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Institutionalizing Community-Based Learning and Research: The Case for External Networks

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The Case for External Networks

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Conversations continue as to whether and how community-based learning and research (CBLR) can be most effectively integrated into the mission and practice of institutions of higher education (IHEs). In 2005, eight District of Columbia- (DC-) area universities affiliated with the Community Research and Learning (CoRAL) Network engaged in a planning and evaluation exercise, applying a "rapid assessment" method to gauge baseline levels of CBLR institutionalization on each campus, envisioning progress in key areas, and proposing ways in which the CoRAL Network could achieve institutionalization goals. Aggregate analysis of the assessment data suggests several areas of similarity across extremely diverse university settings. Principle among the areas of similarity is the clearly articulated need for a network structure, external to any given university, to play a strategic role in enabling CBLR institutionalization goals.

This paper examines a university-community network created to support community-based learning and research in Washington, D.C. The Community Research and Learning (CoRAL) Network serves as the focus of this analysis aimed at identifying some of the value-added components of and challenges to operating a network among institutions of higher education (IHEs) and community partners. For analysis, we utilize an innovative self-assessment technique developed to measure social capital and adapt it to assess institutional and inter-institutional dimensions of universities' civic engagement. We conclude with a discussion of our findings, particularly in light of the limitations of our self-assessment based method, to support the value of regional IHE networks.

History of the CoRAL Network

The Community Research and Learning (CoRAL) Network had its origins at Georgetown University (GU), catalyzed by a 1997 capacity-building grant from the Bonner Foundation. The grant was used to develop expertise in undertaking collaborative, community-driven research designed to effect social change and promote social justice. A core belief for project implementation was that both service-learning and community-based research[1] would have to be "adopted and owned" by the faculty—in their courses and scholarly research—if they were to be sustained and institutionalized at the university. A decade later, this premise extends throughout the CoRAL Network's operations among participating DC-area universities. Although the practices and institutionalization process have varied considerably across CoRAL campuses, community-based learning and research (CBLR) activities have become curricular and scholarly endeavors supported by faculty—in their courses, through the curriculum, and in their scholarship—as well as receiving continuing support through community service, campus ministry, and/or outreach program offices.

The initial three-year grant (1997-2000) supported eight GU faculty members, 40 students, and 14 community-based organizations conducting 18 community-based research projects, ranging from asset mapping to oral histories to program evaluations. It proved to be successful in developing some

expertise among the faculty and community partners who had engaged in community-based research projects. It also demonstrated some of the challenges of undertaking such projects, particularly the mismatch between the academic calendar and CBOs' needs for research results and the substantial learning curves involved in taking on many short-term projects with continuously changing student-researchers. The faculty and community partners also learned about the challenges in effective partnering, such as sharing clear expectations and limits to collaborations, trust-building, sharing resources and power, and upholding standards of excellence in research while simultaneously generating results relevant to social change work. These challenges continue to confront CBLR work, but a number of promising practices have been developed to redirect frustrations or mitigate their negative consequences while strengthening the quality of CBLR.

The CoRAL Network was created to address some of the challenges in conducting CBLR, particularly: to enhance communications among the CBOs and universities; build the IHEs' expertise and capacities to coordinate projects of larger scale and longer duration that would have greater impact on the community; document and disseminate effective practices; and build efficiencies of scale in the areas of faculty training, student engagement, and CBO partner development and information sharing. It did so not by trying to impose a particular model of CBLR development across the member campuses, but by intentionally examining the diverse practices that emerged on each campus to learn the benefits and challenges of each, then sharing this information among network partners. Promising practices in fact were spread from one campus to another, but always with adaptations appropriate for the particular institutional context. Each campus has been respected for its unique mission, student and faculty profile, comparative resource base, and long-term partnerships in the local community.[2]

Through the institutionalization practices reported herein, we note a wide range of practices related to curriculum integration, organizational structures, faculty roles and rewards, student engagement, and community partnering among our network universities. One of the important lessons we have come to understand through this collaborative process is that one model of CBLR practice does NOT fit all institutions and that we need to understand the reasons for and dynamics of particular practices to convey them to other campuses (Stoecker et al., 2003).

The CoRAL Network reached its peak of activity during its third three-year grant cycle, from 2003-2006. During this time, it grew to have three full-time and three part-time staff members in centralized, community center-based offices serving nine[3] universities and some 60+ community-based organizations on a regular basis. From the handful of faculty practitioners and courses found on each of the campuses in the early 1990s, the CBLR practices of the campuses grew significantly. In its 2006 report to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the CoRAL Network reported significant achievements in its three-year aggregate outcomes: administration of subgrants to seven universities; 441 service-learning courses taught by 462 faculty to 9,684 undergraduates; and CBLR partnerships formed with 485 community-based organizations. CoRAL staff and campus PIs enabled success by managing CBLR-related programs, developing policies/manuals, and conducting outreach across departments or schools. Other approaches to institutionalization at the IHEs included the creation of a Service-Learning Advisory Board, offering mini-grants to faculty interested in teaching CBLR courses, integrating service-learning into core curricula, targeting particular departments for faculty outreach initiatives, creating a community-based learning program coordinator position, and working with high-level university officials to consider CBLR teaching and research as part of the faculty reward structure.

