

Urban universities will also move to strategic academically based community service because it is consonant with the historic mission of universities beginning with the founding of Johns Hopkins in 1876. University presidents of the late nineteenth century worked to develop the American university into a major national institution capable of meeting the needs of a rapidly changing and increasingly complex society. Imbued with boundless optimism and a belief that knowledge could change the world for the better, these captains of erudition envisioned universities as leading the way toward a more effective and humane society for Americans in general and for residents of the city in particular.

The Role of Strategic Academically Based Community Service in the Development of the Urban Research University

The tradition of problem-driven, problem-solving strategic academically based community service is easily identified in the history of four leading urban higher educational institutions (John Hopkins, Columbia, the University of Chicago, and the University of Pennsylvania) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Hopkins' president, Daniel Coit Gilman, for example, was the guiding force behind the organization of the Charity Organization Society (COS). An organization designed to provide a scientific approach to helping Baltimore's poor, COS, among other things, studied the causes of poverty, collected useful data, and worked to get at the root causes of destitution. Moreover, a number of Gilman's leading faculty members such as Herbert Baxter Adams and Richard Ely had close ties to Levering Hall, the campus YMCA, which was deeply engaged in work with Baltimore's poor. Students in Adam's and Ely's Department of History, Political Economy and Political Science worked through Levering Hall "to use the city as a laboratory for economic study." John Glenn, chair of the executive committee of COS, remarked in 1888 that Hopkins was the first university where social welfare work was "almost a part of the curriculum."13

Hopkins may have been the first, but it was certainly not the only university to integrate social welfare work as part of the curriculum. More generally, for progressive-period academics, the city was an arena for study and action. It was the site of significant societal transformation; the center of political corruption, poverty, crime, and cultural conflict; and a ready source of data and information. It was according to Richard Mayo-Smith of Columbia, "the natural laboratory of social science, just as hospitals are of medical science." It was also the place where academics could combine theory and practice.14

In most cases, progressive-era university presidents and academics had an expert-driven model of change founded on the assumption that the expert, with scientific knowledge in hand, would increase efficiency in governmental agencies and design institutions that improve the quality of life for the urban poor and immigrant. The expert's role, quite simply, was to study and assist, but not to learn from, the community.15

Not all progressive-period academics shared the authoritative, elitist conception of the university's role. Seth Low, president of Columbia from 1890 through 1901, is notable for his decidedly democratic approach in dealing with New York City and its communities. In his inaugural address, Low stated "the city may be made to a considerable extent, a part of the university." Columbia was also to be part of the city, resulting in a democratic, mutually-beneficial relationship between town and gown. In an article, "The University and the Workingman," Low wrote that the "workingmen of America...[should know] that at Columbia College....the disposition exists to teach the truth...without fear or favor, and we ask their aid to enable us to see the truth as it appears to them."16

Nicholas Murray Butler, Low's successor, emphasized authority, expert knowledge, and autonomy as the appropriate stance for elite universities. Nonetheless, Low's vision of a university both in and of its city exemplifies the institutional stance necessary for putting strategic academically based community service into practice. Low's interactive, optimistic, democratic vision.
is exemplified in his 1895 article, "A City University," particularly when he wrote: "When I dream of Columbia and its possibilities, I always think of a university not only great enough to influence the life of New York, but a university able to influence the life of New York because it is a part of it." 17

While Low provides the most compelling vision of university-city relationships, the University of Chicago, in practice, had the closest ties to its locality. Work emanating from Hull House, the social settlement founded by Jane Addams and Ellen Starr on Chicago's West Side in 1889, was enormously significant in forming ties between the university and its city. Adopting a multifaceted institutional approach to the social problem of the immigrant groups in the Nineteenth Ward, Hull House residents offered activities along four lines designated by Addams as the social, educational, humanitarian, and civic. In addition to its various residents' programs, Hull House was a site for labor union activities; a forum for social, political, and economic reform; and a center for social science research. Regarding its research function, Addams noted, "The settlements antedated by three years the first sociology departments in universities and by ten years the establishment of the first foundations for social research." 18

In 1895, Jane Addams and the residents of Hull House published Hull House Maps and Papers, a sociological investigation of the neighborhood immediately to the east of Hull House; in Addams' words, it was a record of "certain phases of neighborhood life with which the writers have been familiar." 19 Inspired by Charles Booth's Life and Labor of the People in London, the Hull House residents compiled detailed maps of demographic and social characteristics, and produced richly descriptive accounts of life and work in a poor immigrant neighborhood. Theirs was not dispassionate scholarship, as evidenced by Florence Kelley's poignant advocacy on behalf of sweatshop laborers, whose "reward of work at their trade is grinding poverty, ending only in death or escape to some more hopeful occupation. Within the trade there has been and can be no improvement in wages while tenement house-manufacture is tolerated. On the contrary, there seems to be no limit to the deterioration now in progress." 20

In its early years, the University of Chicago demonstrated that by doing good, a research university could do very well. When Chicago's first President, William Rainey Harper, described the mission of his newly-minted university as "service for mankind
wherever mankind is, whether within scholastic walls or without those walls and in the world at large," he expressed a pervasive attitude of progressive-era academics that "scholarship, teaching, and public service were fully compatible." It is not surprising that male sociologists at the University of Chicago were closely associated with Hull House, acknowledging that "it was Addams and Hull House who were the leader and leading institution in Chicago in the 1890s, not the University of Chicago." Indeed, Hull House Maps and Papers "established the major substantive interests and methodological technique of Chicago Sociology that would define the School for the next forty years."23

In the early years of the Chicago School no invidious distinctions were made between the applied sociology pursued by Jane Addams and the Hull House residents and the academic research of the first generation of University of Chicago sociologists. Indeed, the two groups had a close working relationship, grounded in personal friendships, mutual respect, and shared social philosophy. Four men of the early Chicago School, Albion Small, Charles R. Henderson, Charles Zeublin, and George E. Vincent, were ministers or ministers manqué—intellectual Social Gospellers with strong civic commitments. (The exceptions, with no theological proclivities, were George H. Mead and William I. Thomas.) Like the women of Hull House, the Chicago sociologists were "social activists and social scientists."24 Action social research, Chicago-style, encompassed scholarly documentation of a social problem and lobbying of politicians and local community groups to obtain action.25

After 1915, Chicago Sociology under Robert Park and Ernest W. Burgess increasingly distanced itself from social reform, notwithstanding their continued focus on the form, structure, and problems of city living. Increasingly, that focus was circumscribed by a natural science model and an underlying commitment to "the detached and objective study of society," which "allowed no room for an ameliorative approach." Park and Burgess emphasized "urban studies . . . within a scientific framework."26 Nonetheless, from the founding of the University in 1892 until 1952 and the election of Franklin Roosevelt, the reform movement in Chicago was closely tied to the university. Leading scholars, such as John Dewey, James H. Tufts, George Hebert Mead, and Charles Meriam, all played leading roles in efforts to improve education and politics in the city.27

Chicago was by no means the only city that engaged academics in reform movements. In Philadelphia the independent administration of Rudolph Blankenburg received significant assistance from faculty in the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School. The belief that research and teaching could benefit from political activity was perhaps most evident in the early Wharton School. Endowed in 1881 by Joseph Wharton as the School of Finance and Economy, in practice it quickly developed into the "School of Political and Social Science," under the direction of Edmund James. James, a future president of both Northwestern University and the University of Illinois, saw Wharton's future as dependent upon its successful involvement with local issues and real-world problems. He created, therefore, a unique organizational innovation—a school devoted to providing a social scientific response to the problems of industrialization.28

