**TCNJ Task Force on Community Engaged Learning**

**Interim Report, Fall 2014**

TCNJ recently received the classification as a Community Engaged Institution from the Carnegie Foundation. This rare and prestigious honor recognizes TCNJ’s leadership and innovation in this arena, including the integration of the Bonner Community Scholars program with the innovative Freshman Year CEL Experience as well as the growing number and variety of advanced community engaged learning (CEL) courses we offer to our students.

Yet we must do more as an institution to broaden and deepen CEL opportunities for our students, administrators and faculty. Research has shown that student learning is significantly enhanced when community engagement (whether occurring within the context of a course or through co-educational experiences coordinated by Student Affairs) is connected to the curriculum, includes meaningful reflection, extends beyond any one class or semester, and is part of a developmental path for students throughout their four years of college.[[1]](#footnote-1) The CEL Task Force makes the following recommendations centered on increasing the number of students who have meaningful, tiered community engagement experiences during their four years at TCNJ; identifying new and innovative paths for community engagement in both curricular and co-curricular settings; and maintaining TCNJ’s position at the forefront of best practice community engagement colleges or universities.

**A. Establish Community Engaged Learning (CEL) as a Universal and Tiered Opportunity**

The College should move vigorously to advance the two main strategies that have emerged from its “High Impact” planning process, in which an interdisciplinary TCNJ team[[2]](#footnote-2) (led by staff in the Center for Community Engaged Learning and Research[[3]](#footnote-3), or CCEL&R) are advised by leaders from the American Association of Colleges and Universities, the Bonner Foundation, and the Carnegie Foundation’s Community Engagement Classification program.[[4]](#footnote-4) These strategies center on increasing breadth and depth.

1.The first strategy calls for *broad* integration. CEL&R Center staff would help create and support at least one upper level CEL course section within each major that would run at least once a year. The second strategy calls for *depth*. As an important initiative regarding this strategy, CEL staff would collaborate with one department within each TCNJ school to create a four-year path within at least one major. This means that an Interactive Multimedia (IMM) major, for example, could build upon her FY CEL experience (which is already universal)—and participate in a 200, 300, and 400 level CEL course in IMM. Each department could, if it so desires, use this path as a means to develop a deep and comprehensive partnership with a particular organization (such as the Rescue Mission of Trenton), concentrate all of its CEL learning activities on that organization’s needs or issue area, and thereby create a new area of expertise or distinction. The psychology department, could for example, direct its CEL resources to help a high school dropout program and be recognized for its work in youth development.[[5]](#footnote-5)

2. In addition to adding breadth and depth to the level of community engaged learning that takes place within Schools and departments, the College should conduct an analysis of the First Year (FY) CEL program with an eye towards making some changes to increase the percentage of FY Seminar Program (FSP) sections that integrate service and learning. While this number has grown from a handful to over forty during the last several years, it is not possible to continue this pattern of growth. This is partly owing to the fact that all FSP sections are currently offered in the fall semester, and current levels of transportation and staff are not sufficient to mobilize all freshman year students in one term. If more professors are recruited and express interest in carrying out a CEL FSP, the Bonner Institute for Civic and Community Engagement and Bonner Scholars cannot currently accommodate them. If some sections were offered during the spring, they could accommodate more courses. There are at least two strong reasons for looking into this possibility. First, our own research suggests that the FY CEL curricular track is more impactful on students than the co-curricular track.[[6]](#footnote-6) Second, some TCNJ academic leaders have raised some concern that a substantial number of FY students participate in writing intensive FY seminar courses in the fall—before they participate in their Writing 102 course that aims to address their weaknesses.[[7]](#footnote-7)

**B. Institutionalize Community Engaged Learning**

In addition to the above initiatives, a broad effort to provide institutional support to faculty and students is necessary to broaden and deepen community engaged education at TCNJ.

**1. Increasing Institutional Support for Curricular CEL Programs**

The College’s success—measured in part by the increasing levels of faculty participation, student outcomes, community outcomes, and national recognition (such as the recent Carnegie classification for community engagement)—reflects the robust infrastructure that has been built over the last nine years. A dedicated and professional staff was needed in order to connect the College’s mission and aspirations with real work on the ground in the community. It is labor-intensive work to truly cultivate the common ground with respect to three different constituencies: professors, students, and community partners. The College’s suburban location also creates particular logistical challenges (to transport students off-campus) that require staff time.

