

EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNITY-ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP:
**ALIGNING COMMUNITY AND UNIVERSITY
STRENGTHS AND PRIORITIES**



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THE UNIVERSITY *of* NORTH CAROLINA
GREENSBORO

Institute *for* Community *and*
Economic Engagement

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



What does a community-engaged, high research activity university look like? How are community and university priorities and strengths aligned to promote and leverage success for all?

UNCG is one of just 50 institutions to be classified as both community-engaged and as high research activity by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. This volume outlines UNCG's distinctive and strategic advantage to meeting the pressing issues of our times through intentional, collaborative, and coordinated alignment of priorities and practices, and collaborative partnerships with diverse partners across sectors and communities.

UNCG is embedded in a region where diverse sectors work together to create opportunities for large scale initiatives. UNCG is a world class, regional university with a sense of place. UNCG members consistently join community-led conversations about priorities in the Piedmont Triad. Although the impact of anchor institutions, such as universities, is often measured by traditional economic impacts, UNCG contributes significantly to many forms of social and community capital.

Strategic efforts to fulfill UNCG's public commitments require teaching and scholarly activities that are transformative. Community-connected and community-engaged scholarship transforms students' disciplinary, professional, and civic knowledge, and our communities with whom we partner. Reciprocal and mutually beneficial partnerships among community

and university partners are essential to create positive and sustainable outcomes for all.

UNCG is among research universities that are making great strides to encourage and support multi-disciplinary as well as departmental commitments to engaged scholarship to achieve community and university agendas. Aligning priorities and talents requires a shift from individual efforts to collective agendas.

To facilitate more collaborative approaches to achieving community and university goals, we are committed to helping UNCG understand more fully and clearly its institutional portrait of engagement. Knowing who is doing what, where, with whom, and to what ends allows UNCG to clarify goals; craft plans; improve teaching, research, and service; assess outcomes; and identify future opportunities that strengthen our capacity and reputation as a proactive and responsive member of the greater North Carolina and global communities.

Dr. Emily Janke

Director and Associate Professor
Institute for Community and Economic Engagement
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WHY PARTNERSHIPS MATTER



“Have I made a difference?” This is core to what it means to be a happy and productive human being, no matter who you are, but for us in the nonprofit community, that question has a special significance.

A social worker wants to know if the interventions she designed resulted in children staying in safe, healthy homes. A food pantry in our community wants to know if the food it delivers actually reduces hunger, or if it is ineffective, or worse, counterproductive. A local ballet company wants to know that the time spent with a class of aspiring six-year-old ballerinas results in, at the least, a lifetime love for dance, if not a career in the performing arts. A social justice agency wants to know if it is making progress toward eliminating racial disparities in graduation rates.

When you are in the middle of delivering the services that are your central mission, while at the same time, engaging in all the activities that are necessary to keep the doors open, it is easy to lose sight of this core question: “Have I made a difference?” In this post-recession philanthropic landscape, ignoring program evaluation is not only short sighted, it risks the continued support of foundations, government, and a public that want to know that their donations are doing what has been promised. It is no longer enough to “do good.” We must also do it well.

Aligning strengths and priorities through community-university projects and partnerships is indispensable.

For example, in 2014, the Guilford Nonprofit Consortium entered into a new partnership with our friends at the Nonprofit Evaluation Support Program (NESP) at UNCG to bring the fundamentals of program evaluation to our members. The results of that collaboration have been remarkable. We now can say that we have made a difference, and we can identify areas where we need to do better.

Nonprofits and universities occupy a unique place in the community. We are often the “canary in the coal mine,” seeing social issues on the horizon long before anyone else. When we partner around community priorities — such as hunger, education, poverty, homelessness, the arts, and entrepreneurship — and align them to our existing strengths, assets, and structures, we can raise consciousness and “move the needle” on these issues together.

There are 700 nonprofits in Guilford County. Nonprofits rely on UNCG to contribute their faculty and students’ time and talents to achieve our goals to make a difference. We are fortunate to have a university like UNCG that is committed to community engagement, and we are fortunate to have nonprofit agencies that recognize the need for the structure that academic engagement provides. Together, we can “do good,” and we can do it well.

Steve Hayes, MPA

Director, Guilford Nonprofit Consortium

CHANCELLOR'S STATEMENT OF SUPPORT



The University of North Carolina at Greensboro has a rich legacy and current opportunity to deepen partnerships and grow initiatives to catalyze progress in our community and our society. We have the opportunity to transform our region, as well as the lives of our students and scholars through the work we choose to do, who we do it with, and how we do it.

In my other life — as a researcher and scholar who studies public policy, politics, and issues around equity — I've advised advocates, foundations, and thought leaders on the importance of framing the discourse around social change and, thus, moving public will.

The most powerful tool in the framing arsenal is the concept of values. Values are ways of understanding what an issue is about and why it matters. They are the perceptual lens through which people perceive public issues.

One of these values is recognizing our “shared fate.” The shared fate frame suggests that what affects one part of the nation affects us all. It suggests that we need to give greater support to programs and initiatives that get people to work together to solve social, economic, and environmental problems. These are essential to building stronger relationships among our communities making it more possible, and more likely, that we can deal effectively with the pressing challenges our communities confront.

In practice this means we must understand that true progress will only be made when we realize that we must “lift all boats.” This means that we have to think clearly and equitably about how we invest in our communities, as well as how we partner to collaborate with the communities that are most impacted by research, decisions, policies, and statutes. Engaging reciprocally with communities means that we build the capacity of our communities and UNCG for sustainable student, scholarly, and regional transformation. We are not alone. We cannot do this work alone. We have shared fate.

I am proud to be a part of a university that understands this value. Through our teaching, our research and creative activities, and public service work, we honor UNCG's commitment to participate as contributing members of our communities in ways that align priorities and strengths. The next phase of the university is about transformation — student transformation, knowledge transformation and regional transformation. UNCG's engagement with communities will transform us all.

Dr. Franklin D. Gilliam, Jr.

UNCG Chancellor

COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES

Our Abundant Community

Guilford County is uniquely positioned to capitalize on its incredible assets in the social, public, and private sectors. Organizations and individuals are committed to improving the quality of life in the Piedmont Triad and are collaborating more frequently than ever before, leveraging and synthesizing assets to impact change. Multiple community-wide assessments, strategic plans, and initiatives have resulted from such collaborations. It is possible to document such community priorities by listening. This report showcases conversations held *by* members of the region *for* the region.

An Asset-Based Approach

An asset-based approach to engagement requires recognition of the many talents and resources already present in a community.¹ Paying attention to pre-existing initiatives can provide a bird's-eye view of what has become an elevated priority in the community. This volume presents some community-identified goals and priorities established by organizations in the region (Table 1). Many of these regional organizations included UNCG members and utilized inclusive approaches to ensure participation of diverse voices as they created their reports and initiatives.



