

Paradigm shift: Toward a community-university community of practice

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**Paradigm Shift:
Toward a Community-University Community of Practice**

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"...[T]he ultimate worth of the human person is not measured by what we know, but what we freely do."

J. Donald Monan, former President, Boston College (1992)

Overview

For far too long academics have operated in what is denigratingly called the ivory tower. Separated from the very real problems of their communities, too many university faculty, even in professional disciplines, engage in arcane discipline-based research and publication that is mostly incomprehensible or, worse, irrelevant to the practitioner in the field. Working from an outdated positivist view of science that has captured the imagination and traditions of social "science" and the professions, many faculty have become increasingly specialized, discipline-oriented, and divorced from the realities of the world that in the social sciences and professions, they are supposed to be studying. This lack of relevance has resulted in strong critiques of the academy (Boyer, 1990; Lerner & Simon, 1998 a, 1998 b; Lerner & Miller, 1996). For example, the business school accrediting body (AACSB) issued a scathing report in 1996 that blasted management faculty for: lack of interaction with real-world businesses, for not keeping up with technological shifts, for failure to recognize the need for change and assume leadership, and for conducting research that is largely irrelevant to the business community, among other factors (AACSB Task Force, 1996). Education faculty regularly receive similar critiques regularly with respect to their engagement with teachers who actually work in schools, as do faculty in other professional disciplines. Universities in general are lambasted for their lack of commitment to their external (local or discipline-related) communities, for irrelevant research, and for failing to link theory to practice coherently, among other failures (e.g. Lerner & Simon, 1998 a; Boyer, 1990).

The underlying issue is that many organizational--or indeed individual, community, and social--problems do not neatly break into functions or disciplines

(Hammer & Champy, 1993; Senge, 1990). The pieces do not always neatly realign themselves into the whole. The wholes themselves are, of course, complex, chaotic (in the physical science sense of exhibiting patterns and complexity but not exact predictability), and difficult to resolve, particularly with popular "band-aid" solutions.

Communities, that is, the external communities that surround universities, too are struggling. There is substantial evidence that the infrastructures, social norms and values, and economic opportunities that once provided a modicum of stability for communities are rapidly shifting as companies and other enterprises outsource, restructure, and downsize to meet the demands of modern competition (Waddock, 1996). Eroding economic opportunities created by these restructurings and the movement of companies to more comfortable suburban surroundings leaves some inner cities without means of supporting their populace. In some communities violence is a normal part of everyday life, with drug pushers and gangs controlling street corners. Children, more than 20% of whom are now living under poverty conditions in America, are perhaps the ones who suffer most from our inability to generate civil society today (Lerner & Miller, 1996).

This paper will explore the ways in which system change has begun to occur within a university imbued with tradition and the ideals of scholarship, as it has historically been understood. The efforts described below exemplify the struggle to change the institutional structure and understanding of what scholarship is. A loosely-structured group of faculty, with some support from administration, is making a sustained effort to move away from the ivory tower and closer to a more tightly linked integration of theory and practice, university and community working in partnership, and faculty and student co-learning. All of this is happening in a context of stated values and ideals that explicitly are aligned with the new direction, while simultaneously the university and its heritage are bound to the intellectual ideal of disciplinary foci and specialization. The tensions and evolution of this "new order" are described below.

Paradigm Shift

Overused though the term is, dealing with the numerous critiques of the modern university and the serious problems of community may require a paradigm shift in our understanding of the role of the university. At one university, a grassroots group of faculty are attempting to move from the discipline-based "silos" of academic instruction and research (cf. Hammer & Champy, 1993) toward a community-university collaboration with an interdisciplinary basis. This university is a medium-sized, Jesuit liberal arts university with five professional schools (Management, Law, Education, Social Work and Nursing) and a School of Arts and Sciences (with both graduate and undergraduate schools represented in the effort). The work is not so much interdisciplinary in the sense of combining disciplines as it is multi-disciplinary. What multi-disciplinary means is that members of each profession bring their own expertise to the discussions and problems and attempt to apply that expertise in collaboration with people from other disciplines, without necessarily losing the distinctive focus and expertise of the discipline. This tough juggling act requires common language and goals, as well as a great deal of interaction both across disciplines and with community members, where previously little existed.

In this developmental process, fundamental shifts are beginning to emerge among faculty members participating in thinking about scholarship and teaching along three major dimensions. These three dimensions, as articulated in a working document of the initiative, include: (1) a theory/research effort aimed at integrating theory, research, and practice across multiple professions and disciplines through collaborative and interdisciplinary research and scholarship; (2) a professional training effort involving integrating professional education to bring together multiple perspectives focused on improving the lives of children, families, and communities; and (3) an outreach effort that attempts to develop a significant (external) community-university collaboration in which parties are empowered to work together in the long-term interest of all.

