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# Binghamton University: Moving Toward a More Community-Engaged Campus

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BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY:
MOVING TOWARD A MORE COMMUNITY- ENGAGED CAMPUS

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**Executive Summary**

Binghamton University has a long standing commitment to community engagement and would like to apply for the 2015 Carnegie community engagement classification. Although the community engagement classification provides national recognition for institutions' commitment to community engagement, the application process is intensive and nearly half of the 305 institutions registered withdrew from the application process in 2010.

In an effort to increase Binghamton University's success in achieving the 2015 Carnegie classification, this Capstone project examined institutional characteristics that were associated with successful attainment of 2010 Carnegie classification for applicant universities. Ten classified research institutions participated in the study. Five main findings emerged from the data collected from the semi-structured phone interview and internet survey. First, all institutions had a definition of community engagement by the time they applied for Carnegie classification in 2010. Second, institutions used different methods to assess their readiness for the application, and the time spent preparing and completing the application varied greatly. Third, data collection was the major challenge decentralized institutions faced in the classification process. Fourth, although institutions would encourage others to pursue the classification, most of them did not notice any new community engagement opportunities for students or faculty members resulting from the application. Lastly, most institutions would recommend having top administrators be involved in the application process.

The above findings resulted in three recommendations for Binghamton University. These recommendations include having a campus wide discussion on the definition of community engagement, service learning, and other related terms, selecting a centralized office to coordinate its Carnegie application process, and using a team approach to gather data and complete the

application. Binghamton University can use these recommendations to prepare for its 2015 Carnegie community engagement classification application. In addition, these recommendations can also be used by other higher education institutions in the United States that are pursuing the classification and striving to be community engaged-campuses.

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**Problem Definition**

Higher education has been constantly challenged to be more responsive to the pressing problems in society, and working with the community to address these issues is one of the best ways to improve the quality of life in the community and learning in higher education (Pasque, Smerek, Dwyer, Bowman, & Mallory, 2005). Community engagement has been referred to as a "core value" for the University of the 21st Century (Association of Commonwealth Universities, 2001). According to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, community engagement is defined as "collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity" (Carnegie Foundation, n.d.). As the benefits and importance of community-higher education partnerships have been established, the next challenge for colleges and universities is to determine how to institutionalize engagement and create effective community-campus partnerships (Pasque et al., 2005).

Community engagement is an important part of institutional identity and an integral component of the institutional culture in American colleges and universities (Driscoll, 2009). As evidence of this principle, the central goal in SUNY Chancellor Zimpher's *2010 and Beyond Strategic Plan* is to utilize SUNY's potential to drive economic revitalization of the State of New York and create a better quality of life for all its citizens. Community engagement through interactive learning is one of the plan's core values and means for achieving the goal (Zimpher, N.L. 2011).

As with most universities, Binghamton University has a long standing commitment to community engagement and has established enduring relationships with numerous local

community organizations (Alden, 2012). When the devastating flood hit Broome County in 2011, Binghamton University partnered with several local organizations to provide food, water, shelter, and other vital support for thousands of people who were affected by the flood. Binghamton University continues to strive to achieve its goal of "enriching the lives of people in the region… through discovery and education and being enriched by partnerships with those communities" (Binghamton University, 2013).

The Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) was established as a result of Binghamton University's desire to expand engagement in the community. In the *2010 Binghamton University Strategic Plan*, CCE was identified as the institutional leader to promote students' involvement in community issues and make Binghamton University a more community-engaged university (Alden, 2012). Over the past summer, the CCE Advisory Council Task Team worked to develop a new vision for the Center and discussed the Center's larger role at Binghamton University. One of the Center's primary goals is for Binghamton University to receive the Carnegie community engagement classification in 2015.

The Carnegie classification has been the leading framework for recognizing and describing institutional diversity in U.S. higher education for the past four decades (Carnegie Foundation, n.d.). All accredited, degree-granting colleges and universities in the United States represented in the National Center for Education Statistics IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) are eligible for inclusion in the Carnegie classification (Carnegie Foundation, n.d.). This all-inclusive classification framework has been widely used in the study of higher education. For example, *U.S. News & World Report* has based its comparison groups on Carnegie classification categories in its annual college ranking (McCormick & Zhao, 2005).

In 2005, the Carnegie Foundation developed its first elective classification, the

community engagement classification. The elective classification relies on voluntary participation by institutions and was developed to achieve the following goals:  to provide national recognition for institutions' commitment to community engagement (Brinkley, Ellenburg, & Schumann, 2012) and to respect the diversity of engagement approaches between colleges/universities (Driscoll, 2009).

The new elective classification uses documentation provided by each institution instead of the currently available national data (Driscoll, 2009).  The documentation framework has four sections: 1. institutional commitment, 2. institutional identity and culture, 3. curricular engagement, and 4. outreach and partnerships (Saltmarsh et al., 2009).  The first two sections constitute what the Foundation describes as "foundational indicators" (Driscoll, 2009, p.8). Institutions must be able to document all of the foundational indicators in order to complete the rest of the application process (Saltmarsh et al., 2009). In 2006 and 2008, institutions could complete the application process by addressing the curricular engagement indicators, the outreach and partnership indicators, or both. However, in 2010, institutions were required to show extensive evidence of institution-wide efforts in documenting data, description, and examples in both areas (Brinkley, Ellenburg, & Schumann, 2012).