Increase the supply of and access to affordable housing



Ensure all children enter kindergarten literacy-ready



Alleviate food insecurity and its consequences



Accelerate innovation and entrepreneurship



Improve service provision to reduce homelessness



Reduce overall rates of infant mortality and inequality in those rates



Increase the number of trained mental health providers and assurance of access to care



Increase diverse and data-informed leadership

Table 1. Community-Identified Priorities in Guilford County

This is an illustrative table that represents only a small sample of community-generated reports and is intended to highlight the existence of such reports so they may be incorporated into community-university conversations. The list shown here will need to be expanded and updated regularly to remain current with the contemporary thinking and indicators in the community. These reports were selected due to their collaborative and inclusive stakeholder engagement process and methodology.

Report	Conveners	Community-Identified Priorities
Ready for School, Ready for Life ² (2015-current)	Cemala Foundation, Joseph M. Bryan Foundation, Cone Health Foundation, Edward M. Armfield, Sr. Foundation, Inc., Weaver Foundation, Guilford County Partnership for Children	Identifies 10 key priorities to ensure that each child enters kindergarten literacy-ready.
Community Health Assessment ³ (2015-2016)	ADS Alcohol & Drug Services of Guilford, Inc., Cone Health, Cone Health Foundation, Foundation for a Healthy High Point, Guilford Adult Health, High Point Regional Health, Public Health Division of the Guilford County Department of Health and Human Services, United Way of Greater Greensboro, United Way of Greater High Point, UNCG Department of Public Health Education	Provides a wide range of health and health-related measures, including data on morbidity and mortality; health behaviors; clinical care; social, economic, and environmental factors; community health status; health behaviors; access to healthcare; and neighborhood needs.
2015-2019 Greensboro-Guilford County Consolidated Plan: Plan for a Resilient Community ⁴ (2015)	City of Greensboro	Recommends developing viable communities by providing decent housing, promoting a suitable living environment, and expanding economic opportunities principally for low and moderate income persons.
Education Matters: Moving Forward ⁵ (2013)	Guilford Education Alliance, Businesses for Excellence in Education, AchieveGuilford	Pinpoints educational strengths and opportunities in Guilford County.
Piedmont Together Comprehensive Regional Plan ⁶ (2010-current)	Piedmont Triad Regional Council, Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation	Maps out jobs, housing, transportation, healthy communities, places and spaces.
Faces of Change: Addressing Diversity in our Schools ⁷ (2010)	Guilford Education Alliance	Examines the range of challenges and opportunities that come with greater diversity in Guilford County's schools.
Voices Choices ⁸ (2009)	United Way of Greater Greensboro, Joseph M. Bryan Foundation, Weaver Foundation, Toleo Foundation, Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro, Moses Cone-Wesley Long Community Health Foundation	Advances financial stability of individuals and families, access to comprehensive healthcare services, successful school experiences for every child, nurturing children and youth for positive development.

More community-focused initiatives, statistics, and reports can be found at <https://communityengagement.uncg.edu/local-data-sets-and-reports/>

ENVISIONING A COMMUNITY-ENGAGED STRATEGY

A community-engaged approach — one that is *firmly grounded in and guided by reciprocal, cross-sector, and interdisciplinary partnerships for mutual benefit* — must be at the heart of any institutional strategy that pursues academic excellence in the forms of student transformation, knowledge transformation, and regional transformation. Amidst growing social, economic, and health inequalities; increased global connections; and radical transitions, engagement becomes a strategic and synergistic way to address complex and often “wicked problems” that defy simple solutions.⁹

Working With Communities

Community engagement is resolutely process- and relationship-oriented.¹⁰ “Nothing about us is for us without us” is a way of framing why community engagement matters and how it informs practices. Were those who are expected to benefit from the engagement included in designing, implementing, sharing, and reviewing the work? Did partners’ actions demonstrate a *learning stance* — a commitment to listening equitably to the wisdom of academic and non-academic partners for their shared growth, or did they enact a *fixing stance* — an assertion that professional expertise is sufficient to solve issues for or on behalf of community members?

In the context of higher education, community engagement is a strategy that extends beyond individual public service activities or service-learning courses. Rather it is an institutional approach to collaboration that calls for the scholarly and practical engagement of diverse disciplines, sectors, and partners.¹¹ What might be accomplished if we worked collectively and with common aims and shared strategies, rather than individually and coincidentally?

Already, many UNCG members are powerful thought and action partners with colleagues within and beyond academic disciplinary communities as they merge scholarly, professional, and lived knowledge. Community engagement is not an end, but a means towards creating reciprocal partnerships that achieve the priorities and goals of both the community and the university.

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.¹²

UNCG's Strategic Framework

UNCG launched a new Strategic Plan, "Transforming Tomorrow through Opportunity and Excellence," in the fall of 2016. The strategic framework is anchored by three areas of transformation: Student Transformation, Knowledge Transformation, and Regional Transformation, and features three intersecting, cross-disciplinary areas of focus: Health and Wellness, Vibrant Communities, and Global Connections. In the framework, transformation is conceived as a pervasive and enduring process that leaves individuals and communities different than before as a result of reciprocal collaboration across different perspectives.¹³

Figure 1. Strategic Areas of Focus and Transformation

	Student Transformation	Knowledge Transformation	Regional Transformation
Health and Wellness	UNCG students will gain an understanding of and appreciation for health and wellness as it applies to their personal and professional lives.	UNCG students will enhance understanding of health and wellness, health disparities, and health professions.	UNCG will be an active partner in promoting health and wellness in the broader community.
Vibrant Communities	UNCG students will gain the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be active contributors to their communities.	UNCG will enhance understanding of the elements and processes that both comprise and compromise vibrant communities.	UNCG will be an active partner in contributing to the vibrancy of the larger community.
Global Connections	UNCG students will gain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to engage effectively in and contribute productively to the global community.	UNCG will enhance understanding of global issues and challenges related to globalization.	UNCG will be an active partner in promoting a regional environment in which global connections grow and thrive.

STRATEGIC AREAS OF FOCUS



Health and Wellness

Broadly defined to encompass the many dimensions necessary for individuals to cope, adapt, grow, and develop. This theme encompasses predictors and indicators of the state of the human condition and scientific advances related to Health and Wellness. This includes the areas of physical, mental, social, environmental, economic, and public health. UNCG will strengthen its focus on improving health and well-being by catalyzing academic programs, research initiatives, and community engagement activities related to this focal area.



Vibrant Communities

Characteristics of Vibrant Communities include opportunities for cultural enrichment, equitable access to high quality education and support services, a just standard of living, and a flourishing economy. A culture of entrepreneurship and innovation, a thriving creative and arts scene, and a milieu of rich intellectual exchange and open discourse are hallmarks of Vibrant Communities. This theme includes an understanding of the role of individuals, systems, and their interplay in promoting Vibrant Communities. Vibrant Communities include a culture of inclusivity and responsiveness, providing safe and supportive environments for all of their members.