These three aspects of faculty work focus a collaborative effort across all five of the university's professional schools, as well as the Arts and Sciences (graduate and undergraduate schools). They also link this intra-university collaborative to the local community in what can be termed a "community of practice" (Raelin, 1997) and, from a scholarly perspective, a "community of inquiry" (Torbert, 1991).

A Note on Methods

This paper traces the development of this effort. It is based on a review and thematic content analysis of agendas, transcripts, and meeting notes obtained for a variety of developmental and organizing meetings held over a four-years period among faculty and with community representatives. The authors also reviewed archival documents related to the initiative's early stage development. Initially coming under the rubrics of "integrated services" and "inter-professional collaboration," early initiatives were funded by three grants aimed at delivery of integrated services in community settings. Ultimately, several separate but related forums emerged where faculty came together for a variety of purposes. As will be detailed, the work project and various forums have now come to be housed under the broad umbrella of a new multi-disciplinary center focused on children, families, and community partnerships, which was formally instituted in the fall of 1996. As the center becomes institutionalized, existing linking mechanisms have shifted into more formalized, yet still grassroots-based, means of bringing people together.

What will be presented below will look more orderly, more logical, and less conflictual than it actually was--or is. The transcripts make clear the uncertainty faced at each step(including the present), the difficulties of overcoming traditional obstacles not only to change but also to collaboration with the university, never mind with the external local community, which is (to say the least) skeptical of the university's outreach. Difficulties also exist in collaborating within a system that does not tend to foster or reward collaborative work because of the historical need for disciplinary specialization.

The transcripts also make clear the recursiveness with which the initiatives proceeded; issues raised early on are visited and revisited as different actors and perspectives are drawn in. Framing and shaping of the ideas and outreach efforts occur again and again, changed sometimes subtly and sometimes dramatically with each new step.

In addition, we rely upon the memories and observations of the authors as participants in the evolving process of change. This process can best be described as a combination of action research and participant observation, a process in which the observers become deeply engaged with the mess of "wicked problems" associated with any change initiative (King & Acklin, 1995). We will try to tell the "story" of the collaboration and highlight the particulars of collaboration in an effort to do two things. First we attempt to provide lessons on the difficulties of collaborative change directed at developing this community of practice, that is, of integrating theory and practice. Second, we wish to add to our knowledge of collaboration theory some of the realities of collaboration on a day-to-day basis.

A Framework for Thinking about Collaboration

Reviewing transcripts reveals several commonalities among the 30-40 faculty involved in developing this collaboration in one way or another over time. First is a common sense of purpose around improving the lives of children and families in communities. While not always explicit or the same for each person, this core idea was sufficiently shared by those gathering at the tables of the various meetings for the initiative to gain energy and commitment (i.e., new members) over time. This shared sense of purpose evolved into an articulated vision statement that provides a framework for holding the group together (see Exhibit 1), which was discussed in many forums by many different people over time.

-----Exhibit 1 about here-----

The vision of improving the lives of children, families, and communities provides organizational "glue" for the diverse and distinct efforts of faculty in the difficult task of

collaboration across disciplinary and administrative boundaries. Also evident is an apparent willingness by collaborators to leave turf, territory, power, and political disputes behind (cf. Waddock, 1993) in coming to the table, at least initially and for most of the time. This willingness manifested itself structurally over time in efforts to share responsibility and power relatively equally across the schools and colleges, and to sustain the grassroots momentum of the initiative. Specifics of the structure will be discussed in a later section.

Content, Structure, Processes, and Outcomes

Faculty throughout the collaboration negotiated a series of tensions and paradoxes that consistently pulled (and still pull) the initiative in multiple directions. From transcripts of meetings, however, it is possible to see where certain initiatives originated and where ideas were first formally promulgated. It is also clear that the content of these discussions is tightly linked to an on-going process that continually renews the shared and developing understanding of the initiative's focus and reshapes each initiative as it progresses. Structures and mechanisms for linking faculty created an on-going series of interactions among participants and allowed the efforts to expand as others heard about them and expressed interest. These interactions shifted over time as new members joined and the collaboration has become more formalized, yet are still under way. While the outcomes of collaboration are still in the early stages of development, there is growing evidence of significant change and feedback into redefining content, process, and structures both within the university and in its relationships to the community, and externally in the community itself. Several meetings have been held to specifically identify potential outcomes and to shape appropriate structures for encouraging them to come into existence.

