

## **Competency-Based Faculty Development in Community-Engaged Scholarship: A Diffusion of Innovation Approach**

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### **Abstract**

The authors utilized interviews, competency surveys, and document review to evaluate the effectiveness of a one-year, cohort-based faculty development pilot program, grounded in diffusion of innovations theory, and aimed at increasing competencies in community engagement and community-engaged scholarship. Five innovator participants designed the program for five early adopter participants. The program comprised training sessions and individual mentoring. Training sessions focused on the history and concepts of community-engaged scholarship; competencies in engaged research and teaching; and navigation of career advancement as a community-engaged scholar. Mentoring focused on individual needs or discipline-specific issues. The interviews and surveys indicated that the participants gained knowledge in specific areas of community-engaged scholarship. Critical program features and lessons learned are explored.

### **Introduction**

Community-engaged scholarship includes research, teaching, and other scholarly activities that engage faculty and community members in a mutually beneficial collaboration; it results in the development of products that can be critiqued and disseminated (*Commission on Community-Engaged Scholarship, 2005*). Faculty members who pursue careers as community-engaged scholars have few formalized professional development pathways within the academy. Academic institutions typically provide support and training in teaching (e.g., efforts focused on improving teaching or curriculum development), and in research (e.g., initiatives to improve grant-writing and publishing skills or to enhance knowledge of research methods and ethical considerations) (*Reid, Stritter, & Arndt, 1997*). Few institutions, however, provide development opportunities for community-engaged faculty members. Even fewer have brought together diverse disciplines in a sustained, experiential, participatory, reflective endeavor to increase competencies in community-engaged scholarship (*Battistoni, Gelmon, Saltmarsh, Wergin, & Zlotkowski, 2003; Bringle, Games, Ludlum,*

*Osgood, & Osborne, 1999; Goodwin, Stevens, Goodwin, & Hagood, 2000; Kendall, Duley, Little, Permaul, & Rubin, 1990; Kolb, 1984; Sandmann, Foster-Fishman, Lloyd, Rarren, & Rosaen, 2000).*

## **The Faculty for the Engaged Campus Initiative**

The Faculty for the Engaged Campus initiative (FEC) of the Community-Campus Partnerships for Health organization, funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education, was intended, in part, to address the need for faculty development on the topic of community engagement. The FEC initiative aimed to strengthen community-engaged career paths in the academy by developing innovative competency-based models of faculty development, facilitating peer review and dissemination of community-engaged scholarship products, and supporting faculty in the promotion and tenure process. Members of the University of Minnesota applied for participation in the FEC because they felt the university was a leader in the institutionalization of community engagement. The University of Minnesota has revised its promotion and tenure guidelines to recognize community engagement; made progress within various academic departments in recognizing and rewarding community engagement in ways that are aligned with a variety of disciplinary cultures; and established an Office for Public Engagement at the associate vice president level. Notwithstanding these significant investments and statements of commitment to community engagement, the University of Minnesota had no established professional development pathway for faculty, professional-academic staff, postdoctoral appointments, or graduate students who wished to conduct their teaching or research using community-engaged approaches.

As a sub-grantee of the Faculty for the Engaged Campus initiative, the authors developed a one-year, competency-based, multidisciplinary faculty development pilot program grounded in a conceptual framework. The goals of the program were to (1) increase competencies in community engagement and community-engaged scholarship, and (2) encourage the participants to serve as ambassadors for community-engaged scholarship. The authors intended that participants, in their role as ambassadors, would diffuse community-engaged scholarship by raising awareness among peers; expressing enthusiasm for community-engaged scholarship within their departments and on campus; and, eventually, articulating the benefits of community-engaged scholarship to audiences within their disciplines or professions.

The purposes of this article are to (1) describe the faculty development pilot program; (2) document the impact of the program on

community-engaged scholarship competencies and on participant readiness to be an ambassador; and (3) explore lessons learned and ideas for improvement and sustainability.

### **The University of Minnesota's Pilot Community-Engaged Scholarship Faculty Development Program**

In 2008, the University of Minnesota appointed three individuals to develop a proposal to CCPH to participate in the Community-Engaged Scholarship Faculty Development Charrette. The proposal was accepted. The University of Minnesota team joined 19 other campus teams for the 3-day charrette to learn about community-engaged scholarship competencies, faculty development strategies, and the challenges of promotion and tenure for community-engaged scholars. Each campus team also developed an action plan for a competency-based, campus-wide, community-engaged scholarship faculty development pilot program to implement on its campus.

Work at the charrette and subsequent design team meetings resulted in a proposal to establish a faculty development pilot program grounded in the diffusion of innovations theory. The proposal was funded with \$15,000 from the CCPH-FIPSE grant funds, and \$10,000 in matching funds from the University of Minnesota.

### **Conceptual Framework for the Pilot Program: Diffusion of Innovation Theory**

The conceptual framework for the faculty development pilot program was the diffusion of innovation theory (*Rogers, 1962*), which seeks to explain how ideas are spread in a population. According to this theory, any given population can be sorted into five categories based on propensity to adopt novel ideas or behaviors. The five categories are innovator, early adopter, early majority adopter, late adopter, and laggard (*Glantz, Rimmer, & Viswanath, 2008*). Members of the innovator category are often the first to adopt new ideas, followed by members of the early adopter category. Innovators are typically visionary, imaginative, and willing to take risks. Early adopters are willing to try out new ideas, but in a careful way. They also tend to look to innovators for information, guidance, and validation (*Rogers, 1962*). Applying this theory to the establishment of a community-engaged scholarship faculty development program, five innovators and five early adopters were identified to participate. Innovators were faculty and staff members experienced in community-engaged

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scholarship and identified through nomination. Early adopters were faculty interested but less experienced in community-engaged scholarship who were identified through nomination and through campus-wide email solicitations. It was hoped that over time the early adopter participants would spread knowledge of and enthusiasm for community-engaged scholarship to late adopter and laggard faculty members, ultimately transforming the university’s culture.

