

SSU CCE Priorities: Addendum to Strategic Plan  
2008-2013

In conjunction with the strategic planning process for the Center or Community Engagement (CCE) at Sonoma State University (SSU), the Strategic Action Committee has constructed this list of philosophies and initiatives as foci for the CCE. As the Strategic Plan is quite large in scope and it is unreasonable to expect such a small office with such limited resources to accomplish all the goals listed, we have intentionally, after considerable consideration, selected priorities for the CCE for the next five years.

The decision on the following priorities was not made lightly and we were informed by internal (CSU, SSU, and SSU Academic Affairs) and external (input from community partners) contributions. In particular, we point to the CSU's Strategic Plan, Strategic Plan Goal 6: Enhance student opportunities for active learning,<sup>1</sup> the SSU Strategic Plan which includes strategic goals of community engagement, diversity and sustainability,<sup>2</sup> and the SSU Academic Affairs Strategic Plan which includes "Strategic Area 3: Build a diverse and inclusive university community and culture that actively promote our core values," "Strategic Area 4: Foster collaborations that address the educational, social, cultural, and economic development needs of the regional community and enhance our students' learning," and "Strategic Area 5: Establish sustainability as a key element of Sonoma State University's identity on campus and in the region."

These priorities will not suspend any current or ongoing efforts, nor will they rule out responding to any unforeseen events. Additionally, the CCE will continue to participate in current and future system-wide and University-wide efforts that support our civic mission and the institutionalization of the CCE (for example, General Ed reform, RTP process reform, working towards earning the Carnegie Community Engagement designation, Strategic Planning efforts, etc.). They simply serve as guidelines to prioritize our goals.

Because our leadership and service philosophies inform our initiatives, philosophies are discussed with initiatives (I) following. The first two philosophies (P) focus on the roll of a community engagement office and the third on leadership (L) structure.

P1. As the CCE is within SSU and Academic Affairs, we focus on the intersection between faculty and community work in the three main roles of faculty (teaching, scholarship and service<sup>3</sup>).

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.calstate.edu/acadaff/system\\_strategic\\_planning/docs/A2E-BOT-May2008\\_Item\\_1-acc.pdf](http://www.calstate.edu/acadaff/system_strategic_planning/docs/A2E-BOT-May2008_Item_1-acc.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.sonoma.edu/uaffairs/strategicplan/draft2.shtml#community>

<sup>3</sup> When faculty teaching intersects with community, this usually looks like service-learning or some other form of experiential education with non-profit or governmental agencies. When faculty scholarship intersects with community, this usually looks like a

P1.1 This focus is closely structured around faculty need so easily accessible by faculty. Because this is an innovative approach and perhaps SSU would be the first to take it, we will share our successes and challenges with others in the system and region.

P1.2 Make at least two additional hires to support each of the roles (although perhaps a faculty member course buyout could and should be used for the service role).

P1.3 As the three roles regularly overlap and interweave, provide for consistent communication and teambuilding to increase awareness and collaboration.

P1.4 Because structuring the CCE so closely to faculty interests may undermine the reciprocity inherent in community engagement, could be confusing and/or serve as barrier to community organizations, and make it even more difficult for community organizations and faculty to construct authentic partnerships, develop tools to gather consistent feedback from organizations.

P1.5. Continue to address the fourth, admittedly smaller, role of faculty: community service<sup>4</sup>.

P2. Embrace the “radical education reform heart” of the service-learning movement. Authentically explore the purpose of the CCE as it’s framed within the SSU mission and strategic plan, even if that leads away from or in addition to service-learning, community based participatory research, etc. towards community development (perhaps developing and supporting a Time Bank) or a social justice model (with a more politically active civic engagement approach).

P2.1 Emphasize that this is an innovative approach that focuses on community development suggested by KRCB to address concerns that it is radical and could alienate a lot of partners and students.

P2.2 Utilize a social justice model to connect with the historical identity of SSU and find support with many faculty to inspire stronger purpose for CCE.

P2.3 Identify and address conflicts within the CCE Strategic Plan and CSU CCE strategic plan.

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form of community engaged research or the publication or presentation of that research. Faculty service refers to the SSU committee work and shared governance that faculty participate in. The value placed on faculty teaching and scholarship is decided through that service. Another example of the intersection between faculty service and community was the latest discussion about blood drives and the violation of SSU’s anti-discrimination policy. There is more information about all of these definitions in the CCE Strategic Plan.

<sup>4</sup> Currently, the CCE does assist faculty, especially new faculty, with community service. In particular, we have been successful in connecting faculty with boards, committees and commissions. While faculty community service can be the “connector” for the other 3 faculty roles, it is hard to imagine that matching for this will ever be an independent staffing role within the CCE.

P2.4 Provide necessary substantial training of staff and inform future hiring.

L1. Utilize Franklin Covey inspired leadership philosophy.

L1.1 Leverage this system for planned growth to hire another staff member to focus on management tasks and allow current staff to focus on leadership tasks<sup>5</sup>.