The infrastructure to create and expand CEL curricular programs has been largely built on external grant funds, which is not sustainable on a long term basis. Out of nineteen full- and part-time Center program staff members dedicated to TCNJ initiatives[[8]](#footnote-8), three are fully funded by College dollars; yet two of these three only work ten hours a week. Two other staff members receive 70% of their salary and benefits from TCNJ institutional dollars. Meanwhile, fourteen full-time staff and eleven part-time staff are funded solely by grants. As a result of the current need to rely primarily on grant funding, Center staff must currently raise approximately $600,000 to staff its operations on an annual basis. This is simply not sustainable. It puts too much pressure on existing staff who must spend significant time chasing grant opportunities. It can also hinder the staff’s ability to focus on the institution’s main priority of educating students and addressing ‘quality control’ issues. Finally, this fiscal challenge can soon have an impact on the College’s ability to retain talented young staff who played a large role in the aforementioned success of TCNJ CEL programs. For example, during the past year, two full-time staff members were reduced to half time, because the Center lacked funding to cover their healthcare and other benefits. There are currently not enough funds to provide an appropriate level of staff compensation, create clear paths for internal advancement, and retain the skills and expertise that staff members develop over time. Furthermore, many core functions of the Center are carried currently out by one-year Vista Volunteers or Full Time AmeriCorps members, whose short tenure means the loss of valuable knowledge and expertise on an annual basis. They also require significant annual training and supervision.

The CEL Task Force therefore recommends that the College dramatically reduce the reliance on grant funds to support employees who administer signature curricular programs. By funding the staff, including but not limited to student interns, necessary to broaden and deepen CEL programs, community engaged learning can be further institutionalized at TCNJ. Institutionalization will allow the College to expand the support systems for faculty and students, increase oversight of programs, and improve tracking and assessment.

**2. Expanding support systems for faculty and students**

Further institutionalizing community engaged learning is critical, first, to expand support systems for faculty and students participating in community engaged learning. In order to create opportunities for more students to participate in CEL courses and experiences beyond the Freshman Year Experience and current levels of ACEL participation, more faculty must participate. The core group of committed faculty must expand from the current 26; these are faculty who worked with staff to design and/or implement an ACEL experience or project, or shared their own expertise to support an important CEL initiative, during the last academic year. At present, the principal limiting factors on faculty participation in CEL teaching are the lack of CEL&R and Bonner Institute staff to support faculty, and a lack of professional incentives for professors.[[9]](#footnote-9)

To expand faculty participation, it is therefore essential that TCNJ provide more faculty support. As indicated earlier, allocating more resources for Community Engaged Learning focused on hiring more staff for the Center for Community Engaged Learning and Research would allow Center staff to: 1) carry out in-depth consultation with faculty and departments in order to help conceptualize a workable course and project design, match faculty with appropriate community partners, and integrate best practices (such as reflection); 2) Coordinate the logistics (such as managing student travel to Trenton and other CEL course sites, purchasing food or supplies when needed, and other similar tasks) and help co-manage the projects (such as supervising student interns or others who may be providing on-site supervision; 3) Evaluate and assess effectiveness of individual courses, majors, programs and/or partnerships in achieving CEL goals; and 4) ensure compliance with all established legal and risk management policies (i.e. waiver forms, permission slips when working with minors, background checks etc…)[[10]](#footnote-10).

In addition to these tasks to be conducted primarily by Center Staff, six institutional changes would help expand and retain a committed core of faculty teaching CEL Courses. First, the College should designate most or all CEL courses as seminars with a 15-student cap. Second, it is important to provide faculty with course releases, academic-year supplemental pay, and/or summer stipends for CEL course and program development when appropriate and feasible Third, the number of Bonner Scholar positions should be increased, to provide leadership opportunities for exceptional upper-class Bonners who can assist professors and staff in supporting ACEL courses (akin to a Civic Engagement Teaching Assistantship). These three proposed changes recognize that creating and teaching a CEL course in a way that is truly tied to academic, civic and community impact objectives takes more time and effort than a traditional course.