### **Guiding Principles for the Pilot Program**

Four principles grounded in community-engaged work were put forward in CCPH’s Request for Proposals. These principles formed the foundation for the design and implementation of the faculty development pilot program.

1. The program should be competency-based.
2. The program should be participatory.
3. The program should involve community members.
4. The program should focus on both institutional and individual change.

#### **The program should be competency-based.**

Today, training in most disciplines typically gives little attention to cultivating skills and attitudes needed to apply disciplinary knowledge to scholarly work with communities (Blanchard et al., 2009). Most universities do not offer formal opportunities for faculty to learn about community engagement and the production of community-engaged scholarship. Such activities require a body of knowledge and specific skills. Blanchard et al.’s “competencies required for successful practice of community-engaged scholarship” (p. 52) include understanding concepts of history and the literature about community-engaged scholarship; having familiarity with community challenges; working with diverse communities; negotiating academic-community relationships;

developing community capacity through community-engaged scholarship; fostering social change through community-engaged scholarship; translating the process and findings of community-engaged scholarship into policy; balancing research, teaching, and service while engaging in community-engaged scholarship; understanding the relationship of scholarly components of community-engaged scholarship and review, promotion, and tenure; grant writing and developing productive relationships with funders related to community-engaged scholarship; and mentoring students and faculty in community-engaged scholarship. The order of these competencies reflects a novice-to-advanced continuum of mastery.

### **The program should be participatory.**

Sharing responsibility for decision-making is the cornerstone of community engagement (*Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, 1998*). Providing faculty development program participants the opportunity to co-design their program serves as an important model of quality community engagement (*Bringle et al., 1999; Kolb, 1984*). Effective faculty development programs offer many opportunities for participants to make decisions about the direction of the program. For example, although organizers may provide an outline or skeleton for the program, participants can add the details that tailor the program to their identified needs. Pedagogical techniques used in faculty development trainings can be intentionally participatory to provide a model for appropriate group facilitation of community meetings or engaged teaching approaches.

### **The program should involve community members.**

The active participation of community members in all phases of an endeavor is also a fundamental principle of community engagement (*Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, 1998*) and an important one to model in a community-engaged scholarship faculty development program. Community member participation in academic endeavors is valued because community members bring expertise and skills complementary to, but not duplicative of, those of the faculty, as well as an outsider-looking-in perspective.

### **The program should focus on both institutional and individual change.**

The impact of a program can be multiplied when individual participants increase their own capacity as well as become motivated to, or acquire the skills to, champion the work or pass their

own skills on to others. This is the basis for successful models such as train-the-trainer approaches, which have been applied to faculty development programs (Skeff *et al.*, 1992). Institutional change also necessitates shifts across campus departments rather than within an isolated unit that might become marginalized. This requires participation of faculty from diverse disciplines. Participation of successive cohorts eventually builds generations of faculty that create a critical mass to begin to shift institutional culture.

### **Pilot Program Selection of Participants**

Selection of the innovator participants. In 2009, the pilot program design team established criteria for the selection of innovator community-engaged scholar participants. These criteria related to depth of experience in community-engaged research and teaching and a reputation within their department, college, or the campus as a community-engaged faculty member. Diversity of disciplines and colleges represented was also sought. Requests for nominations were sent to all college deans, and the design team also brainstormed potential candidates based on their knowledge. The design team interviewed several candidates and ultimately selected three innovator faculty members from Law, Liberal Arts/Design, and Medicine to join two members of the design team (one from Medicine/Extension and one from Education) as innovator participants. The five innovator participants included individuals from various faculty ranks and rank-levels (i.e., teaching specialist, assistant professor, associate professor, and two full professors).

Selection of the early adopter participants. The innovator participants helped create a program “scaffold” to guide the implementation of the pilot community-engaged scholarship program for early adopter faculty members. Early adopter participants were recruited through a call for applications distributed to all University of Minnesota faculty members. Applicants were asked to submit a curriculum vita and a written narrative describing the nature of their community-engaged scholarship, ways they wished to deepen and further advance their community-engaged scholarship, their relationship with community partners, their development needs concerning community-engaged scholarship, and how they envisioned themselves serving as ambassadors for community-engaged scholarship within their departments and on campus.

Five participants were selected from a pool of 25 applicants. Innovators based this decision on (1) applicants’ having some, but not significant, experience with community-engaged teaching or research, (2) alignment between the applicants’ learning objectives

and the goals of the program, (3) the potential for the applicant to become an ambassador for community-engaged scholarship, and (4) diversity and multidisciplinary among the cohort. The characteristics of the five early adopter participants are described below.

- Four were female; one was male.
- Four were European American; one was Southeast Asian.
- Two were assistant professors and three were associate professors.
- The departments represented were Epidemiology, Theater, Art, Architecture, and Landscape Architecture.
- The colleges represented were the School of Public Health, the College of Liberal Arts, and the College of Design.

Although there was a range in levels of experience and seniority in both groups, when compared to the early adopter participants, the innovator participants tended to have more years of experience and more community partners. They also had developed conceptual frameworks for their engaged work and had experience teaching community-engaged scholarship concepts and skills to others.