James' innovations went beyond his fashioning of the Wharton School's direction. In 1889, he established the American Academy of Political and Social Science as an organization linking academics and leading citizens for the study of societal problems. James and his Wharton colleagues also played key roles in establishing the Municipal League of Philadelphia and the National Municipal League. Like the American Academy, these organizations were predicated on the concept of partnership between academics and reformers. Among the scholars and other leaders who participated in the National League were Theodore Roosevelt, Herbert Baxter Adams, Richard Ely, Francis A. Walker, Edward L. Godkin and Daniel Coit Gilman.29

James' organizational innovations, institutional alliances, and personal relationships with leading Philadelphians established the basis for Wharton's success. Under his friend and successor, Simon Patten, however, Wharton arguably became the premier center of American social science between 1900 and the outbreak of World War I. Continuing James' strong urban emphasis, Patten enlisted Wharton undergraduates and graduate students in Philadelphia's progressive movement.30 As an eminent scholar, he exemplified that being actively engaged in public affairs could contribute to academic success. Within a few years, however, Patten and like-minded colleagues ran afoul of hostile University of Pennsylvania trustees.

In the 1890s a number of social scientists had faced serious difficulty because of their reform-oriented writings and activism. The trial of Richard Ely by the Wisconsin Board of Regents and the dismissal of Edward Bemis from the University of Chicago are two of the best known cases. Although Wharton's more comprehensive reform approach may have helped shield individual faculty, the school became quite vulnerable as its campaign for reform went further than local elites.
had wished. Indeed, the Penn trustees fired Simon Patten’s close friend and junior colleague, Scott Nearing, in 1915; two years later they refused to extend Patten’s tenure beyond the age of retirement, as was routinely done for distinguished faculty members. By 1917 and America’s entry into World War I, most of Wharton’s reform faculty had resigned or been dismissed.31

World War I closed one chapter and began another in the history of urban university-community relationships. The brutality and horror of that conflict ended the buoyant optimism and faith in human progress and societal improvement that marked the progressive era. American academics were not immune to the general disillusion with progress. Indeed, despair led many faculty members to retreat into a narrow scientific approach. Scholarly inquiry directed toward creating a better society was increasingly deemed inappropriate. While faith in the expert and in expert knowledge carried on from the progressive era, it separated from its reformist roots. The dominant conception of science became what physical scientists and engineers did.32

The four historical studies presented above are not designed to evoke images of a paradise lost. Among other things, except for Seth Low’s Columbia, these efforts were neither democratic nor participatory. More centrally, they failed to become the dominant model for the American university. They were, quite simply, far in advance of their time, particularly given America’s engagement in what Robert Nisbet has termed a “Seventy-Five Years War,” which finally ended with the end of the Cold War.33 New conditions, however, now prevail. As stated earlier, decades of focusing attention and resources abroad resulted in the neglect of problems at home, creating, in turn, severe and highly visible domestic crises.

These crises are most visible and pressing in our cities. The future of our cities and the institutions located within them, particularly institutions of higher education, depend on resolving the crises of urban poverty, poor schooling, inefficient bureaucratic delivery of services, collapsing communities, etc., with significant dispatch. Universities, more than any other societal institution, have the broad array of intellectual resources needed to take the lead toward finding solutions. For universities to do so, however, requires that they do things smarter and better than they have ever done them before.

Service learning, as I have argued, is much too weak a reed to get universities from here (internally-directed, solipsistic, self-referential institutions) to there (problem-solving, cosmopolitan, civic institutions). To mix metaphors, we need a stronger reed that can serve as a powerful lever for moving universities and society forward. Even if we agree that strategic academically based community service is the reed/lever, the question remains where and how do we apply it? Too general an approach, quite simply, will only take us so far. More concretely, what steps can urban colleges and universities take to transform themselves and contribute to revitalizing the American city? A first step might be building on John Dewey’s theory of instrumental intelligence and his identification of the core problem affecting modern society.

Strategic Academically Based Community-Based Service as a Deweyan Approach to University and Community Revitalization

According to Dewey, genuine learning only occurs when human beings focus their attention, energies, and abilities on solving genuine “dilemmas” and “perplexities.” Other mental “activity” fails to produce reflection and intellectual progress. As John E. Smith has written about Dewey’s theory of instrumental intelligence: “ Reflective thought is an active response to the challenge of the environment.”34 In 1910, Dewey spelled out the basis of his real-world, problem-driven, problem-solving theory of instrumental intelligence as follows:

Thinking begins in what may fairly be called a forked-road situation, a situation which is ambiguous, which presents a dilemma, which proposes alternatives. As long as our activity slides smoothly along from one thing to another, or as long as we permit our imagination to entertain fantasies at pleasure, there is no call for reflection. Difficulty or obstruction in the way of reaching a belief brings us, however, to a pause. . . . Demand for the solution of a perplexity is the steady and guiding factor in the entire process of reflection . . . a question to be answered, an ambiguity to be resolved, sets up an end and holds the current of ideas to a definite channel . . . . [In summary], . . . the origin of thinking is some perplexity, confusion, or doubt: Thinking is not a case of spontaneous combustion; it does not occur just on “general principles.” There is something specific which occasions and involves it.35

Employing Dewey’s theory of instrumental intelligence is, of course, only a starting point. There are an infinite number of perplexities and dilemmas for universities to focus upon. Which problem or set of problems are significant, basic, and strategic enough to lead to societal as well as intellectual progress? In 1927, in the Public and Its Problems, Dewey unequivocally identified the existence of “neighborly community” as indispensable for a well-functioning democratic society:
There is no substitute for the vitality and depth of close and direct intercourse and attachment.... Democracy must begin at home, and its home is the neighborhood community.

In that same book, he also noted that creating a genuinely democratic community is “in the first instance an intellectual problem.”

Sixty-nine years later, we still do not know how to create democratic neighborhood communities. Events in Bosnia, the states of the former Soviet Union, South Africa, France, Germany, Northern Ireland, etc., indicate that this very practical and core theoretical problem of the social sciences is more than an American dilemma. The problem of how to create these communities is the strategic problem of our time. As such, it is the problem most likely to advance the university’s primary mission of advancing and transmitting knowledge to advance human welfare.

The particular strategic real world and intellectual problem urban universities face is how to overcome the deep, pervasive, interrelated problems of their local environments. This concrete, immediate, practical and theoretical problem, needless to say, requires creative interdisciplinary interaction. Urban universities encompass the range of human knowledge needed to solve the complex, comprehensive, and interconnected problems found in the city. To actually solve the problem, however, will require universities to change and increasingly become organizations that encourage and foster a Deweyan approach of “learning by strategic community problem-solving and real-world reflective doing.”

Strategic Academically Based Community Service and Communal Participatory Action Research as Integrative Strategies for Applying a Deweyan Approach: Anthropology 210 and Sociology 302 at the University of Pennsylvania as Case Studies in Progress

It is, of course, infinitely easier to call for a Deweyan approach than to actually put that approach into practice. For eleven years, faculty, students, and staff from the University of Pennsylvania have been participating in a partnership with public schools, community groups, and other organizations to create university-assisted community schools in Penn’s local environment of West Philadelphia. This partnership, the West Philadelphia Improvement Corps (WEPIC), has identified the university-assisted community school, which functions as the center of education, service, and engagement for all residents of a specified locality, as the vehicle for creating face-to-face, neighborhood community in an area plagued by urban blight, poverty, and decline.

