



BROWN



Community Engaged Scholarship and Action:

A New Plan for the Swearer Center for Public Service



Contents

- 3 Note from the Director**
- 4 Executive Summary**
- 6 The Swearer Center Today**
 - Our Values and Commitments
 - Our Strategic Goals
- 10 Transforming the Brown Student Experience**
 - Curriculum
 - Co-Curriculum
 - Community Engagement Opportunities
 - Integrated Student Learning
 - Diversity and Inclusion
- 26 Transforming Brown's Impact**
- 30 Integrating Academic Excellence**
 - The Faculty
 - The University
 - The Higher Education Field
- 36 Strengthening Engagement Infrastructure**
 - Investing in Human and Financial Resources
 - Enhancing Transparency, Accountability, and Inclusion
 - Realigning the Center's Identity
- 41 Conclusion**
- 42 Appendix A: Strategic Planning Process**
- 44 Appendix B: From Public Service to Engaged Scholarship**
- 45 Notes and Bibliography**

Consistent with our mission to serve “the community, the nation, and the world,” learning that connects academic and real-world experiences is central to the undergraduate experience at Brown. As an established leader in this area, Brown is in a position to define the “second wave” of integrative approaches to engaged learning.

President Christina Paxson
“Building on Distinction: A New Plan for Brown”

From the Swearer Center Director

We live in a rapidly changing world, full of new and long-standing, but newly urgent, challenges. From climate change to resource scarcity, from poverty to intractable disease, the challenges we face require innovations and interventions on a pace and scale we have never seen before. In our age, these issues are no longer limited to the realm of experts, they defy narrow disciplinary redress, and they no longer respect political boundaries. What once was local is now global and global is now local. What once was merely the curious subject of academic study is now the urgent cause of the community practitioner. The co-creation of knowledge, the joining of forces between practitioner and academic in civic problem solving, may be our best hope.

How can we begin to respond to these challenges? What civic responsibility do we have as scholars, students, and community members to tackle these problems? How do we build the democratic practices, between scholars and practitioners, and among all community members, that we will be needed to navigate this world? What relevance does higher education have in this age? The stakes are high and the status quo is not acceptable — for the individuals and places affected by these issues, and for higher education as a field, if we do not engage.

The challenges we face are central to an active and dynamic conversation at Brown. We have always believed that the University has an obligation to prepare ethical, effective, and engaged community members. President Paxson has clearly defined the need— and the opportunity— for Brown to assert and build on its leadership in this area in the University's own strategic plan, and the culture and mission of the Swearer Center uniquely align with the view of the university as an active and important contributor to local and global solutions. Our students have never been content as knowledge creators in a laboratory or a library or to limit their learning to the classroom. Brown students are actively engaged in the world; indeed, our students' passion for social change and innovation is one of the University's hallmarks.

Higher education has a vital role to play by facilitating student, faculty, and community learning about the necessity of diversity, inclusion, collaboration, and democratic practice for solving our most urgent problems. By combining rigorous scholarship with impact-focused community engagement, universities can advance both student development goals and their own civic and institutional contributions to the world. Through community-engaged scholarship, the Swearer Center seeks to address these complex social challenges locally and globally with partnerships between faculty, students, and stakeholders outside of the academy.

As community-engaged scholars, students and faculty bring their knowledge and expertise to bear on real-world problems and do so in collaboration with community practitioners who contribute their own forms of knowledge and wisdom to that inquiry. At Brown, the Swearer Center is the hub of this collaborative work. As we stand on the threshold of a new era, we are poised to move toward transformative impact, and affect a culture shift that establishes Brown as an educational leader nationally and globally in the field of community-engaged scholarship. To these ends, this strategic plan, developed through close consultation and the invaluable assistance of a wide variety of our constituents and stakeholders, reflects an ambitious agenda for the Swearer Center and community-engaged scholarship at Brown.

We're ready to leap into a new era, and hope you'll join us for the exciting journey ahead.



**Mathew
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Associate Dean
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Executive Summary

This strategic plan represents many months of consultations, meetings, drafting sessions, and redrafting. (See Appendix A: *Strategic Planning Process*.) From that iterative process emerged the strategies herein.

The core of our plan is a new integrative model of engaged education and a new model of partnership with communities. The success of these two core strategies requires a focus on integrating academic excellence and strengthening our engagement infrastructure. These four strategies frame our plan.

Within each of the four strategies, we provide a detailed explanation of our rationale and a description of the way forward, followed by specific steps to move the plan forward. Those steps flow from recommendations that informed the development of these strategies as follows:

Transforming the Brown Student Experience

Curriculum

- Scale and refocus the Engaged Scholars Program.
- Support community-engaged course development and the creation of an engaged course designation, and train and support community-engaged undergraduate teaching assistants.
- Support graduate students working on engaged research and teaching initiatives and other campus partners working on engaged curricular innovations.
- Track and evaluate learning and teaching outcomes.

Co-Curriculum

- Grow co-curricular capacity and expertise among students, partners, and staff.
- Identify key competencies and design workshops around teaching those competencies.
- Develop and promote co-curricular pathways and systems that promote best practices.

Community Engagement Opportunities

- Diversify engagement opportunities by approach, program, and topic area.
- Expand engagement opportunities (program calendar, geography, type of students served).
- Institutionalize the Social Innovation Initiative.

Integrated Student Learning

- Create a robust system for student advising and mentoring.
- Design and promote multiple entry points for students.
- Develop a robust cohort of student leaders.