### **Participant Self-Assessment Activity to Identify Competency Needs**

The early adopter participants completed a competency self-assessment at the beginning of the program (Appendix 1). The self-assessment expanded on Blanchard et al.'s (2009) novice-to-advanced continuum by presenting a knowledge continuum for all domains alongside a skills assessment continuum for more practice-based domains. This modification was made to recognize that, even within areas related to, for example, conceptual understandings of community-engaged scholarship, some scholars may have only basic knowledge while others may have advanced knowledge. It also allowed early adopter participants to make distinctions between acquisition of knowledge and the ability to apply that knowledge. Twelve of 21 items focused on knowledge; the remaining items focused on community-engaged scholarship skills. Items related to knowledge of community-engaged scholarship were scaled from 1 to 6, with a 1 representing "I have no knowledge", and 6 representing "I have transformed work in the community-engaged scholarship arena or within my discipline

as it related to community-engaged scholarship”. Items related to community-engaged scholarship skills were rated on a scale of 1 to 6, with 1 representing “I have no skill”, and 6 representing “I can create broad practice innovations and disseminate them”. The questionnaire included items to assess participant knowledge and skills in a variety of areas, including working with diverse communities, negotiating academic and community partnerships, fostering social change, translating community-engaged scholarship findings into policy, preparing a best case for tenure as a community-engaged scholar, and mentoring others. The self-assessment also asked early adopter participants to set goals for each domain.

Each early adopter participant used self-identified gaps in understanding or skill, and determination of goals to create an Individual Development Plan (Appendix 2). For each competency identified as an area in which the early adopter sought to improve, the early adopter specified short-term and long-term goals, strategies for developing the competency, resources available to him or her, and indicators of successful goal accomplishment. Through the self-assessment process, four of the five early adopter participants identified a need to learn about the conceptual and theoretical bases for community-engaged scholarship, and to become familiar with the literature. Group meetings addressed this need. Individual participants had needs specific to their disciplines, current projects, or career stages. These topics were addressed in one-on-one mentor-mentee meetings.

### **The Nine-Month Pilot Program: Activities**

The pilot program was launched in December 2009 after approximately one year of planning by the innovators and recruitment of the early adopter participants. Over 9 months, the innovator participants met three times and corresponded via e-mail to plan nine sessions with innovator and early adopter participants. The group’s meetings were intentionally participatory to model appropriate group facilitation of community meetings and engaged teaching approaches. Innovator mentors were assigned to early adopter participants through a “speed dating” exercise in which early adopter participants conducted brief interviews of each innovator in succession to determine which would best meet their needs for individual mentoring. To keep the early adopter participants actively engaged between group meetings, homework and readings were assigned. After each individual meeting, mentor-mentee pairs completed reflection sheets. The major activities of the program are described in Table 1.

**Table 1. Program Timeline and Activities**

Month	Meeting Focus	Early Adopter homework, projects, and mentoring
December 2009	Orientation of early adopters by innovators	Reflected on strengths, challenges, goals as a community-engaged scholar
January 2010	Innovators reviewed early adopter homework; dialogued about needs and goals	Competency self-assessment; created Individual Development Plan
February 2010	Innovators planned next joint meeting; developed mentoring component  Based on self-assessment, Individual Development Plan, and speed-dating exercise, innovators assisted early adopters in identifying priority goals and preferred mentors	
March 2010		Mentor meetings/reflection sheets
April 2010	Innovators presented to early adopters on community-engaged scholarship history, definitions, and theory  Innovators planned for next joint meeting	Mentor meetings/reflection sheets; reflected on disciplinary models of community engagement
May 2010	Innovators gave follow-up to presentation on theoretical models and homework, and presented on methods of participatory processes  innovators planned next meetings and meeting with community partners; developed capstone project assignment	Mentor meetings/reflection sheets; reflected on personal models of community engagement and development of identity as community-engaged scholar; online pedagogical practices survey
June 2010	Innovators reviewed early adopter homework and presented on pedagogical models to engage students in community	Mentor meetings/reflection sheets
July 2010	Innovators gave follow-up presentation on pedagogical approaches and presented on career advancement as a community-engaged scholar	Mentor meetings/reflection sheets; capstone project
August 2010		Capstone project; invited community partner to final meeting
September 2010	Innovators and early adopters reviewed capstone homework; early adopters completed retrospective pre-post survey of community-engaged scholarship competencies  Innovators, early adopters, and community partners dialogued about role of community partners in developing faculty competencies in community-engaged scholarship	Continued dialogue with community partner about ways the community partner can contribute to development of competencies

### **The Pilot Program's Capstone Project**

In the final 3 months of the program, early adopter participants were asked to write a reflection answering the following questions. The assignment was broken into two parts, with Questions 1 through 4 completed in Part 1, and Questions 5 through 8 completed in Part 2.

1. What disciplines or fields do you draw upon as an intellectual base for your community-engaged scholarship?
2. Who are the key advocates of a community-engaged scholarship approach in your field?
3. What are the seminal pieces/key works regarding community-engaged scholarship in your field?
4. Who are you personally connected with regarding community-engaged scholarship in your field?
5. Thinking back to your search for the key advocates and seminal works, what are the key themes within this body of community-engaged scholarship related work?
6. What are the unanswered questions that interest you?
7. What other fields might you draw upon to answer these questions?
8. Prepare a biographical profile that highlights your engagement history and identity as a community-engaged scholar

### **Program Activities to Affect Institutional and Individual Change**

A major goal of the pilot program was to begin to diffuse understanding and the practice of community-engaged scholarship throughout the institution. To do this, the program leaders worked to (1) increase visibility of community-engaged scholarship across the university by promoting the program in, and recruiting the participants from, all colleges on campus, through contacts with departmental leaders, and through all-faculty e-mails; (2) build the competencies of the pilot program participants so they could perform more and higher quality engaged work; and (3) instill the skills and desire within the pilot program participants to promote community-engaged scholarship within their departments and across campus.