Global Connections

Technological and social changes have resulted in a highly interconnected world. The theme of Global Connections encompasses the multiple ways in which individuals, organizations, and geographic and civic entities from around the world engage with each other. The histories, languages, traditions, religions, creative expressions, economics, ethics, and political mores found in diverse cultures help us to better understand ourselves and others. Global Connections includes the implications of differences and similarities across the globe for human interaction and contemporary issues. Multiple perspectives brought by different disciplines and the power of transdisciplinary perspectives brings enhanced understanding.

AREAS OF TRANSFORMATION

01 *STUDENT*



Student transformation occurs when students acquire knowledge and develop skills and habits of mind necessary to be life-long learners, informed and engaged members of society, and successful participants in life and work. This is accomplished through a variety of learning experiences, both inside and outside the classroom. Experiential learning, study abroad, service-learning, student leadership opportunities, and extracurricular activities all contribute to student transformation. Consistent with our history of and commitment to providing opportunity for all, all UNCG students, regardless of background, should have equitable access to a high-quality, transformative educational experience as members of the Spartan community.

02 *KNOWLEDGE*



Knowledge transformation occurs when understanding is enhanced through research, creative activity, critical analysis, and the translation of research to practice. UNCG faculty build upon the existing knowledge base, grow and refine the disciplines, reach across disciplinary boundaries to address complex problems, and critically examine pressing social issues through multiple lenses. Their active roles in knowledge transformation transfer to the classroom, allowing faculty to bring cutting edge perspectives to their students. Opportunities for undergraduate students to actively engage in research provide unique insights into analysis and knowledge generation, while opportunities for graduate students to engage in research are well-established as essential to their professionalization in their given field. Consistent with our university values, research and creative activity related to access, equity, and disparities are consistent strengths.

03 *REGION*



Regional transformation occurs when local economies are strong and well-aligned with current and future needs, and when equitable access is provided to a reasonable standard of living and quality of life for all. UNCG contributes to regional transformation by collaborating with community partners to move forward common goals; serving as a partner to enhance and sustain a healthy and prosperous environment; providing education, research, and creative capacity to the region; and serving as a partner in the economic development of our region.

STUDENT TRANSFORMATION

At UNCG, students apply discipline-based theory to topics of public interest through a variety of experiential, high-impact courses, including service-learning, undergraduate research, internships, practicums, clinicals, and student teaching.

To What End?

Community-engaged approaches to teaching are particularly promising for student transformation. Research demonstrates that community-engaged learning (sometimes called service-learning) yields positive student outcomes including:¹⁴

- increased retention
- career clarification
- self-confidence
- personal efficacy
- degree completion
- civic-mindedness
- continued participation in community service
- increased GPA
- social responsibility
- meaningful connections to faculty
- social justice
- improvement in attitudes towards cultural differences

Standards of Community-Engaged Teaching

- Partnerships **honor the knowledge and skills of all stakeholders** and address both community and academic priorities.
- Students **directly and actively connect** with community members throughout the course.
- Experiential activities **meet academic, personal, professional, and civic student learning objectives.**
- Faculty facilitate ongoing **critical reflection activities** and prompt deep thinking and analysis about the role of individuals and systems in society.
- Reflective practices promote **students' understanding of diversity, mutual respect, and cultural competence.**
- Partners engage in **ongoing evaluation** to assess the quality of process and progress toward goals, using the results to improve practice and outcomes.

LEARNING WITH COMMUNITY IN 2014-15

590

courses offered across seven academic units¹⁵

5,814

students enrolled in community-based courses¹⁶

48

departments offering community-based courses¹⁷

466,544

hours of course-based engagement with communities¹⁸

251

faculty teaching community-based courses¹⁹

Beyond the Classroom

Civic and professional development does not stop when students put down their books. Many students develop leadership skills through community action in research with faculty and co-curricular service through UNCG-hosted programs.

- Since 2006, more than **60 community-engaged research grants** have supported interdisciplinary, cross-sector teams of undergraduate and graduate student researchers, faculty mentors, and community partners.
- UNCG has received the **President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll** each year since 2006, and *with distinction* since 2013. The Honor Roll recognizes colleges and universities nationwide for exemplary, innovative, and effective community service programs, such as UNCG's days of service, alternative break trips, and civic engagement fellowships.
- UNCG actively participates in the **Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Initiative** and the **Campus and Community Civic Health Initiative** - two national initiatives that foster students as engaged citizens.

Doing and Knowing Differently

“UNCG was integral to my growth and development as a student leader. My time there taught me that I had limitless potential, coupled with unshakable support, and the lessons I've learned during my time at UNCG have transformed me in ways that I never would have imagined. As a biology major who discovered and characterized a fruit fly gene, created the Ignite Greensboro Project, a “student-led, student-built and student-run project aimed to reestablish a sense of obligation to the community, culture and history of Greensboro,” and who shadowed social entrepreneurs in India as UNCG's first Luce Scholar, Zim leveraged her time as a student to make a positive impact. Zim is currently the founder of Travel Noire, a digital publishing platform to build a globally connected community for travelers of color. She was named by Glamour as one of “20 Amazing Young Women Who Are Already Changing the World,” and to Forbes' list of “30 under 30,” and by the Triad Business Journal's list of “40 under 40.”



Zim Ugochukwu '11

Community-engaged teaching describes those activities that 1) honor principles of community engagement and 2) provide opportunities for students to collaborate with faculty and community members for the dual — and integrated — purposes of learning and public contribution.²⁰

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFORMATION

Joint knowledge creation among scholars, neighbors, and citizen stakeholders is a critical strategy to achieve institutional aims for academic success, eminence, and distinction, as well as public aims for healthy, safe, vibrant, and just communities. The process of bringing together diverse voices, expertise, and traditions to bear on topics of shared interest transforms all aspects of scholarly investigation. Joint knowledge partners decide what questions are asked, choose what methods are used, discover what knowledge is gained, and determine how knowledge is shared among disciplinary, professional, and community stakeholders.

UNCG institutes, centers, and research networks foster interdisciplinary research on important areas of focus. Comprised of faculty and staff researchers from the UNCG community whose scholarship and teaching reflect a core theme, these entities capitalize on and leverage UNCG's strengths by coordinating and facilitating collaborations and enhancing research, scholarship, and teaching. For a full list of UNCG's research networks, visit <http://research.uncg.edu/engage/>.

Doing and Knowing Differently

“ Our research and practice addressing health disparities is predicated on an understanding of the implicit and explicit factors impacting health access and promotion, as well as disease prevention. A community-based participatory approach is essential to uncovering these issues, particularly with highly vulnerable populations such as refugees and involuntarily-displaced communities. First, it opens the door for mutual trust building, knowledge sharing, and co-learning, which are necessary ingredients for this work. Second, community stakeholders voice their immediate priorities and frame workable solutions while negotiating partnerships with academic researchers. Furthermore, its methodological flexibility allows us to creatively engage the practical experiences, skills, and cultural competencies of refugees with interdisciplinary and inter-professional faculty expertise, yielding a more culturally-informed and rigorous investigation. This strategy continues to be among the best and most promising practices for health equity research.