The documentation process for Carnegie classification is intensive and requires institutions to demonstrate a campus-wide commitment to community engagement. As evidence of the process's rigor, nearly half of the 305 institutions registered withdrew from the application process in 2010 (Carnegie Foundation, n.d.).  In addition, of the 154 institutions that submitted applications, only 115 were successfully classified. Thus, only 38% of those institutions that initially intended to receive the classification, actually succeeded.  In an effort to increase the likelihood Binghamton University will succeed in receiving the 2015 Carnegie community

engagement classification, this Capstone project will examine how these classified universities prepared for their 2010 community engagement classification application.

Considering the importance of community-higher education partnerships and the challenges colleges and universities face to successfully implement and institutionalize its engagement efforts, the recommendations that this Capstone project provides will not only benefit the Center for Civic Engagement and Binghamton University, but also all higher education institutions in the United States that are pursuing Carnegie community engagement classification and striving to be community engaged-campuses.

## Research Questions

In order to identify to the strategies Binghamton University should use when pursuing the Carnegie community engagement classification in 2015, this capstone project will address the following question:

- What institutional characteristics contributed to the successful attainment of 2010 Carnegie classification for applicant research universities?

## Literature Review

The Carnegie community engagement classification provides a unique opportunity for those higher education institutions that wish to be recognized for and share best practices about their efforts in institutionalizing community engagement. However, the documentation process for the Classification is intensive and arduous, and only a small percentage of institutions have attained this classification. This literature review will provide an overview of the challenges associated with the Carnegie community engagement classification application process and strategies for overcoming such challenges.

**Challenges Institutions Face when Applying for the Classification**

Higher education institutions wishing to receive the Carnegie community engagement classification face a variety of challenges associated with the application process. These challenges include adopting consistent definitions of key community engagement terms as well as both leadership and structural challenges.

*Definition Challenges.* Many institutions face challenges integrating community engagement into their culture and operations due to the lack of common understanding and knowledge of community engagement (Brinkley, Ellenburg, & Schumann, 2012). The definition of engagement might vary from one institution to another; it is shaped by each institution's history, assets, and needs as well as the community it serves (Brukardt et al., 2006). The lack of consistency and clarity about community engagement can leave some campuses and their leaders with the false impression of engagement in which they believe they are "doing engagement," when in fact what they are doing is not meeting the standards researchers set for community engagement (Saltmarsh, et al., 2009, p. 18).

As part of the Carnegie classification process, institutions are asked to define not only community engagement, but also other key terms associated with it (Furco & Miller, 2009; Saltmarsh et al., 2009).  For example, in order to assess students' participation in service learning (SL) courses, one must define "SL or community-based courses" and then collect data on the number of students taking such courses (Zuiches et al., 2008). In addition, Saltmarsh, Giles, Ward, and Buglione (2009) found that the terminology used in tenure and promotion policies varied within and across institutions. Institutions have to formulate clear and consistent definitions for "scholarly engagement" and other related terms in order to provide "the basis for establishing criteria for evaluating community-engaged scholarship across the disciplines"

(Saltmarsh et al., 2009, p. 31).

*Leadership Challenges.* Leadership is another challenge that many institutions face. Several of the foundation indicators in the Carnegie community engagement documentation framework highlight the role of leaders; for example, one asks "does the executive leadership of the institution… explicitly promote community engagement as a priority?" (Sandmann & Plater, 2009, p.13). A highly engaged institution should have executive leaders and other high-level administrators to coordinate the infrastructure to support and advance community engagement (Sandmann & Plater, 2009; Stanton, 2007; Weert & Sandmann, 2008).

Although institutionalization can be achieved through leadership buy-in, leadership in this area is not easy. One of the key challenges for institutions is to ensure that the institutionalization of engagement is sustainable when there are changes in the occupants of key administrative roles (Holland, 2009; Sandmann & Plater, 2009). The average tenure for university presidents is between five and seven years. Therefore, it is important for institutions to articulate engagement as a function of mission and appoint leaders who share a personal commitment to ensure the continuity of their community engagement efforts (Sandmann & Plater, 2009, Weert & Sandmann, 2008). A truly engaged university has leaders who are committed to community engagement both personally and consistently (Holland, 2009; Sandmann & Plater, 2009).

*Structural Challenges.* Organizational structure is also important to consider and is the most significant factor impacting on an institution's commitment to community engagement (Holland, 2009; Thornton & Zuiches, 2009). Most universities have a flat, decentralized organizational structure which consists of a small number of top administrators, a large number of faculty and staff members, and a few levels of management between (Thornton & Zuiches,

2009). Although a decentralized organizational structure may allow professionals to use their expertise to provide prompt and appropriate responses to community needs, it also complicates the issues of institutional coordination and control (Thornton & Zuiches, 2009). For large research institutions, this type of organizational structure might constrain the university's engagement efforts, since there is no one person or place to make decisions and provide directions for the institution's community engagement activities. For example, at North Carolina State University, commitment to engagement is inconsistent across the institution; each college, department, and unit can use its own autonomy in defining engagement-related terminology and deciding policies (Thorton & Zuiches, 2009).  In addition, assessment of community engagement activities in decentralized institutions often occurs at the program level instead of the institutional level (Furco & Miller, 2009). This further complicates the data collection process for the Carnegie community engagement applications as the classification framework focuses exclusively on assessing the institutionalization of engagement (Furco & Miller, 2009).