One of the critical factors responsible for this success was having identified key personnel to serve as network staff as well as campus principal investigators. Similar to the findings reported in Stoecker et al. (2003), we note that CoRAL Network staff became quite knowledgeable about and skilled at working across diverse campus contexts and identifying key resource people on each campus. Similarly, the principal investigator (PI) at each university drew on professional and personal contacts to promote and advance campus institutionalization of CBLR on her own campus. This entailed creating and/or supporting development of faculty champions, administrator allies, and strong student leaders; mobilizing resources and time commitments in creative ways; and "working the systems" at their own university to build institutional support.

The CoRAL experience corroborated one other finding reported in Stoecker et al. (2003)—that of the challenge of the financial sustainability of network operations across institutions. Despite CoRAL's tremendous success—both in meeting ambitious program benchmarks and documenting CBLR institutionalization—securing sustainable funding proved to be even more difficult than noted

in Stoecker et al. (p. 53). Despite deliberately seeking alternative, diversified, sustainable funding for the CoRAL Network, the staff and board of directors found themselves in a Catch-22 regarding funding: local foundations and government agencies believed that because of CoRAL's substantial multi-year CNCS funding, there was no need for DC-area grantmakers to provide support for network activities. These grantmakers further reasoned that because the universities are elite institutions, it was more appropriate to use limited philanthropic resources to support community-based organizations that typically provide direct services with more immediately measurable and effective outcomes. Funders argued that the universities should be providing this support as part of their civic responsibility to the community.

Similarly, the universities receiving subgrants were unwilling to provide substantial financial support for the Network, as they were hard-pressed to secure adequate funding for their own campus development of CBLR activities. The campus PIs were unwilling to seek out funding to support centralized CoRAL Network office operations when each of their offices was inadequately funded to meet their own campus-identified needs. Even the CoRAL Network Board was rife with conflicts-of-interest, as most board members were attached to universities or community organizations and charged with fiduciary responsibilities for their own institutions that competed with CoRAL Network funding sources.

This set of circumstances led to the termination of CoRAL Network staff positions and a shutdown of central office operations. With this termination, area-wide programs for faculty development, student engagement, and community partnering has ceased, as has the consistent and intentional sharing of information and CBLR project opportunities across campuses. Nevertheless, the institutionalization practices reported herein demonstrate the variability and contextual sensitivity required to integrate CBLR into the curricular and scholarly lifeblood of CoRAL Network member universities.[4] We attempt to demonstrate the range of practices along each of the seven dimensions of Barbara Holland's institutionalization rubric (1997)[5] and select a few particularly successful practices in each area to provide a bit more in-depth information.

Literature Review: Meanings and Measures of Institutionalization

The term *institutionalization* refers to integrating and incorporating CBLR into the everyday prac-

tices and norms of IHEs. Zlotkowski (1995) and Lynton and Elman (1997) spoke to making the commitment to service-learning mainstream in the academic enterprise, rather than an afterthought, while maintaining the individual culture of each campus in the process. Institutionalization is such an important issue in assessing the level of mainstreaming community engagement that the Carnegie Corporation funded a three-year study conducted by Campus Compact to document best practices of the "engaged campus." Following guidelines in Hollander et al. (2001), year one findings mention as demonstrable indicators: "mission and purpose; administrative and academic leadership; external resource allocation; disciplines, departments, and interdisciplinary work; faculty roles and rewards; internal resource allocation; community voice; and enabling mechanisms."

Growth of Institutionalization

While many colleges and universities claim to have heeded Ernest Boyer's charge in his pioneering work, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate* (1990), in which he encourages institutions of higher education to embrace the "scholarship of engagement," the degree to which IHEs have committed real resources and institutionalized these practices is uneven. In his foreword to *Lasting Engagement: Building and Sustaining a Commitment to Community Outreach, Development, and Collaboration*, Lawrence L. Thompson observes that "[w]hatever approach an IHE takes to institutionalizing community engagement, two things are clear. First, true community engagement cannot succeed without institutionalization. Second, making lasting changes in how a college or university perceives itself and the outside world is not easy" (Springfield College, 2002, p. vii). The 2002 Springfield College report identifies as evidence of IHEs' serious community engagement: dedicated, hard-moneyed administrative offices or positions; establishing local-vendor and local-personnel hiring policies; incorporating community-based learning into undergraduate and graduate work; direct funding of community activities; and including a faculty member's community work in tenure and promotion cases (p. 7). Perhaps as a result of the degree of difficulty inherent in institutionalization, Butin (2006) provides the sobering observation that "even as the idea of service-learning moves into the academic mainstream, its actual institutional footprint appears uncertain" (p. 474). Butin argues that this uncertainty exists because of the perceptions that CBLR is "soft," both in terms of funding and theoretical underpinnings, it takes a disproportionate amount of time to