A fourth recommendation is that the CCEL&R should create ongoing professional development and teaching support programs for faculty, administrators, and engaged students. This could include creating a CEL Faculty-Fellow position (with one course release per year). This Fellow would: collaborate with colleagues to develop and implement a professional development program and workshop series for CEL; foster more academic writing and publications based upon community engaged learning and research, involving other professors, administrators, and students; help organize regional and national conferences on best practices and innovation in the field; and collaborate with colleagues in the field to organize an annual conference that would allow students from the northeast and beyond to present their community engagement and CEL work (i.e. similar to former Campus Outreach Opportunity League Conferences). This should include professionals and students from both Student and Academic Affairs and seen as another opportunity for collaboration.

Fifth, the Center for CEL&R and Deans, with guidance from other academic leaders (such as the Associate Provost for Liberal Learning), should lay out a process by which the institution revisits the existing goal and two learning outcomes[[11]](#footnote-11) associated with the CEL program—to ensure, among other things, that they resonate with all Schools and can guide the next wave of programmatic expansion and changes. At the same time, the process should encourage Schools and departments to evaluate and transform courses to align with CEL goals. This would include providing an institutional (i.e. the AAC&U “Civic Engagement Value Rubric”) framework as well as one (i.e., “The Engaged Department”) one for schools so they can develop their own set of disciplinary-based civic engagement learning outcomes. These frameworks should inform the creation of a School or Campus-Wide reader of resource materials, which would guide teaching and reflection activities. They would also allow students to contextualize a range of issues—such as the root causes of the community problems that are at the heart of their CEL experience---as well as possible remedies.

Finally, in keeping with the recommendations of the New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE): “With regard to faculty rewards for roles in community engagement, it is difficult to create a campus culture of community engagement when there are not clearly articulated incentives for faculty to prioritize this work. We would like to see more examples of campuses that provide evidence of clear policies for recognizing community engagement in teaching and learning, and in research and creative activity, along with criteria that validate appropriate methodologies and scholarly artifacts. We urge Community Engagement institutions to initiate study, dialogue, and reflection to promote and reward the scholarship of engagement more fully.” To this end, we recommend that departments amend their disciplinary standards to recognize community engaged teaching and research as valuable forms of scholarly work. We also recommend that the College’s tenure and promotion guidelines be amended to reflect the value of CEL teaching and research with a view towards recognizing and rewarding these activities in tenure and promotion decisions.”

|  |
| --- |
| **Case Study #1**From Miriam Shakow, Assistant Professor of Anthropology: “I taught a qualitative methods Advanced CEL course in Fall 2014, ANT 401: Urban Ethnography. Owing to a lack of full-time staff available from CCEL&R to assist in course design and matching with an appropriate community partner, I only learned halfway through the semester that the community partner for this course did not carry out frequent group-based activities with its members, instead carrying out most of its services one-on-one. While the community partner, A Better Way, bent over backwards to accommodate my class, I and they had significant difficulty in finding opportunities to carry out a core CEL activity for the course—participant observation of group events. In addition, the lack of TCNJ CEL&R staff to act as liaisons with the community partner organization staff meant that coordinating all activities was time-consuming for me and conflicted with my family responsibilities. In the end, the students reported that they had learned many important skills and I saw evidence of this in their coursework, but I would be more likely to teach such a course again if I could receive more staff support to design the course and carry out the logistics.”**Case Study #2**From Bruce Stout, Associate Professor and Chair of Criminology: “In the fall 2014 semester I taught a CRI350, Advanced Criminology: Juvenile Justice and Delinquency as an ACEL course.  Students in the course received an all-day training in an evidence-based intervention for at-risk youth, Aggression Replacement Training (ART), and then taught ART lessons to students in an after-school program run by our community partner, Men For Hope.  Staff at the Bonner Center were instrumental in arranging, scheduling and videotaping the all-day ART training and, throughout the semester, for arranging, scheduling, and helping supervise the multiple sessions where my TCNJ students worked with the students at Men For Hope.  There were numerous logistical challenges throughout the semester and Bonner staff ably overcame them all, making this a very positive experience for my TCNJ students, but also for the students from Men For Hope.” At the end of the course, 97% of Bruce’s students reported that the project was “appropriately tied to the learning goals of the course.” 93% reported that the project “increased their understanding of juvenile delinquency in a concrete way.” |