**Strategies for Overcoming the Challenges**

Institutions have developed many different strategies to overcome the challenges detailed in the preceding section. To address the problem of inconsistent definitions of key community engagement terms, many institutions created their own definition of community engagement instead of using the overly broad one that the Carnegie Foundation provided. For example, North Carolina State University developed its own definitions of community engagement (Furco & Miller, 2009) and recommends other institutions to share information in "campus vernacular terms instead of the language of the Carnegie framework" (Zuiches et al., 2008).  As another example, University of Alaska Anchorage defined and identified community engagement as one of four core priorities in its academic plan for 2005 – 2009.

According to Holland (2009), all of the successfully classified institutions recognized the importance of effective leaderships in institutionalizing community engagement. Having an effective infrastructure that supports engagement help lead the institution's engagement efforts and connect engagement initiatives to its ongoing governance. Many institutions create new structures to ensure the continuity of an institution's community engagement efforts (Sandmann & Plater, 2009). Three types of infrastructure have been identified as best supporting engagement: centralized centers, diffused network, and a hybrid coordinated networks (Sandmann & Plater, 2009). As three examples, Bates College uses the first model, Arizona State University's Tempe Campus uses the second, and Syracuse University uses the third. Leadership might occur in academic affairs, public or government relations or institutional advancement, and student affairs (Sandmann & Plater, 2009). However, in all three infrastructures, the leaders report to top administrators, such as the provost, vice president, or president (Sandmann & Plater, 2009).

Finally, in order to institutionalize community engagement, institutions must carefully design an infrastructure that is specific to the institution's particular circumstances and mission. For example, if engagement goals are primarily focused on research and learning, a centralized structure with leadership in academic affairs might be more appropriate (Holland, 2009). A centralized community engagement structure allows colleges and universities to start a cohesive effort in moving toward institutionalized community engagement rather than relying on individual units or disciplines (Holland, 2009). On the other hand, if engagement goals are more focused on student development and community relations, a decentralized structure with work divided by different schools and colleges might be more appropriate (Holland, 2009). Additionally, many institutions have moved toward creating a midsenior-level position for their

engagement activities, such as director of a significant office or vice provost (Holland, 2009).

A review of previous research on applicants that have successfully received the Carnegie community engagement classification highlights some of the key challenges and opportunities associated with documenting information about community engagement. However, it is important to note that institutional engagement may take various forms depending on the individual institution's size, location, resources, and mission (Beere, 2009; Furco & Miller, 2009). All of the literature discussed above looked at all types of institutions and did not distinguish between different levels of analysis that correspond to different types of institutions. This Capstone project aims to address this research gap by examining the institutional characteristics that contributed to successful attainment of 2010 Carnegie Classifications for research universities.

## Methodology

### *Participants*

In 2010, 37 research universities successfully obtained the Carnegie Classification in Community Engagement (Carnegie Foundation, n.d.). Because Binghamton University is a research university, my sample was drawn from these 37 schools. I first obtained a list of the 2010 classified institutions from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching website and then used the "INSTITUTION LOOKUP" function under the CLASSIFICATIONS to identify the 37 research institutions. I entered the name of each of the 2010 classified institutions and looked up the institution's profile. If the institution was classified as a Research University, I then added the institution's name to a spreadsheet.

After I identified all the 37 institutions, I then tried to find the contact person for each of the institutions. The contact person had to be knowledgeable about their institution's 2010

classification application.  For those institutions that had their applications published online, I used the application to identify the individual who I would interview. For those institutions that did not have their applications published, I went to each of the institution's website to find the top administrators' contact information. I called the institutions and obtained the appropriate individual's contact information. A list of the 37 research institutions are listed in Appendix A and a list of the interviewees' departments are listed in Appendix B.

### Procedures

The goal was to have 10 of the 37 institutions participate in a semi-structured phone interview and complete an internet survey. I emailed the first 15 institutions in my list to request a 45 to 60 minute long phone interview (Appendix C) and then called them a few days later to confirm their participation. I had to contact twenty institutions to reach my interview quota. I asked the participants a mix of open-ended and forced choice questions about their institution's 2010 Carnegie community engagement classification application and covered three main topics: process and responsibilities, actual practices, and recommendations.

A copy of the phone interview instrument is included in Appendix D and a copy of the survey instrument is included in Appendix E.  The interviews were conducted at a mutually agreed-upon time, and participation was confidential. The internet survey was sent via email to the 10 participants immediately after the phone interview. Binghamton University's Human Subjects Research Review Committee reviewed and approved this project. A copy of the approval letter is included in Appendix F.

### Strengths

One of the distinct advantages of using telephone interviews as the data collection method for this project is that it allowed me to pose follow-up questions to the participants,

clarify some of the ambiguities, and record the participants' own words.  As a result, I was able to obtain more detailed answers to questions than would have been possible if I just used written surveys. In addition, it would have been impossible for me to do in-person interviews rather than phone interviews, since I had to interview participants who were located at institutions throughout the country.