An example will serve to highlight some changes in university policies and practices that resulted from the paradigm shift. The focus of this example is a comparison of two successful grant applications written by some members of the faculty

group leading this initiative. The first grant was written at the start of this initiative while the second was written four years after the initiative was begun. Both grants were directed at funding a collaborative effort between the university and the community. In the earlier grant, the university requested funds to support changes in its teacher education curriculum in order to tie the preparation more directly to the practice of teaching in local schools. The later grant requested funds to transform a traditional urban elementary school into a community school that served as the “hub” of a variety of services to children and their families. An obvious difference between the two grants was the focus of the funded projects. The grant written prior to the initiative focused exclusively on changes that would occur within the university. Even though the changes involved the external community, their primary domain of impact was the university curriculum. By contrast, the later grant focused on a major change within a community institution, viz., the school. While this work of this later grant was transformative for university faculty, the primary beneficiary was the external community. Clearly, the university had begun to engage the community in a more direct manner.

A second major difference between the earlier and later grant occurred with respect to the position of the university in the university–community collaborative. In the former grant, the university cast itself in the “lead role” as it orchestrated the input and feedback of community members. In the later grant, the university saw itself not as a leader, but as a co-learner within the community. The university was one of four partners serving on a steering committee that guided the development of the community school.

A final difference in these two grants involved the siting of the grant. In the early grant, the university was the Principal Investigator with all “overhead” funding coming to the university. In the second grant, the community agency was the designated Principal Investigator. Consequently, the grant was sited in the community agency even though the university contributed in a major way to the writing and implementation of the grant. At the request of the involved faculty, the leadership of the university supported this change

in practice. Subsequently, the university has continued to participate in writing grants that support significant changes in the community as the university-community partnership has been expanded. The shifts in university policies and practices continue to be maintained at this writing.

The interplay between content, process, structure, and outcomes provides a framework in which we can begin to understand the process of change involved in shifting the work of the university toward "outreach scholarship" (Lerner & Simon, 1998) or a "community of inquiry" (Torbert, 1991). Here theory in a range of disciplines becomes intimately linked to practice in the field. We use the term community of practice (Raelin, 1997) to describe our activities because in part this work is about changing the day-to-day practice of teaching and conducting scholarship. Changes include the way that courses are designed and delivered, the way students view their futures as professionals working in communities, what is research and how research is conducted. The initiative is also about changing all types of scholarly activities, and about bringing the external community and its needs and desires more directly into engagement with the university, not as a subordinate, but as an equal partner.

We use the term *community* in two ways. First, we aim at developing an internal community that is actively engaged in developing this new way of reaching out across disciplinary lines and into the external community, i.e., in changing the practice of the involved disciplines. Further, faculty and representatives of the local external community are involved together in this work and thus are interdependent with each other for its outcomes; goals, resources, and a common agenda are shared. We used the term *practice* because of the effort to link theory with practice, and because the processes of collaboration are as important as the content, structures, or outcomes. Ideas, initiatives, proposals, discussions seem to loop around to feed and re-feed each other, intermingling theories, research, and teaching in wholly new ways.

Understanding the evolution of this collaboration requires, in effect, understanding chaos, not in the vernacular sense of complete disorder, but in the more mathematically-based sense that change is nonlinear, that things are interconnected and interdependent. In chaotic systems, as in this situation, very large shifts may occur from very small differences in initial conditions (i.e., siting a grant in the community creates ripples throughout the university, as administrators question that placement and it is justified).

Further, chaos theory suggests that while patterns exist within the whole, the next particular event cannot be predicted with any accuracy (Gleick, 1987; Stacey, 1991, 1992; Capra, 1983; Prigogine & Stengers, 1984). The initiative has this chaotic character. Complex interactions among many different actors, movement in uncertain directions depend on small differences in initial conditions (new actors involved, new ideas generated, different "voices" heard, grants proposed and received [or not], initiatives begun and followed through-[-or not]). All of this "chaotic" activity suggests that, when viewed as a whole, there is a potentially fundamental shift in the way the work of the university is conceptualized and undertaken being born.

Pulling Together...

The apparent willingness of faculty to share power through these formalized, as well as the informal, mechanisms, however difficult, came about because collaborators kept in mind the higher vision (end goal, see Burns, 1978) rather than their own personal agendas. Another reason was that faculty were hungry for cross-fertilization and communication. They recognized that the nature of problems with which they were dealing needed to be attacked by more than one discipline to be resolved. Through working together participants developed some sense of shared vision, common language, and central purpose and focus that held them together despite the underbounded nature of the work (Gricar & Brown, 1981). This willingness is sustained by the prospect of win/win solutions in which everyone benefits, including the clients, patients, students,

community members (note that each discipline also brought its own language to describe the focus of its disciplinary efforts). Additionally, at least initially, while people were genuinely interested, there was little at stake except for the time faculty committed to discussions. Power sharing also manifested itself in the many dialogues (vs. merely discussions, cf. Senge, 1990) that developed the initiative's focus and activities, as well as in efforts (still nascent) to bring external community representatives in as partners and full collaborators (vs. as research subjects).