L1.2 Because beyond communication challenges between staff members, the process of working on management tasks informs the quality of the work on leadership tasks and vice versa, leverage this already existing clear plan with goals and assessment strategies.

L1.3 Follow the lead of this fast to implement system to address the concern that separating tasks this way could decrease the quality of work on both types of tasks.

Initiatives:

I1. Focus on Roseland, sustainability and multicultural competence/diversity as priorities.

I1.1 Continue support of long-standing faculty/community partner relationships both within and beyond these priorities.

I1.2 Hire staff for each priority.

I1.3 Focus on current faculty interests and provide them with a clear starting point and sense of being part of something larger.

I1.4 Leverage the interest and support from the CSU system and chancellor for this approach. Follow the lead of the successful program at the University of Maryland, College Park and a similar approach at CSU Monterey Bay.

I1.5 Measure and use clear results for continuous improvement and pr

I1.6 Until the time that SSU could, in the case of Roseland, eventually saturate the immediate, visible need, allow CCE staff to explain “nos” to community organizations. .

I1.7 Evaluate if sustainability is too wide an issue to serve effectively to help the CCE to prioritize community need.

I2. The CCE’s ability to provide faculty and partnership sustainable support is dependent on creative funding and resource development, so work to greatly increase student involvement<sup>6</sup> in CCE programming.

I2.1 Hire a grantwriter to focus on resource growth<sup>7</sup> allowing us to capitalize on the fast changing national<sup>8</sup> and local environment.

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<sup>5</sup> As defined and listed in the CCE Strategic Plan.

<sup>6</sup> Students have excellent learning opportunities from increased involvement will allowing us to leverage our greatest resource: students.

<sup>7</sup> Locally, excellent grantwriters are available and SSU has just hired a new staff member with experience, knowledge and interest in community engagement to direct the Office of

I2.2 Address potential conflict with SSU policy as grants that support student community engagement tend to have very low overhead allowances.

I2.3 Identify the correct funds to support initiatives to avoid becoming perceived as following the funds.

I2.4 Hire a “liaison” to attend all related academic and co-curricular meetings and plan and implement joint programming,<sup>9</sup> particularly between the CCE and JUMP.

I2.5 Leverage the CCE Strategic Plan and the JUMP coordinator’s position description to strengthen relationships with co-curricular community engaged programs.

I2.6 Increase collaboration to intentionally lead to higher quality student learning and community work.

I2.7 Create as many service-learning courses as possible, to expose as many students as possible while addressing as many community requests as possible<sup>10</sup>.

I2.8 Leverage the resources of students, while providing them with leadership experience, and of CCE staff who started and managed a successful SLPM program at previous institution to create a corps of student service-learning peer mentors (SLPMs) who would, in pairs, be assigned to a community partner. They would lead reflection activities in classes and free up faculty from having to become experts in SL before starting.

I2.9 Follow the lead of similar approaches taken at several CSUs and excellent work at Portland State University to mitigate the potential undermining of the powerful and dynamic relationship between faculty and community partners.

I2.10 Develop stronger partnerships with student services to address challenges of ongoing recruitment, training and support of SLPMs<sup>11</sup>.

I2.11 Assess and address concerns of the value of other engaged pedagogies being undermined.

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Research and Sponsored Programs. CCE staff has successfully written a large AmeriCorps grant and managed a successful program at previous institution so is experienced with it.

<sup>8</sup> Nationally, the economy and Administration change provides new opportunities, including the Obama Administration’s Call to Service, Obama’s stimulus package and a new large agenda to support National Service, including Learn and Serve.

<sup>9</sup> The former JUMP coordinator and the CCE coordinator envisioned this as a graduate assistant position or AmeriCorps position. However, several approved AmeriCorps positions remain unfilled. Additionally, there would be high turnover.

<sup>10</sup> Perhaps the focus would be in a specific area such as GE, capstones or English.

<sup>11</sup> CCE coordinator attempted to launch an SLPM program at beginning of SSU tenure. Only four students applied and all but one backed out. This would likely be addressed over time.

I1.12 Address concerns that this model focuses on the means (service-learning) rather than the purpose (student learning and addressing community need).

I1.13 Leverage the speed of creating such a visible program to address concerns that this model is very similar in appearance to service-learning requirements that have been discredited for a variety of reasons, including that it requires faculty to use a specific pedagogy.

I1.14 Develop necessary substantial buy-in from administrators throughout the University while mitigating any potential faculty perception that the program is top-down.

I1.15 Address challenges of turnover with lecturers and potential conflicts with Hutchins pedagogy.

I3 Recruit, train and utilize volunteers from the community, perhaps from the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, to do fundraising, service-learning teaching, and assisting with large service-learning classes<sup>12</sup>.

I3.1 Hire a volunteer program coordinator.

I3.2 Assess if due to the potential large scope of this opportunity, this volunteer program should be housed elsewhere so volunteers could assist throughout the University not simply with academic community engagement.

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<sup>12</sup> This is an innovative idea that models our collaborative, inclusive approach that leverages the resources of the highly educated aging Sonoma County population to provide valuable inter-generational experiences.