### *Limitations*

While there were many strengths to my approach, there are limitations associated with using the phone interviews as a data collection method. First, it was very time-consuming to set up the interviews, transcribe the audiotapes, and analyze the data. I was only able to interview 10 out of the 37 research institutions, so the results might not be applicable to all the classified research institutions in the country. Second, participants might not provide the correct or true answers either intentionally or unintentionally. For example, the application was done in 2010, and the participants might not remember all the details about it or did not want to take the effort to remember these details. A replication of this study should consider these limitations.

### *Data Analysis*

I took detailed notes during each telephone interview and audiotaped the whole conversation. The qualitative data that I collected from both the telephone interview and the survey was regularly revisited and analyzed using a thematic coding technique. With the thematic coding, I compared and connected information from each participant and identified common themes. These common themes were then used to answer the research questions posed in this project (see Appendix G for full phone interview and survey results).

## Findings

Based on the results of the phone interview and email survey, five key findings emerged. Each of the findings reflects the most important factors that contributed to the ten institutions'

successful attainment of the 2010 Carnegie classification. Those findings are: 1. all institutions had a definition of community engagement by the time they applied for Carnegie classification in 2010; 2. institutions used different methods to assess their readiness for the application, and the time spent in preparing and completing the application varied greatly; 3. data collection was the major challenge decentralized institutions faced in the classification process; 4. although institutions would encourage others to pursue the classification, most of them did not notice any new community engagement opportunities for students or faculty members resulting from  the application; and 5.  most institutions would recommend having top administrators involved in the application process.

**Finding 1: All institutions had a definition of community engagement by the time they applied for Carnegie classification in 2010.**

The phone interview results align with the literature suggesting that the definition of engagement might vary from one institution to another (Brukardt et al., 2006).  All 10 of the institutions that were interviewed had a definition of community engagement, even though some were different from the Carnegie definition. Six of the institutions had their own definition of community engagement that was either based on the Carnegie Foundation's definition or was similar to it. For example, institution 6 had a definition that was created before the Carnegie community engagement classification, and the definition "just happens to align with Carnegie." Institution 10 also had its own definition created before Carnegie, and the definition was "very specific but also broad because of the unique mission of the university."  Literature on engagement, such as the Reports of the *Kellogg Commission* on the Future of State and Land-Grant Universities, influenced the definitions in institutions 2 and 3.

   Four institutions used the definition provided by Carnegie Foundation, and the reason for this decision varied by institution. For example, institution 4 used the one provided by the Carnegie Foundation because there was "no need" for another definition. However, institutions 8 and 9 adopted the Carnegie definition because they did not have an official or "university-wide" definition that was "formally approved." Two of the four institutions indicated that they wanted to have their own definition for the next application.

**Finding 2: Institutions used different method to assess their readiness for the application, and the time spent preparing and completing the application varied greatly.**

   Institutions gave very different answers to the question "how did you know your institution was ready for the application?" Three institutions had intended to apply for the classification in 2008. But two of these three institutions did not complete the application due to limited resources; one cited having a "small office" and having "not enough staff." They knew they were ready for the applications when their center for engagement grew bigger or moved to a new unit. Two institutions used a more systematic way to assess their readiness. They had small groups or a task force to review the foundational indicators ("part 1") of the application, and if they met all the requirements, they knew they were ready for the application.

   For the seven institutions participating in the Carnegie classification process for the first time in 2010, leadership and a strategic plan played important roles in the institution's decision to apply. For example, institution 1 had a new center created in 2006, and the center assumed a leadership role for the institution in the institution's community engagement efforts. Institution 9 hired new administrative director for its center for community engagement instead of having a faculty member, and institution 8 moved the center to a new unit that reports directly to the vice provost. Two institutions had appointed new presidents prior to the application, and the new

presidents supported community engagement. In addition to having a new president, institution 3 also had the provost who created an action team to help achieve the goal of community engagement in its 2009 strategic plan.  The new leadership and strategic plan helped prioritize each institution's community engagement efforts and made the activities "more structured." This finding also supports work by Sandmann and Plater (2009) which asserts it is important for institutions to articulate engagement as a function of and institution's mission and appoint leaders who share a personal commitment to ensure the institutionalization of engagement is sustainable.

Institutions not only differed in ways of assessing readiness, but also differed greatly in the amount of time used for preparing and completing the application. The time spent preparing the application ranged from 40 hours to several months, and the time spent completing the application ranged from 15 hours to several months. For the three institutions that had applied in 2008, one answered that it took the institution 40 hours to prepare for the application and 15 hours to complete the actual application, while another spent 4 months preparing and 3 weeks completing the application.

**Finding 3: Data collection was the major challenge decentralized institutions faced in the classification process.**

Eight of the institutions stated that they had decentralized community engagement structure which made it very difficult to collect data from different departments and offices. For example, although institution 2 had its own definition of community engagement, it was very difficult to gather data because there were "different levels of engagement among colleges" and there was no one definition for "service learning" across the campus. Institution 9 indicated that the biggest challenge for data collection was "there were case studies here or there" but "no

centralized effort." Institution 5 also mentioned the difficulty in data management. There were "between 1500-2000 pages" of documentations that the interviewee gathered from different colleges and organizations and used "a large matrix" to decide "what to use and what not to use" for the application.