The third common factor is a desire among many of participating faculty to change approaches to education, research, and service in the university by linking theory and practice more closely. By engaging each other, students, and community representatives more richly and more fully in dialogue, faculty attempted to enhance learning within and at the boundaries of the many disciplines involved. Particularly, for example, when interdisciplinary (e.g., education and social work) student teams operated in the field, they and their faculty mentors discovered (or invented) wholly new ways of dealing with issues presented by child clients/students. Finally, participants have a deep desire to make a difference (consistent with the university's theme of social justice) for students, professionals, and the community. "Making a difference" occurs in research, writing, and teaching in an "activist" professional agenda that found an articulation in Lerner's (1998 a, b) term "outreach scholarship," where members of the external community are actively involved in developing the research agenda rather than having it imposed upon them.

Fragile and Complex. There is a very real fragility inherent in the collaboration. Combined with embeddedness in a hierarchical and tradition-bound context, fragility creates tension and complexity. Two fundamental shifts in understanding are taking place as the work moves forward. One involves the university's relationship to its external communities, which is evolving towards more of a partnership than the historical "we study you, then move on" stance that has been taken by most university-based

researchers, at least within this initiative. The second shift involves the emergence of multi-disciplinary learning, exhibited in interdisciplinary field placements, courses, seminars, research work, and collaborations with community organizations in the day-to-day activities of the Center.

In this transition, there is a risk that traditional bureaucratic structures, turf domains, and political realities--or ironically, even its own success--will derail the current forward momentum of the initiative. The collaborative effort is, in some respects, similar to the self-organizing systems described by Kauffman (1995). It seems always on the edge of dissolving from order into randomness, chaos, far from equilibrium. Yet the vision and shared values and norms, the leadership of key faculty, the common purpose, and the permeable boundaries provided glue that held the fragile effort together.

Despite the shared vision, however, tough issues of resource distribution, e.g., on allocation of indirect funding from grants (to schools and colleges vs. the center) remain a continual focus and source of controversy. Similar conflicts arise and remain in allocation of credit for interdisciplinary courses. Tenure and promotion standards at the university remain generally untouched (though some individuals involved have, in fact, been promoted, while others have not), and achieving credibility for this type of work remains at best a target. Multi-disciplinary work of this nature is still problematic because publication or research typically has multiple authors, long time frames, and journals are not traditional discipline-based journals. The result is that many of the individuals involved who became involved are already tenured in partial recognition of this fact. Further, as of this writing, the director has announced that he is leaving the university, leaving university funding support and the initiative's future uncertain, ironically, while simultaneously re-galvanizing the grassroots element that had originally sustained the initiative.

As we review the history of this collaboration, it is apparent that several key factors were involved in its development. Understanding what these factors were may

help others undertake similar efforts elsewhere. Additionally, perhaps this understanding can enhance collaboration theory. The first major step--and an on-going one, is a process of "framing" the work of the group.

Content: The Strange Attractor

The very first official meeting of a group of education faculty gathered to discuss "an integrated services model" ended in October 1993 with the following words: "Well, it really is incredible that people from different places and experiences share this same vision." In many ways "this same vision" has served as what chaos theorists would term a "strange attractor" (Gleick, 1987). A strange attractor keeps a chaotic process within boundaries, in fractal structures; the fractal demonstrates a clear overall pattern of behavior even though the next specific event in the process remains unpredictable.

This collaboration resembles a fractal in that respect: the boundaries are uncertain, potentially infinite, and malleable to external conditions. The next event cannot be predicted with any certainty, but the themes and interests draw people together and remain reasonably consistent over time, creating a recognizable pattern. For example, during that first official meeting faculty stated why they were in attendance and what they hoped to accomplish. Table 1 cites particular comments that helped to "frame" the work of the initiative during this initial meeting, and Exhibit 1 lists the vision statement put together four years later. Additionally, in Table 1 the underlined phrases represent core themes that have been sustained throughout the initiative and shape the vision statement that ultimately emerged. These themes, we argue, formed the basis for the strange attractor that drew many faculty members from around the campus into this initiative over time. At the heart of this effort, and largely implicit until fairly recently, is the (long-term) theme of changing the way the university performs its work and develops its primary relationships.

