

NOTES FROM CONVENING ON UNIVERSITY EDUCATION FOR COMMUNITY CHANGE SEPTEMBER 13-14, 2005

The following notes are a composite of notes which summarized the main points of agreement on the butcher paper, and notes which Denise Fairchild and Richard Couto took earlier in the meeting. They begin with Andy's notes from the butcher paper, and then circle back to include Denise's graph on the participants' current work and materials which Dick wrote as he thought back on the meeting. They conclude with a memo from Michael Swack on the discussions by the small group focusing on evaluation.

Our goal of building the field --

We agreed that our goal is to build the field of university education for community change. We see that resulting in educating people and strengthening organizations that are seeking to bring about positive economic, social, political and community change through grassroots community organizing, community development and rights-based work. During the meeting we clarified our goals by focusing on **issues of who, what and how** –

- Whom we want to reach and educate
- What we want them to learn
- How they would learn, and what methodologies are most effective

We then discussed how we might work together to create a growing network to focus on building this field, enabling us to work collectively and separately to enrich and expand university programs for community change.

Whom are we trying to reach?

We are working to prepare pathways into social change careers for four types of people:

Students

Undergraduates, including community college students
Graduate students

Practitioners

With different levels of experience and academic background
Both midcareer practitioners and people earlier in their careers who have some prior experience

Faculty

Training of teachers in pedagogy, how to approach learning, practice
In different disciplines, committed to social change
Including some “technical” disciplines

Involving practitioners as faculty -- How do you prepare practitioners to be good teachers and mentors?

Community/Indigenous grassroots leaders

In programs with and without credentials

In programs with NGOs/nonprofits as well as university-based programs

Major problems of affordability, access, and time

Our programs should differ, responding to the different needs, etc, but we should also look for how these different levels of education can overlap, how they can learn from each other and from dialogue

Are we getting the right students?

How flexible should we be about entry requirements?

We vary, from no degree to Masters level

Are credentials important? (Eric)

- For some people credentials are very important; for others they are not.
- Advantages of greater flexibility of non-degree programs; but need credential for respect and as reward for hard work (Carlos and Michael)
- Practitioners may not see advantage of a degree or discipline – won't lead to opportunities to teach, have had negative experience with academics/ strong hostility/ see nonprofits as having more credibility
- How do you overcome that hostility?

What education do they need?

Should be –

- Interdisciplinary
- Integrating practice and theory
- In a flexible program with a “negotiated curriculum” and some core components
- Designed to provide study skills, confidence and comfort in applying and adapting what they learn

The education should include all three elements in the Venn diagram –

1. Knowledge and skills on facilitating collective action

Empowerment/Training people to organize

Human rights

Instrumental vs. strategic participation -- defined externally or by the social process?

Leadership and management of democratic organizations, organizational development

Requires dedication of radical and reformist people

2. Specialized knowledge and skills
 - Requires technical, programmatic or other specialized knowledge on the issues the person focuses on
 - Includes knowledge of alternative approaches to addressing issue or sector, especially approaches with a rights perspective
 - Could be linked to education in other specialized academic disciplines
 - Community economic development, or CED, is one major area of specialization
 - Other examples include public health, social planning, action research, other programmatic areas

3. Analytic and reflective skills
 - Teach self-reflection, how to continue learning
 - Need space to reflect on what people do
 - Study historic, cultural, social, economic, political and policy contexts; global context
 - Political and power analysis
 - Strategic thinking
 - Decision-making
 - Problem-solving techniques

How can we best deliver that education?