Diversity and Inclusion

- Develop a Diversity Action Plan for the Center.
- Engage the campus with communities in conversations about diversity and inclusion.
- Invest in diversifying staff, participating students, partnerships and in the cross-cultural competency of all stakeholders.

Transforming Brown's Impact

- Build an ecosystem approach to community partnerships through increasing our capacity for effective community collaboration that values community knowledge and community voice.
- Emphasize diversity, inclusion, power, and privilege and hold ourselves accountable.
- Create value with and for partners including developing a community-based research capacity.

Integrating Academic Excellence

- Build a community of engaged scholar faculty.
- Support, cultivate, and recognize excellence in community-engaged scholarship.
- Advocate for and contribute to a University plan for engaged scholarship.
- Explore and establish new partnerships with campus units.
- Develop and implement new platforms and policies for engagement.
- Influence the field through hosting and attend regular convening; creating and disseminating learning; and engaging thought leaders in the field.

Strengthening Engagement Infrastructure

Investing in Human and Financial Resources

- Invest in our staff.
- Mobilize alumni.
- Attract, secure, and successfully steward donors and funders.
- Achieve and maintain excellence in our fiscal practices and procedures.

Enhancing Transparency, Accountability and Inclusion

- Rigorously assess our work.
- Communicate effectively and regularly.
- Enhance stakeholder inclusion and participation.

Realigning the Center's Identity

The Swearer Center Today

In 1986, Brown President Howard Swearer was at the forefront of a revolution in higher education when he founded one of the first public service centers in the nation, now named for him — the Swearer Center for Public Service. President Swearer had the foresight to locate the new center within the Dean of the College's office — at the heart of the undergraduate curriculum. He strongly believed, as President Christina Paxson does today, that public service and experiential learning are essential components of Brown's educational mission. (See Appendix B: *From Public Service to Engaged Scholarship*.)

Today, the Swearer Center works with more than 1,500 Brown students, through and with 100+ community partners (half of whom are located in the greater Providence area). In our 30-year history, we have developed and nurtured many deep — and deeply rewarding — relationships with individuals and organizations in Providence that continue to inspire us and our work. Over the past eight years, backed by a strategic commitment from the University and catalytic support from Brown alumni and parents, the Swearer Center has renewed President Swearer's legacy with the development, launch, and institutionalization of three major initiatives that have advanced community-engaged learning at Brown.



The Engaged Scholars Program

Launched in spring 2015, the Engaged Scholars Program (ESP) is a multi-year undergraduate program of study, grounded in the disciplinary concentrations, that creates educational pathways connecting academic theory and real world practice. Through community-engaged coursework, internships, and integrative capstone projects, ESP students gain hands-on experience working with community partners — locally and in settings across the nation and globe — to address important social challenges.

TRI-Lab for Teaching, Research, and Impact

The TRI-Lab for Teaching, Research, and Impact piloted in 2013. TRI-Lab was a cross-disciplinary and immersive learning lab in which students, faculty, and community practitioners learn and collaborate on projects and research that address pressing and complex social issues in Providence and Rhode Island.

Social Innovation Initiative

The Social Innovation Initiative (SII) was launched in 2007. SII promotes an open culture of collaborative learning and community impact with programming focused in four key areas: funding, intensive skills training, and advising needed to build powerful ventures; courses that help students develop a dynamic understanding of innovation; student groups dedicated to social innovation; and connections to professional experiences, fellowships, and funding opportunities.

Community Partnerships

These initiatives expanded upon the foundation and values of the Swearer Center's carefully cultivated and long-running Community Partnerships. Today, these partnerships engage more than 600 Brown students annually in work with a range of local community agencies, advancing both Brown student learning and meaningful community impact.

Over the past three years, Brown has been in a period of intense and exciting campus-wide planning. *Building on Distinction*, the university's strategic plan, was released in October 2013, and the operational plan behind it in September 2015. Both prominently feature engaged scholarship and social innovation as university priorities and speak directly to the centrality of the Swearer Center in advancing this agenda. The University also released a plan for diversity and inclusion at Brown; the goals, strategies, and underpinning values expressed in the plan are echoed in active conversations at the Center, and come at a time when the Center is re-dedicating itself to diversity, equity, justice, and inclusion in all that we do. Brown's latest capital campaign — Brown Together — has also launched during this period and includes the Swearer Center. Strategic fundraising and significant new resources will be necessary to make this ambitious and innovative plan a reality. Notably, Brown's peer institutions — Cornell, Duke, Harvard — have publicly committed significant new resources to similar efforts.

Our Strategic Goals

Transform the Brown Student Experience

We will work to transform Brown’s ability to educate students “for lives of effective action” by providing new and deeper experiential opportunities for Brown students to develop the knowledge and competencies for active engagement in their communities, the nation, and the world.

Transform Brown’s Impact in the World

We will work to transform Brown’s impact through reciprocal community partnerships for community-engaged scholarship and action. We will respond to collaboratively defined pressing social needs, engage community members as full partners, and produce significant and measurable public benefits.

Integrate Academic Excellence

We will work to integrate academic excellence in all we do. We will engage and partner with our faculty and administrative colleagues to encourage and support student integration of their academic, co-curricular, and experiential pathways. We will nurture a university culture of deep, pervasive and integrated¹ community-engaged scholarship and action that makes Brown a national and global thought leader, innovator, and convener in engaged higher education.

Strengthen Community Engagement Infrastructure

We will strengthen our infrastructure to support impact-driven community capacity and innovation, support more students engaging more deeply, and support community engaged curriculum and faculty research. We will also develop clear and transparent communication strategies with the University and our stakeholders that regularly articulate our value.