The university, through its Center for Community Partnerships, has contributed to creating university-assisted community schools through a series of communal participatory action research projects.

As an institutional strategy, communal participatory action research is different from traditional participatory action research (PAR). Both research processes are directed toward problems in the real world, concerned with application, and obviously participatory. They differ in the degree to which they are continuous, comprehensive, beneficial, and necessary to the organization or community studied and the university. For example, traditional PAR is exemplified in the efforts of William Perry Whyte and his associates at Cornell University to advance industrial democracy in the worker cooperatives of Mondragón, Spain.

Its considerable utility and theoretical significance notwithstanding, the research at Mondragón is not an institutional necessity for Cornell. By contrast, the University of Pennsylvania's enlightened self-interest is directly tied to the success of its research efforts in West Philadelphia, hence its emphasis on communal participatory action research.

In short, proximity and a focus on problems that are institutionally significant to the university encourage sustained, continuous research involvement; problem-focused research, in turn, necessitates sustained, continuous partnerships between the university and its geographic community. A crucial issue, of course, is the degree to which these locally based research projects result in general knowledge. The Center's position is based on a Deweyan orientation that local does not mean parochial and that the solution to local problems necessarily requires an understanding of national and global issues as well as an effective use and development of theory.

Two Penn seminars focused on advancing community school development, Anthropology 210 and Sociology 302, have made particularly significant contributions to teaching, research, and service. Both strategic academically based seminars have at their core communal participatory action research projects that involve public school students as well as Penn undergraduates as active problem solvers who contribute to knowledge. A sketch of each seminars' evolution also illustrates how Dewey's theory of instrumental intelligence might be applied in practice.

Anthropology 210 focuses on the relationships between “Anthropology and Biomedical Science.” An undergraduate course, it was developed to link premedical training at Penn with the Anthropology Department's program in Medical Anthropology. The course has always emphasized deepening students'
awareness and knowledge of health and disease as rooted within human biological variability, human evolutionary history, and the synergism between human biology and culture. That orientation has remained constant. In 1990, however, the course was revised significantly after Professor Francis Johnston, who teaches it, decided to participate actively in the project to assist the Turner Middle School in West Philadelphia (a school in which over 84 percent of the students come from low-income families) transform itself into a community school.98

From 1990 to date, students in Anthropology 210 have carried out a variety of activities at Turner focused on the interactive relationships among diet, nutrition, growth, and health. Readings and class discussions in "Anthro 210" deal with theories of health and disease, concepts of population health, the evaluation of health, nutrition, and growth status at the aggregate level, and the formulation, application, and evaluation of intervention programs following the model of participatory action research. Beginning in 1990, these more theoretical aspects of the course have been applied in practice through an interrelated set of semester-long student group projects carried out at the Turner School, spanning a range of research and service activities.

Since its 1990 revision, Anthro 210 has been explicitly organized around strategic academically based community service and communal participatory action research. Students are encouraged to view their education at Penn as preparing them to contribute to the solution of societal problems through service to the local community, and to do so by devoting a large part of their work in the course to a significant human problem, in this case the "nutriment" of disadvantaged inner-city children. (Nurturite is defined as "the balance between the intake and expenditure of energy and nutrients by an organism.") Direct linkage between students' work "in the field"—a long-standing tradition in Anthropology—and their readings and class discussions helps them put their practical experience into a framework of theory and generalizable knowledge.

The students conceive and conduct their projects as rigorous investigations of problems (in both the human and scientific senses) which require careful attention to the methods of scholarly investigation. Moreover, because their projects deal with different aspects of a single significant and complex "problem" and are carried out as group activities, students come to better understand the complexity of societal problems and the advantages—and difficulties—of collaborative attempts to solve them.

In effect, after Anthro 210 was reoriented and reorganized in 1990, its members have worked with teachers and students at the Turner school to construct a real-world "nutrition laboratory" in West Philadelphia. Part of that "laboratory's" work has been to design and carry out the "Turner Nutritional Awareness Project." Among other goals, that project aims to enhance the nutriture of Turner students by providing them with the framework for making informed decisions about diet, nutrition, and health.

To help achieve that goal, Penn students have worked closely with Turner students and teachers and conducted a variety of projects grouped in four main categories: 1) teaching nutrition, 2) evaluating nutritional status, 3) recording and evaluating the actual diets of Turner students, and 4) nutritional ecology, i.e., observing behavior in the school lunchroom, mapping sources of food in the Turner neighborhood and the types of food featured and sold in them.

To carry out the four types of projects cited above, Penn and Turner students engage in a variety of activities which require systematic research, data collection, and data analysis and interpretation. That is, in accord with John Dewey's precepts, the Penn and Turner students collaborate in learning by real-world doing about significant real-world problems and reflecting on what they are doing.

As a result, according to Professor Johnston, Anthro 210 is working better for Penn students than it ever has; he finds the course continually more stimulating, enlightening, and enjoyable to teach; and the Turner students seem highly motivated to work seriously on the subjects involved in the nutritional awareness project. Moreover, the descriptive data produced in Anthro 210 has been presented at university seminars and scholarly meetings and published in the scientific literature.

These data focus on aspects of the quality of the Turner students' diets, and on the high prevalence of obesity—among the highest yet reported for American youth of any ethnic group. These data have also stimulated at least one doctoral dissertation which seeks to understand the dietary and cultural correlates of obesity and decrease the prevalence of obesity through effective community-based strategies.99

Approximately two years ago, Penn's Zellerbach Family Professor of Sociology and Research, Frank F. Furstenberg, Jr. began a communal participatory action research project at University City High School. Adjacent to Penn's campus, University City High School has consistently been placed near or at the very bottom of Philadelphia's high schools. With 88.5 percent of its students from low income families, 50 percent of its students receiving a D or an F in at least one course, an average combined SAT score of 643, and the eighth worst suspension rate and 7th worst absentee rate among Philadelphia's public high schools, University City High
School is visible testimony to Penn's need to do more and better in its work with West Philadelphia. Furstenberg was the first of approximately fifteen faculty to connect his or her academic work with University City High School. This "wave" of Penn involvement is the direct result of an extraordinarily able, progressive, Deweyian principal.

A scholar of the family, Furstenberg has published widely on teenage sexuality, pregnancy and childbirth as well as divorce, remarriage, and step-parenting. In recent years, Furstenberg's work has focused on the family in disadvantaged urban neighborhoods, focusing on adolescent sexual behavior, changes in the well-being of children, and urban education.

I have known Furstenberg since 1967, when Furstenberg was a new assistant professor and I was a sophomore at Penn. From the early 1990s, I had "made the case" to Furstenberg that he turn his research and teaching toward West Philadelphia. A grant from the Ford Foundation to the Center for Community Partnerships and the College of Arts and Sciences to develop academically based community service courses in Sociology as well as three other departments provided an additional incentive for Furstenberg to pilot a West Philadelphia seminar. Since he cared deeply about the dreadful condition of public schooling in Philadelphia and wanted to do something to reverse those conditions, and since he found University City High School to be in particular need of assistance and advantageously located for serious, sustained engagement, Furstenberg focused his attention on that high school.

Designing his work both to study and to help reduce teen pregnancy, Furstenberg's project was participatory action in design from the outset. At the core of Furstenberg's work is a two semester senior thesis seminar, Sociology 302, "Community Research and Community Service." Seminar students work with teachers in four small learning communities (schools within—schools designed to "break-up" large impersonal schools into smaller, more human-sized, learning-friendly units), helping to incorporate a teen pregnancy prevention project into the curriculum.