accomplish, and it is not rewarded by current faculty tenure and promotion policies (p. 474). Campus Compact sponsored a 20th anniversary symposium of CBLR scholars and practitioners to assess the current state of engaged scholarship in IHEs (Holland & Meeropol, 2006). More than 40 engaged scholars celebrated the increased and widespread acceptance of some aspects of CBLR practice, while at the same time noting the remaining challenges facing further institutionalization.

Assessment of Institutionalization

Prior to the late 1990s, assessing institutionalization was addressed in the literature in a more ad hoc approach than seen in later works. The Kellogg Foundation commissioned an evaluation of 35 service-learning projects (at the $100,000 or higher level) funded at a number of IHEs from 1985 to 1995 (Koch, 2000). The evaluation concluded: a number of courses were being adapted to include service; institutionalization was being encouraged through the creation of new centers, institutes, and clinics; policies, practices, and mission statements were being changed to reflect service; scholarships and living-learning communities were being created for service-focused undergraduates; leadership training in service was being provided by off-site institutions; a positive impact was observed in terms of integrating curricula and creating spin-off activities; and funding for service was extended via capital campaigns and in-kind and government support.

In 1996, Bringle and Hatcher advised higher education administrators to identify an individual at their institution to serve in a leadership position and establish a service-learning office. They promoted the example of an IHE that has moved beyond a handful of faculty champions with their set of courses to broad-based appeal among a number of departments and colleges, especially when general education curriculum courses are involved. Bringle and Hatcher further recommended taking the controversial (for academia) step of investigating the faculty reward system with an eye toward incentivizing faculty to engage in service-learning and/or community-based research, or, at the very least, not *discouraging* such efforts via current systems of reward that overlook, undervalue, or disparage community-based work. But faculty know all too well that tenure and promotion decisions are not typically granted on the basis of even strong, engaged community-based research or teaching.

Holland's earlier work, in which she provides examples of factors related to organizational impacts of service-learning (1997), addressed issues of the demonstrability of institutionalization, stating that, regardless of rhetoric, institutions must make con-

scious decisions and develop their own determination of when service becomes an essential part of the academic enterprise (p. 35). Bringle and Hatcher (2000) indicate that, when "curriculum can better reflect community engagement," a more enduring institutionalization can occur (p. 274). Furco (2000) provides a thorough framework for assessing institutionalization that recognizes IHE diversity and suggests an internal organizing effort to build support for institutionalization of CBLR.

The 2001 Wingspread Conference on institutional engagement resulted in a helpful set of institutional indicators of student civic engagement (Long, 2002). Among their indicators are: making service a part of the curriculum; creating an institute or center to serve as liaison between faculty and community organizations; providing resources and support for students and faculty; providing forums and conferences for discussion of service and engagement issues among both faculty and students; creating residence halls with community outreach activities; running alternative spring break programs; and creating community service scholarships. The proceedings also encourage high levels of support from college presidents and high levels of commitment from faculty, although recommendations are vague and non-specific.

Three years later, the published summary of the 2004 Wingspread Conference proceedings by Brukardt, Holland, Percy, and Zimpher identified six practices that would lead to institutionalization of community engagement among higher education institutions: integrating engagement into mission; forging partnerships as the overarching framework for engagement; renewing and redefining discovery and scholarship; integrating engagement into teaching and learning; recruiting and supporting new champions; and creating radical institutional change (p. iii). The conference proceedings further called for university and college administrators to "support engaged faculty, encourage interdisciplinary efforts and expand disciplinary assessment models" (p. iii). Calls also are raised to students to demand this new pedagogy, to communities to expect more from their local higher education institutions, and to funders to "make engagement a national priority" (p. iii).

Holland (1997) developed a matrix for identifying categories of levels of commitment to service, based on a number of factors related to the organization's mission. These factors then identify the IHE as demonstrating relevance at one of the following four levels: *Low Relevance*, where service may be extra-curricular, with little other mention; *Medium Relevance*, where there is some support for volunteer work but little other institutionalization;

High Relevance, where centers and institutes exist, attention is paid to service in promotion and tenure and formal criteria exist to reward service; and *Full Integration*, where service is a guiding and defining principle of the institution (p. 34). Clearly, much progress has been made to identify the elements comprising the characteristics of sustained, institutional commitment to engagement. We build on this work, in particular Holland's assessment guidelines, adopting key indicators across the IHEs of the CoRAL Network.