Our Guiding Values and Commitments

Ethical and Engaged Student Leadership

We are committed to educating the whole student, listening carefully to students' voices, and respecting students' agency as learners, change-makers, and leaders. We will create inclusive opportunities and pathways for students to build effective community-based teams, coordinate community-engaged projects, and lead peers into community-engaged commitments.

Reciprocity and Respect

We are committed to long-term reciprocal community relationships built on respect and collaboration in teaching and learning, in the co-creation of knowledge, and in the achievement of impact. We will create structural mechanisms that facilitate community agency and community voice, and that better facilitate University responsiveness and responsibility to community.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

We are committed to active and equitable inclusion of diverse stakeholders, perspectives, identities, histories, and ways of knowing. We will critically examine the roles that power and privilege continue to play in community engagement relationships and particularly in the relationship between the University and the greater Providence community.

Social Justice

We are committed to building peaceful, equitable, and just communities through systematic analyses and collective action to address challenges faced by communities. We will build relationships and strategies that connect University human, intellectual, and financial resources to systemic analysis and collective action for social justice.

Intellectual Rigor

We are committed to academic rigor as a critical component of a Brown education and of being civically generative community members. We will build a culture and mechanisms of transparency and accountability, measurement and evaluation, and evidence-based and critical reflective practices into all that we do.

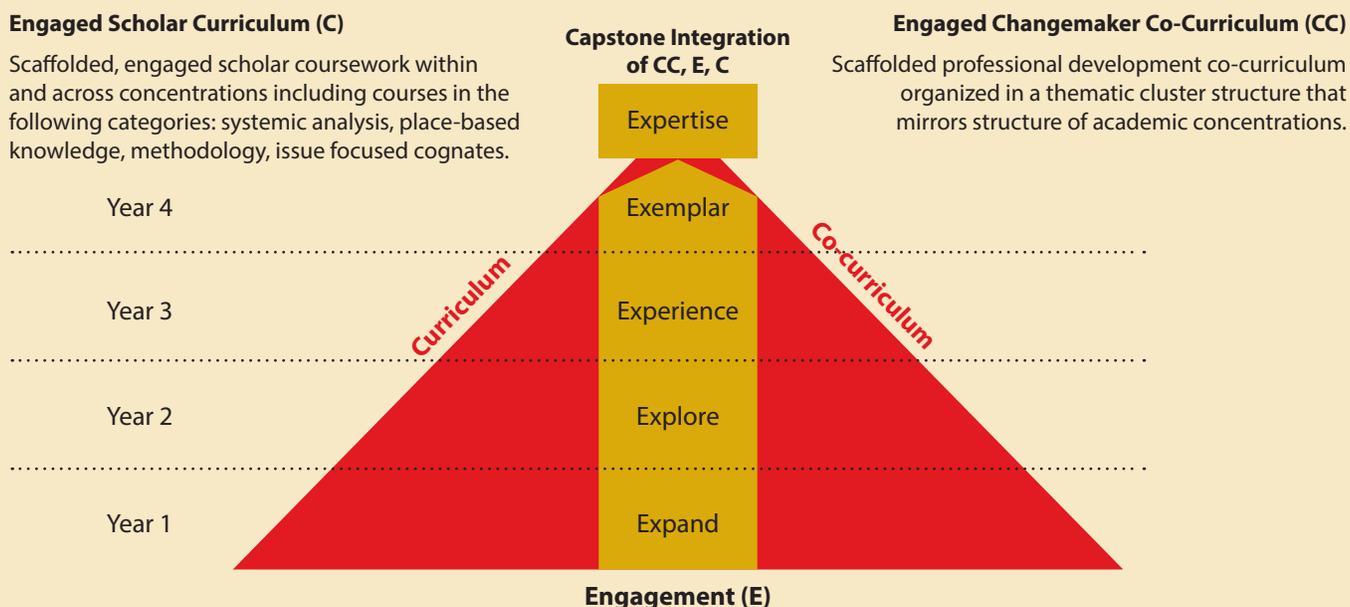
Transforming the Brown Student Experience

Brown has the opportunity to make community-engaged learning pervasive and deep.¹ Our ambitious engaged learning model builds on the strength and tradition of the Open Curriculum and the lessons we have learned from our Community Partnerships, the Social Innovation Initiative, and TRI-Lab to deepen student learning through community engaged scholarship, action, and reflection. We will adapt, replicate, and scale our high-touch, high-impact educational model to give Brown students the transferable skills and knowledge to help create peaceful, just, and equitable societies.

The Swearer Center's innovative integrated engagement model strengthens and develops three mutually reinforcing educational pathways, each of which is a proven high-impact teaching and learning approach.² Integrating them in the model magnifies their individual impact (see Figure 1 below). The three pathways are:

- **Curriculum:** Scaffolded, intentionally designed, and community-engaged courses aligned to best practices in the field; from entry level to advanced;
- **Co-Curriculum:** Sequential, competency-based trainings and intensive advising and mentoring for students aligned to clearly articulated learning goals and rigorous assessment of these outcomes; and
- **Engagement Opportunities:** Long-term, developmentally appropriate experiential opportunities that enhance the leadership and collaborative competence of students and add operational capacity to community-based partner agencies.

Figure 1: Integrated Community Engagement Model



Scaffolded, developmental, long-term, intensive community engagement that builds capacity for partners.