Sociology 302 is also divided into task forces working to design a proposal for reducing teen pregnancy at University City High School. One task force focused on designing a sexuality education program for teens; another on the transition from high school to the workforce; and a third on the transition from high school to college. Each task force produced a paper and presented it to a group of teachers who had been meeting regularly with Furstenberg to discuss how to lower the high school's pregnancy rate, increase its attendance, and lower its drop out rate.

Each Sociology 302 undergraduate also writes an individual research paper based on his or her experiences at University City. Papers have focused on such topics as race relations, school culture, teenage fatherhood, and the impact of work. Finally, Furstenberg, his students, and University City students have been conducting a baseline survey of the school, collecting data on teen parents and demographics of the school population in general. This information is being used to develop a more comprehensive intervention designed to reduce teen pregnancy at University City.

Reports from the field and seminar have been exceedingly positive thus far. Furstenberg has described this work as the "most electric teaching I have done in nearly 30 years at Penn." The principal, moreover, and Furstenberg are planning a significant expansion of the project to begin in fall 1997.

Conclusion

I have argued (and tried to illustrate through the work of two colleagues at Penn) that strategic academically based community service (and not service learning) holds promise for producing the structural change needed to markedly reduce the deprivation and (inhuman) human suffering found in our cities. I have also argued that the early history of the modern American urban university provides us with a useful example from which to learn and build.

For the founders, the mission of the university was to create a better city and society through advancing and transmitting knowledge. Even with its limitations, their model was essentially one of strategic academically based community service, integrating research, teaching, and service and attempting to make fundamental improvements in the lives of people and their communities.

That comparatively successful model has the potential, I believe, to help inspire America's urban universities to function as "Deweyan learning organizations" that advance knowledge by solving the strategic intellectual and societal problem of creating and maintaining attractive, highly livable, humane cities that are centers of learning and progress.


5. For a more extended discussion, see Harary and Puckett, "Toward Effective University-School Partnerships," pp. 286-306; and Ira Harary, "The University and Social Science in the Social Order: An Historical Overview and "Where Do We Go From Here"" (Virginia Social Science Journal 27 (1992): 1-8, 17-19.


11. In 1966, Julius S. Lesi, Assistant to the President at the University of Chicago, brilliantly described one of the outcomes when an urban university neglects its local environment: "A university is more than a collection of scholarly communites. It is rather a community of scholars living with each other and with their work. The relationship of students and faculty is disrupted if the community around the university cannot accept and hold faculty members as residents." See his "Ground Space for the University," in The University, the City, and Urban Renewal: Report of a Regional Conference, ed. Charles G. Dickens (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1966), p. 11.


22. Diner, A City and Its Universities, p. 90.


24. The quoted phrase is from Fitzpatrick, Endless Crusade, pp. 39, 94.


26. Bulmer, The Chicago School of Sociology, pp. 69, 89.


29. Satz, The Pragmatic Imagination, pp. 75-78.


31. Satz, The Pragmatic Imagination, pp. 125-126; and Roscoe C. Taggart, To the Least of These: A Memoir of the University of Pennsylvania, 1900-1930, pp. 3-70.


Perspectives
The Current Status and Future Potential of Service Learning at UB

The symposium held on October 14, 1996 included a panel discussion moderated by Robert Shibley which followed the keynote address presented by Dr. Ira Harkavy.

Panelists
Professor R. Nile Olsen
DIRECTOR, CLINICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM, SCHOOL OF LAW
Dr. G. William Page
CHAIR, DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
Dr. Hugh Petrie
DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Professor Alfred Price
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, FACULTY SENATE, PUBLIC SERVICE COMMITTEE
Dr. David Triggle
VICE PROVOST FOR GRADUATE EDUCATION AND DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Respondents to the discussion that followed the panel session included:
John Sheffer
INTERIM VICE PRESIDENT, OFFICE OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND URBAN AFFAIRS
Professor Henry Taylor, Jr.
DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR URBAN STUDIES AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENTS OF PLANNING AND AMERICAN STUDIES.

Audience: How can the university build rewards for service learning given its current reward structure for tenure?

Harkavy: Each university is different in its reward structure for good scholarship and research, and both of these are definitely improved through service learning. Service learning makes better science and results in greater intellectual drive in students. It's important that senior faculty members protect and support less senior colleagues involved in service learning.

Leadership by the university's president is also very important. Rewards should be given to research that is rooted, long term and educationally based.

Shibley: Why isn't UB already understood to have a strong focus on service learning?

Triggle: All universities are facing the end of the era of expansion. The perception of universities has changed. There is a lack of general respect for higher education. There is a problem that the faculty are not teaching undergraduates. We've been pursuing other prizes due to significant rewards, and haven't fulfilled our mission to the community. What we do is disconnected from the community. The university has been unfocused, disconnected for forty years, but is changing as funding is running out. The contemporary university doesn't have a lot of time. We need to change rapidly.

Shibley: What is the Faculty Senate doing in regard to an adjustment to the reward structure for service learning?

Price: There is a debate on how to reconfigure the university's mission of service with traditional definitions. We encourage the university to alter the tenure reward system. The university is tilted in one direction, and we're trying to tilt it toward public service.

Shibley: Are the professional schools ahead in service learning?

Olsen: Professional schools have an obligation to the community, but the university is unwilling to be flexible in its reward structure. The law school is better at focusing on community problems in its clinical application. We have projects that focus on affordable housing, affordable day care, and needs of elderly to maximize Medicaid. These projects are done by tenured faculty. They're more risky for untenured faculty because of the perception of public service research. Faculty involved in this research receive qualified appointments or second class positions. This is unfortunate since faculty work the hardest when they are trying to get tenure so this would be the best time for community projects. Law, architecture, planning and education recognize social service, but an effective reward system is needed if we are to do more of it.

Petrie: The Graduate School of Education is doing it now. We've broadened our notion of scholarship to include applied work, and we view professional service as not separated from scholarship. Faculty who demonstrate outstanding work in the community—national, state or local—that is of high quality, relevance, and impact can and do get promoted. There is a problem, however, with the epistemology of academia working against professional service. Applying general laws to solve special context-sensitive, local problems doesn't work. We need to develop new ways of evaluating work that is done in the community.
Price: The proof should be in the impact. If we have better housing where there was none, that should be the proof for a positive evaluation.

Shibley: Some would argue there is an epistemological barrier to service learning. That such learning engaged as research is bad research. How do we deal with this?

Harkavy: Public service work and ideas need to be linked. Too often students produce intellectual work that is of little value. The university often uses fads in research assessments, evaluating as “flavor of the month.” Work should be evaluated according to its ability to improve neighborhoods and advance scholarship.

Price: One of the requirements of tenure is a plethora of work on narrow topics, some of which have limited significance, and yet we have major problems in society. Public service does something to solve these important problems. We should be able to support faculty involved in public service on important topics, and these faculty should be able to publish papers about this work to gain tenure.

Shibley: Professor Olsen, you actually advise junior faculty not to focus on public service. Why?

Olsen: The criteria used to evaluate intellectual work doesn’t fit the work done in the community. The type of writing for public service is different from traditional research, so the university doesn’t see it as scholarship. My advice to young faculty is to write scholarly work for four years to ensure publication and tenure and then to focus on community service. They must do what’s needed at the provost level. This does mean that meaningful work is not done in the early years. To change this, the university has to be flexible in its reward structure.

Price: If one’s passion is to do community work, do it and reflect later.

