

Making Place Matter

California State University, Fresno

Final Report, August 1, 2005

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Process

In the spring of 2004, President John Welty and Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Jeri Echeverria, appointed a committee of forty-three on and off campus regional stakeholders to begin the process of identifying the issues and opportunities to collaborate on the unique problems of the San Joaquin Valley. They contracted with Dr. Robin Tricoli to work with the campus and the community on the identification of the issues/problems, suggestions for change, and a plan for embedding engagement into the campus and the community. Profoundly, since 1993, and clearly much earlier, but without specific focus, California State University, Fresno, faculty, students, administrators, students, and staff have had a very visible role and powerful impact in supporting the non-profit, educational, and business community which surrounds the university. In 1993 the University established a vision to become a premier interactive institution and set out to link its resources to the community. That effort was originally led by the Futures Institute which spent considerable time identifying the valley as a region and promoting regional collaboration. That was followed by the Fresno Area Collaborative Regional Initiative (CRI) and the Regional Jobs Initiative (RJI) which as set as one of its primary goals, increasing jobs by 30,000 in the next few years.

Over the past two years, research in the area of faculty and student engagement was conducted for the Spring 05 WASC Accreditation Report. Appendix E3, of the Fresno State Educational Effectiveness Review Report prepared in July 2004, for WASC, indicated that 3,800 students contributed approximately 172,000 hours of service annually. This translates into an estimated \$2.6M in value to the San Joaquin Valley community. Also of interest is the \$840,000 of financial assistance which was paid to students engaged in this work. It is quite likely those students (Fresno State is largely a commuter campus with student living in the region) returned that money to the community as well, adding up to almost \$ 3.5M invested in the community through the work of outreach and engagement. While numbers alone do not tell the story of how deeply embedded the university is within the community, it does go a long way in explaining the potential of what could occur if efforts are coordinated and enhanced. Appendix A will demonstrate the commitment of the community to the university and vice versa.

From the initial and subsequent meetings, the campus and community interest and desire to participate in the process grew. With each meeting I held, I would learn of

someone else who wanted to be involved, and the numbers grew to almost one hundred stakeholders participating and contributing to the discussions. At this point, I also began to meet individually with each of the campus vice presidents and various staff members within their areas to share the nature and extent of the campus engagement work and to gather their thoughts about where they see their departments and programs fitting into the regional mission. Each of the vice presidents were appointed to the initial committee, but due to normal university life cycles and unplanned events, it made it easier to keep them informed and connected to the process if I met with them individually. Each vice president was completely supportive and offered assistance to the project.

Orientation Meeting, July 20, 2004

An initial orientation meeting was held on July 20 (Appendix A); with four potential areas which emerged as the priorities we might address (collaborative governance, innovative economy, livable community, and social inclusion). We discussed the challenges and the opportunities in each of these areas. In order to assess the current beliefs, roadblocks, and smooth streams, between July 20 and October 20, Dr. Tricoli met with small groups and individual members of the initial committee as well as other interested and engaged members of the community and campus. I asked each group the following three questions and the results were reported at the October 20th meeting:

- 1) What policies, procedures, and or practices facilitate your ability to develop outreach or civic engagement community partnerships with the University or the community?
- 2) What does not work well or inhibits your ability to engage in outreach?
- 3) What suggestions do you have for streamlining the process of community engagement with the campus or the community? (Appendix B)

Making Place Matter Fall 2004 Meeting

The October 20th meeting focused on the results of the discussions of the three questions above. The discussion was then directed to each priority area (collaborative governance, innovative economy, livability community, and social inclusion), the outcomes they wanted to see, and the actions which were needed to achieve the goals. Each member of the committee chose one or more groups to which they wanted to be initial champions or partners. Looking at the results of the three questions asked between meetings and from the discussion at the October 20 meeting, it also became evident that there were two groups missing from our initial priority area selection: Health and Human Services and Arts and Culture. These groups were added and membership consisted of community partners, deans, faculty, and staff. Moving participants to thinking in terms of the measurable outcomes and actions which are needed to achieve those goals became somewhat of a challenge because most constituents were not accustomed to thinking in those terms. It remained a challenge throughout the process, but there was success.

Making Place Matter Spring 2005 Meeting

Between October 20 and March 4, I continued to meet with the established groups, adding membership as we gathered momentum. I also met personally with individuals who were not able to attend meetings. The following questions were asked of everyone participating and the results were reported by group members at the March 4th meeting:

- 1) What kinds of programs and special projects are you working on within the community at this time?
- 2) What group/s/ are you most trying to impact in the region?
- 3) How would you like to see the program/project further develop? What barriers do you face?
- 4) How can we better coordinate campus outreach activities and service learning to be more effective? What resources will you need?
- 5) What can we do as a campus to be more accessible to the regional stakeholders with whom you are involved?
- 6) How can we better market and leverage the campus' existing efforts in your area? (See Appendix C).