***Drs. Sudha Shreeniwas and Sharon Morrison
(Public Health Education)***

KNOWING WITH COMMUNITY²¹

21%
or
\$1,408,229

of UNCG's sponsored research focused on community engagement activities in 2014-15

98%
of above research was focused in North Carolina communities



Table 2. Standards of Community-Engaged Scholarship - Comparison of Traditional and Community-Engaged Scholarship²²

	Traditional Scholarship	Community-Engaged Scholarship
Clear Goals	Basic purposes are clearly stated; objectives are defined, realistic, and achievable; questions are important to address	+ Intended audiences/users are clearly identified
Adequate Preparation	Shows understanding of existing scholarship; brings necessary skills and resources	+ Builds upon prior knowledge and work in the community
Methodological Rigor	Methods are appropriate to the goals and effectively applied; procedures are modified in response to changing circumstances	+ Authors effectively incorporate community and academic/institutional expertise in the work and work products
Significant Results	Goals are achieved; work adds to the field and is open for further exploration	+ Adds to existing knowledge and benefits communities
Effective Presentation	Organizational style of presentation is suitable; uses appropriate forums for communicating work; message is presented clearly and with integrity	+ Appropriateness of language and visual aids for diverse audiences
Reflective Critique	Critical evaluation of one's own work; brings appropriate breadth of evidence to the critique; uses evaluation to improve the quality of future work	+ Critique is informed by both academic/institutional and community feedback
Ethical Behavior	Appropriately cites others' work; follows guidelines for ethical behavior provided by institutional review board	+ Evidence of collaborative approach characterized by mutual respect, shared work, and shared credit

+ Community-engaged scholarship builds on the standards of traditional scholarship, and adds additional standards.

A community-engaged approach to knowledge generation and creative activity describes activities undertaken in collaboration with community partners whose involvement helps set the agenda, questions, and methodology, as well as contributes to the implementation of activities and development of scholarship that bridge and serve academic and community contexts.²³

REGIONAL TRANSFORMATION

There is no doubt that UNCG plays a transformational role in the Piedmont Triad. UNCG contributes nearly one billion dollars annually through local hiring and purchasing of goods and services.²⁴

But what if UNCG were suddenly removed from the Piedmont Triad? The region would lose far more than money. It would lose current and potential collaborators who are working on common, community-identified priorities.

Passive economic returns do not fully capture the value generated from the reciprocal exchange of knowledge and resources in pursuit of social, environmental, and public outcomes. UNCG offers world-class researchers and educators who draw on national resources and global connections to bring innovative approaches and evidence-based practices to our communities. We create shared communities of experts between scholars, neighbors, and citizens.²⁵ A diverse community of experts has far more potential for identifying, implementing, and refining programs and initiatives that work and are sustainable. When researchers leave, innovations do not leave because knowledge is centered at the intersection of where communities and the university meet. Building the capacity of communities is a long-term strategy to achieving common goals for regional transformation.

UNCG contributes to regional transformation by collaborating with community partners to move forward common goals that make our communities safer, healthier, more vibrant, and more just.

Community-engaged service describes those activities that honor the mutual benefit and reciprocity principles of community engagement. Such service also enables the university to carry out its mission; contribute to the function and effectiveness of faculty or staff members' professions and disciplines; and reach out to external constituencies, such as governments, businesses, and nonprofits.²⁶

LEARNING WITH COMMUNITY²⁷

500

health degrees conferred in 2013-14 at the undergraduate, masters, and doctoral levels

309

new initially licensed teachers in 2013-14

100+

professional development opportunities offered to the public

COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS²⁸

>50%

of nonprofits and businesses look to UNCG for interns, volunteers, and employees

25%

of nonprofits and businesses look to UNCG for research and consulting services

UNCG has in place a number of structures and systems that support the advancement and infusion of community-engaged approaches to regional transformation. Over the last few years, UNCG has encouraged interdisciplinary collaboration with communities by:

- supporting centers, institutes, and networks
- providing seed grants and other funds
- reframing promotion, tenure, and reappointment policies to articulate support for community engagement across all areas of work
- establishing systems and tools for comprehensive tracking of engagement activities to connect and assess the impact of engagement initiatives on students, faculty, staff, the institution, and the community

Knowing that greater things can happen when we work together toward common goals, rather than striving toward individual agendas alone, UNCG is committed to community engagement as a core transformational approach.

Doing and Knowing Differently

“ The UNCG Center for Housing and Community Studies is a research, evaluation, and technical assistance center working with local and regional governmental agencies, foundations, nonprofit agencies, and health systems. As director, my work has focused on developing and evaluating best practices to remedy the impact of substandard housing on health, addressing systemic inequality and unfair housing practices, and improving neighborhood and community conditions that negatively affect the quality of life. Inherently embedded in the needs of residents, this community-engaged work relies on and further informs academic scholarship and methods. Long-term, reciprocal relationships with urban planners, municipal officials, housing advocates, neighborhood organizations, and residents are imperative for regional transformation. Effective and sustainable solutions to pressing social issues can only be found when collaborators from the community contribute directly to new practices and models of intervention.

Dr. Stephen Sills (Center for Housing and Community Studies)



SPOTLIGHT: HEALTH AND WELLNESS



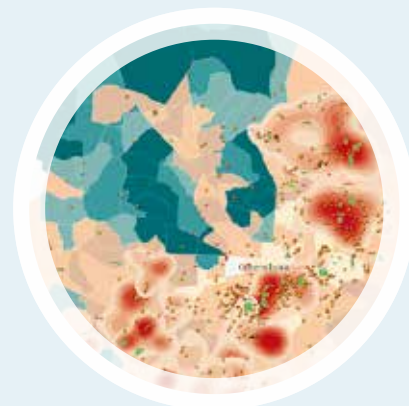
Riding High at Therapy Camp

Over the past 13 summers, graduate students in UNCG's Communication Sciences and Disorders program have spent two weeks at HORSEPOWER Therapeutic Learning Center in Colfax, NC. They use horses to provide therapy to individuals with communication disorders alongside various physical, emotional, and developmental differences. The graduate students work one-on-one with preschool and school age children to address stuttering, articulation, and expressive and receptive language. The camp offers 30 hours of free, individualized therapy to participants, and it also counts as a clinical practicum experience for the graduate students.



How We Communicate about Food

Dr. Marianne LeGreco (Communication Studies), whose research links communication and food, will be the first to tell you that how we talk about and make sense of our food practices, food systems and access to food as a community matters. Over the last few years, she has mobilized students to get involved in the conversation about food hardship in Guilford County. Examples include the Mobile Oasis Farmer's Market, the Local Food Storm brainstorming event, and the Local Foods Celebration.