Triggle: There has been an overproduction of theoretical scholarship.

Petrie: My advice to junior faculty is to do good public service research and write about it later. Doing it this way and getting tenure is not easy, but it can be done. We have a responsibility to educate the rest of the university on the proper recognition of service learning.

Price: UB was not established as a land grant institution. It started as a medical college. Its structure was built during the postwar era that held research in high regard and not teaching or citizenship.

Shibley: President Greiner has called for more involvement in public service, but should it be lead by junior faculty?

Harkavy: You need top down support for service learning. The fact that UB has a vice president of public service and urban affairs is very important. What is needed is a structure that links public service with academic interests. You do not want each school or discipline doing its own thing. You want a structure that combines disciplines on sites.

Olsen: UB has focused on being the cheapest education, but this won’t work because the public values more expensive private education. Faculty who deal with public problems rarely interact with those that deal with theoretical problems, and it’s the theoretically-focused faculty that evaluate faculty.

Price: The Senate Committee did some self-education on service learning. Each of the deans were contacted regarding the president’s initiative on service that matters. They were asked to provide their criteria for public service. Some responded and some did not. The most resistant statements came from the natural sciences and math.

Triggle: We have four generations of faculty who have been brought up on the research model.

Harkavy: You need quick radical change, but you have all the pieces in place. Rewards should not be based only on research with an abstract focus. There must be genuine improvement to society. Academics use fad upon fad to judge scholarship. Instead they should judge work according to its improvement of the community and its advancement of scholarship.

Shibley: There are disciplines, such as math, for example, that some may feel are at risk under service learning. How do they fit in?

Harkavy: There needs to be a balance, where service learning is appropriate for some disciplines and inappropriate for others. A strategy is needed since you couldn’t have all faculty working in community service.

Price: Time has been spent putting the university in one direction. It takes time to change it. Any discipline can conform to service learning.

Petrie: There is a disciplinary paradox. We need to be interdisciplinary in working on today’s problems in the community, and yet academic criteria is disciplinary based. Social structures are needed that can bring disciplines together so that the impact on the community can be relevant.

Harkavy: You need the following to implement service learning: institutional level commitment; internal/external structures; commitment to long-term involvement; involvement of senior faculty.
Audience: How can university staff be involved in service learning?

Harkavy: At the University of Pennsylvania, staff volunteer in public service as mentors, grant-writers, and in other technical roles. Staff need to be part of the organizational structure that is developed for service learning.

Audience: Are there studies that have evaluated research that has been done in service learning?

Harkavy: Dwight Giles and Janet Eilens at Vanderbilt have done important work on evaluating service learning. William Poore Whyte at Cornell has written on the important contribution that action research has and can make.

Audience: How can brilliant people in the community who have not had access to the university in the past, have a greater role in the university?

Harkavy: The University of Pennsylvania has ongoing joint seminars with leaders from the community—but much, much, more can and should be done.

Audience: There’s a need for greater communication among various disciplines and groups, since the university is an intimidating place to get information. There is a need for follow through via small groups interacting over a period of time.

Taylor: There are several programs involved in service learning at UB and other local colleges, including the University Community Initiative. In the School of Social Work, students can work toward a master’s degree doing public service. Canisius College has an entrepreneurial training program, and the Center for Urban Affairs has a support program for minority owned businesses that includes forums on various topics.

Audience: Women and American Studies combine theory and action. Perhaps they can be used more effectively.

Harkavy: There is a need to create structures that bring departments and the community together; and that integrate academic and administrative resources so that they affect change in the community.

Sheffer: It’s the responsibility of each department and the university to achieve a balance of teaching and research with community involvement. We have to build on many fronts, and not just top down, but it needs to be a multilevel activity. Resources must be allocated in this direction and tenure requirements changed. Significant change has to occur quickly so that the university will not be a lagging indicator. It must take a leadership role.
The King Urban Life Center project involved the rehabilitation and restoration of a former Catholic church into a prekindergarten through second grade school and community center.
Community-Based Research, Practice and Learning at the University at Buffalo: Six Projects
Gloria J. Brennan

Six successful service learning and research projects were described by faculty and students during a forum on service learning for students that was held on October 30, 1996. The purpose of the forum was to acquaint students with the notion of public outreach and the many opportunities there are to be involved in service learning, and to acquaint students with the University Community Initiative. While the cases profiled are not intended to be comprehensive, they are exemplary in that they describe work which is integrated into the curriculum in different ways, continues over a long term, and represents the level of sustained faculty commitment required for successful community involvement.

The King Urban Life Center
Professor Stephen Halprin presented the case history of the King Urban Life Center. This project involved the rehabilitation and restoration of St. Mary of Sorrows Church located on the city's east side into a pre-K through 2nd grade school and a community center. The initial efforts of Professor Halpern and political science students were on establishing landmark status for the building to ensure that it wouldn't be destroyed. Next, they worked on plans to convert the building and on raising funds for the conversion. Until the Center was completed, activities were conducted in School 90 which is located nearby.

This is a multiyear project that began over ten years ago. It has no disciplinary boundary. In addition to Political Science, other disciplines have been involved.

* The Graduate School of Education operates an early childhood program at the school under the direction of Professor James Hoot.
* The School of Nursing, under the direction of Professor Ann Sidel, has, among other activities, completed a public health profile of the surrounding neighborhood and will operate a health clinic across the street from the Center.
* Social Work graduate students work with classroom teachers and provide outreach to families.
* Center for Urban Affairs students conducted a survey of the community's leaders and completed research and other administrative activities.
* School of Architecture students completed preliminary design work and cost estimating on rehabilitation.

The project provides an opportunity for faculty and students to apply their research and theoretical expertise in the community. While work on the project is a requirement for one political science course, interested students can choose it as an independent elective and earn degree credit. Graduate students can use the project as a thesis or dissertation topic.

The project has received numerous grants from public and private institutions, and has been the subject of a few reports. A journal published by the University of Pennsylvania, Universities and Schools, devoted one whole issue to the project, with several of the faculty members involved in the project contributing articles.

One of the unexpected outcomes of the project is the close working relationship that has developed between individuals involved in the project and other organizations such as School 90 and the Buffalo Coalition of Day Care Providers, a coalition of women who provide day care within their homes. Both of these organizations have benefited from the university's expertise. Professors Halpern, Sidel and Hoot have provided valuable assistance to the School and Coalition on such issues as health and child development.

In addition to providing a valuable service to the community, working on the project has also expanded the knowledge base of the faculty. Professor Hoot has been exposed to child development issues, such as HIV children, that are not found in the Early Childhood Center at the Amherst Campus that he directs. This has helped him to broaden his perspective. For Professor Halpern, the benefits of involvement have far exceeded his expectations.

Professor Halpern believes that faculty and students are privileged to be educated, and have a powerful moral and ethical obligation to give back to the community. Those who do, get back more than the time and energy that they put into it.

Affordable Housing
Professor George Hezel described the Affordable Housing Clinic that is part of the law school curriculum. Professor Hezel works with a “gaggle of students” in assisting in the development of affordable housing in the city, working with the Affordable Housing Clinic of the Law School, and representing nonprofit community-based organizations. Professor Hezel believes that students learn more through practice.

The students learn by doing and while providing a valuable service to the community. They have the opportunity to perform “deal making” in the transactional side of law, and are not involved in litigation.