It was important for each group to begin to take ownership for their Priority Area. As such, at all subsequent meetings each group had a member report out their findings. This process began at the March 4th meeting.

Several themes began to emerge as cross cutting:

- * A comprehensive definition of engagement;
- * Greater marketing of programs, services, and resources to the community;
- * Faculty incentives;
- * Greater involvement of alumni;
- * Greater coordination of efforts across the campus for the benefit of the campus and community.

Specifically, six categories of suggested University actions emerged:

- 1) Regional marketing/communications;
- 2) Faculty review, promotion/tenure incentives, recognition, development and training;
- 3) Student alumni engagement;
- 4) Regional access for community;
- 5) Internal coordination/collaboration;
- 6) Infrastructure for regional collaborations.

Making Place Matter Meeting Summer 05

Between March 4th and June 6th, President Welty and Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Jeri Escheverria appointed an additional committee to review the issues identified as University-wide issues and to meet with the six priority area groups to further understand the remaining challenges and to offer suggestions for moving this initiative forward (see Appendix D). The Seven Principles for Leadership in an Engaged Institution were introduced during this and all subsequent meetings to encourage broad and specific thinking and which focused on ways to engage the university and the community in effective partnerships. The seven principles are as follows and are taken from Wm. Platter's work in *Public Work and the Academy: An Academic Administrator's Guide to Civic Engagement and Service-learning*, Mark Langseth and William Platter, (Ed), page. 11. Anker Publishing, Bolton, MA:

- 1) Responsiveness: listening to the communities, states and regions served;
- 2) Respect for partners: collaborating with communities based on an understanding of and respect for what they bring to a partnership;
- 3) Academic neutrality: taking up difficult, even divisive issues, while ensuring intellectual honesty and neutrality;
- 4) Accessibility: finding ways to mark our complex disciplines and academic practices understood and useful to communities;
- 5) Integration: combining the discovery of knowledge and its dissemination; through teaching and service as the whole and complete work of a university while bringing together disciplines to apply their expertise to issues and problems in their social context instead of the academic specialization exclusively;
- 6) Coordination: making sure that willing partners inside the university understand what each is doing and is capable of doing before inflicting narrow, unrelated activities on neighbors and communities;
- 7) Resource partnerships: committing sufficient institutional resources-along with community, corporate, and governmental partners-to ensure that the work can succeed (NASULGC, 2000, p.16)

Civic Engagement and Collaborative Governance Meeting, July 25, 2005

This group requested an additional meeting because they felt they wanted more time to talk with one another about the potential for collaboration and to confirm definitions. The results are reported as follows:

The Collaborative Governance and Civic Engagement Priority Area met again on July 25 to further refine their outcomes in working with the non-profit sector and offered the following as an amendment to the June 6th meeting.

For this group to be successful it was suggested the following serve as a potential strategic plan for the Civic Engagement/Collaborative Governance Priority Area:

- 1) Adopt the definition of civic engagement as suggested including examples and vision;

- 2) Develop funding;
- 3) Develop university branding and budget for marketing
 - *Move Fresno State to become a recognized leader in civic engagement
 - *Attain scholarly journal on collaboration to be housed in Fresno State Academic Affairs (Chancellor's Office potential initiative);
- 4) Engagement (5 step process)
 - a) Input on policy and engagement
 - b) Engage and involve
 - i. Fresno State become the "go to" place for faculty/student research services
 - ii. University needs to be "safe" place for diverse and difficult topics
 - iii. Fresno State needs to encourage more participation in public sphere
 - iv. Engage students and support faculty in community based professional service and research
 - v. Engage faculty and students in electoral process
 - vi. Fresno State involvement in civic engagement and democratic process
 - c) Fresno State create Best Practices Institute for public and community leaders
 - d) Evaluate and assess each area of this work to determine efficiency and effectiveness
 - e) Effective feedback
- 5) Ambassadorship (encourage stars in all areas);

Outcomes (some examples of immediate action)

The following represents only brief examples of several campus-wide and community initiatives which are immediately taking place and some of which have been on-going as a result of the community and campus meetings:

- 1) A committee was appointed to review the RPT process and recommendations were made to the Provost;
- 2) University Relations will immediately begin to incorporate engagement and outreach in all appropriate university publications and speeches;
- 3) A definition of civic engagement was designed and presented to the Provost and Faculty Senate for consideration;
 - a. *Civic engagement is our institutional commitment and responsibility to serve the public good. Civic engagement refers to the many ways our university demonstrated through mutually-beneficial partnerships the alignment between the teaching,*

professional/scholarly/creative activities, and service agenda of the university and the interests of our region.