Addressing Pediatric Asthma in Greensboro

Greensboro is one of 50 cities selected to take part in a new, national community health-focused initiative. Invest Health, a collaboration of the Reinvestment Fund and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, aims to transform how leaders from mid-size American cities work together to help low-income communities thrive. The team, which includes Dr. Stephen Sills (Center for Housing and Community Studies), the City of Greensboro, Cone Health, East Market Street Development Corporation, and the Greensboro Housing Coalition, aims to improve the availability of safe, affordable housing for families living with asthma.



Alleviating Triad Health Disparities

A large research initiative called TRIAD (Teamwork in Research and Intervention to Alleviate Disparities) has brought together researchers from Nursing and other disciplines to create health equity. Funded by the National Institutes of Health, the TRIAD Center has three core components: research, training, and community outreach. Studies have ranged from reducing diabetes risk among older African-American women to addressing rural Latina/o adolescent health disparities through school nursing and school counseling services.



Summit Explores Mental Health Care

The latest collaboration between Dr. Bob Wineburg (Social Work) and Rev. Odell Cleveland, the Behavioral Health Faith Summit was designed to give the community insights into the challenges facing people with mental illnesses and was dedicated to fusing the energy of health professionals and the faith community. The one-day summit, which counted as certification training for healthcare professionals, included sessions focused on the enduring stigma of mental illness and how to help people feel more comfortable seeking care.



Keeping Communities Safe

Researchers in the North Carolina Network for Safe Communities at UNCG, in the Office of Research and Economic Development, reveal how an innovative Offender Focused Domestic Violence Initiative developed in High Point and replicated in Lexington, NC, helps keep individuals and families safer than traditional approaches. This work has been shared widely to make homes and communities safer and more just. This team provides evaluation, training, and technical assistance to programs that wish to replicate the model across the state.

SPOTLIGHT: VIBRANT COMMUNITIES



Greensboro's New Art & Project Space

A new art space — known as the Greensboro Project Space — is transforming the student experience and shaping downtown. Launched by UNCG's Art department, the 3,200 square foot space in the heart of Greensboro's historic south end serves as a "locus of interaction" between the university and the city. On any given week, the multifunctional space — which shares a building with The Forge, the city's makerspace — may be used as a classroom for UNCG students, an art gallery for regional and national artists, and an event space that hosts public programming.



Sharing the Stories of War

Dr. Chuck Bolton (History) believes that everyone has an important story that needs to be told. That is why this professor of history is partnering with the Greensboro Public Library and the national project StoryCorps to document the stories of war through his course "Oral History and the Veterans' Experience." This unique collaboration provides students and community members the opportunity to work together and collect the stories of individuals who have been impacted by war — from veterans to conscientious objectors to refugees fleeing conflict.



Grove Street People's Market

Dr. Channelle James's (Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Hospitality, and Tourism) social entrepreneurship class is partnering with the Grove Street People's Market to address sustainability and marketing. The market is not only a food market but is a micro-venture incubator for those who may want to try their hands at running a business. Students help develop a marketing strategy with the vendor, and see the entire process of produce entrepreneurship through idea, production, post-production, and sales.



Peck Elementary String Program

Kids at Peck Elementary have the opportunity to play strings in the symphony because Dr. Rebecca MacLeod (Music Education) collaborates with the Greensboro Symphony, the Music Academy of North Carolina, and the elementary school. Students and faculty from UNCG and the Music Academy provide instruction, the symphony provides the instruments, and the school hosts students eager to learn how to play the violin and cello.



Participatory Budgeting

Greensboro is the first city in the southern United States to attempt participatory budgeting. Community members from all five City Council districts directly decide how to spend \$100,000 per district. The idea is that participatory budgeting can deepen democracy and build stronger communities. Over the course of two semesters, Dr. Spoma Jovanovic (Communication Studies), along with approximately 50 UNCG undergraduates and two graduate students in UNCG's Communication Studies department, have been involved in helping get the word out throughout the city and helping facilitate the process.



IT is for Girls

Dr. Lakshmi Iyer's (Information Systems & Operations Management) summer program is reversing the trend of declining female engagement in information technology (IT). IT is for Girls began as a free, half-day session for high school girls, who engaged in hands-on sessions in web design and mobile application development. Funding from the American Association of University Women allowed Dr. Iyer to expand the half-day program into a week-long summer camp. The program continues to evolve, and now includes a social awareness aspect, challenging students to solve a social problem, such as bullying, recycling, or sustainability, through IT.

SPOTLIGHT: GLOBAL CONNECTIONS



Crossing Cultures

The Montagnard Health Disparities Research Network is a community-based research partnership designed to create sustainable solutions to problems faced by the Montagnard community in the Triad region. Members include Research Fellows at the Center for New North Carolinians, Montagnard community stakeholders, and local community supporters. Issues addressed include household food security and nutrition challenges, diabetes and hypertension, women's literacy, health care access, community health worker and foreign trained physician needs and outreach efforts within the community, and mentorship and training of high school and college-age Montagnard youth.



Engaging Latino Immigrant Parents in Kids' Education

Dr. Laura Gonzalez (Teacher Education and Higher Education) learned by observation the challenges Latina/o immigrants face and maneuver. She sees that parents want their children to succeed academically here in the United States, but the parents often face cultural barriers in doing so. She is working with Spanish-speaking parents to support the development of cultural skills to help them guide their children to succeed in school. In Forsyth County, she has created 8-week group sessions to help Latina/o parents guide their children toward their educational futures.



Global Opportunities Center

Growing jobs and expanding opportunities for global commerce in Greensboro and beyond requires global knowledge, experience, and access to networks and markets. This is what the Global Opportunities Center offers as a hub where college students, immigrants, entrepreneurs, multinational businesses, economic developers, government, and nonprofits connect and contribute. Bryan Toney's (Research and Economic Development) leadership helped win a \$500,000 award through Greensboro's Strong Cities, Strong Communities economic development competition to seed this initiative.



Youth Development through Sport

Dr. Tom Martinek (Kinesiology) and colleagues have engaged students with international youth in Greensboro through Project Effort, which provides underserved youth with physical activity programs that help to foster students' personal and social responsibility. Students who travel abroad on short-term, faculty-led service-learning trips, such as to Mexico, explore their calling and career, develop intercultural competence, and contribute to youth empowerment in communities.



Coalition for Diverse Language Communities

The Coalition for Diverse Language Communities (CDLC) is a catalyst for innovative, relevant, collaborative, and policy-related research that is responsive to identified diverse language communities. Members of the CDLC are listening to lived experiences and ensuring that the next generation of teachers are competent and confident in engaging with diverse language learners, families, and communities. Among CDLC's many fellows, Dr. Ye He (Teacher Education and Higher Education) brings public school teachers to classrooms in China to bridge cultures and exchange ideas, while Drs. Melody Zoch and Amy Vetter (Teacher Education and Higher Education) offer professional development writing workshops to local school districts.