-----Exhibit 1 and Table 1 about here-----

These same themes also held diverse faculty together despite the tugs and pulls of more discipline-based work (see the first column of Exhibit 2 for specific elements that shaped the vision). Notably, these items are fully consistent with the eventual vision statement (Exhibit 1), constructed with the establishment of the center some four years later. Particular themes that consistently arose during this initial meeting and carried forward consistently include: addressing the multiple issues of children in schools, accessing and being people who make a difference, working collaboratively with the community to construct new approaches, linking theory with practice (framed as "having a foot in the real world"), preparing professionals in an integrated way, building community-based partnerships, developing mutual respect.

-----Exhibit 2 about here-----

Struggling to develop a common understanding of the issues that the collaboration would deal with is an on-going process (see below). Early conversations, involving mainly school of education faculty, focused on developing a shared understanding and language about the problems of children in schools and possible ways of approaching the community to proffer assistance, without appearing to be overbearing. The following quotes indicate some of that struggle: "...the issue ... of how the school looks is an important one to be surfacing now because...the emphasis of a family commitment to a school is all about the dialogue and the conversation about how ... things get run. And that process for having the conversation and having multiple points of view and making decisions, making mistakes, but learning from them, and making informed decisions is an important piece.... And...that's how the School of Education can intersect with that conversation, where you practice another body of knowledge, intersecting."

Four years into the initiative, it is clear from the vision statement for the center that this initial vision did provide a kind of glue that held the many disparate perspectives that faculty brought to the initiative together. But there is another perspective on the work, mentioned briefly above, that suggests that a core element of the mission of the

faculty's work is to change the way the university creates and delivers knowledge by working together with its many stakeholders. The core of the center's work, viewed from this alternative perspective, is to develop closer theory-practices linkages by working collaboratively with (not on) external community groups. Faculty in discussing "who are we" and "what are we about" defined the work as changing the way that the university creates and delivers knowledge to key stakeholders.

This broader vision (see Exhibit 3) emerged in a research seminar attended by faculty in the fourth year of collaboration; it represents a "re"-vision of the initiative's work. The "re"-vision potentially opens up dialogue about the way in which the university's (and faculty's) work is conducted to many potential actors across the university (or threatens administrators who wish to sustain the status quo). This broadened audience includes faculty already involved with the work of the new center, as well as faculty who are interested in definitions of community different from "children, families, and communities." Such communities as the business community, the scientific or health care community, legal, advocacy, or judicial community, school communities, the faith communities, and so on can potentially become involved in the achievement of this broader mission. From this point of view the content, process, structure, outcomes relationships are visualized as expanding circles of interest and impact in Figure 2, entitled "Collaborating to Change the University and Its Stakeholder Relationships."

-----Figure 2 about here-----

Process: It's the Journey that Matters

One reason that collaborations develop at all is the nature of the problems with which they attempt to contend and the frustration of those who are attempting, from a single disciplinary perspective, to tackle such problems. Frequently, such real-world problems as school reform, children in poverty, or children in legal difficulty, are "messes" (Ackoff, 1976), or "wicked problems" (King & Acklin, 1995). Wicked

problems are those problems or issues that are unlikely to be solved in the near term, for which solutions require actions by multiple interdependent agents to begin tackling them effectively (Gray, 1985; Waddock, 1989, 1998) because actors are interdependent for resolution of the problem.

Given the interdependency surrounding wicked problems, the time frame for resolving them, and the complexity inherent to their resolution, there is a sense in which undertaking a collaboration is more like taking a trip around the world than visiting Paris or going to a resort. The point of the trip around the world has as much to do with the journey itself, including the short stopovers in many places along the way, as it has to do with reaching any specific end point and resting there. Each stop (or, in the case of collaboration, achievement) *and* the journey itself are inherent to the success of the effort. Both the results and the processes are necessary. What this journey metaphor suggests is that in practice, underpinning any successful collaboration are several critical processes (akin to the journey) that ultimately make the collaboration effective (Waddock, 1989), i.e., making the journey (process of collaboration) as enjoyable as the places visited (outcomes).

Processes in collaboration are iterative, on-going, and constant. Important processes revolve around coalition building and issue crystallization, resulting in an on-going formulation and reformulation of purpose (see Waddock, 1989, for this framework). For example, we can look at the process of issue crystallization in this collaboration as being largely encompassed by the development of a shared vision among participants, which has been discussed above. As noted above, we can define the crystallized issue in this case as twofold. First is helping to improve the lives of children, youth and family, which can be accomplished by, second, changing the way the university conducts its work and relationships within and without its communities through multi-disciplinary education and scholarship.