Different models of study,

- Are adapted to differing needs
- Including part-time and full-time
- All mix theory, practice and reflection

Teaching and learning approaches

- Mix different methodologies
- Establish the historic and cultural context
- Use educational approaches which model the “what”, new models of teaching which stress participation, share decision-making, have authority which is accountable
- Create safe space in the classroom and open up possibilities for discussion
- Help people unlearn “professionalism” and learn to listen and share priority-setting
- Use case studies
- Use action research projects as a teaching method
- Use different forms of writing to make it easier for students to articulate their own experience, etc – journaling, non-assessed writing, “freefall”
- Teach self-reflection, resulting in change in behavior, thinking, work
- Make it relevant to everyday experience of the students
- Analyze and reflect on current work which involves collective action, “use experience as text”

- Integrate practice and theory, go back and forth from work to university, with help with transitions
- Make sure education actually connects, has impact

What you may gain from education in addition to what you learn

- Education enhances standing within an institution, credibility
- May help people get better jobs
- Network gives the academic program greater credibility, legitimacy
- May facilitate gaining more resources and support
- May help them gain flexibility to influence the university more broadly

What resources are needed?

Huge financial and time problem for students – Many cannot be spared or don't feel they can; real problems of access and affordability

Very difficult to sustain programs without outside funding

- Requires major commitments of funds
- Very difficult to get funds for education in this field -- Who funds it?
- Now often self-financed, loans, few scholarships, high tuitions
- Corporate model – OK if you can bring funds and market to it

Network of whom?

What unites us? We all –

- Give priority to expanding university education for community change including development of materials and tools, research and TA
- Are committed to multidisciplinary education which combines theory, practice and reflection
- Are educators in universities and noncredentialing institutions which equip people with the tools of collective action, specialized knowledge of the issues they're addressing, and analytic, reflective and strategic thinking skills
- Are committed to education for entry level people, practitioners, community leaders and the faculty which are needed to educate them
- Are concerned about issues of poverty, exclusion, race, gender and rights
- Are committed to preparing people to achieve social change by developing and pursuing community-driven agendas, involving the affected people at the table, equipped with power, knowledge and skills so they can negotiate in parity with others
- Focus on issues of power
- Are committed to collective action
- Are committed to structural and systemic reform
- And also to approaches which provide some immediate benefits

In creating a network we should be flexible. Whether we are a network of individuals, or institutions, or teams of colleagues within an institution should depend on which makes the most sense in a particular situation

“Members” – what criteria should we apply for future membership?

- At a minimum must have a shared vision
- We don't want to be gatekeepers but want some clarity about who's in and who's not

Size -- How can we best balance size/growth and advantages of intimacy?

Let's start with the current group of 16 and work together for the next year; don't add anyone as we have developed a group which has a common understanding and has begun working together

Our vision:

Want to see enhanced university role on social, economic and political justice, to scale up, expand and enrich such education

Want to work on a global basis

Collectively develop body of knowledge, principles, contents and methodologies for educating people on

Collective action training

Technical and programmatic education in areas requiring specialized knowledge

Analytic, reflective and strategic thinking skills

Develop several pathways through education into social change work

Explore new methodologies and advance them, using network which uses reflective practice

Promotion of field of education for community change

- Develop a strong case for it
- Legitimate it through publications
- Build its credibility through visibility at conferences, in journals, etc
- Make it more successful in attracting students, “expanding the market”
- Encourage *partnerships like Drew/Kenya* ones which enhance education, get institutional support

“Membership” but not accreditation -- Accreditation and credentialing have their pros and cons

Peer visits with safe space for sharing, critiquing, learning

Solidarity/camaraderie/share and learn together

We will be “boundary pushers and pullers”

Short-term goals:

Conduct environmental scan of related efforts

- Who else is focusing on these issues, and what are they doing?
- Special focus on what’s going on outside the US (since Andy’s report focused on US) -- IDS, other universities in each region, Dave Brown, etc
- Also learn what else is going on in the US (inventory our contacts, learn about professional conferences, Campus Compact, Democracy Collaborative, Democracy Project, Susan Stroud, LA Council on Social Science, social work schools)
- What relationships should we have with them?

Explore the “what”

Share curricula, materials, methodologies, especially on mid-career education

Develop plan for teaching the teachers in this area

Do something together, mount an actual collaborative effort

Study who are the students and the potential students, explore whether the supply is adequate and whether these are the students who are needed

Share on-line

Promote university education for community change through participation in key conferences, placing articles, etc.