Method: Operationalizing a Multi-site Assessment Tool

Assessment Tool, Method, and Limitations

We deliberated over which assessment tool to use in our CoRAL cross-institutional assessment, taking into consideration the availability, accessibility, and cost-effectiveness of instruments, as well as appropriateness for application across the Network's diverse IHEs. We decided to use the Gelmon, Holland, Driscoll, Spring, and Kerrigan matrix in *Assessing Service-learning and Civic Engagement: Principles and Techniques,* published by Campus Compact (2001)—based on Holland's earlier work (1997). We used this rather than Furco's "Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Service-Learning in Higher Education" (2000) due to the expressed reluctance of participating universities to complete the latter's more onerous and resource-exhausting data-gathering and reporting requirements. We made efforts to ensure the reliability of our results would not be compromised by the more limited input the Gelmon et al. instrument required. We discussed the meaning of the indicators and how they might be operationalized with all campus PIs prior to undertaking the assessment to ensure comparability of meaning across institutions. We reassured the PIs that their assessments were not tied to funding decisions and that no results would be made public without their expressed approval. Finally, in follow-up presentations and discussions of the results, we allowed IHEs to adjust their scores in light of the discussion.[6] The rate of return from the participating universities was 100%.

The assessment process began in fall 2005 following two years of sustained Network-building. The purpose was to plan for the Network's growth over the next five years, based on IHEs' needs. Gelmon et al.'s (2001) chapter on "Institutional Impact" reviews the seven dimensions for institutional assessment and provides useful tools for self-assessments. Following guidelines set forth in *Table 1. Levels of Commitment to Service, Characterized by Key Organizational Factors*

Evidencing Relevance to Institutional Mission and elsewhere, CoRAL-affiliated universities assessed the levels and expectations for institutionalization of CBLR initiatives in their own institution in mission; promotion, tenure, and hiring; organizational structure; student involvement and curriculum;[7] faculty involvement; community involvement; and campus publications. To carry out the self-assessments, each CoRAL Network PI assembled a team of campus stakeholders to review these criteria and undertake the scoring.[8]

To guide the planning exercise, each self-assessment team posed the following questions:

1. How do we rate our campus on each of these factors? What level of commitment is demonstrated by our administration, faculty, and students? For each factor, what are specific examples of how commitment and institutionalization are (or are not) carried out? (See Table 2, Column A.)

2. If we are successful in our jobs over the next few years, what will our campus look like in terms of institutionalization of CBLR? What specific changes will be made in each key area? What numeric scores would we seek to achieve on each dimension by 2009? (See Table 2, Column B.)

3. What resources and support can the CoRAL Network provide to make this assessment a reality? What do we need, specifically, in terms of staffing, equipment, information and communication products, training, research, materials, political will, and so forth, to achieve these goals? (See Table 2, Column C.)

The results, while preserving each campus' unique character, demonstrated the common problems each faced and the ways concerted, coordinated networking strategies could respond to these needs.

The two potential limitations of the data are their internal (intra-IHE) validity and their external (across-IHE) reliability. The internal validity limitation is due to the small-sized teams of assessors on each campus. The institutionalization rubrics for other assessment methodologies call for expanded teams drawing on extensive data sources to document and measure institutional resource commitment along each dimension. For the comparative and strategic purposes of this analysis, however, such extended data gathering is not warranted as the final outcome measures are summative in nature and limited in scale.[9] The central location of the key team members as campus leaders on CBLR provided them with sufficient knowledge to make summary assessments in each of the areas.

The inter-institutional reliability of the indicators

Table 1.
Levels of Commitment to Service, Characterized by Key Organizational Factors
Evidencing Relevance to Institutional Mission

	Level One Low Relevance	Level Two Medium Relevance	Level Three High Relevance	Level Four Full Integration
Mission	No mention or undefined rhetorical reference	Service is part of what we do as citizens	Service is an element of our academic agenda	Service is a central and defining characteristic
Promotion, Tenure, Hiring	Service to campus committees or to discipline	Community service mentioned; volunteerism or consulting may be included in portfolio	Formal guidelines for defining, documenting, and rewarding service	Community-based research and teaching are key criteria for hiring and evaluation
Organizational Structure	None focused on service or volunteerism	Units may exist to foster volunteerism	Various separate centers and institutes are organized to provide service	Infrastructure exists to support widespread faculty and student participation
Student Involvement and Curriculum	Part of extracurricular student life activities	Organized support for volunteer activity	Opportunity for extra credit, internships, practicum experience, special events/activities	Service learning and community-based learning featured across curriculum
Faculty Involvement	Service defined only as campus duties; committees; little interdisciplinary work	Pro bono consulting; community volunteerism acknowledged	Tenured/senior faculty pursue community-based research; some teach service-learning courses	Community research and active learning a high priority; interdisciplinary and collaborative work is encouraged
Community Involvement	Random or limited individual or group involvement	Community representation on advisory boards for departments or schools	Community influences campus through active partnerships or part-time teaching or participation in service-learning programs	Community involved in defining, conducting and evaluating community-based research and teaching
Campus Publications	Community engagement not an emphasis	Stories of student volunteerism or alumni as good citizens	Emphasis on economic impact, role of campus centers/institutes	Community connection as key to mission; fundraising has engagement as a focus