That very process of crystallization, however, iterates and reiterates as new partners join in collaboration and their inputs reshape the vision, work, and contact with the community. Partners join in collaboration because they believe in the importance or salience of the issue, understood their interdependence around it, and perceive that benefits might derive from working together on it. As assumptions about the way the university works with its external community(ies) became clearer, the need for a new way of constructing those relationships, more as equal partners and as two way-relationships than universities have historically assumed, is made obvious.

Making sure that key individual and organizational stakeholders are included in the process, as well as trust building and education about each other and the issue(s) are critical to coalition building. All of these processes are found in this collaboration, which expanded quickly from the purview of the school of education to encompass all of the university's professional schools as well as arts and sciences at the graduate and undergraduate schools (see Figure 1). Bringing external community actors to the table as partners is also a clear agenda item, one not yet fully accomplished. Further, collaborators need to learn each other's languages and perspectives (i.e., become educated about each other), particularly if new courses are to be developed, if interdisciplinary teams of students are to be placed in the field, or if joint research initiatives and writing is to be accomplished. All of this is embedded in a process of trust building so partners can see "what's in it for them."

-----Place Figure 1 about here-----

But these processes alone, while necessary, are insufficient for coalition building of the sort envisioned in this collaboration. We also observe the need for building alliances and relationships over time, for using dialogue as a way of sharing and evolving information and ideas (as opposed simply to "discussion," which as Senge [1990] points out has the same roots as concussion and percussion). Dialogue, it turns out, requires real listening skills, clarification of assumptions, breaking down of stereotypes (even where

status, pay, and disciplinary differences continue), and power sharing, including relative equity of inputs, resource sharing, and outcomes for participants. The latter takes shape in the structures that have been developed to govern this initiative.

Faculty and administrators recognize the long-term nature of the relationships being built and work being done. We have also learned by observing the ebbs and flows of this collaboration that leadership emerges from different individuals over time, depending on the needs and talents required for a particular situation. Finally, the collaboration has extraordinarily flexible boundaries, bringing different people in depending on their interests and the particular topic, issue, or structure at hand, albeit that the boundaries became less permeable with the institutionalization of the Center.

Purpose formulation occurred as specific initiatives were identified and embarked upon. For example, a seminal change occurred when involved faculty received a grant that required the joint placement of student teams in schools. For the first time, social work and education students began working together in field settings, where it became clear that one of the major purposes of the initiative was to develop university-school partnerships. Faculty reshaped clinical placements for professional students to provide them with an integrated perspective that evolved both from more integrated coursework and also from students' work together in the field, supervised by faculty from more than one discipline.

Purposes are best demonstrated in the fourth column of Exhibit 2, labeled "major outcomes," which details the types of outcomes that collaborators began to envision. Among these are joint grants (as noted, some housed in the community), joint research and publications, courses, seminars, and other specific outcomes, such as major public presentations that impact policy. By assessing the specifics of these outcomes, the enacted purposes of the collaboration--the partnership--are visible. With the processes used to achieve them, shifts in the way the work of the university--and external

communities--gets done begin to occur. Process and outcome are thus integrally related because part of the desired outcome is, quite literally, to change processes.

Structure and Relationships: The Shape of Collaboration

Collaborations such as this one have permeable boundaries, as noted above. Initially, the efforts were relatively unstructured and ill-shaped, but over time as the effort evolved, more institutionalization occurred and identifiable structures emerged. A sketch of this process is provided below.

"Confusion" characterized the start-up of this initiative, partially because of the inherent lack of boundaries of the activities, at least as they might have been viewed by outsiders (internally, the common vision held participants together). Early on, for obvious reasons, the effort was relatively unstructured, existing largely in temporary "forums." These forums were meetings called by various groups to try to develop ways of thinking, researching, working, and teaching together, or simply to share ideas and see what might develop.

When initial grants were received and some funding was available, these forums evolved into regular meetings, each serving slightly different purposes, but overlapping to some extent in their participants, focus of dialogue, and hoped-for results. Among these were so-called pizza lunches, which advanced the actual collaborative initiatives by focusing on grant and research development, course development, field placements, and similar discussions. Another forum called brown bag lunches attracted more doctoral and masters' students as well as faculty and served as a forum for presentations by individuals actually doing community-based and related work. A third, more intellectually oriented, faculty-centered, forum took place at the law school, creating a rubric "[Location name] Seminars." This latter forum implicitly at first (and now explicitly) serves to advance common understanding of the intellectual underpinnings of the nature of the work being done. In its current version, it is also the place where community representatives are specifically drawn into the scholarly work.

The prospect of establishing the center also brought with it not only the potential for formalized leadership in the person of the director, but also the risk that the grassroots energy that had sustained the initiative would be lost, which has happened to some extent. Prior to the director's coming on board, participants in the effort, guided by school of education faculty leaders, began thinking about ways of formalizing the structure, yet retaining shared power and decision making capacity.