Develop plan for increasing credibility of community change studies

Explore methods and bridges between academic and community

Schedule peer visits – review, critique, camaraderie, common vision and understanding

Develop our thinking about programs for younger people, share program knowledge and experience

How do you evaluate education?

Quality issues?

Initial brainstorming on guiding questions for initial year of learning enhancement:

- A. **Who?**
 - a. *What are the demographics of our students?*
 - b. *What are the pathways for attracting and educating young students? What conditions would facilitate attracting and involving more young people?*
 - c. *What conditions would facilitate attracting and educating more midcareer people?*
- B. Explore the issues of “what” using the Venn diagram
- C. ***How does/should context influence education?***
- D. How can we help practitioners develop their critical analysis and reflective capacity?
- E. ***How can we evaluate this kind of education?***
- F. Where else does this practice go on?
- G. How do we scale up this field?
- H. How can we expand outreach to increase visibility, engage people?
- I. What are the jobs? Where are they?
- J. Need to deepen our understanding of “social change”, develop our theory
- K. What are best ways to educate each of these types of people
Community leaders? By universities and nonprofit/NGOs?
Etc

Brainstorming on possible activities for first year:

- A. Choose several educational topics for exploration from the current list of topics
 - Work in small groups based on interest, expertise, mix of experiences and perspectives; take advantage of the leadership skills and expertise of our members
 - Prepare paper(s) to start discussion
 - Provide financial support for convenings, including travel, logistics, preparation of papers, follow-up
- B. Schedule and provide financial support for a few pilot initiatives such as peer visits, etc, as part of structured learning process
- C. Develop plans for future work on select topics
- D. Provide speakers, discussion leaders, etc to key forums to increase visibility and test value of such an approach
- E. Bring entire working group together after ten months to bring these discussions together, develop plan for future

Dick Couto's memo on "Who are we?"

Who are we?

As educators we stand at the institutional boundaries of higher education and prepare people for the hard work of community change. Some of us are within credentialing institutions of higher education and some of us are in community-based educational programs and collaborate with university programs and individual faculty. Depending on our context, we push and pull the boundaries of higher education to serve the training, educational, and developmental needs of those who seek to reduce social and economic inequalities and to increase political equality through democratic forms of collective action.

We assist young and pre-career people, mid-career and well-established professionals, and community leaders who seek appropriate entry points on pathways to careers and projects of problem solving for social justice. We seek to serve learners, who however diverse their backgrounds and goals, have a common desire to be effective change agents to further the democratic prospect of reduced social and economic inequality and increase bonds of community and human solidarity. We serve these aspirants for social justice in interdisciplinary learning communities of reflection on the democratic and effective practice of collective action.

As educators and agents of social change we recognize the economic, social, and political roles of higher education and the issues related to those roles. We work to increase and improve the role of higher education in the civic infrastructure of democratic problem solving through the collective action of people closest to the problem. This entails increasing the legitimacy of community-based pedagogies, research methodologies, and democratic praxis—the unity of theory and practice of democracy—off of our campuses and the credibility of these same factors within higher educational institutions, professions, and disciplines. Thus, we are on the same pathway of those whom we serve and teach primarily by modeling our methods and goals of strategic participation and of responsible and accountable authority in a community of learning.

B. Denise Fairchild's notes on our backgrounds

COMMUNITY CHANGE NETWORK

	Goal/Purpose	Issues/Gaps	Assets
Antioch	Ph.D. Leadership/Change Interdisciplinary Cohort based On-line discussions Low-residency 4x/year Competency based/reflection	What change are we intending (organizational, social?) Alternatives approaches often digress toward the mean (inertia/pull back from change)	Focus on Innovation Produces reflective practitioners at masters level (48yrs average w/experience trying to knot it together) Virtual campus