**3. Promoting Student Participation and Advancing the Total Student Experience**

From the student’s perspective, several additional institutional changes could help them make more informed decisions, and take advantage of the opportunities in the community that can enhance their participation, engagement, and learning:

* Creating a Records and Registration PAWS designation for CEL courses so that students know of there is a CEL component to a class before their first day in that class. This would also make it easier for students to demonstrate their participation to employers and graduate programs, since this would lead to CEL being captured on transcripts. (It would also make it easier for the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to run reports and help track as well as assess levels of participation.)
* Conducting an analysis of the current course grid and the range of requirements placed on students (non-credit seminars, for example) that may make it difficult to leave campus for any meaningful amount of time. This challenge, if real, would be even more daunting for students who have to work to help pay for College and support themselves.
* Creating a Service, CEL, or Community Engagement Shuttle. Students who participate in curricular or co-curricular programs would find it easier to engage with the community if there was a free and reliable means to visit some of the key community sites. While there is a public bus system that connects the campus to many city locations, this is not a solution for many reasons. This includes the amount of time it takes due to the regular stops on each route and the inconvenient location of those those stops for CEL students.
* Working with Career Services to develop expertise in guiding TCNJ students into careers that make use of the skills and intellectual competences developed though participation in CEL and ACEL activities. Affiliate TCNJ’s Career Services with “More than Money Careers,” an organization that connects students with well-paying jobs with social impacts that reflect their values.
* Working with Student Activities and Fraternity and Sorority Life to support student organizations with philanthropic and service missions. This could include organizing upper level Bonners and CEL academic partners to help lead pre-service educational sessions (and/or materials), leading post-service reflection sessions, and/or offering trainings for students within these organizations who participate in regular service and/or philanthropic activities. This also could include helping student organizations with issue-based missions to connect to the best community partners (not all have the capacity to partner) and begin (or enhance existing) meaningful service experiences.
* Collaborating with the Leadership Office within Student Affairs to incorporate civic leadership co-curricular programs to enhance the ways students demonstrate personally and socially responsible leadership and citizenship.
* Building more opportunities for students to increase their civic engagement and democratic learning through political engagement programs, such as Student Lobby Days incorporated into a class, voter registration drives, evening educational panels on local, national, and international issues (etc.). Student Affairs and CEL staff could also collaborate on integrating opportunities into some curricular programs—such as the FY CEL experience.
* Exploring with Residential Education the possibility of using pre-existing assets (Bonner Scholars and Community Advisors) to deepen the connection of the off-campus CEL experiences to FSP-CEL learning objectives; this could be done, for example, by organizing pre-service film discussions or post service conversations with academics or community partners in the dorm lounges or areas.

**4. Developing an interdisciplinary minor in Social Innovation and Social Justice**

In order to move TCNJ to the next level in the field of community-engaged education, we also recommend that a faculty taskforce be convened to develop an interdisciplinary minor in Social Innovation and Social Justice. Integrating social entrepreneurship and social justice education with traditional CEL activities will enable TCNJ to better address our ACEL objectives, and will provide our students with an intensive and focused curriculum that will complement the CEL and ACEL courses in various disciplines. We currently have a Liberal Learning Concentration in Social Justice Studies that enrolls several students each year. The School of Business also offers a minor in Business and Society. These existing programs should be reviewed and merged into an interdisciplinary minor (and later perhaps a major) in Social Innovation Studies. The curriculum should include a set of foundation courses dealing with topics such as: social movements, community organizing, social entrepreneurship, business planning and management, fund raising, leadership, and organizational development. There could be a variety of upper level options, for example, tracks within the minor (or major) for students to concentrate either on social innovation/community development or environmental innovation/ sustainability. The interdisciplinary minor in Social Innovation would be designed so as to integrate with and complement other major’s CEL and ACEL own programs. The proposed Social Innovation minor should be reviewed after several years of operation, and if student demand warrants it, the College should expand the curriculum into an interdisciplinary major.[[12]](#footnote-12)