## **Community Member Participation in the Pilot Program**

Community partners played three important roles in the pilot program. First, members of the local community served on the program's recruitment advisory group, which provided consultation on recruitment strategies and criteria for the selection of the innovator participants. Second, the community partners of the early adopter participants attended a dinner meeting of the whole group to discuss their partnerships and best practices in community-university engagement, generally. Finally, early adopter participants and their community partners were encouraged to reflect on their partnerships, and ways that they could contribute to each other's growth, after the program ended.

## **Evaluation of the University of Minnesota's Pilot Community-Engaged Scholarship Faculty Development Program**

A faculty member from the School of Public Health served as the program evaluator. In the early stages of the project, the evaluator and the innovator participants developed an evaluation plan to assess how well the pilot program achieved its goals. The university's Research Subjects Protection Program staff determined that the evaluation plan was not subject to Institutional Review Board approval. In this section, the authors describe the evaluation process. The evaluation questions were

1. Did the faculty development pilot program create a cadre of faculty with the capacity for community-engaged scholarship?
  - a. In what ways was enthusiasm for community-engaged scholarship increased among innovator participants and early adopter participants?
  - b. In what ways were community-engaged scholarship competencies enhanced (knowledge, behavior, skills) among early adopter participants?
  - c. In what ways did early adopter participants apply community-engaged scholarship competencies to their work/scholarship?

- d. What plans did early adopter participants and innovator participants develop for being ambassadors for community-engaged scholarship within their departments and across campus?
2. What components of the program were most valuable for innovator participants and early adopter participants and why? Which components were less helpful?
3. What lessons were learned that might inform future faculty development pilot programs?

### **Data Collection and Methods**

Three data collection methods were used to answer the evaluation questions: individual interviews by the evaluator of early adopter and innovator participants, program documentation (e.g., minutes from meetings, Individual Development Plans, mentoring meeting reflection sheets from both innovator and early adopter participants), and a survey of early adopter participants.

#### **Individual interviews.**

An 18-item structured questionnaire was used by the program evaluator to conduct 30-minute audio-recorded interviews. The questionnaire included open-ended questions on topics related to the faculty development pilot program and community-engaged scholarship. Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim.

#### **Documentation.**

Written documents were coded in the same manner as individual interviews to identify themes.

#### **Survey.**

At the end of the 9-month pilot program, the early adopter participants completed a competency retrospective pre-post assessment (Appendix 1). Early adopters were asked to recall their level of knowledge and skills in community-engaged scholarship before they began the program, and to estimate their end-of-program levels using the same questionnaire. The retrospective pre-post method avoided potential reliability problems that occur when the participants do not have enough insight at the beginning of a program to know what they do and do not know (*Drennan & Hyde, 2008*).

### **Data analysis.**

Data analysis involved a three-step process: (1) identifying segments of text (transcripts and documents) that were related to the evaluation's objectives and organizing them into categories, (2) coding text in an iterative process that transformed the data from concrete dialogue to conceptual themes and sub-themes within identified categories related to the evaluation's research questions (Thomas, 2006), and (3) summing and comparing the average responses on the community-engaged scholarship retrospective pre-post survey.

## **Findings from the Interview Data**

### **Capacity for Community-Engaged Scholarship**

Early adopter participants indicated that they had been involved in community-engaged scholarship for some time. They had not, however, previously referred to their work as "community-engaged scholarship." Being part of the pilot program helped them define their work within a community-engaged scholarship framework, which gave their work greater meaning and validity. One participant's comment illustrates this.

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My scholarship has always been, in my mind, community-engaged from the moment that I settled on a dissertation topic with a community-based theater company, and my research was really about being in interaction with people and trying to pay attention to how community gets animated through the processes of theater. So I didn't go into that saying "I am going to be a community-engaged scholar." It's just that's the work that I was doing and have been doing as a scholar for 15 or 16 years. So it's more about putting a name to it.

At the end of their program participation, the early adopter participants were enthusiastic about their work and felt more equipped to integrate community-engaged scholarship concepts

and theory into their teaching and research. Three of the five early adopter participants mentioned that they planned to share their community-engaged scholarship work at meetings and symposiums, and with other faculty members. They did not, however, feel ready to be “ambassadors” for community-engaged scholarship. One participant noted, “You know again, it just feels a little too early for me to do it because really the community engagement part is just beginning.”

For a couple of early adopter participants, the program’s focus on competencies was challenging because words like “competencies” were not part of their discipline’s vocabulary. To illustrate, one participant said,

So I think what’s always been hard for me is the language of competency and skills, because of the kind of learner I am. It makes it hard to conceptualize, like going to map out “this [is] where I want to be,” and “this is how I want this competency or this skill,” because I am an immersive and relational learner to begin with.

The innovator participants indicated they had a long history of community-engaged scholarship. For three of the five innovator participants, community-engaged scholarship defined their work and identity as scholars. One innovator commented, “Well, I mean it defines what I am doing in the research component of my life.” Another remarked, “I’ve always seen community engagement as critical to the work that I do, both in an integration of teaching, [and] research. I wouldn’t say service, but doing public good at public universities.”