	Project required Intentional on change		
Sonia –Wagner/Leadership for a Changing World	2 yrs – Create spaces for change agents to problem solve together & capture the knowledge (academics & practitioners) for the field. Learning by process – with spaces for busy people Generate products for people (new methodologies oriented toward action research) ResearchCenter w/faculty	1) Connection to University. Issues of Credibility non-traditional research methods) struggle for credibility How to engage faculty from other schools Non-Ph.Ds face isolation Trying to be progressive in University espousing non-progressive policies 2) Relationships – between practitioners and academics - practice vs. theory. Disconnect. E.g. Practitioners distrust academics. Must work on constantly 3) Bridging in Practice – desire to integrate theory and practice (good for researchers and practitioners). Develop different products for different audiences? Can we create products that should serve both stakeholders?	Cooperative Inquiry –(Social Change Spaces) New Methodologies & Processes Action Research Database of conversation/transcripts for case studies Reports

Institution	Purpose	Issues	Assets
Southern New Hampshire	<p>Help practitioners to be more effective at change</p> <p>Building the institutional base to carry out this type of activity</p>	<p>How to balance theory and practice. Theory is important for practitioners. And financing is important.</p> <p>How do you narrow the distinction between knowing something and doing something. Allow for risk taking—what are the technical skills needed, what is the theory behind it.</p> <p>What is the best format to learn (how much time together, what cost?)</p> <p>Things that affect people’s ability to learn</p>	<p>Alumni – skills, all over the world, extremely knowledgeable</p> <p>Good place to host events/Good physical space</p>
Univ of Tanzania	<p>Offshore Program of Southern New Hampshire</p> <p>International Development Focus</p> <p>Training to practitioners (international, NGO & community development)</p> <p>18 mo. Residential program for working adults, focuses on projects & provides technical assistance for free</p>	<p>Credibility – <i>ways of measuring rigor</i> (project vs. thesis)</p> <p>Faculty background</p> <p>Network can strengthen the credibility issue (sharing research, publication,)</p> <p>Relationship between practice and academi</p>	<p>Students – brings together practitioners, public & private)</p> <p>Cost is cheaper</p> <p>Project reports (lots of information)</p>

Institution	Purpose	Issues	Gaps
Trade Tech	<p>Expand grassroots leadership and leadership skills in CED</p> <p>Strengthen capacity of practitioners (multi-disciplinary)</p> <p>Train on and off campus</p>	<p>Attracting/building the pipeline (Legitimacy of the Field)</p> <p>Finding a format to reach busy practitioners</p> <p>Build a true multi-disciplinary faculty</p> <p><i>Pedagogy of Practice (Teaching practitioners to teach OJT)</i></p> <p>Basic Skills & Personal Challenges</p> <p>Missing – environmental, policy level work, international context</p>	<p>Regional Context ---- Demographic (multi-ethnic) Social Change Strategy among Immigrant Communities v. Longterm residents</p> <p>Issues of gentrification, job linkage strategies, new development models, labor issues</p> <p>Student Population (mixed demographic, experiential, etc.)</p> <p>Universal Access/ Affordable</p> <p>No prestige issue – faculty or research with experience or masters</p> <p>Curriculum (beginning on-line)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – mortgage finance – development – organizing –
Henry Armas, Peru	<p>Working University</p> <p>Enforce Human rights approach, addressing the political aspects of health.</p> <p>Relationship between poverty and rights</p> <p>Address Linkage between Human Rights and Health</p> <p>Introduce Participatory Perspective (as content and process)</p>	<p>Misuse of the word participation (focus on quality participation)</p> <p>Interdisciplinary Approach – how to create the dialogue & make the process democratic</p> <p>Institutional Prestige – why do they have to change – to talk about rights when they have prestige</p> <p>How to measure change, how to measure what we have achieved.</p> <p>How to create</p>	<p>Network with policy makers in Peru</p> <p>How to implement participatory approach –</p> <p>Human Rights and Public Health Nexus</p>