**5. Providing** **Oversight and Coordination of CEL through a Program Council**

As part of the necessary process to institutionalize CEL and expand the support systems for faculty and students, we propose the creation of more guidance, oversight and coordination. This is part of the natural progression for some programs as they grow and become more integral to the strategic mission of the College. This is even more important since CEL and community engagement is of interest to units in both Academic and Student Affairs; we see great promise in their potential to collaborate at this time. The Faculty Senate should play a role in this as it currently does in other areas—such as Liberal Learning or Global Engagement. It is therefore essential that TCNJ create a Program Council (either solely focused on CEL or combining functions with other signature experiences such as leadership and internships). Among other duties, this program council could: 1) suggest revisions to tenure and promotion documents that clarify the importance or weight of CEL at an institution that honors the principles of Boyer and has identified “signature programs”; 2) Vet CEL curricula, programs, and courses; 3) Encourage and support CEL in all schools at TCNJ; 4) Make recommendations regarding the number and type of course releases and funding opportunities for faculty involved in CEL; 5) help create an annual program plan that includes the voices of Student and Academic Affairs as well as some concrete initiatives to use CEL as a vehicle for promoting “the total student experience”; and 6) help CEL staff determine the appropriate mix of programs that are tied to specific learning objectives as opposed to those that are primarily focused on community engagement or change.

**C. Create new and innovative paths for CEL at TCNJ**

While the College is a leader in the field due to our past efforts and current programs, as described above, we must challenge ourselves to allow TCNJ to remain a leader and national exemplar. There are multiple potential paths for innovation and creating a broader range of options for community engaged learning. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Create "centers of expertise" with our upper level CEL courses at the core. This would be something akin to Law Clinics in law schools where the our faculty would design certain project parameters for the type of help or expertise that they and their students could offer and then outside entities (NGOs, municipalities, etc.) would apply to get our "services."
2. Design at least one year-long CEL Path (e.g., Fall IMM Design Perspective students becoming Spring IMM Lab Interns at TCNJ TrentonWorks) in each School.
3. Create interdisciplinary CEL projects for students and professors (e.g., organizing education, psychology and criminology classes or interns to help the Trenton Prevention Policy Board develop evidence-based approaches to promote positive youth development/reduce delinquency; organizing History and IMM students to collaborate on Trenton History Tour apps).
4. Expand the types of community partners from the service providing non-profits that make up the majority of current partners (e.g., possibly, to unions, government agencies, political parties, private sector organizations trying to create more jobs, and grassroots member-driven organizations).
5. Expand the types of projects and activities students carry out in ACEL and Social Innovation/Social Justice courses (e.g., policy, activism, grassroots organizing to confront particular issues).
6. Create a unified plan that includes CEL&R and Global Engagement and supports every study abroad student who wishes to participate in CEL.
7. Create a CEL-MUSE Track during the summer session that becomes a model for linking undergraduate research in new or more areas to the stated needs or interests of public groups and communities.
8. Develop a range of options, and dedicate resources, for community partners to be co-educators and have a voice (perhaps on the Program Council) in program development and assessment.
9. Create a Board of Trustees or other institutional position for one or more community partner members who are invested in TCNJ’s CEl program and mission.

**D. Establish a Standard Minimum Dataset to track our practice and progress**

At present, the Center for CEL&R surveys students who complete the Freshman Year Experience, focusing on their self-reported feelings and perceptions. All are asked approximately 17 pre and post questions[[13]](#footnote-13) that fall into a range of general categories: including—but not limited to--civic efficacy (do you believe that individuals can make a difference? do you feel like you made a contribution), learning (did you learn something about the issue (i.e. hunger) that was at the center of your experience? can you share one fact about that issue?), citizenship (did you gain a deeper understanding of the role of citizens in a democracy? do you feel individuals have a responsibility to help others?), or future behavior (are you more inclined to volunteer again?)—among others. There are also some ‘customer service’ or real time measures; all students, for example, are asked to give a concrete grade (A-F) for their day or experience.