They work as professionals with others in the community to achieve a common goal.
The project has made a difference in the community. Since 1988, over 300 units of affordable housing have been developed and over 24 million dollars has been raised. The project has produced an organizational infrastructure by creating nonprofit corporations capable of producing affordable housing on their own. Successes include HOPE of Buffalo, Benedict House and Delta Development.

Professor Hezel has begun a new service learning initiative. It began after a recognition of the decline in the city’s housing stock and the shocking disparity in wealth between the city and suburbs. While the city’s median income is not even $19,000, the metropolitan Buffalo area’s median income is $40,000. On weekends, suburban people are busy investing energy into their homes, while many city people are not. The difference in activity is due to home ownership. Professor Hezel feels that the city needs money to rehabilitate its housing stock and increase home ownership.

The new program, to be called Buffalo Rehab or Visions Unlimited, will: triage units in a specific area of the city to identify 1/3 that are OK, 1/3 that can’t be saved, and 1/3 that need cash for rehabilitation; and gather forces needed to rehabilitate the buildings.

The project will develop an economic model that uses foreign capital tax credits to generate the funds needed for the rehabilitation. Students will be working to develop the model, the corporation, and the economic plan to be used in the tax credits.

**East Buffalo Community Ownership Program**

Sandra Sheppard, a graduate student in the School of Social Work, described her internship in the East Buffalo Community Ownership Program. The school of Social Work has a long history of service learning that requires students to complete internships as part of the curriculum. In the past, the internship program focused on service providers as clients. Now, the community is viewed as the client and the focus of intervention.

Ms. Sheppard’s internship in the East Buffalo Community Ownership Program began in September, 1996 and continued until May, 1997. This organization is a land trust that controls development in a specific east side area of Buffalo by maintaining the ownership of land. Structures are bought, renovated and sold, but the land remains owned by the trust. The trust was established so that home ownership opportunities could be offered to low- and moderate-income residents of Buffalo’s east side. Ms. Sheppard’s tasks, as a community organizer, included networking with other housing organizations, creating a tenants’ association, facilitating monthly tenant association meetings, and monitoring the quality of organization communication. The experience has exposed Ms. Sheppard to a variety of individuals and situations, including working closely with city officials. She feels that the internship has given her an excellent education.

Ms. Shepherd believes that internships provide a tremendous opportunity for service-based learning, and can provide much needed assistance to understaffed community organizations. Students could perform work for organizations with staff who don’t have the time or expertise to do necessary research. The community, however, has not identified the university as a resource.

**Toward A New Neighborhood for Downtown Buffalo**

Under the direction of Professor Robert Shibley, this multiyear project created a redevelopment strategy for housing and neighborhood services for downtown Buffalo. The project involved graduate students from the Departments of Architecture and Planning who received assistantship incentives or studio, internship, or Community Design credit. The project resulted in a student-faculty authored publication setting out the strategic conditions necessary to establish a new neighborhood downtown. Funding was provided through subscriptions or “shared learning contracts” with Buffalo Place, Inc. (a business improvement district organization in the downtown). The strategy for new housing developed was implemented through the creation of Revival Downtown, Inc. as a subsidiary of the Buffalo Place Inc. business improvement district. Revival, in turn, expanded its scope to include the neighborhoods surrounding downtown and became Heart of the City, Inc.

Gwen Howard, who worked on the studio project as an architecture graduate student, believes that she is a product of successful service learning. After working on the studio project for course credit, Ms. Howard worked as an intern at Buffalo Place, Inc. designing a plan to implement one of the components of the housing strategy, and later was hired to implement the plan through Revival Downtown, Inc. For Ms. Howard, involvement in studio projects and internships were valuable experiences that enhanced her résumé, benefited downtown Buffalo, and resulted in a position after graduation.

The publication produced by the team entitled *A New Downtown Neighborhood in Buffalo* was adopted by both Buffalo Place, Inc. and the City of Buffalo and its recommendations are currently being implemented as Buffalo renews its urban center.

The Urban Design Project, a center in the School of Architecture and Planning has completed multiyear
projects in Niagara County, Jamestown, as well as in the City of Buffalo. The studio projects are part of the required curriculum in the graduate programs and the published products set the framework from which future actions occur.

Technology Access Campus
As a graduate student, Jason Hagin worked part time for the Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access (IDEA) in the School of Architecture to develop more affordable and accessible housing for people with disabilities through the renovation of an abandoned city firehouse.

IDEA's director, Professor Edward Steinfeld, served as a consultant to the project's architectural firm. Mr. Hagin codrafted the initial proposal for a Demonstration and Training Center as part of the renovation of the Engine 16 Firehouse. He researched existing assistive technology and facilitated the donation of equipment. At the training center, members of the community will see the latest assistive technologies and learn about approaches to independent living for people with disabilities. The housing units have been completed and construction on the training center will begin shortly. After graduation, Mr. Hagin began working full time in the IDEA Center and remains involved in the training center's implementation.

Mr. Hagin is pleased with the knowledge and experience he gained from the project while making a contribution to the community, and that he had the opportunity to participate in a project from start to finish. The training center will provide the community with something that is very tangible and enduring. Everyone will benefit.

University Community Initiative
Jayme Williams, a graduate student in the Center for Urban Studies, participated in a two-semester studio project in the university community area that enabled her and other Urban Studies and Planning students to apply learned concepts. Students participated for course or internship credit, or as part of an assistantship. The goal of the project was to identify how to develop and sustain an economically diverse community. They:
* conducted a traffic study of the area because of resident concerns regarding commercial construction
* surveyed 1,500 residents in the university community regarding attitudes about the area
* conducted six focus groups of residents regarding perceived needs and solutions

Students were involved in construction of the survey instrument, distribution of the surveys, selection and invitation of focus group members, data analysis, and preliminary preparation of a report. Ms. Williams believes that these activities helped to put a human face on the project. The students found that residents were very concerned about the neighborhood and were pleased that the University Community Initiative was addressing the neighborhood's problems.

Professor Henry Taylor, director of the University Community Initiative, provided additional information about the UCI and student projects. The UCI addresses the challenge of transforming a declining neighborhood into a viable place to work, live and play. The goal is to stabilize and recreate the area so that it attracts a wide range of people and classes. The Initiative seeks to identify those factors affecting community desirability and to use this information to formulate and carry out a comprehensive plan to develop the community. The focus is on eight policy areas:
* neighborhood image and design
* housing and neighborhood development
* schools and life-long learning
* economic development and job creation
* community safety and security
* health and human services
* parks and recreation
* capacity for sustained development

The plan is to have a clustering of housing for different socioeconomic classes that would attract people to the neighborhood and would keep current residents content. A joint studio of students from Planning and Urban Affairs looked at the physical dimension of the neighborhood to identify appropriate strategies. Six planning zones were identified and analyzed. This created the foundation for work that is proceeding. Professor Taylor stated that in the future, researchers will investigate how to redesign the community. The Initiative will move from ideas and notions of housing to the concept of a total neighborhood. One of the issues to be addressed is the appropriate mix of rental and private residences.

The University Community Initiative has multiple opportunities for service learning:
* Center for Urban Studies
* community-based organizations
* participation of other departments
* internships and studios for course credit
* independent study projects

A guideline for projects is "First, do no harm." The background work that has already been completed can be built upon. There is a need to get graduate and undergraduate courses and internships established. Dr. Taylor stated that we're on a mission to change the community, not just to give something back. There are a variety of ways in which individuals can get involved.
Perspectives
Student Forum on Service Learning

There was a discussion with audience members after the case study presentations. A summary of issues raised follows.