Like the early adopter participants, two innovator participants expressed some ambiguity about serving as ambassadors for community-engaged scholarship. They saw their roles more as co-learners or mentors than “ambassadors.” One participant said, for example, “I’d say this is my key challenge. I don’t know that I am in a position to be exactly an ambassador at this stage.”

## **Promotion and Tenure**

One training session was devoted to the discussion of strategies for making one’s best case for promotion or tenure as a community-engaged scholar. The authors were interested in whether early adopters felt reassured, skeptical, or concerned about their promotion or tenure prospects after this discussion. Two early adopters expressed uncertainty about how community-engaged scholarship

would help participant goals related to tenure. For example, one early adopter remarked, “Well, again, I mean this is only one component of my research, probably stuff I won’t get to publishing any time soon.” Others did not comment specifically on this issue.

## **What Worked Well in the Pilot Program**

### **For the early adopter participants.**

Early adopter participants, for the most part, felt privileged to participate in the program. They felt the program provided them an opportunity to reflect on their work with others who share an interest in community-engaged scholarship as well as access to a network of resources. The early adopter participants noted two primary benefits of the faculty development pilot program. First, they indicated that the program created a space for exchanging ideas with individuals who shared similar visions for working with communities. Second, they valued both the group and individual mentor meetings. For example, one participant noted, “Most helpful was getting together . . . I think we were all excited to meet and I think that’s another dynamic of the group, the excitement.” Another commented,

Well, I really enjoyed the group meetings and again, I think because of that interdisciplinary nature of them and hearing from people who are really outside of my areas talking about how they approach this or that issue . . . And then I also loved the one-on-one mentorship, which you have heard before, because it just seems rare that I get to my particular age and stage of life to have someone mentoring me, you know it’s like this is so fabulous, I love this.

### **For the innovator participants.**

The innovator participants enjoyed interacting with each other as advanced community-engaged scholars from different disciplines. Like early adopter participants, innovator participants felt the program provided a rich and stimulating experience and an opportunity to share their passion for community-engaged scholarship. They also felt group meetings with the early adopter participants provided them a better understanding of the principles underlying community-engaged scholarship. One participant reported,

For me personally, the most satisfying part was sitting with the senior peers from different disciplines and comparing notes because there's a quality of interaction that I haven't previously benefited from . . . that integration of teaching and learning is a beautiful thing.

They also believed the pilot program helped the early adopter participants gain confidence in their community-engaged scholarship work. One participant reflected,

I think we have people now who are further off the launching pad with more confidence in their community-engaged scholarship, more motivation to continue in this track, and more understanding of how it can fit into their career goals.

### **Areas Identified for Program Improvement**

The early adopter participants expressed a need for more frequent meetings to discuss topics in more depth. Both early adopter and innovator participants believed there was not sufficient time to fully implement the program. The innovator participants noted that participation in one-on-one mentoring activities was uneven. One participant's comments illustrate.

The other thing I think we need to work on is how to make the mentoring piece happen as effectively as it can. My sense is that you know everybody met with somebody once or twice, some people met more extensively with a particular person or sought out, you know, a couple of different people, and there are other people who I think really did minimal one-on-one stuff, and I am not sure yet how we can make that a more structured piece.

The innovator participants expressed concern about how community-engaged scholarship competencies were presented to the early adopter participants, because a competency-based approach to community-engaged scholarship was not consistent with the language or practices of some participants' disciplines. Innovators also indicated concern that community partners had not been integrated into the program at earlier stages.

## **Findings from the Program Documentation Data**

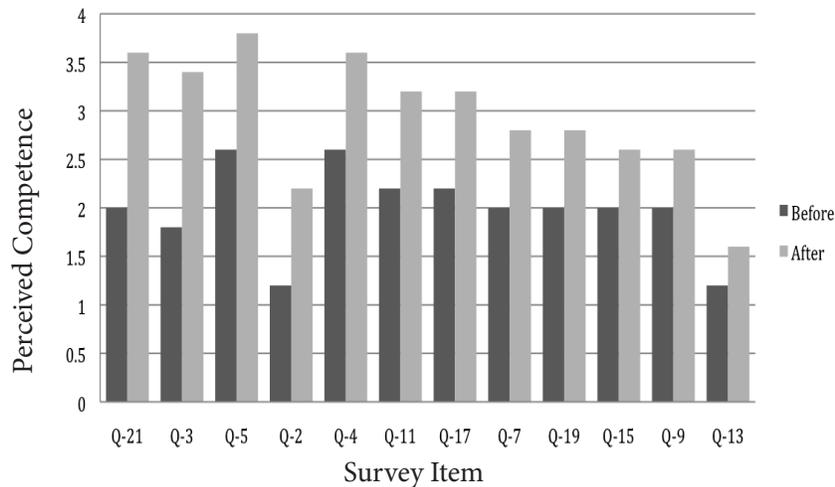
Review of Individual Development Plans and reflection sheets confirmed several themes noted in the interview data. The five early adopters were primarily interested in increasing their knowledge of community engagement trends within their disciplines, enhancing their capacity to produce scholarship as a result of their community-engaged work, and, particularly for those at the assistant professor level, learning how to make their best case for promotion and tenure as a community-engaged scholar. Review of meeting minutes suggested that the content of the group meetings was well aligned with the expressed goals of all of the early adopters. Review of reflection sheets confirmed that there was inconsistency across all five early adopters in terms of the extent to which they made use of available one-on-one meetings with innovators serving as mentors.