Since the FY surveys are administered to students in the co-curricular and curricular tracks of this program, there are approximately nine additional questions that are answered by students in FSP CEL courses. These are obviously looking to clarify if the project has advanced the teaching and learning process (i.e. was CEL a source of motivation for you? did it help you better understand a learning objective, class concept or lecture?). In addition, there is now a tool for Advanced Community Engaged Learning classes, which is designed to drill down more specifically; it refers to the specific discipline-based learning objective or concept (i.e. juvenile delinquency) that is linked to the service-learning experience. There are also some questions that ask students to report on their potential future behavior or interests (i.e. would you like to volunteer again?).

While these measures above are useful, the Task Force recommends expanding this dataset. To this end, the College should charge the Program Council or an interdisciplinary team of assessment experts, including the Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness, Associate Provost for Liberal Learning, and some active ACEL professors with an interest in civic and community engagement, to do the following:

In the short term, some new data could be gathered quite easily (There are systems in place to capture some-but not all of these.) These include:

* # of students and professors who participate in curricular and co-curricular CEL programs[[14]](#footnote-14) each year (including FSP CEL classes, co-curricular CEL experiences, ACEL and others);
* The distribution of these students by School, Class Year, and Major
* # of students engaged in co-curricular community service or volunteer activities;
* # of student, professor, and staff hours dedicated to a curricular or co-curricular project;
* the # of curricular and co-curricular projects by issue area, partner, and location;
* the # of students who report or demonstrate that they “have a better understanding of the role of citizens in a democracy” (from existing instruments); and
* the # of students who report or demonstrate that the ‘CEL component of the class helped them better understand a specific learning objective of the course’ (from existing instruments).

In the medium term, the new Program Council on Community Engaged Learning should devise ways to track outcome data for all TCNJ students, those who participate in community-engaged work through Student Affairs (extra-curricular groups) as well as Academic Affairs (CEL). These activities fall under various labels—community engagement, civic engagement, or community engaged learning. As indicated earlier, one possible starting point and tool is the American Association of Colleges and University’s Civic Engagement Value Rubric, which has six categories[[15]](#footnote-15) (as well as one initial benchmark, two milestones, and one capstone for each).

Also in the medium term, the Program Council on Community Engaged Learning should begin the process of taking stock of what programs (such as FY CEL, ACEL, Liberal Learning, the Student Affairs Leadership program, and others) and measurement systems are currently in place—and which ones would be relevant to any new campus wide developmental rubric. This group would probably need to develop some new questions in order to “unpack” some of the expected or desired outcomes in the AACU rubric (such as the one that calls for students to “demonstrate evidence of adjustment in own attitudes and beliefs because of working within and learning from diverse communities…”).

In the longer term, the task force proposes identifying new areas and outcomes to measure those that are more complex and difficult, but critically important. These include: 1) the degrees of student civic engagement before and after completing CEL courses; 2) the types of student civic engagement before and after completing ACEL courses; 3) the depth of students’ civic engagement within the ACEL course; 4) the degrees of student academic achievement before and after a number of CEL experiences; and 5) a comparison of the depth of civic engagement of TCNJ alumni who do and don’t participate in ACEL courses/programs, after graduation.

This type of more rich and substantive data, and the attempt to track student learning outside of direct activities through CCEL&R, can only be gathered with the collaboration of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. The Task Force proposes, therefore, that representatives from both Student Affairs and Academic affairs, working through the new Program Council, working under the guidance of the Associate Provost for Liberal Learning, develop a set of survey and interview instruments in the medium and long term.

**Conclusion and Next Steps**

TCNJ has, over the past decade, created a vibrant, innovative, and highly impactful Community Engaged Learning program. Yet in order to sustain and expand the reach and depth of CEL programs, the College must devote more and sustained funding to hire and retain staff and institutionalize community engaged learning throughout the institution.

A delegation from TCNJ will be attending the Ashoka University Exchange Conference in February and will be participating in the Campus Change Academy in order to gather information and guidance about how to integrate social innovation education with CEL. In order to further refine these recommendations and perhaps make additional necessary recommendations, the CEL Task Force plans, during the spring of 2015, to survey students and faculty to learn about their experiences with CEL courses and gather their suggestions for future initiatives.