Microenterprise for Refugees in the Triad

The MERIT program, hosted by the UNCG Center for New North Carolinians and in partnership with UNCG's North Carolina Entrepreneurship Center, and the African Services Coalition, provides business training and technical assistance to refugee and asylum-seeking entrepreneurs who have been in the country five years or less. The program provides assistance in developing capital resources and establishing, or repairing, a credit history. The entrepreneurs include butchers, tailors, grocers, tow truck operators, and auto dealers. (Photo credit: Nancy Sidelinger Herring / News & Record)

FROM INDIVIDUAL TO COLLECTIVE

UNCG has a continued legacy of leadership in advancing the public good through educational achievements. It is tempting, therefore, to believe that given the rich examples of engagement illustrated throughout the previous pages that UNCG has reached its goals for community engagement as enacted through the curriculum, co-curriculum, and scholarship. After all, UNCG has successfully recruited and retained cohorts of faculty and students, attracted diverse streams of funding from local to national sources, and has received numerous distinctions as a result of its successful community engagement partnerships and activities.

UNCG has strengthened its reputation via community engagement, as well as its strategic advantage; through the partnerships and activities needed to synergistically achieve internal and external goals relating to teaching, research, and creative activity, UNCG is poised for greatness. UNCG has the opportunity to collaboratively and collectively tackle the “grand challenges”²⁹ facing society and our communities. By reframing *me* to *we*, individual scholarly agendas are transformed; an institutional agenda focused on shared goals emerges. Through this transformation, more can be done better, more quickly, more sustainably, at greater scale, and with further reach. The corpus of data and lived experiences show that our collective talents are great, and they are here. Our communities are rich with talents, passions, and connections offered by local residents, associations and organizations. Many priorities within our communities are critical and require immediate attention. All of this leads to opportunities for the positive transformation of students, knowledge, and the region because they are all interconnected and interdependent. We can do more, but only if we do it all together.

Building Enduring Partnerships

Community-university partnerships are complex and take considerable time to establish as they rely on relationships built on trust, effective communication, common goals, and commitment to achieving partners’ individual and shared goals. Establishing teams of multiple faculty and staff who work together on shared initiatives with community partners is key to creating more effective and enduring educational and scholarly partnerships. Multi-faculty teams offer not only the mosaic of talents and perspectives of each scholar, they also help to ensure the longevity of the partnership.³⁰ If one partner leaves the project, such as for parental leave, sabbatical, or to pursue opportunities elsewhere, it is less likely that the project and community-university relationship collapse. Enduring partnerships increase effectiveness towards goals and efficiencies in achieving them. Enduring partnerships are iterative and developmental; they refine processes, goals, and pursue new resources and sources of funding. Partnerships are a precious resource because their foundations are established over years — sometimes decades — of a faculty or staff member’s career. Strong partnerships are not decimated by conflict or crisis; the bedrock of trust and belief in shared commitments to common goals, which are built through reciprocal relationships, help partners to work together toward new understanding.

The ability to network talents and resources with priorities, and the preciousness of partnerships, are two important reasons why the Institute for Community and Economic Engagement (ICEE) has been leading the university's efforts to establish a systematic approach to tracking and measuring who is doing what, where, when, with whom, and to what ends with and for communities that extend beyond the campus. ICEE designed and licensed The Collaboratory®, a centrally coordinated and publicly available online database of faculty and staff partnerships with community partners, and the activities provided with and for communities.

Knowing UNCG's institutional portrait is essential to advancing community engagement, not so much as an initiative, but as "an orientation towards the future – a many-sided conversation that our fellow citizens are keen to have with us and which needs our best thinking."³¹ A comprehensive view of community-university connections and contributions is essential for any group or institution that wishes to leverage its existing assets and attract new ones. A comprehensive view of an institution's portfolio, or portrait, reflects as well as actively shapes its image and identity – who it is and where it is going in to the future.

Levels of Coordination for Collective Community Engagement

- **Individual:** engagement with a community-identified agenda based on one's own teaching, scholarship, and service
- **Departmental:** engagement with a community-identified agenda embedded within curriculum, scholarship, and commitments enacted by the faculty of a department
- **Unit:** engagement with a community-identified agenda supported and facilitated across departments by leadership, systems, and structures within the college/school.
- **Institutional:** engagement with a community-identified agenda supported and facilitated across units by centrally coordinated leadership, systems, and structures.

INSTITUTIONAL PORTRAIT AND PLANNING

Tracking and measuring community engagement and public service activities provides critical information for a variety of honors, recognitions, and accreditations as well as for fundraising and strategic planning.³² Data collection should never be an end unto itself; it is a tool for continuous improvement and striving toward excellence. A comprehensive portrait of UNCG's engagement with communities supports the following efforts:

Understand the full range and scope of purposes, activities, impact areas, and constituents.

- Identify and analyze which faculty, staff, and students are involved in and with communities, within which programs and units, doing what kinds of activities, with which partners, where, for how long, pertaining to which issues or populations, and to what effect.

Clarify goals for community engagement as a teaching pedagogy, as well as an approach to research, creative activities, and public service, that serves to achieve key, institutional strategic goals.

- Establish impact areas and projects that align with larger university strategic priorities and initiatives.
- Clarify intentions to institutionally support deep and multi-dimensional and multi-person partnerships, as well as multiple smaller and individual partnerships.
- Identify how many students are engaged in different forms of community-engaged learning.
- Establish which organizations and to what capacity organizations partner with students, faculty, and staff.

Assess outcomes of various types of engagement activities on community and university priorities.

- Identify courses and projects to evaluate the effect of engagement on student's academic, personal, professional, and civic development.
- Identify organizations, issue areas, or populations to study the ways in which community-university activity have affected community quality of life factors.
- Identify community-engaged faculty, staff, and students to learn more about how such engagement has affected their productivity, retention, and satisfaction.

Strengthen reputation and capacity as a proactive and responsive member of North Carolina and global communities.

- Actively shape UNCG's image and identity as community-engaged by sharing comprehensive data about engagement and service on websites, dashboards, social media, newsletters, press releases, recruiting materials, listservs, annual reports, self studies, and public speeches.
- Clearly articulate UNCG's community-engaged work in light of community priorities by explicitly linking the work with community data, publications, and initiatives.

Craft plans to support activities that are based on best practices and are informed by campus-level data and key constituents.

- Align areas of talent and resources with areas of opportunity.
- Use data to inform conversations about support for as well as the coordination, integration, and expansion of community-engaged research, creative activity, teaching, and service.
- Invite faculty who teach community-engaged courses to attend and provide professional development opportunities to improve student learning, community outcomes, and the scholarship of teaching.
- Convene administrative leaders of engaged departments and units to identify challenges and opportunities to share best practices, maximize resources, and launch joint initiatives.

Identify opportunities for cross-institutional collaboration and/or teaching.