posed a potentially greater challenge as it might be initially unclear what a particular score would mean across different institutional contexts. As noted, we addressed this matter by talking through with the PIs the range of activities that might constitute a particular score on each dimension before undertaking the assessment. The CoRAL Network director stayed in contact with each campus PI as their teams undertook the assessment and provided consultation when questions arose, thereby further strengthening consistency across the institutions.

Finally, as noted above, we collectively discussed the results with the PIs, presenting the summary data they produced back to them and affirming the assessments collectively, making only two changes to the initial scores. To some extent, there was an element of comparing "apples to oranges" across the different campuses—in light of the disparate institutional contexts—yet the PIs felt comfortable that the scores enabled meaningful and accurate cross-institutional comparisons. For the purposes of considering how the Network could support

Table 2.
CoRAL Worksheet to Assess Commitment to Institutionalizing CBLR by Key Organizational Factors

	Column A Level of Relevance (2005)	Column B Level of Relevance (2009)	Column C How can CoRAL get you there?
Mission			
Promotion, Tenure, Hiring			
Organizational Structure			
Student Involvement and Curriculum			
Faculty Involvement			
Community Involvement			
Campus Publications			

future campus development, enumerating key practices in each area enabled us to assess practices firmly established and in need of further development on each campus, and those for which the Network was most able to provide support.

Findings: Plotting a Course for the Future

Graphing Assessment Results

The numerical scores from each campus were mapped onto radar graphs for each campus to present a visual summary appropriate for intra- and inter-institutional comparison (Krishna & Shrader, 2000). The 2005 data were plotted along the axes for the seven dimensions with thick lines, visually illustrating areas of institutional strengths and weaknesses. A lower score on a particular axis indicates a weaker area, one that may be prioritized

for future individual campus CBLR work. A higher score on a particular axis indicates an area to be exploited for further leveraging of CBLR resources and advancing CBLR institutionalization—an opportunity to build on one's strengths. The 2009 goals were also plotted on the same axes using thin lines. The outer lines show the realistic projections of the campus team for CBLR institutionalization. A highly skewed or erratic figure indicates a greater imbalance or disparity among the key CBLR variables. A more geometrically-uniform figure suggests greater balance, and relative size indicates a greater or lesser degree of CBLR institutionalization throughout campus life. For example, on Georgetown's plot (see Figure 1), it is clear that there are many campus strengths in implementing CBLR (its larger size), but there is a dramatic challenge in that little consideration is given
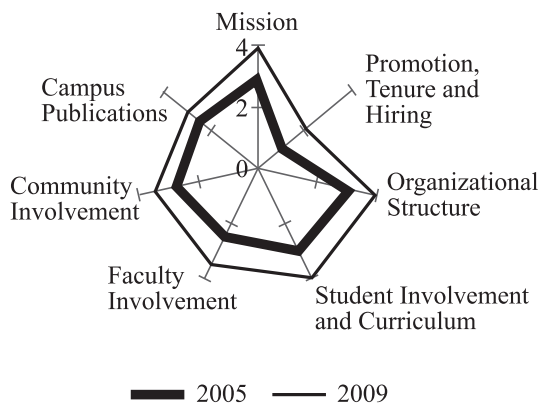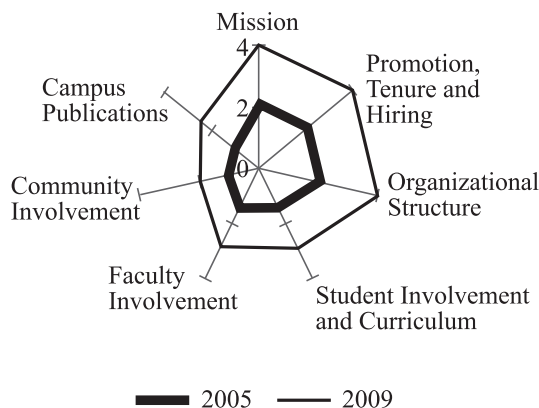
Figure 1.
Radar Graph for Georgetown University

Figure 2.
Radar Graph for the University of the District of Columbia

to CBLR in the hiring, promotion, and tenure process (shown by its skewed drop-off on that dimension on the graph). The radar graphs (see Figures 1 and 2 for two representative graphs) were then compared to easily assess relative strengths and weaknesses for each campus and across campuses, and identify areas where each campus might need attention as well as being in a position to offer support to other campuses.