In light of the fact that the university itself is highly centralized in its decision making, this step necessitated developing a balance between oversight by top administrators and input by grassroots faculty, and finding a space for community representatives as well. The working group of faculty, led by school of education faculty, arranged a meeting, which proved seminal, with the deans of all of the professional schools and the graduate school of arts and sciences to share their vision and ideas, and attempt to gain support. Support from the deans combined with the willingness of the academic vice president to establish a center and recruit the director advanced the formalization process.

Over the spring and summer prior to the director's arrival, faculty generated ideas about how the new center should be structured to sustain the grassroots involvement of faculty from all across the campus, while providing university oversight and an appropriate structure. Three institutional structures developed, each serving different roles (see Figure 1). A Dean's Advisory Committee (DAC) was created, consisting of the deans from all of the schools (adding the undergraduate arts and sciences dean as well) to be responsible for strategic oversight and direction for the new center. Importantly, an operations committee, called the Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC), with representation from each of the schools, was created to carry out the work on a day-to day basis. When the director arrived, he negotiated for the third structure of outside visitors, who would serve on a Visiting Committee, as outside advisors to guide the development of the center's work.

By the time the center opened four years into the work, more formalized structures, as well as some rationalization of the different forums, which were multiple and confusing, seemed appropriate. Pizza lunches and brown bag lunches were collapsed together into "bagel breakfasts," which were now deliberately focused on internal information sharing across schools and disciplines. The seminars held at the law school remained as the central focal point for the intellectual advancement of the work being done, now formalized into a regular series with presenters from across the university sharing their ideas and work. Notably, this seminar series also resulted in the development of an edited research volume synthesizing much of the work and thinking to date. Many faculty members involved in the effort, as well as individuals outside the university, are contributing to this book. The Center negotiated with the University to use an accounting system for grants that did not penalize the Schools or Departments that constituted the primary affiliation of the faculty.

In light of the need for shared power and decision making authority to sustain grassroots involvement, it quickly became clear once the center was established that something needed to be done to avoid too much centralization of the grassroots efforts at the heart of the work. Led by a law school professor, specific initiatives were advanced to devolve some of the responsibilities for carrying out the work to faculty, rather than allowing all of it to become centralized (for example, three individuals assumed responsibility for the bagel breakfasts, and two for the law school seminars). The FAC itself, led by the director, became deeply involved in forwarding a number of initiatives, including grant applications, public seminars and workshops, publicity, information gathering and dissemination, and research and scholarship related to the initiatives. More recently, with the establishment of the center, the rubrics shifted to that of the center and its director.

Difficult issues remain to be resolved. Sustaining the grassroots moment has already been identified as problematic with the institutionalization caused by the establishment of the center. Differences in power, status, and rewards (particularly, pay) among faculty in the various schools and colleges are becoming more noticeable. As leadership begins to consolidate into the hands of the most active faculty, it is likely that significant power struggles will evolve. With the director's departure, the whole enterprise is now entering a risky stage, one that could be characterized as truly at the "edge of chaos," in that the enterprise will either survive in new form or dissolve. Despite this risk, there is a significant belief that the "work" of community collaboration and multi-disciplinary understanding will survive. Finally, as noted above, the reward system in the university remains largely untouched as yet, and the multi-disciplinary nature of the work, long-time frames for research and publication, and status of the work within the university has yet to be substantially tested.

Perhaps most importantly, while the external community has been actively and mutually involved in numerous on-going projects, they are still vastly underrepresented in the university-based structures created to oversee the collaboration's activities. So, much remains to be done, though much progress has been made. As many participants would observe, the journey has only just begun.

Table 1: Initial Framing of the Purposes of the "Integrated Services Model"

"How to work within the large framework of schools and education to address the multiple issues kids bring to school."

"How can we, as a society, figure out ways to deliver services to kids in schools...to address the multiple issues they have."

"...access the kinds of people who could make a difference..." for kids in school.

"Little guys, little girls, smoking, having sex, running away from home, and the parents are going wild. ...I think we ought to do something, but I don't know what we are going to do."

"I come ...from working more with communities and very much oriented to collaborating with indigenous leaders..., that is natural leaders, and looking for ways of resourcing mutually towards constructing new ways of knowing about kids and what their needs are and how schools can better address those needs. So the idea of integrating educational with community resources is extraordinarily appealing to me. ..."

Is it "humanly possible to bring to bring up a generation of children...without violence and not cheated out of their birthright so they have the fullest possible extent of their childhood."

"I need to a time in the real world. I think as we struggle in our own teaching and theory--and research building, we need to have a foot in reality."