This finding is consistent with Thorton and Zuiches (2009) study in which they found that a decentralized structure might constrain an institution's ability to coordinate and assess its community engagement efforts at the institutional level, especially for large research institutions where different departments and offices might have their own community engagement definitions and ways of assessing engagement work.

**Finding 4: Although institutions would encourage others to pursue the classification, most of them did not notice any new community engagement opportunities for students or faculty members resulting from the application process.**

Nine of the institutions would encourage others to pursue the classification. One of the institutions would not encourage others to pursue because the "institution must make their own decision as to what their mission is, what they stand for, and pursue those accordingly." However, pursuing the classification was "a valuable experience" for the institution.

Although all of the institutions agreed that applying for the Carnegie classification was a great experience, only three of the institutions' representatives indicated they had new community engagement opportunities for students and faculty members result from the application process. Among the three institutions, only one institution had intentionally hired or recruited faculty with expertise in and commitment to community engagement. This institution indicated that community engagement was an important factor in the faculty's promotion and tenure decisions. One explanation for this finding might be that since most institutions already

had a history of community engagement, receiving the classification did not influence the existing community engagement activities at the institutions. Future research studies on Carnegie classification could compare institutions before and after classification to learn more about changes the classification brought to these campuses.

**Finding 5: Most institutions would recommend having top administrators and leaders from different offices and colleges involved in the application process.**

Seven of the institutions would recommend other institutions get top administrators involved in the application process. Institution 9 had the top administrators create a task force for community engagement. However, the task force was not created for the Carnegie application. It just happened to "have a goal that aligns with Carnegie." Institution 9 suggested other institutions have top administrators' "push" for the Carnegie application. Institution 7 stated that "it makes all the difference" when having top administrators "put money and right people together" for the application.

Five of the institutions would recommend other institutions involve leaders from different offices and colleges within the university in the Carnegie application process. For example, institution 2 would recommend others "assemble a team," institution 7 would recommend "find[ing] people that really care about outreach and engagement," and institution 9 would recommend seeking "help from as many people as possible." In addition, institution 1 and 5 would recommend others gather input from various departments.

## Recommendations

Based on my examination of the factors and strategies that contributed to successful attainment of the 2010 Carnegie classification for the 10 research institutions, I am making three recommendations to Binghamton University and the Center for Civic Engagement in moving

forward to apply for a Carnegie classification in 2015. First, I recommend that Binghamton University initiate a campus-wide discussion on the definition of community engagement, service learning, and other related terms. Second, I recommend Binghamton University select a centralized office to coordinate its Carnegie application process. Third, I recommend Binghamton University use a team approach to gather data and complete the application.

**Recommendation # 1: Binghamton University should have a campus-wide discussion and agreement on the definitions of community engagement, service learning, and other related terms.**

Finding 1 indicates that definitions are important when applying for Carnegie classification, and all interviewed institutions had defined community engagement by the time they applied for the Carnegie classification. Therefore, I recommend Binghamton University identify a definition of community engagement that reflects Binghamton's unique history, mission, culture, and needs. Binghamton University can do this by using the Carnegie definition or by developing its own. Drawing on work by Furco and Miller (2009) and Salmarsh et al. (2009), a clear and shared definition will help Binghamton University leaders communicate with different colleges and departments in order to lead the institution-wide community engagement initiatives and build partnership with the surrounding communities.

In order to develop these definitions, Binghamton University should assemble a task force consisting of top level administrators and leaders from each college to work on defining community engagement and other key community engagement terms.  In some case, the committee may wish to adopt definitions for community engagement terms that have already been developed. For example, Dr. Allison Alden, Director of the Center for Civic Engagement, has developed a very specific definition for Binghamton University's service learning courses

(Alden, 2013, p. 5). In addition, the detailed definitions had been approved by the Binghamton University Faculty Senate Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and the University's top administrators.

**Recommendation # 2: Binghamton University should select a centralized office to coordinate the Carnegie application process.**

According to Finding 3, having a decentralized structure made it difficult for several institutions included in this study to collect the data needed for the Carnegie classification process. Therefore, I recommend Binghamton University select a centralized office to oversee its 2015 Carnegie application. The centralized office would help collect the data and information needed for Binghamton University's Carnegie application. The Center for Civic Engagement would be one of the options, since it has been identified as the institutional leader to promote Binghamton University's community engagement efforts (Alden, 2012), and one of the Center's primary goals is for Binghamton University to receive the 2015 Carnegie community engagement classification. In addition, Office of the Provost, Office of the President, or Office of Service Learning might be other options (See Appendix B).

**Recommendation # 3: Binghamton University should use a team approach to gather data and complete the application.**

Based on the comments and suggestions from the 10 institutions, I recommend Binghamton University create a task team for its Carnegie application. The task team should consist of top administrators and leaders from across campus. Finding 5 indicates the importance of having top administrators involved in gathering resources and the importance of leaders from various departments and offices involved in collecting data. Indeed, engaged universities have leadership from the highest level to the department or center level that communicate consistently

about the institution's commitment to engagement and embed it in the institutional plan (Holland, 2009; Sandmann & Plater, 2009).

Based on the findings in the previous section, the task team would assume the following important roles and responsibilities for Binghamton University's Carnegie application. First, one of the key roles is to help reconcile the definitions of community engagement and other key terms for the Binghamton University's Carnegie application.  Second, the task team could act as the institutional leaders in promoting the University's community engagement efforts and achieving its engagement goals in the strategic plan. Third, the task team could help gather data needed for the application.