Examples of Civic engagement activities include but are not limited to:

1. *Service learning*
2. *Community-based participatory and applied research*
3. *Community service and volunteerism*
4. *Efforts engaging the campus community in the democratic process*
5. *Social entrepreneurship*
6. *Professional service to the community*

b. Faculty focus groups will be conducted in Fall '05 to determine faculty understanding of engagement and outreach;

- 4) Based on the outcome of the focus groups, training is planned for Spring '06 for the revitalization of the Service-Learning Development Committee;
- 5) Use the focus-group information to support the Engaged Department Seminar (The Engaged Department Toolkit published by Campus Compact provides the basis for this seminar). The Engaged Department Seminar is designed for academic departments interested in the department as a unit of engagement and change. The purpose of the institute is to help participating departments develop strategies to (a) include community-based work in both their teaching and their scholarship, (b) include community-based experiences as a standard expectation for majors, and (c) develop a level of unit coherence that will allow them to model successfully civic engagement and progressive change on the departmental level;
- 6) Encourage greater participation in the Engaged Department Grant;
- 7) University Relations will begin in Fall '05 to use the term and work of engagement and outreach in all appropriate university publications and speeches;
- 8) The Dean and faculty of the Kremen School of Education and Human Development are broadly and deeply involved in assisting the Fresno Unified School District in general restructuring and gaining financial stability;
- 9) There have been ongoing efforts in the area of Economic Innovation linking the university and the business and manufacturing community in efforts to grow the economy;
- 10) Discussions are taking place between community partners and the university to reduce the risk management issues which can negatively impact faculty and students involvement with regional services and initiatives;
- 11) Link all major outreach, engagement, and service-learning initiatives for greater impact

- 12) Dr. Tricoli has been retained by the University to continue the efforts to assist with aligning institutionalize engagement efforts, values, practices, policies and rewards on campus and develop a broader and deeper knowledge within the community of potential partnerships.
- 13) Recognizing the long-term economic, environmental and social challenges of the San Joaquin Valley, Governor Schwarzenegger signed an executive order in June 2005 establishing the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley. Designed as a joint initiative between the public and public sectors and state and local leaders, the Partnership is comprised of cabinet secretaries from eight state agencies, eight local government leaders, and eight private sector leaders. The purpose is seven-fold and includes partnering with the University of California, California State University and community colleges to 'provide guidance and support of studies of particular interest and importance to the Valley. Fresno State is working cooperatively with universities in the region to provide leadership on several of the Partnership's initiatives.

Goals of the University Wide and Six Priority Areas:

Human Capital and Literacy

- 1) Create a partnership program with local school districts where the University and the districts collaborate on the pre-service preparation of teacher candidates and the in-service training of current teachers.
- 2) Create a center for educational leadership in the central valley to focus upon improving school achievement and overcoming the achievement gap between children from high versus low-income families.
- 3) Create a center for literacy education to overcome the fiscally driven reading instruction policies being pushed onto schools, relying instead on research driven instructional methodology.
- 4) Develop a community collaboration including the University, school districts, the County of Education, and Fresno Business Council to focus on children at risk for dropping out of school.
- 5) Expand programs such as Mini-Corp, turning Points Academy, Teaching Fellows, and the Teacher Recruitment Center to foster post-secondary attendance by under-represented groups.

Arts and Culture Goals

To broaden the range and scope of public awareness of the impact of the University's contributions to the New California's quality of life and better inform the public of its collaborations with local and regional agencies, our goals would be to:

- Goal 1:** Make it possible to market subscriptions of the Daily Collegian to alumni
- Goal 2:** Establish and maintain relations with local and regional cultural arts and literary associations
- Goal 3:** Explore sources of funding to improve and expand production for the Fresno Channel (Comcast channel 96).
- Goal 4:** Explore sources of funding to broaden KFSR (campus radio station) programming and broadcasting range
- Goal 5:** Explore the idea of a partnership or special advertising rate with the Fresno Bee for University Relations to create a bi-annual Fresno State "broadsheet" that can be included in the strategically selected edition of the Fresno Bee

Economic Innovation Goals

- Goal 1:** Establish, expand, and ensure effectiveness of university-industry partnerships in applied research for targeted industry sectors poised for growth and expansion in the region, such as:
 - International Center for Water Technology-providing R & D and other program support to manufacturers of water technology
 - Advanced manufacturing Center- providing engineering and technical expertise to general manufacturers and partnering with the International Center for Water Technology and Institute for Food and Nutrition Innovation to serve water tech and food manufacturers
 - Institute for Food and Nutrition Innovation-Providing R & D support to food manufacturers and relates sectors (e.g. packaging)
 - Center of Excellence for Construction Industry-providing "best practices", technical support to the construction, real estate, development and "built environment" industry sectors
 - Center of Excellence for Supply chain Management – providing leading-edge information on technology and practices driving excellence in the Advanced Logistics and Supply chain Management industries