It is essential to expand the opportunities for all students, regardless of financial need, to participate in Center programs. Doing so is both a moral imperative for Brown and one demonstrably effective way to increase the success of students from historically underserved groups.³

Curriculum

Brown's strategic plan calls for a renewed emphasis on, and expanded investments in, engaged learning and course offerings that advance Brown's liberal learning goals. Central to this effort is the expansion of and support for the engaged curriculum. Research in the field demonstrates that strong academic contextualization of community engagement magnifies both student learning gains and positive community impact.⁴

Community-engaged courses help students connect their academic pursuits with real-world learning experiences, reducing what can sometimes feel like a conflict between the two and enabling them to transfer and generalize their learning to contexts beyond the classroom. Thus, a community-engaged curriculum can create high-impact learning experiences for students as they work to understand and address major community challenges and produce tangible public benefits.

The community-engaged curriculum at Brown includes two elements. First, Swearer Center staff work with faculty and departments to design and deliver **community-engaged courses** across the Brown curriculum. Most often, we assist Brown faculty in making new and redesigning existing courses. Swearer Center staff also regularly design and deliver our own interdisciplinary community-engaged courses as part of the Swearer Center's ongoing intellectual contributions to Brown.⁵ Second, we work with academic departments to build **community-engaged concentrations** and assist in building the community partnerships and advising structures needed to support concentrators interested in participating in the Engaged Scholars Program.

Community-Engaged Courses

Community-engaged courses integrate the application of academic knowledge to directly impact a public good within the context of a specific community, and with community stakeholders as the partners. Community-engaged courses fall into one of the following four types.

- 1. Place-based** courses have a significant focus on place-based knowledge and challenge students to systemically analyze societal problems and challenges faced by communities. By "place," we mean a specific delimited location — virtual or physical — that a group of people identify as a community to which they belong.
- 2. Issue-based** courses have a significant focus on issue-based knowledge (i.e. education, health, climate, etc.) and engage students in examining the specific challenges faced by people and communities dealing with the particular issue.

3. Methods of Community Inquiry and Innovation courses initiate students into the theory and practice of disciplinary and interdisciplinary research methods appropriate to understanding and analyzing societal problems and community challenges. A particular focus of these courses is on the role of community members as collaborators and on the ethics of research methods.

4. Project/Partnership-based courses integrate a community partner/project deeply into the course pedagogy and content. These courses build on introductory and methods courses and ideally involve longer-term community partnerships developed by departments, faculty members, or the Swearer Center. Capstone courses (for seniors) that feature advanced investigations of particular community/social issues in collaboration with partner organizations are frequently included here.

The community engagement will vary from course to course. Some examples of course-based community engagement strategies include:

- Case studies investigating local communities, organizations, or challenges;
- Community practitioner speakers or panels representing relevant community knowledge;
- Site visits to organizations, neighborhoods, project events, and exhibits;
- Community-focused investigations involving field assignments;
- Experiential learning opportunities (e.g. practicums, apprenticeships, internships);
- Team-based research projects developed in partnership with community organizations; and
- Reflective practices aimed at exploring: students' positionality and agency in community; gaps between theory and practice; the limits of specific disciplinary practices; or specific modes and strategies of social change.

Staff of the Swearer Center also develop courses that flow directly from our fields of expertise and align with our experiential programming. Currently, Swearer Center staff members have designed and teach courses for the Engaged Scholars Program and Social Innovation Initiative, as well as topical courses on important social change strategies and social justice issues. Over the past 3 years, the Center has created, modified, or supported the development of more than 30 community-engaged courses in 11 departments. We will continue to catalyze and accelerate the development of a body of courses that are of the highest quality, model best practices in the field, and expand the pedagogy of community-engaged scholarship in higher education.

Community-Engaged Concentrations

As one facet of the Engaged Scholars Program, twelve departments will offer community-engaged concentrations in 2016-17. Each department involved has developed and articulated a specific set of four requirements that form a community-engaged pathway through the discipline and concentration:

- 1. Concentration Requirements:** In addition to foundational concentration requirements, departments define a discipline-specific curricular pathway, within which students are required to take courses (as defined by participating departments) that may include introductory, theory/methods courses, and/or other courses with a community-engaged component.
- 2. Seminar and Programming:** Students participate in programming and activities with the cohort of other Engaged Scholars, centered on a required interdisciplinary reflection seminar.

3. **Practicum:** Students must undertake significant experiential work with community and other non-university stakeholders - significant in both intensity (hours per week in meaningful, challenging work) and duration (number of weeks) - addressing a community challenge.
4. **Capstone:** Students will complete a culminating community-engaged capstone course, project, or thesis in which they demonstrate successful interdisciplinary and experiential integration and application of learning.

One example of a community-engaged concentration is the Modes of Social Change track within the Public Policy concentration. Working in close partnership with the Taubman Center, the Swearer Center helped design a pathway through the policy curriculum that equips students to understand and engage with complex societal challenges. Modeled after the design of independent concentrations in social innovation, the track gives students a rigorous grounding in contextual and historical knowledge, analytical skills, and methodological tools. Students in this track also explore social issues and apply what they've learned in the classroom through electives, practicum experiences, and capstone projects.

What's Next?