## Conclusion

Applying for Carnegie classification is a very challenging process for institutions. It is therefore important to study institutional characteristics that contribute to the successful attainment of the 2010 Carnegie classification. This study augments the research about the Carnegie classification by focusing on the experiences of research institutions. The findings and recommendations that emerged from this study may be used to assist Binghamton University and the Center for Civic Engagement as well as all other research institutions in the nation in applying for the Carnegie classification in 2015.

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**Appendices**

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| List of the Interviewees' Title | Appendix B |
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**Appendix A**

List of the 37 Research Institutions

| School | Name | Title | Email | Phone |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Adelphi University | | | | |
| Auburn University | | | | |
| Azusa Pacific University | | | | |
| Clark University | | | | |
| Cornell University | | | | |
| Florida International University | | | | |
| Florida State University | | | | |
| Indiana University-Bloomington | | | | |
| Jackson State University | | | | |
| Kansas State University | | | | |
| Miami University-Oxford | | | | |
| Mississippi State University | | | | |
| Montana State University | | | | |
| Nova Southeastern University | | | | |
| Oregon State University | | | | |
| Rutgers University-New Brunswick | | | | |
| Sam Houston State University | | | | |
| *St. John's University-New York* | | | | |
| Stony Brook University | | | | |
| SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry | | | | |
| Temple University | | | | |
| Tennessee State University | | | | |
| The University of Texas at Arlington | | | | |
| The University of Texas at El Paso | | | | |
| University of Arkansas at Little Rock | | | | |
| University of Connecticut | | | | |
| University of Georgia | | | | |
| University of Idaho | | | | |
| University of Kansas | | | | |
| University of Missouri-St Louis | | | | |
| University of Notre Dame | | | | |
| University of Southern California | | | | |
| University of Southern Mississippi | | | | |
| University of Utah | | | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wake Forest University | | | | |
| West Virginia University | | | | |
| Western Michigan University | | | | |

**Appendix B**

**Interviewees' Department**

| Institution | Interviewees' Department |
|:---:|:---:|
| 1 | Center for Engagement and Community Development |
| 2 | Office of the Provost |
| 3 | Office of Community Partnership |
| 4 | Community and Leadership |
| 5 | Office of the Senior Vice Provost |
| 6 | Office of Community Engagement and Service |
| 7 | Outreach and Engagement |
| 8 | Center for Civic Engagement |
| 9 | Center for Service Learning |
| 10 | Office of the Vice President |

**Appendix C**

Initial E-mail to Research Participants and Informed Consent

To:              [Email]
From:          mhuang5@binghamton.edu
Subject:       Carnegie Community Engagement Classification
Body:

Dear Mr./Ms. [last name],

My name is Mengchen Huang, and I am a graduate student at Binghamton University. I am currently conducting a research study as part of the requirements of my Master's degree in Public Administration, and I would like to invite you to participate.

This research study will examine how universities with a 2010 Carnegie community engagement classification prepared for their application in order to identify to strategies colleges and universities should use when pursuing the 2015 Carnegie community engagement classification. I am contacting you because your institution successfully obtained the classification in 2010 and you were an individual who is knowledgeable of your university's application processes.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to participate in a forty-five minutes to an hour phone interview with me and complete a short survey. Participation is confidential. For details of the study and your rights as a participant, please see the attached informed consent.

I will be happy to answer any questions you have about the study. You may contact me at mhuang5@binghamton.edu or (347)-882-7892.

I sincerely hope that you will consider participating in this important research study on Carnegie community engagement classification.  I will be contacting you in the next few days to see if you are willing to participate. I look forward to talking with you soon.


Sincerely,

Mengchen

Attached Informed Consent

I am conducting a research study on Carnegie Community Engagement Classification. Your voluntary participation is requested as the project will examine how universities with a 2010 Carnegie community engagement classification prepared for their application.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relations with Binghamton University. If you decide to participate, you are not obligated to answer all questions, and may stop at any time.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to participate in a phone interview with me and complete a short survey afterward. The phone interview will take place at a mutually agreed upon time and place, and should last about forty-five minutes to an hour. The interview will be audiotaped so that I can accurately reflect on what is discussed. The tapes will only be reviewed by me who will transcribe and analyze them. They will then be destroyed. The written survey will be sent via email to you immediately after the phone interview, and should take about ten minutes to complete.

Participation is confidential. Study information will be kept in a secure location at Binghamton University. The results of the study may be published or presented at professional meetings, but your identity will not be revealed. In addition, I will share my final paper with you.

If you have any additional questions, you may contact me at mhuang5@binghamton.edu or (347)-882-7892. If you have questions concerning your rights as a research subject you may call Binghamton University's Human Subject's Research Review Committee at (607)777-3818.

Thank you for your assistance.


Participant Signature                                        Date

_____          _____

**Appendix D**

Interview Instrument

**Process & Responsibilities**
1. What is your institution's definition of community engagement?
   - If your institution's definition of community engagement differs from the one provided by the Carnegie Foundation, why is yours different?
   *"Community engagement describes collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity"*

2. What did your institution do to assess your readiness for the application?
   - How did you know that your institution was ready for the application?