		sustainability <i>Tension between activism and academia</i>	
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Brad Lander, Pratt Institute	<p>Help create sustainable and a more just community</p> <p>Policy and campaign and project oriented</p> <p>Practitioner oriented – social change and technical skills (good healthy tensions)</p> <p>Relevant in the place that we are in – economic and environmental justice, gentrification issues</p> <p>Building power to make change</p> <p>6 weeks out of the year (mixed hard skills w/soft change skills and reflection)</p>	<p>Structure for practitioners—not credentialed (too expensive)</p> <p>Models, methodologies</p> <p>Balancing technical skills with social change approach</p> <p>Tension between the focus on building and transforming power relationships vs. rebuilding fabrics of neighborhoods</p>	<p>Lots of great relationships and project work in NY</p> <p>Progressive approach to community planning and community development (intersection of community power vs community change – and community development)</p> <p>Environmental Justice/Change (new change)</p> <p>Good model for adjunct faculty</p>
Carlos Cortes/Autonomous Metropolitan University	<p>Midcareer education for rural development specialists</p> <p>Teach them a grassroots community development approach</p> <p>Offer diploma, MA and PhD programs, and grassroots leadership training</p>	<p>How to teach younger students without specialized training or background</p> <p>How to replicate program in Mexico or other countries</p>	<p>Lack regular meetings or networking of alumni</p> <p>Lack “technical” or specialized education for younger students</p>

Institution	Purpose	Issues	Assets
Rajesh Tandon – Society of Participatory Research in Asia	<p>Young and midcareer training for community change</p> <p>Youth - linkage with 40 depts around country (changing curriculum & pedagogy – field experience & classroom)</p> <p>Mid career – short duration training</p> <p>Combination of field and classroom work</p>	<p>1) Funding for social science research does not exist</p> <p>Decline of social science teaching within Universities</p> <p>No University linked program for mid-career in the South Asia</p> <p>No revenues (from fees (capped) or government)</p> <p>2) Practitioners do not see value in degree/diploma. Career opportunities frozen by age 30. No incentive</p> <p>Short term reflections hard to do since academics “preach”. Thus hostility among practitioners re: University</p> <p>3) In the world development funders not willing to invest in reflective space for practitioners. Need affordability and access. Small CBOs can’t afford to engage in reflection, especially those in lowest income areas.</p> <p>4) Concern about University foci for community change – since it doesn’t exist in India</p>	<p>Resource Center of Learning on Participation & Democracy</p> <p>Huge Non-English publications</p> <p>Large network of practitioners</p> <p>Credibility with 45+ University faculty & departments</p> <p>Participatory Research</p>

Institution	Purpose	Issue	Assets
Marshall Gans - Kennedy School	<p>Build capacity for collective action – how to mobilize for effective outcomes/changing power.</p> <p>Lost history & tools of collective action, therefore:</p> <p>Lifting up importance of social movements for change (impacting electoral process) vs. social entrepreneurs or voluntarism</p> <p>deTocqueville – democracy is not about protecting individual rights but, bringing knowledge together.</p> <p>Ensure that the blend of Practitioner/Research is common as in other domains (military, etc.). Integrate Teaching, Research & Practice</p>	<p>How to tie research to practice (Carnegie School—service learning) that leads to political engagement/movement and not voluntarism</p> <p>Time, money, collaborators (Teaching mentoring)</p>	<p>Students – looking for pathways to social change</p> <p>An expanding Student Networks</p> <p>Harvard name lends legitimacy</p> <p>Lots of resources-- convening & network capacity</p> <p>Executive Directors Program</p> <p>Collaborative Applied Research</p> <p>Knowledge of the research on the pedagogy of Service Learning</p>
Roland Anglin, Rutgers		What do you want University to do for us (who are we, what do we do and what do we want?)	
Eric Shragge/ Concordia University	<p>Meets _ time Deeply imbedded in University</p> <p>Develop reflective practitioners</p> <p>To shift folks to more political</p>		<p>Program Links between Univ and Community</p>