## **Findings from the Survey Response Data**

### **Early Adopter Findings**

The five early adopter participants completed the survey. Figures 1 and 2 outline the changes in their perceptions of their community-engaged scholarship knowledge and skills before and after participation in the faculty development pilot program (see Appendix 1 for survey item content). Figure 1 shows an increase in knowledge for all 12 items measuring community-engaged scholarship knowledge, but some more than others.

- Knowledge related to community-engaged scholarship concepts, working with diverse communities, and mentoring others in community-engaged scholarship increased the most among participants.
- Knowledge about how to translate findings of community-engaged scholarship into policy; develop community capacity for community-engaged scholarship; and balance research, teaching, and service while engaging in community-engaged scholarship increased the least among the participants.

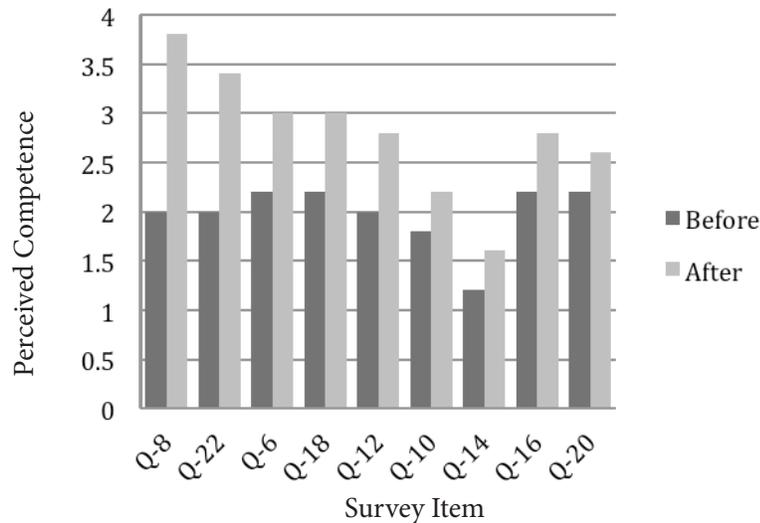


Note: Items are listed in terms of the greatest difference in average scores between pre- and post-assessment among the program's early adopter participants. Questions 21 (mentoring), 3 (concepts of community-engaged scholarship), and 5 (working with diverse communities) showed the greatest increases. Question content is available in Appendix 1.

**Figure 1. Perceptions of Community-Engaged Scholarship Knowledge before and after the Faculty Development Pilot Program**

Figure 2 indicates that skills in community-engaged scholarship increased for all nine items assessed, but for two in particular.

- Skills related to effectively negotiating academic community relationships and mentoring others in community-engaged scholarship increased the most.
- Skills related to effectively fostering translating findings into policy; balancing research, teaching, and service while practicing community-engaged scholarship; and grant writing related to community-engaged scholarship increased the least among participants.



Note: Items are listed in terms of the greatest difference in average scores between pre- and post-assessment among the program's early adopter participants. Questions 8 (negotiating community-academic partnership) and 22 (mentoring) showed the greatest increases. Question content is available in Appendix 1.

**Figure 2. Perceptions of Community-Engaged Scholarship Skills before and after the Faculty Development Pilot Program**

Survey responses reflected smaller increases in skills than in knowledge over the course of the program.

### Summary of Findings

The early adopter participants gained knowledge of *community-engaged scholarship*. They acquired a name for something they had believed in and practiced, but had not labeled community-engaged scholarship. Organizing this aspect of their academic identity under an umbrella term gave them a systematic, multi-disciplinary academic practice that transcended what in some cases felt like more idiosyncratic or discipline-specific practice. It changed how these faculty members thought of themselves. They moved from “I am a faculty member who is committed to engaging communities” to “I am a community-engaged scholar.”

While the early adopter participants grew in their knowledge of community-engaged scholarship and became more confident and enthusiastic in their ways of speaking and writing about community-engaged scholarship in their fields, their community-engaged scholarship skills did not appreciably increase. The authors conclude that the program was not long enough or intense enough to

translate knowledge gains into new forms of practice with communities and students. The survey demonstrated an increase in knowledge or skills in select areas, and not others. The early adopter participants tended to make gains in the areas addressed in the program, and not in the areas that were not addressed in the program. Although the authors had envisioned the innovator participants spending time interacting with the early adopter participants and their community partners, community partners were not invited into the process until the end of the program.

Given the limited opportunity to integrate new knowledge with practice skills, it is not surprising that the early adopter participants did not fully become ambassadors to their faculty colleagues during this project's time frame. The original goal was for the early adopter participants to develop ways to share their newfound enthusiasm and competency with other faculty members in their departments and across campus, and eventually more broadly within their areas of academic and professional interest. However, most of the early adopter participants were too new in their development as community-engaged scholars to formulate plans for spreading community-engaged scholarship among colleagues.

### **Implications for Future Community-Engaged Scholarship Faculty Development Programs**

The authors learned four lessons from this pilot program. First, despite one caveat explained later, there is value in using the

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*“Selecting interdisciplinary innovator faculty members to disseminate their expertise created an energy and cross-fertilization across the university’s disciplines and proved valuable for the pilot program described in this article.”*

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diffusion of innovation theory as a conceptual framework for a faculty development program. Selecting interdisciplinary innovator faculty members to disseminate their expertise created an energy and cross-fertilization across the university’s disciplines and proved valuable for the pilot program described in this article. There was an expectation that the innovator participants would serve as models and inspire the early adopter participants. The diffusion of innovation theory was also applied to selection of the early adopter participants. They could not be so advanced

as to be community-engaged scholarship peers of the innovator participants nor so novice that they needed encouragement to even try community-engaged scholarship.