- Convene faculty, staff, and community partners engaged in community-university partnerships to identify opportunities for joint orientations, professional development, and high impact programs that benefit academic and community priorities.
- Establish community-wide common goals and common measures for collective impact.
- Convene teams of inter-disciplinary, cross-institutional researchers to apply for competitive external funding that address key academic and community priorities.

Generate funds and advocates for community-engaged teaching, research, and service.

- Maintain a centralized, common, and updated database of faculty, staff, student, and alumni profiles to provide concrete examples for various audiences about how new or continuing funds support positive student, knowledge, and community transformation.
- Respond quickly and comprehensively to external and internal requests for information about the ways in which university resources contribute to vibrant and meaningful educational and community outcomes.

Recruit and retain faculty, staff, and students to come to our institution and the greater community.

- Show prospective faculty, staff, and students real examples of how their engagement will be supported by the university by illustrating existing partnerships, activities, and networks.
- Enhance current faculty, staff, and students' sense of belonging by providing information about the various university members involved in community engagement and by offering opportunities for networking, collaboration, professional development, and funding.

MAPPING ALIGNMENT: THE ENGAGED DEPARTMENT

Aligning community-university priorities is essential to effectively generate and encourage interdisciplinary teams, networks, departments, and units that build on existing relationships with community organizations to create multifaceted, multi-project, and multi-year initiatives and partnerships. These provide UNCG and its partners with the strategic advantage to maximize and collect new resources, including time, talent, and treasures, that can be brought to bear on the pressing issues of our times, such as: continuing to provide high quality education, generating and disseminating new knowledge through diverse forms of scholarship, and sharing resources generated through scholarly activities for the direct and intentional benefit of the public.

The MAPDIP Tool³³

The Mapping Alignment of Priorities in Department-Invested Partnerships (MAPDIP) tool (Figure 2) can facilitate thoughtful discussion about how and why certain partnerships should be selected for deep and long-term investment by an academic department. A guiding principle is that partners build on existing assets rather than necessarily creating new ones.

The MAPDIP tool raises six foundational questions about individual, departmental, unit, and institutional alignment and mutual benefit among partners and partnering organizations:

1. Does the activity align with individual faculty members' teaching, research, inquiry, and service agendas?
2. Can the activity be integrated within existing or new, required or elective, courses and experiences offered by the department/unit to students?
3. Does the activity align with academic student learning outcomes?
4. Does the activity address something that the community partner has identified as a goal?
5. Does the activity align with the responsibilities and agendas of the community partners?
6. Can the activity be integrated within existing or soon to be developed activities or programs offered by the community partner?

To access the full article from which this is excerpted, visit www.aascu.org/freepubs/OperationalizingStewardsOfPlace.pdf

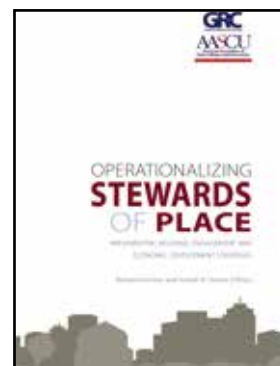
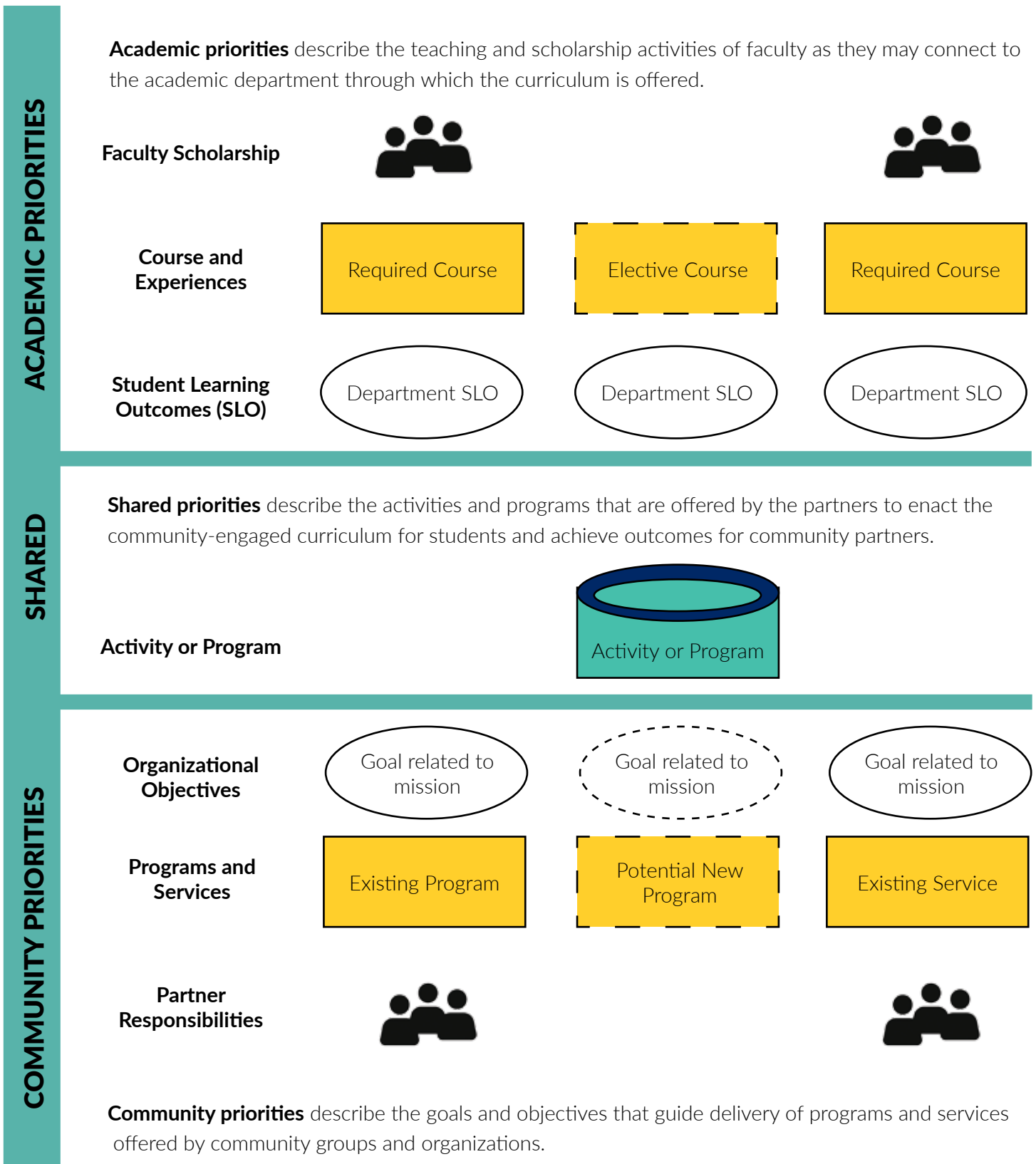


Figure 2. Mapping Alignment of Priorities in Department-Invested Partnerships (MAPDIP) Tool



HELPING YOU CONNECT: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Institute for Community and Economic Engagement

At the Institute for Community and Economic Engagement (ICEE), we study and promote community engagement within UNCG and beyond as a distinctive and transformative approach to teaching, research, creative activity, and service, which requires collaborative and reciprocal partnerships.