To continue to support the growth and development of the community-engaged curriculum, we will:

Scale and Refocus the *Community Engaged Scholars Program*

In ESP's first year, more than 50 students — or approximately 25% of all concentrators seeking to study in the five pilot departments and programs — were admitted into the program. In the program's second year, twelve departments and concentrations (including Independent Concentrations) are participating. With the addition of these new departments, we will have a total of 110 students in the program in the 2016-2017 academic year. We anticipate that within four years — by 2020 — we will be able to scale up the program dramatically and that there will be:

- at least 40 concentrations offering Engaged Scholar tracks;
- at least 300 undergraduate students participating in the Engaged Scholars Program;
- official university recognition — such as a transcript designation or transcript comment — that marks students' successful completion of this distinctive and rigorous course of study; and
- at least 1000 students enrolled in community-engaged courses offered across the curriculum (whether or not they are formal participants in ESP).

Given the many forms of engaged scholarship at Brown and the many centers where this type of work is flourishing (e.g., the new Center for Entrepreneurship, the John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage), we believe it is increasingly important to make clear the distinctiveness of the Swearer Center's distinctive brand of engaged scholarship. Our approach puts a special emphasis on community; indeed, community is at the very heart of our engagement and values. In order to differentiate our offerings and clarify our approach, we will rename the Engaged Scholars Program as the "Community Engaged Scholars Program" (CESP).

Support Community-Engaged Course Development and Designation

While there are already some community-engaged courses at Brown, there is demand from faculty in pilot and other interested departments to create new courses or modify existing ones to more fully integrate the principles and practice of engagement into their curricular offerings. With competitive course development grants, professional development workshops for faculty, promotion of best practices, and assistance brokering course-specific community partnerships, the Swearer Center will grow the base of community-engaged courses at Brown. These courses are not simple to teach or manage, and we will invest heavily in ensuring that faculty members are well-supported in the design and delivery of a rigorous and positive learning experience for students that does not negatively impact the communities involved. As a Center, we will continue to develop new courses that align directly with our programs and initiatives and contribute to the university's mission and development of our field.

We will also propose a community-engaged course designator that will provide guidance for Brown faculty seeking to develop such courses; enable students to more easily identify and register for engaged courses; and facilitate the tracking, evaluation, and ongoing improvement of the engaged curriculum. We will work closely with the College Curriculum Committee to review and support new engaged course proposals.

Train and Support Community-Engaged Undergraduate Teaching Assistants

Community-engaged courses are more complex and time-intensive than regular academic courses. Faculty members must cultivate and steward often complicated community partnerships, and structure and supervise students' community engagement activities to manage risks (to the students and community) and ensure a positive, valuable experience for all involved. Building on our experience with teaching assistants (TAs) in courses offered by Swearer Center staff (e.g., SOC 1870A: Investing in Social Change, and PLCY1910: Social Entrepreneurship), we will train and fund undergraduate students to serve as TAs to faculty teaching community-engaged courses. This will significantly enhance faculty members' capacity to offer successful community-engaged courses.⁶

Support Graduate Students and Other Campus Partners

Many doctoral candidates are interested in community-engaged scholarship in the classroom and in their research.⁷ As the community-engaged curriculum expands across campus, we will support the development of opportunities for graduate students to teach these courses, pursue community engaged research projects, and connect with the broader engaged scholar community in the field. We will also partner with other campus units to offer training programs in innovative pedagogy.

Track and Evaluate Learning and Teaching Outcomes

We will identify the core learning outcomes associated with community-engaged courses and evaluate the effectiveness of our curriculum in achieving those outcomes. We will collaborate with other experts at Brown and elsewhere in the development of assessment tools, training workshops, and evaluation studies. We will highlight and promote exemplary community-engaged courses to all our stakeholders.

Co-Curriculum

A community-engaged education requires the active involvement of community partners — people at nonprofit, government agencies, and social enterprises who are willing and able to offer experiential opportunities to undergraduates. The capacity and willingness of these agencies to train thoroughly and supervise intensively college students is often limited as it falls outside their core mission; indeed, the responsibility for educating and preparing Brown students lies squarely with the University itself. In the course of this planning process, we heard our current and prospective partners express a strong desire for better training and preparation of Brown students intending to work in and alongside communities.⁸ With rigorous student preparation, partner agencies and partner communities will not consider students to be a burden, but to be important assets in advancing their missions, and be inclined to engage even more deeply with Brown students in their work.

Similarly, students want to meaningfully contribute to the community through their engagement and are actively seeking opportunities to develop and demonstrate the personal and professional learning outcomes and competencies necessary for success.⁹ Students value the opportunity to document their mastery of these competencies in a manner that is electronically portable including post-graduation.¹⁰ Documentation makes their skills more visible to communities and agencies with whom they engage as well as to potential internship placement hosts and prospective employers. Specific competencies — such as meeting facilitation and public speaking — will align and support broader Center-wide learning outcomes that may include:

- **Systems analysis:** capacity to analyze systemically the root causes and consequences of poverty and other forms of social inequity and marginality (systems thinking);
- **Power dynamics:** ability to describe and analyze critically the role power plays in preserving the status quo and might play in moving towards a more just system (sense of justice, analytic capacity);
- **Intercultural competence:** capacity to adjust and transform one's own attitudes and beliefs by working with and learning from individuals and communities different from oneself (intercultural competency); and
- **Project management:** ability to manage (design, build, assess, and adapt) community projects (effective action, professionalism).

In order to better prepare students for work in the community, for exploration and implementation of social innovation projects, and for life after Brown, we will create a **community-engaged co-curriculum**: a series of developmentally-appropriate, competency-based, and sequential trainings aligned to clearly articulated learning goals. In this way, students' contributions to our partner agencies and communities will be maximized.