For the pilot program in this article, the diffusion of innovation theory did not apply as well to the notion of creating “ambassadors” of community-engaged scholarship. The program developers envisioned an increase in the capacity of early adopter participants to serve as ambassadors. Findings from the program assessment indicate that some participants experienced an increase in self-doubt rather than empowerment about their ability to spread community-engaged scholarship. For future iterations of the program, the terms “enthusiast” or “supporter” will be used rather than “ambassador.”

The second lesson learned was that the value of a competency-based approach is evident for faculty members in some disciplines, but not all. For at least one early adopter participant, a competency-based approach was a foreign concept. Future community-engaged scholarship faculty development programs would benefit from participants’ discussing the language used by various disciplines to communicate quality community engagement and scholarship.

The third lesson learned was the importance of using community-engaged scholarship principles of collaboration with communities in implementing the program. The program designers consciously developed just enough scaffolding for the pilot program to give it coherence and structure. They included the early adopter participants in making decisions about specific topics and learning practices included in the program. The early adopter participants’ enthusiasm for the program stemmed, in part, from the sense that they were co-creating the program, which reflects a fundamental community-engaged scholarship principle in community-building. Though numerous principles of community engagement were modeled in this training, the meaningful involvement of community partners in this program was delayed until the end of the program. Beyond issues of time, the delay resulted from three additional factors: First, a well-defined role for community partners was not determined until well into the program. Second, the nature of the material we addressed in the program in order to be responsive to this cohort’s identified need—the conceptual and theoretical bases of community-engaged scholarship – did not provide an obvious connection to community members. However, this situation likely arose due to the third, and more important, factor- given that the group that designed the program did not include community partners, it is not surprising that the

community partner role was marginalized. Even though the innovators had previously witnessed the consequences of failing to engage community members themselves in campus activities related to community engagement, the innovators were not sufficiently vigilant and allowed history to repeat itself.

The fourth lesson learned was the importance of setting realistic goals, given the time and resources available for the program. The authors learned that the grant funds could not be used to provide participants a stipend or course release time. They also learned that the time needed to plan the program and select participants greatly diminished the time available to implement the program within the constraints of the grant's time frame.

The authors suggest that community-engaged scholarship faculty development programs should involve 2 years of direct work with faculty participants (plus start-up and evaluation time). Year 1 should be focused on community-engaged scholarship knowledge and identity development, with active involvement of community partners as sources of expertise. Year 2 should focus on practice skills involving fieldwork and the application of community-engaged scholarship knowledge, along with more extensive consultation with innovator mentors and community partners. Year 2 should also emphasize the diffusion goal of the project: how faculty who now have more integrated knowledge and practice in community-engaged scholarship can be advocates for this work in their university and beyond. The authors also suggest that all participants should receive course releases or salary support.

## **Conclusion**

The University of Minnesota's Pilot Community-Engaged Scholarship Faculty Development Program suggests a number of prospects and challenges for such programs at other universities. The authors found that a competency-based approach can be effective for increasing knowledge of motivated faculty members who have experience engaging with communities. The participants appreciated the group meetings. They liked having the program grounded in the history, theory, and concepts of community-engaged scholarship; they also appreciated having a mix of activities to enhance their knowledge and skills for integrating community-engaged scholarship into faculty teaching and research.

Future programs should continue to experiment with strategies to improve faculty skills in community-engaged scholarship,

provide more time to digest and implement the program concepts, frame community-engaged scholarship competencies in ways that transcend disciplines, and create substantive roles for community members in the process.

## Epilogue

Although this faculty development program has not been sustained beyond the pilot phase due to funding constraints, a number of positive developments have occurred in the interim. The university's community-campus health liaison began convening the organizers of several faculty development efforts that touch on community engagement, such as service-learning trainings and a community-based participatory research course. These meetings provided faculty development coordinators with the opportunity to learn about each other's work and to begin mapping faculty development offerings across the institution. The Office for Public Engagement then commissioned the community-campus health liaison to conduct an analysis of all faculty development efforts that address community engagement to highlight the potential gaps in topics offered and audiences reached.

The Office for Public Engagement also charged a committee, the Task Force on Faculty Scholarship, Development and Reward, to recommend, among other things, mechanisms to create faculty development pathways in community-engaged scholarship.

The Office for Public Engagement hopes to act on the recommendations of this task force and the findings of the analysis of faculty development opportunities to enhance the coordination of faculty development efforts, increase the regularity of course offerings, and fill gaps by creating courses for novice and advanced community-engaged scholars from diverse disciplines.

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## Appendix I

### Competency Self-Assessment

The questionnaire assesses your perceived level of competence in a variety of areas relevant to community-engaged scholarship. Please provide a rating for your level of competency at the beginning of the program and now, at the end of the program.

Each domain represents an important area of competence for effective community-engaged scholarship (CES). Some domains relate to one's knowledge base. Others are more about skills. However, since knowledge is integral to effective practice, skills-based questions in this self-assessment also inquire about the robustness of one's knowledge within the domain. Please choose only one statement per question (one for the *beginning* and one for the *end* column).