We achieve this through pursuing active research and scholarship, supporting institutional strategic initiatives, and providing professional development opportunities. We promote community engagement as a strategy to positively and sustainably transform communities, including academic ones, in ways that matter.

Our Scholarship and Praxis

Our research and scholarly agenda is continually being informed and shaped by our practice, scholarship, and relationships; it is not fixed. At present, our work is broadly encompassed by the following two areas of praxis:

Community-University Partnerships

- Interpersonal, intergroup, intra-organizational, and cross-sector partnerships
- Developing partnership identity within teams
- Tensions, conflict, and healing

Leading Community Engagement Into the Future

- Defining community engagement in university work
- Recognizing and rewarding the mosaic of faculty talents and engagement
- Strategic planning for community engagement within higher education institutions & associations
- Tracking and measuring institutional landscapes of community engagement
- Institutional identity, image, and communication management



Ways We Offer Support

The support we provide leverages our research and responds to the stated interests of both university and external communities as they relate to community engagement. We provide an array of services and opportunities to connect people and resources; track who is doing what, where, with whom, and to what ends; build the capacities of individuals and groups; and inspire high-quality community engagement activities.

The Referral Desk - How Can We Work Together? A user-friendly point of entry to UNCG for local community members and organizations. The Referral Desk is also available to members of UNCG who are interested in working with the community or connecting with faculty in other disciplines as part of their teaching or research.

Community and Friends Website - A portal to UNCG resources, events, and community networks to inspire, support, and assist in directing community colleagues, as well as UNCG members, to various assets for community engagement on- and off-campus, in and out of the classroom.

UNCG Community Engagement Series - An annual series of conversations facilitated by international to local practitioner-scholars on how community-university engagement advances key institutional and regional strategies and goals.

Support for the Scholarly Practice of Community Engagement - Bespoke consultations, professional development workshops, and an online collection of articles, journals, and tools to guide and connect UNCG members to national resources on community engagement, including a collection of resources that support the operationalization of community-engaged scholarship in promotion and tenure dossiers and reviews.

Community & Economic Engagement Metrics - We track UNCG's connections to and collaborations with external communities by embedding into existing, and where necessary, establishing new, systems for tracking and assessing the broad range of community-engaged activities, programs, and initiatives across the university. We do this to improve our programs, curricula, partnerships, and results that benefit our UNCG and broader communities.

HELPING YOU CONNECT: ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT

Post Great Recession, Greensboro was considered an economically distressed community. Sub-communities and populations within the greater community are known to be underserved or under-connected. UNCG asked itself: How can we, as an institution of higher education, infuse access, opportunity, and prosperity throughout Greensboro by purposefully engaging students, faculty members, businesses and under-connected populations to unleash innovation for economic growth? How can we contribute to the transfer of ideas “off the shelf” and into practice by fostering pathways that use market forces to allow passionate individuals to wake up every day making their passion into reality - changing not only their lives, but also the lives of others?

UNCG hosts diverse opportunities for economic engagement that foster innovative partnerships and community building. The Associate Vice Chancellor for Economic Engagement helps advance UNCG’s priorities in economic engagement and development, technology commercialization, industry collaboration, entrepreneurship, and technology-based economic development and creates partnerships that link university, government, and industry resources in Greensboro, the Piedmont Triad, and across North Carolina.

Our Values

- Connect to create student pathways for community engagement. Create community pathways for university interaction. Increase interactions that would not typically occur.
- Convene and provide participants (investors, companies, organizations, and individuals) increased legitimacy for participation.
- Catalyze and bring credibility to projects as early champions.
- Capacity build through collaborations and public/private partnerships to ensure long-term sustainability.
- Create new career and business opportunities for Greensboro by connecting all stakeholders – innovators, artists, designers and makers, entrepreneurs, students, faculty, businesses, nonprofits, economic developers, government officials and investors from across industries and realms of expertise – with an intentional focus on the under-connected.

Learn more at <http://research.uncg.edu/engage>.

Ways We Offer Support

UNCG and HQ Greensboro - UNCG and NCA&T State University jointly operate a University Engagement Office out of HQ Greensboro, the 11,000 square foot co-working space in downtown Greensboro. The University Engagement Office brings university resources and hundreds of faculty, staff, and students into the community. The UNCG Office of Innovation and Commercialization (OIC) also opened an office at HQ Greensboro for university spinouts.

North Carolina Entrepreneurship Center - The NCEC spearheads and sponsors over 20 initiatives to help innovative people create and expand their entrepreneurial opportunities. Partnering with 20+ local organizations and impacting over 3,000 students and other participants, the NCEC serves as UNCG's connection to the entrepreneurial community in the Triad and beyond.

Office of Innovation Commercialization - As part of its educational, research, and service mission, UNCG is dedicated to the transfer of its research and technology to the public sector for the general economic benefit of Greensboro, the Piedmont Triad and North Carolina. The OIC supports UNCG's effort to encourage innovation and disseminate knowledge by commercializing discoveries developed by faculty, students and staff.

Doing and Knowing Differently

“ Perhaps because of our motto (“service”) or because of the faculty and students attracted to UNCG, we have long been involved in our local community and state. But as we moved to deepen our commitment to be a “steward of place”, we recognized the importance of embracing a community-engaged framework to guide our work. To better distinguish this unique framework from the important tradition of service, highlighting the absolute necessity of reciprocity in our partnerships, we made a strategic decision to distinguish community engagement from service and base many of our coordinating efforts within the Office of Research and Economic Development. Aligning these efforts with research also highlighted our commitment to employ an evidence-based approach, employing best practices in building out our community-engaged research as well as community-engaged teaching and community-engaged service. Whether research, teaching, or service, we believe that community-engagement enables us to ask better questions and get better answers.

Dr. Terri Shelton (Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development)



WANT TO LEARN MORE?

UNCG's Institute for Community and Economic Engagement has created and contributed to a number of scholarly publications, which are publicly accessible from <http://communityengagement.uncg.edu/publications-reports>.

Building Healthy Lives and Vibrant Communities
Community & Friends Website
communityengagement.uncg.edu

HOW CAN WE WORK TOGETHER?
REFERRAL DESK
find out at **336.505.8994**



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About the Cover Artist

John Gibbs is a multi-talented artist currently working as an sculptor, painter, illustrator, and designer. John's paintings have been exhibited at a number of galleries in the Piedmont Triad area. John received his BFA in Sculpture and Scientific Illustration from the University of Michigan. John currently lives and works in Greensboro, NC and more of his work can be seen at www.gibbsgallery.com.

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