The community-engaged co-curriculum at Brown will include three elements. First, we will formalize existing and develop new **workshops** that train Brown students in the key competencies of community engagement. Second, we will build co-curricular "**concentrations**" — clear pathways through the co-curriculum that allow students to delve deeply and achieve mastery in particular areas of interest (e.g., non-profit leadership; strategic communications; fundraising). Finally, we will implement a **credentialing system** that tracks students' progress through the co-curriculum and demonstrates their achievement. Many students will choose to dive deeply into the co-curriculum by completing a full sequence of workshops, while other students may participate in and benefit from co-curricular workshops in more occasional or limited ways.

Community-Engaged Workshops

Just as courses are the unit and platform of delivery for the traditional curriculum, community-engaged workshops are the building blocks of the community-engaged co-curriculum. Because the competencies for innovation and community work are many and varied, we will develop a wide variety of workshops that cover essential context, topics, and skills.

In addition to the diversity of topics and subject matter, community-engaged workshops will utilize a wide array of pedagogical methods including those that blend face-to-face and online pedagogy, self-paced on-demand learning, experiential learning, and more traditional classroom training. The delivery of these workshops will engage experts from within the university (faculty and other campus colleagues) as well as local community partners, other practitioners, student leaders, and alumni.

While the workshops will be quite diverse, they will all reflect common elements, just as all courses follow common structures of time, written syllabi, learning objectives, assignments, evaluation, etc. The standard framework (or “syllabus”) for each community-engaged workshop will clearly articulate:

- Measurable learning goals, objectives, and competencies with clear assessment mechanisms;
- Pedagogical approach including activities, assignments, and other deliverables;
- Workshop structure, flow, and timing; and
- Roles and responsibilities of facilitator(s) and participants.

Community-Engaged Co-Curricular Concentrations

The community-engaged workshops will be developed to cover a number of topics and competencies, with offerings that range from introductory to advanced. Students in their first two years at Brown will be encouraged to explore their interests by sampling broadly from the co-curriculum. Mirroring Brown’s Open Curriculum and academic concentration process, students engaged in Swearer Center programs will choose to pursue a specialized co-curricular theme — in essence, declaring a co-curricular “concentration” (e.g., policy research, non-profit leadership, advocacy, social innovation) at the end of their second year. Over the third and fourth years of their undergraduate education, students will take more advanced workshops related to their area of interest. Intensive advising and mentoring by Swearer staff and others will guide students’ choice of community-engaged workshops, helping them link their individual interests to workshops topics and develop thoughtful sequencing that builds on prior learning.

Co-Curricular Infrastructure and Systems

Building the co-curricular workshops and concentrations requires a strong and adaptable infrastructure to capture and share student participation and accomplishments. The explosive growth of e-portfolios that document learning achievements from experiential and competency-based education reflects this need and also allows for greater rigor and quality control.

What's Next?

In order to build a robust and relevant community-engaged co-curriculum, we will:

Grow Co-curricular Capacity and Expertise

We build on existing and add new, dedicated Swearer Center staff resources with expertise in co-curriculum/training development; collaborate with campus and community partners; and craft meaningful roles for students in the design and delivery of an innovative co-curriculum.

Identify Key Competencies and Design Workshops

We will partner with local and national experts and networks to identify critical and measurable competencies for our students and build a wide-ranging menu of workshops that develop students' skills in these areas.

Develop and Promote Co-curricular Pathways and Systems

We will build an architecture that helps students navigate through our co-curriculum in a coherent and strategic fashion; tracks their participation and documents achievement of specific competencies; certifies mastery for public audiences (including employers¹¹), documents their experiential learning, and allows students to build portable e-portfolios. As we do so, we will be mindful of our "piloting" role and build the system to be open to utilization by all campus units in order to support and document co-curricular competencies those units might offer for their program needs.

Promote Best Practices and Ensure High Quality Offerings

To ensure that our workshops and concentrations are rigorous, meet student and partner needs, and reflect best practices, we will establish a Co-curriculum Council that includes staff members of the Swearer Center, faculty, students, and community partners. The Co-Curriculum Council will articulate clear guidelines and criteria for workshops and solicit, review, and approve proposals (including those eligible for Center funding) for community-engaged workshops from any stakeholder.

Community Engagement Opportunities

A community-engaged experiential education creates individualized and team-based community engagement opportunities for students to integrate more traditional forms of learning and discovery with community-based action. These experiential learning opportunities include structured and supervised community engagement opportunities that provide students with direct exposure to the issues they are studying and opportunities to investigate and contribute to tackling problems alongside community partners. Through internships/practicums/fellowships and in work settings related to their academic or professional interests, students will explore, engage, and innovate under the direction and mentorship of professionals and practitioners.

Experiential learning opportunities are linked to important cognitive, affective, and behavioral outcomes.¹² Furthermore, national surveys have shown that the capacities developed by students through experiential learning are highly sought after by employers.¹³ Students gain a broad array of skills and competencies including:

- Integration, organization, and utilization of knowledge in different contexts;¹⁴
- Affective and interpersonal growth, increased levels of empathy, respect for diversity, and intercultural competence;¹⁵
- Teamwork, critical thinking, and complex problem solving; and
- Gains in students' sense of ethical purpose and social responsibility, as well as increased civic engagement, as measured by voting behavior and participation in civic life.¹⁶

As is recognized in *Building on Distinction*, by creating opportunities for students to connect their academic experiences to experiences in communities beyond Brown, community-engaged learning will improve the quality of our students' undergraduate education and prepare them for productive and fulfilling lives once they leave campus.