- Digital Economy Center – providing support to area businesses to accelerate the deployment and adoption of information technology in order to upgrade business performance and improve operating efficiencies
- Center for Renewable and Innovative Energy – develop this center to serve as the regional “hub” of information on energy efficiency, renewable and clean technologies

- Goal 2:** Accelerate the creation of new, high-growth businesses in the regional economy by (1) establishing an “intellectual property” office and program on campus to encourage the development and commercialization of new ideas and technology among faculty and students, (2) partner with the private sector to launch at least one additional venture capital and/or angel investment fund in the region, and (3) with the Lyles Center as the coordinator, serve as the “clearinghouse” of supportive programs for entrepreneurs
- Goal 3:** Establish the Campus Collaborative on Industry to ensure maximum collaboration between and leverage of campus-based programs that involve industry partnerships
- Goal 4:** Develop and execute a comprehensive, integrated plan for career services and job placement for Fresno State students so that (1) students receive maximum support in their transition from graduation to career and (2) area businesses have effective, coordinated support for accessing recent graduates
- Goal 5:** Develop and execute a communications plan targeting business audiences (particularly the target industries referenced above) to relay the specific resources available on campus to help grow businesses and how to easily access those resources

Environmental Stewardship Goals

The five focus areas for Environmental Stewardship are:

- Air quality
- Water quality
- Water quantity
- Energy management efficiency, and renewables
- Land use planning

The four goals for addressing these issues are as follows:

- 1) Appropriately and effectively frame the issues, specifically focusing on a scientifically based decision process rather than perception/intuition based decisions.
- 2) Raise awareness of Environmental Stewardship starting in the K-12 schools and to promote career opportunities among this group in the areas of math, engineering, science, technology, etc.
- 3) Fresno State needs to become a regional and national model for environmental stewardship through:
 - a) technology development
 - b) entrepreneurship
 - c) lifestyle choices such a carpooling, building design, etc.
 - d) Fresno State through its colleges and schools centers/institutes, faculty staff, students need to be a recognized leader in all areas of environmental stewardship, for example: it is not just dirty air that is the issue in the Valley. We need to breakdown and identify the contributing factors and solve the problems through science and applied technology, lifestyle choices and changes, etc.
 - e) Participate with “regional interests” (ag, manufacturing, construction, etc.) as well as elected officials, the environmental community, higher education and government agencies in raising awareness and implementing needed changes.

Civic Engagement and Collaborative Governance

- Goal 1)** Reach agreement that the following will be the definition of civic engagement for this campus: *Civic engagement is our institutional commitment and responsibility to serve the public good. Civic engagement refers to the many ways our university demonstrates through mutually-beneficial partnerships the alignment between the teaching, professional, scholarly/creative activities, and service agenda of the university and the interests of our region.*
- Goal 2)** Fresno State will become the institution of choice for those people gathering evidence to make solid public policy decisions.
- Goal 3)** Create a center for training public and community leaders.
- Goal 4)** Create and sustain more opportunities for students and faculty to become effectively engaged in community based professional service and research.
- Goal 5)** Create evaluation/assessment instrument on the effective/efficacy of this work and reform it as necessary.

- Goal 6)** Secure funding for and launch the Center for Community Based Learning and Research.

Health and Human Services Goals

Goal 1: Review College RTP process so that the faculty involved in engagement activities are explicitly acknowledged for these efforts

Goal 2: Develop fellowships for faculty and students who incorporate community engagement principles and activities into their research

Goal 3: Involve College alumni in the development of community engagement activities

University Wide Stewardship Goals

- Goal 1)** More and coordinated marketing of college and campus activities and events. Creation of a marketing strategy which will combine regional and internal marketing focusing on higher quality publications across the colleges and departments for internal and external markets.
- Goal 2)** Clarify within the faculty review, tenure, and promotion process, the expectations for new faculty recruits and current faculty, the expectations for participation in engagement and outreach.
- Goal 3)** The campus to become the “go to” place for businesses, educational leaders, agriculture, water technology, manufacturing, arts, culture, health care, viticulture and enology. Create a more “user-friendly” campus for community partners, create more opportunities for businesses to work with appropriate faculty, centers, and institutes, and create a Welcome Center in which visitors, businesses, prospective students could go for information.
- Goal 4)** Generate greater opportunities for collaboration in the interest of greater and more effective impact. Create and sustain a process through which centers, institutes, interested faculty, and campus community could be informed about grants, initiatives, and partnerships with the community.
- Goal 5)** Secure greater funding and support from Sacramento and Washington, D.C. Coordinate all campus efforts to maximize effectiveness funding and support.
- Goal 6)** Utilize the knowledge, skill, and influence of alumni and emeriti faculty to benefit the new graduates with career opportunities, for university fundraising purposes, and campus advisory purposes.