Finally, further data gathering and discussion is necessary to shape TCNJ’s CEL initiatives in the future. The recommendations above were made based on the discussions and experiences of faculty, staff, and student members of the Community Engaged Learning Task Force during the fall of 2014; a survey of the participants in the Community Engaged Scholarship Roundtable in November, 2014; and input from staff of the national Bonner Foundation, and the AACU and Carnegie Foundation leaders. In order to further refine these recommendations and perhaps make additional necessary recommendations, the CEL Task Force plans to continue its work during the spring semester of 2014. We will carry out a survey of all students and faculty to learn about their past experiences with CEL courses and their ideas for how to improve future CEL courses and programs and chart out the first steps necessary for carrying out the actions outlined above.

Respectfully submitted to Provost Taylor by the Task Force on Community Engaged Learning, January 23, 2015

Pat Donohue, Community Engaged Learning Programs and Partnerships

Morton Winston, Philosophy

Marla Jaksch, Women’s and Gender Studies

Angela Lauer Chong, Student Affairs

Miriam Shakow, History and Sociology/Anthropology

Bea Chiang, Accounting

Katie Hahn, Student

Robbie Heindel, Student

Ieva Zake, Academic Affairs

1. See, for example, Ernest Boyer’s *Scholarship Reconsidered* (1990) and The National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement’s “A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy’s Future” (2011). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The following individuals, among others, have attended High Impact retreats at Siena College in 2013 and 2014: Ben Rifkin, Mort Winston, He Len Chung, Nino Scarpati, John Sisko, Donna Drewes, John Laughton, Patrick Donohue, Paula Figueroa-Vega, Katie Kahn, Michael Nordquist, and Natasha Perez. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Center for Community Engaged Learning and Research houses a number of institutes and programs, including the Bonner Institute for Civic and Community Engagement, the Bonner Scholars Program, the Advanced Community Engaged Learning Program, Policy and Collective Impact Program, VISTA and AmeriCorps. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The High Impact Initiative is a project of the national Bonner Foundation in collaboration with leaders from AACU and the Carnegie classification program. With the endorsement of each institution’s President, participating colleges and universities assemble a team and embark on a three year strategic planning process to integrate high impact educational practices with high impact community engagement practices. The goal is to help campuses reach more students and maximize impact on and off campus. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. This approach could help departments as they compete for the best high school students. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. This co-curricular track primarily consists of stand-alone CEL Days; intense and intentional days that combine a small dose of learning (the magnitude of the problem being addressed and a ‘democracy 101’ talk that highlights the link between CEL and citizenship) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The Assistant Provost for Liberal Learning and his team are examining these issues. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Five grant funded employees who are involved in regional and national service (including AmeriCorps) and service-learning grants (in partnership with the Bonner Foundation) that bring this work to other colleges are not included in this conversation because of the nature of their work. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Several of the national experts the Task Force members have consulted have confirmed that our current number of core faculty is low for an institution of this size and that we should prioritize measures to increase this number. As noted earlier, we must boost our capacity to reach higher numbers. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. This is not an exhaustive list but is meant to illustrate some of the roles of staff. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. The Civic Responsibilities requirement of the College’s Liberal Learning program includes one goal and two outcomes for community engaged learning. The goal is that students should seek to sustain and advance the communities in which they live by engaging in an informed and academically based service experience. The two outcomes are: 1) that students should think critically, analytically, and inclusively about their society. They should develop a hands-on understanding of class, power, and privilege. 2) that students should develop the means to apply the knowledge they gain from their academic experiences within the context of everyday community life. They should understand how to accept responsibility for active and engaged citizenship in a complex and diverse society. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. This recommendation also demonstrates the opinion of many Task Force members that the language we sometimes use (such as CEL) does not always convey that this type of teaching and learning can be relevant to all disciplines; the terms innovation and entrepreneurship help address that concern. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. In addition to these 17 questions, students answer approximately 7 demographic questions (gender, major, number of organizations they are members of, etc…) [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. These are programs that have established learning or student development goals/objectives at the start—with systems in place to measure impact. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. These are: Diversity of Communities and Cultures; Analysis of Knowledge; Civic Identity and Commitment; Civic Communication; Civic Action and Reflection; and Civic Contexts/Structures. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)