



# Community Engagement at Florida Atlantic University

2016-17 Annual Report

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# Introduction

On behalf of the Community Engagement Task Force, I am pleased to present the 2016-17 FAU Report on Community Engagement. The report highlights the activities and accomplishments of the Task Force over the past academic year and provides goals for 2017-19.

FAU's Community Engagement Initiative was launched in June 2015 as a priority of the University's newly appointed President, John W. Kelly. Recognizing FAU's impact in and commitment to its local and regional communities, President Kelly established the Community Engagement Task Force (CETF). The CETF was charged with defining, identifying, and documenting the breadth and depth of FAU's engagement activities in the community as well as institutionalizing and strengthening the culture of strategic engagement within the University. In order to formally recognize the institution's extensive engagement activities, the Task Force was also charged with preparing the University for a successful application for the Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement designation in 2020, the next application period for this prestigious designation.

This 2016-17 Report on Community Engagement provides an update on the progress made toward these goals as well as information that we hope you'll find useful as we all seek to foster awareness and deepen FAU's commitment to engagement within our respective divisions, departments and units.

We look forward to receiving your feedback and supporting your initiatives as we continue to build stronger, mutually beneficial engagement with our communities.

Ron Nyhan, Chair  
Community Engagement Task Force

## About the Report

Florida Atlantic University has a long history of providing engaged learning, research and service to its local and regional communities. Engagement is embedded and highlighted in the University's mission, vision, and strategic goals and is a strong and fundamental component of FAU's strategic platforms upon which the institution's pillars of excellence are built.

The history and practice of engagement at FAU is based on a distributed network of students, faculty, and staff from many divisions, departments and units working with community partners to achieve mutual goals. Each of FAU's divisions accepts ownership of the values and principles of community engagement.

Together, we teach and enrich students through experiential learning opportunities, foster life-altering research to solve problems in our communities, and provide necessary services through faculty expertise, student involvement, and student and staff volunteerism – all by strategically partnering with our many stakeholders.

This annual update highlights the activities of the Task Force and reports initiatives and data gathered from multiple sources within the university and the community.

We invite you to explore our current achievements and future goals and their role in the realization of life-changing reciprocal engagement with FAU's valued local and regional communities.



## Key Accomplishments for 2016-17

Over the past year, the Community Engagement Task Force has continued to strengthen a university-wide infrastructure to recognize, support, enhance, and document engagement activities and opportunities for students, faculty and staff. Through collaborations with divisions, departments, and colleges across the University, the Task Force is increasing awareness of community-based activities and establishing a broader foundation to support those activities.

Three areas of particular accomplishment are:

- Coordination of Efforts
- Awards and Incentives
- Data Collection

### **Coordination of Efforts**

#### ***Promotion and Tenure***

One of the more significant accomplishments of 2016-17 was the formal recognition of community engagement as a part of the Promotion and Tenure process at FAU. Community engagement is now a key component of the teaching, research, and service criteria in annual faculty reviews and promotion and tenure decisions. This was a joint effort with the University Faculty Senate and the Provost's Office.