"I think the work we can do here to think about how to prepare professionals to work in an integrated way with each others--professionals from different disciplines--has an enormous implications. ...No one discipline can solve these problems."

"My vision of a integrated services model is one that brings the home and community together. We need to build those home/school/community relationships on the basis of mutual respect, and on a joint commitment of goals, values, and behaviors that we can all agree upon."

This model "has to do with kids faces and teachers faces and making a difference."

"We need to have respect for each other."

[We need] "input from the community. ...if we really mean integration, working hand in hand, respecting each other."

"...school is the context that has the most potential for bringing together a lot of different kinds of resources to solve the problems of children and families."

Table 2: Goals Identified at First Integrated Services Model Meeting

"...one thing the school can do is think about the different ways in which we could address this question, integrating theory and practice, with a number of pieces."

"One clearly is implementation or doing and being out there in the world of action and trying some of our hypotheses and trying to figure out better ways by listening to the people who are out there on the front lines."

"It's clearly a case of self and other for all of us...We're in it a little bit for ourselves and a little bit for the other. What we try to do is keep a balance, but all of us are here because we have some personal reason and commitment. On the other hand, the needs out there are tremendous, so we're trying to balance both those things."

"Go back and see what exists in the literature, ...learn about what is in Boston and who wants to work with us...and ...how can we bring the expertise from the community to this discussion from the beginning, so that we can build, whatever it is to be, together."

"There's another level of learning...and that's learning around the table." ..."In addition to asking people what they are doing in the schools, also what they are doing in the community... ."

"...most of what has been going on that makes a difference has been governmental policy. ...We need to pay attention to the broadening relationships and work with committees that thoroughly understand the change in families since the 1950s. We need to understanding what happens nationally and policies."

"Maybe we need to forge a position paper that says who is going to save and advocate for children at a time when individual advocacy is lacking." ..."So it seems that what you're both saying is that ...our group needs some policy ramifications and ...some political activity component to it."

"We have to do more than just going to the schools. ...we have to get involved with greater understanding of the policy and issues that shape these things and be in on it somehow."

"I think that we will have to be there but also need to struggle with models of constructing knowledge that will influence policy. ...So how do we build some connection from the base so that when we do go to Washington and give testimony, we really have knowledge constructed from an integration?"

Exhibit 1.
Vision and Mission of the Center

Vision

The Center ... will improve the lives of children, youths, and families--leading ultimately to stronger, healthier and more economically sound communities.

Mission

The Center will integrate the resources of ... with the health-care, social-service, economic-development and educational agencies within the community. The Center will employ a collaborative work style known as "outreach scholarship." [University] professors and students will work with community leaders to determine community needs. Participants will mutually develop short- and long-term strategies to effect positive change. This two-way relationship will ensure that needs are real, solutions are feasible and measurable, and long-term results are sustainable.

Exhibit 2. Content, Processes, Structures, Outcomes in the Integrated Services Collaboration

Content:	Key Processes	Major Structures	Major Outcomes
Shared Vision Improving the lives of children, youth, and families in healthy communities	Relationship building internal /external	Institutionalize the initiative through the development of a Center that brings multiple disciplines together	Grants placements to place interdisciplinary teams in schools and agencies
Integrating theory and practice	Trust building internal/external	Visiting Committee (powerful outsiders to advise the center)	Grants for research with communities, agencies, and schools
Develop models of integrated services to address multiple needs of children, family, and communities	Dialogue across disciplines internally and with community members externally	Dean's Advisory Committee (deans of all schools and colleges)	Research papers, presentations, books, and other scholarship
Structure strong two-way university-community relationships and working partnerships	Mutual respect	Faculty Advisory Committee (operational responsibilities)	Interdisciplinary courses and other teaching/learning experiences
Constructing new ways of knowing and sharing research and scholarship	Clarify assumptions	"Bagel Breakfasts" for information sharing internally	Lists of: interested faculty, related programs and courses, research and publications, on-going projects
Work with (not on) the world of practice	Power sharing (leave power "hats" at the door)	"[Law School] Seminars" for knowledge, research sharing and development internally and externally	Work in schools and with agencies
Change the way professionals are educated and deliver services	Sharing knowledge and information across disciplines (learning around the table) and with community members		Brochures
Create a paradigm shift based on systems perspectives	Recognize long-term nature of relationship building, dialogic processes, and outcome generation		Seminars and workshops
Concept of outreach scholarship	Breaking down stereotypes/mental models (disciplinary and community boundaries)		White paper series
	Generating equity of status, inputs, resources, and outcome among participants		Book series
	Multiple sources of leadership		Journal editorship
	Flexible boundaries		Grant applications
			Publicity

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