▼ Involvement
- Service learning should not be the domain of only professional schools. Other disciplines should also be involved. Political science appears to be currently the only nonprofessional school that is involved in service learning.
- Disciplines need to be invited to be involved in service learning. Disciplines, such as economics, could get involved by using economic knowledge to develop patterns and models that could be tested in the community.
- The Community Action Corp. places student volunteers in organizations throughout the City of Buffalo. It may be possible to link the Community Action Corp. into service learning projects like the University Community Initiative.
- The School of Management is involved in service learning. It is working with the city on a community policing project.

▼ Intellectual prejudice
- Some disciplines are proud that they don't deal with real world activity, with some faculty being content with producing useless knowledge. Emphasis is on theory that is divorced from practical application. There is a bias against practical work which is viewed as being second tier work.
- Both the applied and theoretical perspectives are valuable. A dialectic between the two is needed with the differences recognized and celebrated. This could be done through a network that would make connections between the two groups. The place of knowledge work is in improving the lives of people.
- The dialogue must not be phrased in a way that builds antagonism. We need to create opportunities where theory can be put into practice. Theoretically-focused faculty can be part of an interdisciplinary team that works toward converting abstract knowledge into concrete experiences.

▼ Attracting Faculty
- The financial benefits of service-based learning in procuring grants and fees will help attract faculty.
- National recognition of successful projects will also lead to more faculty involvement.
- We need to go forward and build successful service learning experiences. Once notoriety spreads, and more funds are attracted to service learning, other faculty will get involved.
- "Dirtying one's hands" with real-world concerns has led to interesting research. If this was known, more faculty would be willing to participate in service learning.

▼ University faculty can do harm in the community through poorly designed projects. Some individuals in the community are suspicious of university involvement because of poor past experiences.

▼ There is a need to ensure that the student experience is positive.

▼ A structure within the university is needed to facilitate the distribution of information on service learning, its successes and opportunities, to faculty and students.

We need to reconceive the balance among our primary activities and outcomes—our teaching, research, and public service—so that all three flow together. We must make our cities places to learn; to train students; and to conduct research. We must form multi-sector partnerships, and, in concert with community leaders, try new approaches to mutual learning and discovery.

—William R. Greiner
The University Community Initiative
The Center for Urban Studies

The University Community Initiative represents a joint effort by the City of Buffalo, the Towns of Amherst, Tonawanda, and Cheektowaga and the University at Buffalo to stabilize, revitalize and reinvent the neighborhoods surrounding the university's Main Street Campus, collectively referred to as the university community (see page 25). This partnership with the community is designed to ensure that these neighborhoods remain attractive places to live, work, and play well into the future.

Challenges in the University Community
In recent years the university community has emerged as a diverse, multicultural community with a rich mixture of persons, places, and activities. There are a variety of social, educational, and cultural institutions located in the area. Its commercial strips reflect a unique vitality and diversity that includes ethnic restaurants, book stores, coffee shops, a soda fountain, and the county's sole Harley-Davidson dealership.

There are many exciting activities currently underway, upon which the University Community Initiative can build and add value. These activities, coupled with the many strengths of the university community, suggest that thoughtful and imaginative planning and programming can help maintain the community's attractiveness. If the community is to grow and prosper, it must be able to compete for residents with neighborhoods throughout the metropolitan region. The goal of the University Community Initiative is to assist in building and sustaining a competitive community.

Despite its many strengths, significant changes have taken place in the university community over the past twenty-five years. Household income and home ownership levels have fallen, while unemployment and poverty rates have risen. Much of the housing stock is old and in danger of becoming obsolete. In some neighborhoods, there have been visible increases in dilapidation, graffiti, and blight, while the perception of increased crime, violence, teenage pregnancy, and other social problems persists.

As confidence in the future of the university community declines, middle-income families are leaving for the suburbs. The racial and economic balance currently enjoyed by the community is at risk, due to the out-migration of white and middle-income households. This process of social transformation is starting to affect the university community's vitality and life. Fortunately, it has not reached the point at which it is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to reverse these trends and stabilize these neighborhoods. This is the environment within which the University Community Initiative operates.

Vision for the University Community
The vision proposed for the university community is that of a lively, cross-class, multicultural community with a high quality of life, interesting shops and stores, delightful parks and playgrounds, great schools, safe neighborhoods, and superior—but affordable—housing. Four related concepts provide the focal point of this vision: restoring a sense of community, recreating these neighborhoods as centers of convenience, addressing the needs of both people and places, and developing the university community within a metropolitan context.

Restoring a Sense of Community
Community is the foundation upon which this effort is based. Residents and other stakeholders will be actively involved in the planning and development process, working toward a vision of community development that reflects the diversity of the university community. Local institutions and community-based organizations will work cooperatively to provide stability and assure sustained development. Public spaces will be designed to create opportunities for social interaction, and festivals and celebrations will take advantage of the rich cultural traditions within the community.

Recreating Neighborhoods as Centers of Convenience
Convenience is essential to building a livable community. Within walking distance or a short drive, residents will have access to a cluster of frequently-used conveniences, such as grocery stores, banks, dry cleaners, medical offices, child care and other services, along with restaurants, recreational facilities, parks and playgrounds. University Plaza will serve as the commercial center, with Bailey Avenue, Kensington Avenue and Main Street supporting additional activities. Within the plaza and along those corridors will be a diverse collection of shops and stores that will attract residents from throughout the metropolitan region. The concept of convenience is based on the notion that people's decision on where to live is based primarily on the type of amenities and assets available in a community.

Addressing the needs of People and Places
Investing in both people and place is essential to building a successful and sustainable community. Capital investments must occur simultaneously with efforts to increase employment opportunities and enhance community services.

Concentrating on physical improvements will create
a more attractive neighborhood, but may lead to the displacement of existing residents and will not address social and economic problems. While investing in job development will make residents more marketable, it also may cause them to relocate if neighborhood conditions continue to deteriorate. Investments must be balanced between people and place, so one is never promoted at the expense of the other.

Developing Community within a Metropolitan Context
Developing the university community within a metropolitan context reflects the reality that communities compete for residents on a regional basis. In 1900, the vast majority of Erie County residents lived in the central city. Now the county's 968,000 individuals are scattered across three cities, twenty-five towns and sixteen villages. People are not only moving from central city to suburb, but from suburb to central city and from one suburb to another.

Erie County's population is not expected to grow significantly over the next thirty years. Therefore, in order to develop a stable population base, the university community must be capable of successfully competing with suburban communities, rather than other central city communities for residents. This includes efforts to link the community to employment, shopping, entertainment and recreation centers throughout the metropolitan region.

Simultaneously, development of the university community must be based on the knowledge that it is composed of several smaller neighborhoods. Thus development must occur at both the community level—where projects, programs, and activities are initiated for the benefit of the whole area—and at the neighborhood level, where residents live.

Structure of the University Community Initiative
The University Community Initiative represents a bottom-up process uniting faculty and staff, local businesses and professionals, community stakeholders and residents in contributing to the vision of the community. The Initiative is designed to take advantage of the resources that the University at Buffalo brings to the community as part of its public service mission. Faculty and staff are encouraged to use the community as the site for sponsored research in areas such as housing, public safety, health and human services, economic development and education. The diversity of the issues facing the community requires a similar diversity of exploration on the part of the university.

The basic organizational structure of the University Community Initiative includes a Leadership Group, consisting of local elected officials and university representatives; a Development Group, consisting of representatives from government, public authorities, service providers and the community; and a Projects Group, consisting of faculty and staff who are conducting research in various areas. Administration and staffing for the project is through the Center for Urban Studies in the School of Architecture and Planning.