3. How did top- level administrators become involved in the application process?
   - Who was the person who initiated the process?
   - How the process was initially launched?
   - How did the top administrators promote community engagement?

4. Who was involved in the application process?
   - How were the people organized?
   - Where were these people from?
   - What division was that within your college?
   - How often did these people meet?
   - How did they engage with each other?

**Actual Practices**
5. What community engagement practices did your institution emphasize in its application?
   - How did your institution integrate community engagement into the university's curriculum? (Undergraduate studies/graduate studies? Majors/departments? General Education/elective course?)

6. What were the biggest challenges your institution faced when applying for the classification? Please list the top 3.
   - Describe how you addressed these challenges.
   - What aspect or part of the application you found most difficult?
   - How did your institution overcome these challenges?

**Recommendations**
7. What recommendations would you offer to those institutions that are pursuing the classification in 2015?
   - What would you do differently?
   - What would you add to the application?

**Appendix E**

Survey Instrument

**Process & Responsibilities**

1.  Did the university have a campus-wide coordinating infrastructure (like a center or office) to oversee the process?

    Yes _____

    No_____

    If yes, what division was that within your institution?

    Student Affairs_____

    Academic Affairs _____

    Other _____

2.  Did the university have a designated chief engagement officer for the process?

    Yes_____

    No_____

    If yes, what was the designated engagement officer's title?

    _____

    If yes, which department or office was the position located?

    _____

**Actual Practice**

3.  Did your institution intentionally hire or recruit faculty with expertise in and commitment to community engagement?

    Yes_____

    No_____

4.  Was community engagement an important factor in your institution's promotion and tenure decisions of faculty members?

    Yes_____

    No_____

5.  Were there any budgetary allocations for community engagement research or scholarship?

    Yes_____

    No_____

6.  Did the university provide internal budgetary allocations for community engagement?

         Yes_____

         No_____

7.  Which was the most extensive and most expensive part of the whole documentation process?

        _____

8.  How long did it take to prepare for the application?

        _____

9.  How long did it take to complete the actual application?

        _____

**Recommendations**

10. Were there any new community engagement opportunities available to students as the results of the application?

         Yes_____

         No_____

11. Were there any new community engagement opportunities available to faculty members as the results of the application?

         Yes_____

         No_____

12. Would you encourage other institutions to pursue the Classification?

         Yes_____

         No_____

**Appendix F**

Human Subjects Research Approval Letter

Date:                    February 28, 2013
To:                       Mengchen Huang, CCPA
From:                    Anne M. Casella, CIP Administrator
                            Human Subjects Research Review Committee
Subject:               Human Subjects Research Approval
Protocol Number: 2215-13
Protocol title: *Huang_Carnegie Community Engagement Classification Research*

Your project identified above was reviewed by the HSRRC and has received an Exempt approval pursuant to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations, 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) .

An exempt status signifies that you will not be required to submit a Continuing Review application as long as your project involving human subjects remains unchanged.  If your project undergoes any changes these changes must be reported to our office prior to implementation. Please complete the modification form found at the following link:
http://research.binghamton.edu/Compliance/humansubjects/COEUS_Docs.php

Principal Investigators or any individual involved in the research must report any problems involving the conduct of the study or subject participation.  Any problems involving recruitment and consent processes or any deviations from the approved protocol should be reported in writing within  five (5) business days as outlined in Binghamton University, Human Subjects Research Review Office, Policy and Procedures IX.F.1 Unanticipated Problems/adverse events/complaints.  We require that the Unanticipated Problems/adverse events/complaints form be submitted to our office, found at the following link:
http://research.binghamton.edu/Compliance/humansubjects/COEUS_Docs.php

University policy requires you to maintain as a part of your records, any documents pertaining to the use of human subjects in your research.  This includes any information or materials conveyed to, and received from, the subjects, as well as any executed consent forms, data and analysis results.  These records must be maintained for at least six years after project completion or termination.  If this is a funded project, you should be aware that these records are subject to inspection and review by authorized representative of the University, State and Federal governments.

Please notify this office when your project is complete by completing and forwarding to our office the Protocol closure form found at the following link:
http://research.binghamton.edu/Compliance/humansubjects/COEUS_Docs.php Upon notification we will close the above referenced file.  Any reactivation of the project will require a new application.

This documentation is being provided to you via email. A hard copy will not be mailed unless you request us to do so.

Thank you for your cooperation, I wish you success in your research, and please do not hesitate to contact our office if you have any questions or require further assistance.
cc: file
Kristina Lambright

*__Diane Bulizak, Secretary__*
*Human Subjects Research Review Office*
*Biotechnology Building, Room 2205*
*Binghamton University*
*85 Murray Hill Rd.*
*Vestal, NY  13850*
*dbulizak@binghamton.edu*
*Telephone:    (607) 777-3818*
*Fax:    (607) 777-5025*

Date:               March 20, 2013
To:                 Meng Chen Huang, CCPA
From:               Sharon A. Bryant, Chair
                    Human Subjects Research Review Committee
Subject:            Modification Approval
Protocol Number: 2215-13
Protocol title: *Huang_Carnegie Community Engagement Classification Research*

Your project modification, which involves adding a brief survey to the research, was reviewed by the HSRRC and has received an exempt approval pursuant to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations, 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) .