Today, the Center offers a number of engagement programs, varying in focus, duration/intensity, time of year, etc. The majority of the Swearer Center's longest standing academic year engagement opportunities — our Community Partnerships — are in direct service, specifically in the education arena: tutoring and teaching public school students, facilitating workshops at the ACI, and teaching ESL classes to Providence residents. These partnerships engage 600+ Brown undergraduate volunteers and leaders in work with a number of schools and agencies.

Direct service is a critical approach to social change that provides valuable community context and rewarding connections for students. While many students experience direct service as an introduction to community engagement, many students also see it as a pathway (and ultimately a profession) that can be progressively more challenging, rigorous, and impactful as students build skills, knowledge, and relationships.

More recently, the Center has been developing other frameworks for community engagement that build upon our long and strong history of engagement through direct service. The iProv internship program funds students working on projects designed by local Providence agencies (with assistance from Swearer staff members) in the summer. The Social Innovation and Royce Fellowships allow students to pursue a summer engagement project of their own design, with wrap-around programming and cohort-building activities in the spring and fall semesters. The Innovate WinterBreak program allows students to gain hands-on experience working with innovative social change organizations for two weeks during Winter Break. Intensive ESP practicum projects can occur during the academic year or over the summer months; and TRI-Lab has brought together faculty, students, and community practitioners as collaborators considering a particular community challenge in the context of a multiple semester project.

These programs have different approaches to supporting student engagement and working with community partners; the practices and policies in each program are far from consistent or standardized across the Swearer Center, complicating efforts to measure, communicate about, and improve our work. The diversity and fragmentation of this programmatic portfolio also hinders our ability to guarantee a high-quality, rigorous

experience for students and meaningful contributions toward the missions of our agency partners.

An additional opportunity for the development of Swearer Center programming is an expansion of our support for graduate students. Across higher education today, graduate students — particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds — often lead the most sophisticated community engaged scholarship and action. Brown has invested significantly in graduate education in recent years (e.g., Schools of Public Health and Engineering, Medical School) yet this is an untapped resource for Swearer; our work today is almost exclusively with undergraduates. Graduate students offer more highly developed and specialized skill sets and knowledge that are valuable to community partners; more advanced graduate students can also enhance their own professional skills by leading project teams of undergraduates, adding critical capacity to the Center and advancing undergraduate learning in the process.

Even as the type and nature of engagement may vary widely, the best engagement opportunities share a number of common characteristics:

- **Strong partner/community buy-in** including the joint definition of opportunities that meet partner organization/community defined needs with significant investment in the training and supervision of students and a designated partner staff supervisor/community mentor.
- **Strong partnership/network planning** that forecasts and plans strategically for multi-year and multi-faceted collaboration between multiple University actors (students, staff, faculty, academic departments, etc.) and the partner agency/community.
- **Clarity of roles and responsibilities** to set expectations; identify, assign, and mitigate risks associated with engagement; and ensure accountability of all partners (the Swearer Center, students, and community agencies and members).
- **Adequate, advance and ongoing student preparation** by Swearer staff, partner agency staff, and community mentors to develop students' skills necessary for successful community engagement.
- **Wrap-around advising and reflection** to help students make good decisions and process/integrate their experiential learning.
- **Clear connections to academics** so that experiential learning can reinforce, challenge, integrate, and synthesize what students are learning in the classroom and the co-curriculum.
- **Students working in teams** with progressive responsibility and room for individuals' growth and development.
- **Intensity and longevity** of student engagement. Best practice requires as much regular engagement as a full-credit course (intensity) over more than two semesters (longevity) and/or the execution— from inception to completion — of a well-defined project with clear and meaningful deliverables.
- **Developmental placements** that move students toward increasing complexity of understanding and competence over time.

What's Next?

In order to offer high quality and meaningful engagement opportunities for students and to build capacity among community partners, we will:

Diversify Engagement Opportunities by Approach, Program, and Topic Area

In the coming months and years, we will work with current and new community partners to increase the diversity and sophistication of engagement opportunities available to Brown students. Building upon our strength in direct service opportunities to add activities like policy research, program evaluation, fundraising, and communications, will allow students to progressively develop their skills and gain applied knowledge while building new and different capacity for partner agencies and communities. We will also draw on lessons from the TRI-Lab to build our own capacity to work with faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, and community partners to design and implement a new **community-based research initiative**.

While retaining a strong presence in educational equity, we will seek to grow our opportunities in new sectors including health equity, environmental justice, the arts, and economic justice. We will continue to innovate through a **new initiative innovation fund** that will support research and development on design and implementation of new community-engaged programs (e.g., in public health, STEM, organizational capacity building, public science, philanthropy, and social investment, etc.).

Expand Engagement Opportunities

Brown's strategic plan aims to expand the boundaries of when, where, and how learning takes place. To this end, the Swearer Center will:

- **Expand the Program Calendar:** The Swearer Center will offer year-round programming that gives students options for participation during the academic year, in the summer, during the winter break, as well as pre-orientation and post-graduate opportunities. Innovate WinterBreak is one such program, piloted by the Social Innovation Initiative. The initial program, a two-week mini-internship in New York City, has since expanded to four cities in partnership with BrownConnect, the new signature internship program of Brown's CareerLAB.
- **Expand our Geography:** For most students, community engagement during the academic year happens in Providence, a diverse and vibrant city that offers an array of opportunities to engage in meaningful community partnership and innovation. As we focus and deepen our presence in Providence, we will explore the development of new program sites in the US and abroad, aligned with places where the University is making strategic investments (e.g., Watson Institute initiatives in Brazil and India), where faculty research projects are located, and where students can build cross-cultural competencies and work toward change in new and innovative ways. Building on the new Brown in Washington program, the Swearer Center will develop programs and relationship in three additional locations in the U.S. and expand this model to include locations outside the US.
- **Expand the Range of Students We Serve:** Given Brown's existing strength in and emphasis on the sciences and technology and the critical role that these disciplines play in society, we will work to serve students in the STEM fields with engagement opportunities. Master's degree students are another opportunity for expansion: many Brown programs already require immersive, experiential, and/or community-based course

and practicum work as elements of the curriculum. As we deepen our community partnerships and amplify their impact, we see important opportunities for collaboration with graduate students. We will also support doctoral students from all fields and disciplines who are interested in working actively with community practitioners in the development of their research and teaching agendas.