Eight Policy Areas
Based on the broad planning framework formed by the four concepts of community, convenience, people and place, and developing the community within a metropolitan context, University Community Initiative projects, programs and activities will unfold within eight policy areas. These policy areas are:

- neighborhood environment, image, perception, and design
- housing, family, and neighborhood development
- schools, community, and lifelong learning
- economic development, job creation, and workforce development
- community safety and security
- neighborhood health and human services
- parks, leisure, culture, and recreational activities
- building community capacity for sustained development

Overall, the Initiative is designed to provide a framework within which projects can be initiated by a variety of organizations, groups and researchers.

Current and completed projects include the development of a housing plan and delivery system for the community; an analysis of the Main-LaSalle revitalization project; the South Campus Master Plan; preparation of a demographic portrait of the community; a review of existing initiatives in the community, including health and human services; and an analysis of the city's acquisition/rehabilitation program for the university district.

The University Community Initiative offers a unique opportunity for the City of Buffalo, Town of Amherst and University of Buffalo to join together in addressing issues of common concern. The active participation of university faculty and staff, community stakeholders and other interested parties is essential to the success of this effort. With a vision of community, convenience, and people and place as the foundation, it will be possible to develop and implement strategies that achieve the goal of building and sustaining a lively, cross-class, multicultural community that is competitive on a regional level.
University Community Boundaries
There are several different ways in which individuals in the university can get involved in UCI projects. Examples of these models were presented at a meeting of interested individuals on November 6, 1996. At that meeting, several faculty, staff, and students discussed their ideas for new service learning projects within the UCI. A summary of a few of these ideas and models for involvement follow.

**Traditional Scholarship**

Professor Lawrence Southwick from the Department of Management presented a traditional approach to learning where theory leads to community service. Not all faculty get involved in community projects to help the community. Some faculty have a desire to do good research and this involves working in the community. They are motivated to pursue research questions that are interesting to the profession, since this is how faculty are rewarded. A primary concern is publication of the research findings in professional journals.

Professor Southwick described his research in using property tax assessments and municipal services to compare the value of different municipalities. He suggested the possibility of analyzing property tax assessments for the target area. Research assistants could be used on the project.

A discussion on how the UCI could assist in this project revealed that the UCI could provide assistance in funding and grant writing, data sharing, and connection to work that has already been done on the housing market in the target area. Housing is one of the priority research areas within the UCI.

**Community Service is the Focus**

A desire to participate in community service may be a reason for some individuals to become involved in the UCI. This is a bottom-up approach to learning where community service is the primary focus.

Professor Catherine Emihovich from the Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology is interested in research that improves teaching and learning in schools. She believes that schools need to be more committed to the community and should function as community centers.

Under the department's Buffalo Research Institute on Education for Teaching (BRIET) program, seventy-five students are placed in area schools to work with teachers to address some question of concern, such as women in science. Professor Emihovich wants to expand the program to include students who are interested in what makes schools work and their role in the community. She would like to place students in the target area's schools and provide workshops for teachers in an attempt to improve the community-school linkage. She believes that college student participation in the community is essential for learning.

The education profession rewards people who work and write on service learning projects. There is an emphasis on community-school collaborative initiatives. University partnerships with community schools is a trend in the field. Individuals in education who focus on abstract research have less prestige than those who focus on community involvement.

Schools and education is one of the priority areas for research in the UCI. The UCI can help Professor Emihovich in data sharing, linkages with educational institutions, communication with the superintendent of Buffalo Schools, and funds for outreach. The possibility of linking this project with the property tax assessment project was also discussed. There could be an economic return to the area due to the presence of the university in its schools. If the educational system is helped, more people may be attracted to the area although in the longer term. A focus could be on improving one school to see if property values increase.

**Extending a University Function into the Community**

John Grela from the Department of Public Safety discussed how the reduction of crime, crime awareness, and the perception of crime, both on and off campus is important to the university. Often victims of crime are students who live in the target area. There is a problem on how to deal with off-campus crime. The city's community policing policy and recent improvements in communication among the various jurisdictions has helped.

Mr. Grela would like to see the university's public safety department work more closely with City of Buffalo, Town of Tonawanda, and Town of Amherst police departments in the target area. A task force of the different police agencies could be created to better coordinate crime and safety activities. Safety and security is one of the priority research areas. The UCI can help with the necessary linkages.

**Increasing Awareness of Resources for the Community**

Jacqueline Bascom, staff with the Student Life Workshop described how workshops on a variety of topics are offered free or at a nominal fee to the university community and the general public. She suggested increasing resident awareness of these services through the UCI. The possibility of expanding the Student Life Workshops to other topics was also raised.
Investigating Ideas for UCI Projects
The questions to be asked in investigating ideas for possible UCI projects are:

- What are the research objectives?
- What kind of data will be collected?
- What kind of resources are needed from the UCP (amount of funds, grant writing assistance, research site)?
- How does the idea relate to existing or planned UCI projects?
- Is there a possibility for data sharing?
- Which of the eight policy areas does the idea address?
- How can the idea be expanded or revised to better fit UCI policy areas?
- What are the projects' potential benefits for the community?

UCR is a giant that can contribute mightily to the development of the university community. The university, with its army of faculty staff and students, combined with its libraries, academic departments and professional schools, represents an unrivaled community resource. The University at Buffalo is not only a transmitter of knowledge and culture, but it is also an economic engine, an applied technology center, investor, real estate developer, employment center and a neutral venue where complex and divisive issues can be deliberated.

The challenge then, is to find creative ways to unleash this resource. Here, faculty, staff, and students are urged to develop projects, programs, and activities, including research initiatives, internships, service-learning courses, and various technical assistance programs to assist in the development of the university community.

---

Get Involved
The University Community Initiative

University at Buffalo faculty, staff, and students are invited to participate in projects that address the eight policy areas that are essential elements contributing to the stability and vitality of a healthy community. Faculty and staff interested in conducting research, sharing information, developing strategies, or contributing ideas for projects in these areas or other areas of study that strengthen and enhance the university community are encouraged to participate. Researchers will add value to their own efforts, while ensuring that the Initiative can achieve its goal of creating a strong, multicultural, cross-class community. Please contact Danit Gehl at (716) 829-3099.

Neighborhood Environment, Image, Perception, and Design
Projects and activities designed to foster neighborhood pride, create a sense of community and increase confidence in the area's future growth and development.

Housing, Family, and Neighborhood Development
Projects and activities designed to produce an affordable supply of good housing for residents across the income spectrum and create a housing market that competes successfully with the region for middle-income residents.

Schools, Community, and Lifelong Learning
Projects and activities designed to produce high quality schools that can meet the educational needs of community residents and integrate the resources of the university with the needs of community.

Economic Development, Job Creation, and Workforce Development
Projects and activities designed to create vibrant, convenient commercial strips that provide community residents with a variety of goods and services, attract customers from across the metropolitan region and link community redevelopment with the creation of jobs and opportunities for business development among minority groups and women.

Community Safety and Security
Projects and activities designed to create a safe environment where people feel secure and protected from harm.

Neighborhood Health and Human Services
Projects and activities designed to enhance the delivery of social and health services.

Parks, Leisure, Culture, and Recreational Activities
Projects and activities designed to build a clean, distinctive environment with parks and open space and that bind together diverse neighborhoods and encourage social interaction.

Building Community Capacity for Sustained Development
Projects and activities designed to build community organizational structures that support sustainable social and economic development.