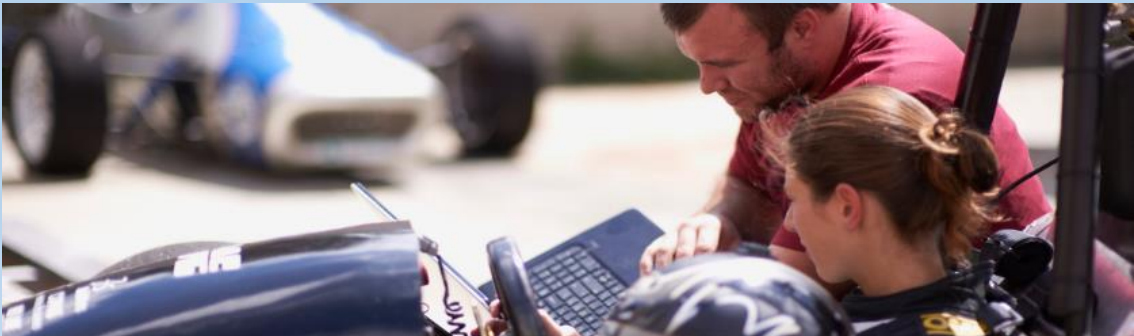
## **Coordination of Efforts (cont)**

### ***Designation of Courses***

The College Community Engagement Liaisons program was established to build engagement activities within the colleges, support engaged students and faculty, and assist with the collection and reporting of engagement data. The liaisons are also working with their colleagues to identify existing courses that have the necessary criteria to be designated as academic service-learning courses and jointly approving those courses with the Weppner Center for LEAD and Service-Learning in the Division of Student Affairs. Presently, there are 84 courses that carry the AS-L attribute in Banner. After the completion of this effort we expect the number of courses carrying the AS-L designation to reach 150 or more.

### ***Survey of Partners***

In December 2016, and in collaboration with the Sandler School of Social Work, a pilot Community Perception Survey was distributed to the school's active partners. The survey was designed to uncover the perceptions of the school's community partners on community engagement activities and the partnership itself. The survey questions focused on the partners' perspectives on motivations, benefits, challenges, and satisfaction, as well as their vision for sustainable partnerships. Their responses will provide the basis for the final survey that will be distributed to all of FAU's partners in 2018.



## **Coordination of Efforts (cont)**

Subsequently, the Task Force co-sponsored the first joint School and community partner lecture and luncheon with a broad group of partners and school faculty and staff in attendance. The event highlighted the partnerships between the Sandler School of Social Work and its valued community partners.

## ***Creation of Website***

To further highlight the University's engagement activities, the creation of a community engagement website now promotes awareness and provides information and resources for both our internal and external communities.

Check it out at: <http://www.fau.edu/community>.

## **Awards and Incentives**

The inaugural year of the Presidential Awards for Engaged Teaching, Research or Scholarly Activity, and Service generated 17 applications in three categories of engaged faculty activities. Applicants submitted a summary of their work, and a letter of support by their dean or supervisor and community partner. Semi-finalists were selected by the UFS Committee on Community Engagement and forwarded to the UFS Honors and Awards Committee for further consideration. Final candidates were approved by the Provost and presented with their respective awards by President Kelly at the 2017 Honors Convocation in April. The award included funding designed to support the recipient's continued professional development in community-based activities.



## **Awards and Incentives (cont)**

The faculty award winners for AY2016 are: Dr. Rhonda Goodman, for engaged teaching; Dr. Jeanette Wyneken, for engaged research; and Dr. Adam Dobrin, for engaged service. The impact generated by the activities of these faculty is life-altering for the communities they serve. A summary of their work can be found on the Community Engagement website under the Faculty tab. We encourage you to review and celebrate their achievements.

In recognition of a community focus in their respective projects, seven students received recognition through the 2016 Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship program (SURF) and also received a \$500 stipend to further work on their project. Research conducted by these students includes topics such as: “Hydrodynamics of Lake Okeechobee” and “Testing the Efficacy of Equine-Assisted Therapy for the Treatment of Substance Use Disorders.”





## **Data Collection**

In order to submit a successful application for the Community Engagement designation, FAU will need to identify, collect, and report data that will document the university's engagement efforts and outcomes. This data is generated through the activities of multiple divisions, many departments and units, and all colleges.

In order to identify sources of data documenting FAU's engagement activities, engagement-related questions have been included in surveys administered across several divisions and many departments.

Questions designed to identify and quantify engagement activities have now been incorporated into the following surveys and reporting tools:

- Faculty Academic Information Reporting (FAIR) system to identify faculty-led engagement activities;
- GrantsERA to identify grant-related, community-based research activities;
- Academic Program Assessment process to identify the level of experiential learning in academic programming;
- Undergraduate Research project application form to identify student-conducted community-focused research projects;
- Graduating Student Survey to identify the number of students who enrolled in AS-L courses and their perception of the benefits of experiential learning opportunities;
- AS-L student, faculty, and partner surveys; and
- Community Partnership surveys.