No two shapes were alike, highlighting the wide variation among CoRAL-affiliated campuses. While only the Georgetown and UDC radar graphs are included here, we note that all campus assessments reflected interest in improving *all* seven CBLR dimensions over the next five years. This desire for change is evidenced in the PIs' strong commitment to working collaboratively with CoRAL, community organizations, and each other toward specific goals. For example, all of the assessment groups envisioned strengthening CBLR consideration in hiring, tenure, and promotion. This would entail both internal changes of such criteria and advocacy across IHEs, based on successful implementation of promising practices.

Another common feature is that many of the figures are quite flat (i.e. scored low) on the "Promotion, Tenure, and Hiring" axis, reinforcing the perception that this aspect of CBLR institutionalization needs greatest attention. Another 'flat' area for many campuses is the "Community Involvement" axis, which upon further analysis proved to be a compromise score of the "IHE in the community" and the "community in the IHE." Many campuses are stronger on the former and less institutionalized or proactive on the latter, with the latter serving as the focus of their desired change goals.

For several campuses, the radar graphs reflect strength along the "Mission" and the "Student Involvement and Curriculum" axes. This indicates areas where campuses can leverage further CBLR work. Similarly, strong rankings on the "Student Involvement and Curriculum" axis may point to a "bottom-up" strategy, focused on organizing committed students–along with their parents, and university alumni–to demand stronger organizational structures to support CBLR institutionalization.

The Value-Added of the CoRAL Network

The assessment teams offered specific suggestions concerning ways the CoRAL Network could help the IHEs increase their campus CBLR institutionalization (column 3 in Table 2). We report their suggestions in Table 3, organized by the Holland dimensions, to illustrate how a centralized network can provide strategic resources that will serve as a catalyst for IHE development and/or provide efficiencies of scale to multiply impacts across campuses and ultimately to benefit the community.

Conclusions: Building a CBLR Network

We took these results from the final activity in the planning exercise—identifying the CoRAL activities and programs that would assist universities in moving from their 2005 assessment to their 2009 goals—and grouped them around a manageable set of strategic initiatives for the CoRAL Network's development, categorizing them into the following *five strategic areas*:

1. Conducting research and evaluation—CoRAL staff undertake research to identify promising practices, attain resources, acquire assessment tools, and compile research instruments

2. Providing capacity-building and training— CoRAL staff identify local and nearby experts to provide network-wide trainings

Table 3.
Strategies to Maximize CoRAL Network Support to its Higher Education Members

| | Implementation Strategies | | | | |
Assessment Variable and Strategic Approach	Research and Evaluation	Capacity-building and Training	CoRAL Participation on Campus	Consultations, Collaborations, and Consensus-building	Information Dissemination
Mission *Make "service" a central and defining characteristic of higher education institutions' mission*	Provide IHE administrators with comparison data from other DC-area universities' best practices and models (e.g. "College with a Conscience")	Help IHE develop a strategic plan and implementation road map Support campus partners to unify and coordinate activities and faculty/administration efforts to revise missions of partner universities			Increase national visibility of CBLR work
Promotion, Tenure, and Hiring *Ensure that community-based research and teaching are key criteria for hiring and evaluation*	Research/review what comparable campuses are doing to recognize CBLR commitments and what strategies were used to achieve professional recognition Support the process of systematically identifying precedents for tenure revision		Support (and participate in) presentation at Faculty Senate meetings Educate specific departmental units for tenure rule modification	Convene a meeting with campus decisionmakers about tenure and promotion matters; prioritize campus strategies for institutionalizing CBLR on campuses Sponsor roundtables with faculty from other campuses where there is success Create a CoRAL-affiliate Advisory Committee to support changes among partner universities by providing information, publicity, research and other needed supports to help them achieve desired changes	Raise academic credibility of CBLR work, specifically by publishing proceedings from the CoRAL conference Circulate national models (e.g., Georgetown Dept. of Sociology guidelines)
Organizational Structure *Guarantee that the infrastructure exists to support widespread faculty and student participation in CBLR activities*	Research/review other campuses' structural approaches; lay out the pros and cons of co-locating under Campus Life vs. Academic Affairs vs. Campus Ministry Work with IHEs' internal research units to assess the impact of service-learning and CBLR, especially demonstrating the return on investment and academic rigor	Provide continued funding (through subgrants) to IHE affiliates, especially for office space and liaison staff Assist IHE to develop a strategic plan and implementation road map	Investigate potential for CoRAL representatives to have a role on specific campus committees that promote engagement	Convene public forums and dialogues, conferences, meetings, advisory groups to advance university/community civic engagement area-wide and on specific partner campuses Form DC/Maryland/Virginia Campus Compact chapter to promote and coordinate civic engagement Work with each campus PI to create and support area-wide student/faculty support committee for civic engagement	Provide publicity, fundraising assistance, and publications that highlight model programs