You will rate questions according to the following Likert scales, depending on the question:

Knowledge continuum (In response to "What do you know" questions):

- 0 = know nothing
- 1 = familiarity with basics
- 2 = working knowledge/can apply knowledge
- 3 = can communicate and disseminate existing knowledge in the field through teaching, critiquing or mentoring
- 4 = can contribute to or advance knowledge in the CES arena or within my discipline as it relates to the CES arena
- 5 = have transformed work in the CES arena or within my discipline as it relates to the CES arena

Skill (applied knowledge) continuum (in response to "How effective are you" questions):

- 0 = no skill
- 1 = basic skills
- 2 = intermediate skills
- 3 = can communicate and teach effectively about practice
- 4 = can effectively contribute to a practice domain
- 5 = can create broad practice innovations and disseminate them

	Time 1	Time 2
1. (background question)		
2. What do you know about the history of and the literature about CES?		
3. What do you know about concepts of community engagement and CES?		
4. What do you know about contributors to community challenges including economic, social, behavioral, political and environmental factors?		
5. What do you know about working with diverse communities?		
6. How effective are you at working with diverse communities?		
7. What do you know about negotiating academic-community relationships?		

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8. How effective are you at negotiating academic-community relationships?		
9. What do you know about developing community capacity through CES?		
10. How effective are you at developing community capacity through CES?		
11. What do you know about fostering social change through CES?		
12. How effective are you at fostering social change through CES?		
13. What do you know about translating the process and findings of CES into policy?		
14. How effective are you at translating the process and findings of CES into policy?		
15. What do you know about balancing research, teaching and service while engaging in CES?		
16. How effective are you at balancing research, teaching and service while engaging in CES?		
17. What do you know about the relationship of scholarly components of CES and review, promotion and/or tenure?		
18. How effective are you in preparing to present your best case for promotion or tenure as a community-engaged scholar?		
19. What do you know about grant writing and developing productive relationships with funders related to CES?		
20. How effective are you at grant writing and developing productive relationships with funders related to CES?		
21. What do you know about mentoring students and faculty in CES, thereby increasing the capacity of the University to engage with communities?		
22. How effective are you at mentoring students and faculty in CES, thereby increasing the capacity of the University to engage with communities?		

## Appendix 2

### Individual Development Plan Template

1. 2. 3.

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**Areas to Develop**  
(What do you need to develop?)

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**Goals: Long-term**  
(What will you do to improve in the areas identified?)

---

**Goals: Short-Term**  
(What could you do this year?)

---

**Overall Strategies for Reaching Goals**

---

**Steps and Timeline for Completion** (What steps will you take to accomplish your goals and by when?)

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**Resources Available**  
(Human, funding, electronic, events, training, literature, etc.)

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**Outcomes**  
(What will you have accomplished to indicate that you have reached your goals?)

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## Appendix 3

### *“Speed Dating” Approach to Mentor Assignment*

Approach: A method was needed to provide all mentees with an opportunity to learn about all potential mentors and then to discern which mentor(s) would best meet their needs. A “speed dating” approach was modified to serve these purposes.

Procedures: Potential mentors each gave a 5-10 minute presentation about their domains of expertise and the areas that they enjoy mentoring students and junior faculty in. Mentees and mentors were then seated in pairs.

At the end of the speed dating session, mentees were asked to complete the following sheet:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Based on your conversations today, list three competencies you want to work on and who you want to work on them with. Asterisk any that are urgent needs.

1. Competency:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

a. Who do you want to work with on this? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Competency:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

a. Who do you want to work with on this? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Competency:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

a. Who do you want to work with on this? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there anything else you want Innovators to know?

## Appendix 4

### *Key Informant Interview Questions*

Guiding questions that informed key informant interview questions are listed below. Relevant sources of information in parentheses (I = Innovator; EA = Early Adopter)

- 1) Did the faculty development program create a cadre of faculty with the capacity for CES?
  - a. In what ways was enthusiasm for CES established? Increased (I/EA)?
  - b. In what ways were CES competencies enhanced (knowledge, behavior, skills) (EA)?
  - c. In what ways did EA's apply CES competencies into their work/scholarship?
  - d. What plans did EA's/I's develop for being ambassadors for CES?
- 2) What components of the program were most valuable and why (I/EA)? Which components were less helpful and why?
- 3) What lessons were learned about developing faculty development programs related to CES (I/EA)?

### Key Informant Interview Questions

#### 1a. Related to enthusiasm

- What was the importance of CES in your academic career before the program? How has that changed?
- Has the program had an effect on your identity as a community engaged scholar? If so, what effect has it had? If not, explain why not.
- What role will CES play in your career in the future? How would you have answered that question a year ago?

#### 1b. Related to competencies

- What competencies or skills did you come in wanting to develop?
- What competencies or skills did you work on in the program?
- What progress have you made on those competencies or skills?
- What competencies or skills do you want to work on in the future?

#### 1c. Related to application of competencies

- How have you been able to apply what you've learned in this program to your work?
- What challenges have you faced in doing so?

#### 1d. Related to ambassador plans

- Do you feel competent in your ability to serve as an ambassador for CES on campus or in your discipline?
- How do you plan to serve as an ambassador for CES on campus or in your discipline?

#### 2. Related to feedback on the value of the program

- What components of the program did you find helpful?
- What components did you find unhelpful? (Could probe with specific references to components like: application process and selection, identification of competencies and development of the individual development plan, large group meetings, mentoring, etc.)

#### 3. Related to lessons learned (focused mostly on Innovator interviews, but can also be gleaned from EA interviews, meeting notes, site visit feedback)

- What lessons did you learn about designing a faculty development program?
- What lessons did you learn about competencies necessary for CES and how those competencies are best developed in faculty?
- What worked well about the faculty development program?
- What did not work about the faculty development program?
- What would you suggest/do differently if you were to do it again?