Additional data will be collected from the Division of Student Affairs (AS-L data, all student volunteer hours, and employer surveys); Administrative Affairs (HR – Faculty/Staff Community Leave hours and areas of service); and others in order to provide a comprehensive overview of engagement at FAU. The data collected from AY2017-18 and fall 2018 will be used to benchmark our efforts in engagement and support our application for the Carnegie Community Engagement designation.

## Status of FAU's CE Application

All efforts to date directed at enhancing the community engagement culture at FAU have also contributed to potential answers to sections of the Carnegie Foundation community engagement designation application. The application will be released on January 15, 2018 with a due date of April 15, 2019.

The application is expected to closely mirror the 2015 application's questions and format. The 2015 application had 53 questions and responses were limited to 500 words. During the past year, responses to these questions have been drafted based on available information. The results were reviewed and the responses assessed as complete, partial, or not yet addressed. The following is a summary of the exercise:

Complete	16
Partial	28
Not yet addressed	9

For an additional assessment of our progress toward achieving the Carnegie designation, the University recently participated in the National Inventory of Institutional Infrastructure for Community Engagement (NIIICE) evaluation conducted by a team of former evaluators for the Carnegie Foundation engagement designation who are now independent consultants.



## The NIICE:

- Is designed to be a program assessment tool for strategic planning and program development.
- Explores purpose, process, & programs of campus community engagement activities and centers.
- Maintains survey results on the participation of 143 U.S. institutions (77 Carnegie classified, 66 non-Carnegie classified).

Category	FAU	Carnegie Peer Mean	Non-Carnegie Peer Mean
Institutional Architecture	25	18.43	18.73
Center Infrastructure	42	31.29	34.55
Center Operations	33	35	29.55
Center Programs for Faculty	13	8.14	8.91
Center Programs for Faculty Development	10	9.14	10.27
Center Programs for Students	35	32.93	31.09
Center Programs for Community Partners	18	19.71	16.73
Center Director Information/Background	10	8.07	8.73
Institutional Information	9	8.43	5.27

In six of the nine categories, FAU scored higher than the Carnegie Peer and non-Carnegie means. The above indicators are positive; however, continued close coordination and compilation of data and narrative responses are required to strengthen some responses and to develop responses for those not yet addressed. Questions pertaining to assessment of how data are impacting student learning outcomes, success and curricula development are examples of some of the challenges yet to be addressed.

## Selected Goals for 2017-2019

- Complete college submission of Academic Service-Learning courses;
- Create an Assessment Committee to evaluate how community engagement activities address student success, learning outcomes and curricula development;
- Assist colleges in identifying and incorporating engagement activities into their respective faculty evaluation and Promotion and Tenure criteria;
- Continue to identify and collect data to measure community engagement at FAU;
- Construct a database of community partners to implement a mapping project that will graphically illustrate the University's reach and types of engagement activities;
- Administer a university-wide partnership survey;
- Expand the availability of quality experiential learning opportunities for students;
- Conduct community workshops and recognition events for partners, faculty and students in order to promote engagement opportunities;
- Complete the application to achieve the Carnegie Community Engagement designation; and,
- Evaluate and recommend to Executive Leadership a viable, sustainable infrastructure for FAU to continue its engagement activities in the future.

# Organization and Placement for an Office of Community Engagement

There are varying examples of Community Engagement offices throughout Florida and the United States. They range widely in terms of staff and responsibilities. However, a comprehensive review of all their various responsibilities reveals that each one is currently being performed within some division at FAU.

Experience in working with the Task Force indicates that a small staff could serve as a coordinating unit that continues to identify and document FAU's engagement activities in the community. It can also as measure and report on the engagement within the University and community.

FAU has an excellent "distributed ownership" model at present. There is ownership of the responsibility/value of community engagement within each of the eight main divisions (Academic Affairs, Administrative Affairs, Athletics, Financial Affairs, Institutional Advancement, Public Affairs, Research, and Student Affairs).

Trying to centralize community engagement functions under one division or department would be difficult and problematic. Therefore, continuing with the existing model of a coordinating group of 2-3 individuals is recommended. As to placement, the strongest strategic positioning for the Carnegie application would be the Office of the President. After the application is complete and the unit formalizes its processes, there are future possible placements including Academic Affairs, Institutional Advancement or Strategic Initiatives that could be considered.