Table 3.
Strategies to Maximize CoRAL Network Support to its Higher Education Members (continued)

Assessment Variable and Strategic Approach	Implementation Strategies				
	Research and Evaluation	Capacity-building and Training	CoRAL Participation on Campus	Consultations, Collaborations, and Consensus-building	Information Dissemination
Student Involvement and Curriculum *Ensure that CBLR are featured across the curriculum*	Review/report on other campuses' program models and how staff dedicate their time	Provide training for student empowerment so students can push for greater support for CBLR in all schools Coordinate and promote area-wide educational, research and engagement opportunities, and programs for students and faculty at partner universities		Clarify the "categories" and concepts presented in the literature and help advance the recognition of the diversity of higher education institutions and their work in this arena	Promote recognition of the diversity of institutions and their structures, and thus, of different vehicles for this work Promote "on-the-ground" tours of neighborhoods for funders, faculty, students, other non-profits (e.g., Northwest One walking tour, Prince George's tour, DC Mural Tour)
Faculty Involvement *Promote the ideal that community research and active learning are a high priorities and encourage interdisciplinary and collaborative work*	Analyze how to involve more faculty in teaching CBLR courses.	Maximize recruitment for Faculty Fellows Learning Circle[10] Provide a list of CBLR practitioners as a resource for speakers, trainers, bibliography, collaborators, mentors, etc Provide faculty training on (a) community-based research methods; (b) CBLR curriculum development; (c) S-L and CBLR student assessment strategies Disseminate successful curriculum models and syllabi	Implement campus-specific CBLR Learning Circles; tailor content for distinct disciplines or colleges	Pool resources to bring in experts from other higher education institutions	Promote collaborative publication endeavors across CoRAL IHE affiliates Promote broader dissemination opportunities for faculty by (a) providing funding for faculty to travel to conferences to present their CBLR-generated scholarship and (b) creating other vehicles for knowledge dissemination
Community Involvement *Maximize community involvement in defining, conducting and evaluating CBLR initiatives, co-teaching, and providing representation on IHE advisory boards*	Help inventory promising practices from CBOs' perspective	Hire CoRAL staff to focus on community partnering issues Coordinate IHE placements so resources don't always flow to the same CBOs Allow for line-item funding for CBOs in subgrants Strengthen CBOs' capacity to engage with IHEs, develop "access portals" for each campus		Develop consensus definitions for "partnerships" and implementation guidelines for IHEs	Share promising practices and hear about experiences from others Share information regarding local community partners with 'strong' capacity for effective engagement with IHEs

Table 3.
Strategies to Maximize CoRAL Network Support to its Higher Education Members (continued)

Assessment Variable and Strategic Approach	Implementation Strategies				
	Research and Evaluation	Capacity-building and Training	CoRAL Participation on Campus	Consultations, Collaborations, and Consensus-building	Information Dissemination
Campus Publications *Promote the ideals that community connections are a key to university's mission, that engagement is a fundraising selling point, and that universities should emphasize their economic impact and role of campus centers/institutes*		Develop templates for articles and press releases (plug-ins) that stress civic engagement, assessment tools, reflection techniques, and robust undergraduate opportunities	Liaise with campus press offices to highlight importance of CBLR in university/community relations	Promote opportunities for collaborative publications Provide technical assistance and funding support for campus CBLR websites Assist with funding and identifying peer reviewers for new online journal	Identify publication venues for CoRAL affiliate IHEs Disseminate publications from other campuses that highlight service-learning Publish and disseminate CoRAL conference proceedings Monitor local media and respond when appropriate with letters to editor, editorial meetings, press interviews Maintain relevance and update content on CoRAL's CBLR Web portal: www.coralnetwork.org

3. Encouraging CoRAL staff participation in campus activities—CoRAL staff members serve as a resource for campus-specific initiatives

4. Convening stakeholders and creating spaces for dialogue—CoRAL staff convene and facilitate cross-institutional and cross-sector conversations

5. Disseminating information—CoRAL staff cultivate and develop communication networks, Web based tools, print resources, and other media

These five strategies formed the framework for CoRAL's future expansion. Had the Network continued, we planned to replicate our successes with other DC-area campuses and deepen our work with the existing network members. By sharing this information, we contribute to the growing body of research findings enabling CBLR collaborations to operate effectively. These recommendations serve as a roadmap for other local networks and national associations of CBLR practitioners to consider for advancing community-based learning and research. These findings also can help IHEs educate funders about the growing needs for cross-institutional CBLR support to achieve synergy and economies of scale.