An exempt status signifies that you will not be required to submit a Continuing Review application as long as your project involving human subjects remains unchanged.  If your project undergoes any other changes, these changes must be reported to our office prior to implementation.

Please notify this office when your project is complete by completing and forwarding to our office the following form:
http://humansubjects.binghamton.edu/Forms/Forms/Protocol%20Closure%20Form.rtf

Upon notification we will close the above referenced file.  Any reactivation of the project will require a new application.

This documentation is being provided to you via email. A hard copy will not be mailed unless you request us to do so.

cc: file
Kristina Lambright


***Diane Bulizak, Secretary***
*Human Subjects Research Review Office*
*Biotechnology Building, Room 2205*
*Binghamton University*
*85 Murray Hill Rd.*
*Vestal, NY  13850*
*dbulizak@binghamton.edu*
*Telephone:    (607) 777-3818*
*Fax:    (607) 777-5025*

## Appendix G

Results of the Survey and Phone Interview

**Survey Results**

1. Did the university have a campus-wide coordinating infrastructure (like a center or office) to oversee the process?

|  | # of Responses | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 7 | 70% |
| No | 3 | 30% |

   * 4 from Academic Affairs, 2 from both Academic and Student Affairs, 1 chose others

2. Did the university have a designated chief engagement officer for the process?

|  | # of Responses | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 7 | 70% |
| No | 3 | 30% |

   *3 Office of the Provost, 1 Office of Vice President Office, 1 Division of University Outreach and Engagement, 1 Office of Community Engagement and Service, 1 Center for Civic Engagement

3. Did your institution intentionally hire or recruit faculty with expertise in and commitment to community engagement?

|  | # of Responses | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 5 | 50% |
| No | 4 | 40% |
| Empty | 1 | 10% |

4. Was community engagement an important factor in your institution's promotion and tenure decisions of faculty members?

|  | # of Responses | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 7 | 70% |
| No | 3 | 30% |
| Empty | 0 | 0% |

   *1 indicated only minimal, 1 only for outreach and extension faculty

5. Were there any budgetary allocations for community engagement research or scholarship?

|  | # of Responses | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 7 | 70% |
| No | 3 | 30% |
| Empty | 0 | 0% |

*1 indicated only minimal, 1 only for those research/grant funds which faculty had received

6.  Did the university provide internal budgetary allocations for community engagement?

|  | # of Responses | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 8 | 80% |
| No | 2 | 20% |
| Empty | 0 | 0% |

7.  Which was the most extensive and most expensive part of the whole documentation process?

| # of Responses | Answers |
|---|---|
| 2 | None |
| 3 | Staff time |
| 3 | Hiring people to write the application or consultant |
| 4 | Data Collection |

8.  How long did it take to prepare for the application?

| # of Responses | Answers |
|---|---|
| 1 | 40 hours |
| 1 | 1 week |
| 6 | 4-6 month |
| 2 | did not answer |

9.  How long did it take to complete the actual application?

| # of Responses | Answers |
|---|---|
| 1 | 15 hours |
| 1 | 3 weeks |
| 3 | 1 month |
| 2 | 3 month |
| 2 | 5-6 month in total |
| 1 | Did not answer |

10. Were there any new community engagement opportunities available to students as the results of the application?

|  | # of Responses | Percentage |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 3 | 30% |
| No | 7 | 70% |

11. Were there any new community engagement opportunities available to faculty members as the results of the application?

| | # of Responses | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 3 | 30% |
| No | 7 | 70% |

12. Would you encourage other institutions to pursue the Classification?

| | # of Responses | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 9 | 90% |
| No | 0 | 0% |

**Phone Interview Results**

Q1 Definition of Community Engagement

| | # of Responses | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 10 | 100% |
| Used the same one | 4 | 40% |
| Based on Carnegie Foundation | 3 | 30% |
| Own definition | 3 | 30% |
| Plan to have own definition for next application | 2 | 20% |

**Q2 Assessment for Readiness**

| # of Responses | Answers |
|---|---|
| 3 | Intended to apply in 2008 |
| 2 | Reviewed part 1 of the application |
| 2 | A history of engagement |
| 3 | New center created, new president hired, or change in the center |

**Q3 Top Administrators Involvement**

| # of Responses | Answers |
|---|---|
| 7 | The provost |
| 2 | Bottom up approach |
| 1 | Both bottom up and top down approach |

**Q4 People involved in the application process**

| # of Responses | Answers |
|---|---|
| 3 | Singular approaches, used own knowledge or help from others |
| 7 | Task force or team approach |

## Q5. Practices in the Application

All of the institutions tried to include practices across the institution to provide an institutional wide overview of community engagement practices.

## Q6 Challenges

| # of Responses | Answers |
|---|---|
| 7 | Data collection/management |
| 4 | Documenting the application |
| 3 | Communication across the campus |
| 2 | Structural support |
| 2 | People's motivation |
| 1 | Not start on time |
| 1 | No challenges at all, rewarding experiences |

## Q7 Recommendations

| # of Responses | Answers |
|---|---|
| 7 | Top Administrators Involvement |
| 6 | Team Approaches |
| 4 | Start early in the application process |
| 3 | Use the application to lead the institution's community engagement efforts |

(This table did not list all the recommendations the interviewees suggested, only top four recommendations were listed.)