Notes

[1] Regarding terminology, in this paper we use "service-learning" and "community-based learning" interchangeably, depending on the context. In the earlier years (the 1990s), all CoRAL campuses used the term "service-learning" to refer to students' community service work directed toward community-identified needs that was integrated into courses by intentional learning activities such as reflection and/or writing exercises. By the early 2000s, some campuses began switching terminology from "service-learning" to "community-based learning" to avoid some of the negative connotations of the term service-learning (e.g., the power hierarchy implicit in service relationships; notions of noblesse oblige conveyed by the term; and collegial skepticism about the "feel-good" nature of service that does not necessarily connect to course learning objectives). Community-based learning (CBL) seemed to resonate better with some skeptical faculty who could understand the parallels of CBL with laboratory – or classroom-based learning. It also facilitates an understanding of the connections and overlaps of CBL with community-based research, which may be undertaken as a specialized form of CBL. Each of the campuses has its own preferred nomenclature, so when we are describing a particular campus initiative, that campus' language is used. When describing initiatives in the earlier years, we use the term service-learning; for the later years, we use the term community-based learning. When we refer to the entire set of practices supported by the CoRAL Network, we often use the term community-based learning and research, or the acronym CBLR.

[2] Indeed, it was the growing sense of trust established over time that enabled us to share information openly without any institution having to fear being judged by the other IHEs. It was this sense of trust and forthright discussion of the assessment criteria that allowed us to undertake the cross-campus institutionalization assessment successfully.

[3] Seven universities received subgrants from Georgetown through the Corporation for National and Community Service grant: American University, The Catholic University of America, George Washington University, Georgetown University, Trinity University, the University of the District of Columbia, and the University of Maryland-College Park. Two additional universities, Gallaudet University and Howard University, participated in some CoRAL programs and/or activities but did not receive subawards from the overall grant.

[4] Although eight IHEs participated in this assessment, we identify by name the practices of only six specific institutions based on their self-expressed desires for having their names attached to particular practices.

[5] We were intentional about adopting Holland's institutionalization protocol (1997) rather than some others that are available based on two key considerations: a) it is intuitive and easy to apply and adapt across widely varying institutions, yet it captures the key elements of institutionalization practices needed for strategic planning and future development (which was our key purpose for undertaking this research), and b) it could be undertaken with a reasonable commitment of staff time and resources and still yield reliable, valid data required for our comparative and strategic purposes.

[6] These post-hoc revisions were quite limited (only two scores were adjusted across the eight institutions along seven dimensions; a total of 56 scores) and were done long before there was any discussion of publishing the results.

[7] The campus research teams noted a methodological and conceptual limitation to this category. As presented in the assessment matrix, the "student involvement and curriculum" category mixes two concepts: (a) student participation in CBLR activities and (b) faculty integration of CBLR pedagogy in the curricula. For future assessments, there is a need to refine the tool and definitions to disaggregate and effectively measure these two different dimensions separately.

[8] The authors would like to acknowledge contributions to the assessment process: at American University, Faith Leonard, Marcy Fink Campos, and Vanessa Palma; at Catholic University, Lynn Mayer; at Gallaudet University, Karen Kimmel, Eloise Mollock, K. P. Perkins, Janice Mitchell, and Lillie Ransom; at Georgetown University, Kathleen Maas Weigert, Deanna Cooke, Sam Marullo, Jim Slevin, Jean Manney, and Suzanne Tarlov; at George Washington University, Mary Anne Saunders, Timothy Kane, and Emily Morrison; at Trinity University, Roxana Moayedi and Melynda Majors; at the University of Maryland-College Park, Margaret Morgan-Hubbard and Genevieve Villamora; at the University of the District of

Columbia, Sylvia Benatti, Shiela Harmon-Martin, and Sandra Jowers Barber.

9   The extended teams recommended that the application of the Furco assessment tool would be more appropriate for an internal audit as part of an internal change initiative. The multiple indicators within each area called for by Furco would provide for clearer direction of the changes needed within the institution and would likely involve the unit leaders who would be needed to implement such changes. This was not the purpose of our assessment.

10   The Faculty Fellows Learning Circle employed peer learning and support, and was developed and facilitated by CoRAL Program Director Marie Troppe, whose extensive experience as a service-learning faculty development trainer contributed to the program's overall success. During the spring semester, Faculty Fellows met bi-weekly to discuss promising practices in CBLR and share their work on adopting CBLR into their courses for the following academic year.

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