- **Expand and Align Current Fellowship Programs:** We will build on the strengths of and scale out our current student fellowships (Community Fellows, Royce Fellows, Messing Fellows, Social Innovation Fellows, as examples) to create more opportunities for student leadership in our work, including graduate fellowships. We will align all fellowship opportunities with our strategic goals for community collaboration and integrated learning priorities.

Institutionalize the Social Innovation Initiative

We will fortify our rich ecosystem of students, faculty, alumni and practitioners within the Social Innovation Initiative (SII) by permanently endowing programs for students to develop and implement social innovation projects, complementary course offerings, and assistance for students seeking jobs, internships, fellowships, and other innovation opportunities. The recent creation of the Jonathan M. Nelson Center for Entrepreneurship creates the opportunity to re-emphasize the ways we conceive of, support, and practice social innovation as one of our community engagement frameworks. We will further integrate social innovation practices and principles across the programs and operations of the Swearer Center and maximize the opportunity to champion and model this integration in higher education. SII will enhance its national leadership by building on best practices of learning, designing expanded ways of partner inclusion and participation, and advancing the critical self-understanding of the dynamic field of social innovation.

Formalize, Standardize, and Strengthen Infrastructure for Engagement

New Center practices and structures are required to maximize opportunities for student learning, balance partner agency and community needs for efficient and effective student engagement, and manage the potential risks — to the student, to the university, and to the community — associated with community engagement. We will create and implement new systems to identify partner agencies and communities and scope opportunities; place, supervise, and track students' engagement; and document student learning and community impact. Elements of the new approach will include:

- **Student position/project descriptions** to be developed jointly by students, Swearer staff, and the partner agency or community members to ensure developmental appropriateness and increase the likelihood of positive outcomes for the students and community; position descriptions will specify the nature and terms of engagement (intended length of student engagement, start and end dates, and anticipated intensity of engagement - hours per week).
- Clearly identified **site supervisors** (partner agency staff) or **community mentors** (for social innovation and community based research students) and Swearer Center **staff liaisons**.
- **Community Learning Agreements** that articulate an individual student's learning goals, approved by both a Swearer staff member and the site supervisor or community mentor.
- **Memoranda of Understanding** between the community-based partner organization and the Swearer Center outlining the respective roles, responsibilities, timing, and expectations for the partnership and

student engagement. MOUs will explicitly address and assign responsibility for insuring against possible risks, grant compliance issues (if any), and any associated protocols, including student training.

- **Team approach** to student placements/projects that encourages more advanced students to assume supported and defined leadership positions.
- **Online system** that:
 - Allows students to track their participation, capture reflections and other demonstrations of learning, and document achievements across their Brown experience; and
 - More accurately collects and aggregates data about student engagement, facilitating better assessment and measurement for the University and partner agencies.

With new partners, practices, and systems, community engagement opportunities will be more diverse, rigorous, and beneficial for all stakeholders.

Integrated Student Learning

The three programmatic elements described above — the curriculum, co-curriculum, and engagement opportunities — are most powerful when pursued in an integrated and sustained way, resulting in mutually reinforcing learning and application for students, and increasing the value of engagement for partner agencies and communities.

As students involved in our programs progress through their four years at Brown, the dialogue between their disciplinary learning, co-curricular competency development, and community-engaged experiences will amplify their understanding of complex social issues and their ability to create and implement innovative solutions. While the model will be relevant and accessible for all students across the campus, regardless of their involvement with the Swearer Center, students who consistently and intensively participate will receive the greatest benefits. With more intensive and long-term involvement with the Center, students will progress from exploration and the development of foundational knowledge and skills to greater specialization, responsibility/leadership, mastery, and integration.

The Swearer Center currently offers a number of initiatives that thoroughly integrate the three elements of the model. These more focused engagement pathways, typically appropriate for students in their third and fourth years, include the Social Innovation Fellowship, the Community-Engaged Scholar Program, the Royce Fellowship, etc. We will expand these integrative initiatives and student leadership roles within the Swearer Center and community partner agencies.

Students who complete the four-year sequence will be able to synthesize and transfer their learning across complex situations within and beyond the Brown campus. This integrated, multifaceted approach will develop students' empathy, persistence, critical and systems thinking, capacity to work in and lead teams, and ability to navigate through cultural, economic, and other differences. Looking beyond the horizon of their immediate interests, students will develop the intellectual and ethical capacities they need to lead full and engaged lives of significant and effective action.

What's Next?

In order to fully integrate the three components of the model and thereby maximize learning for students and outcomes for partners, we will:

Create a Robust System for Student Advising and Mentoring

High quality advising is essential in order for students to most effectively navigate and integrate the three elements of the new Swearer model. Today, we hear from students (echoing the research in the field) that the formal and informal advising from Center staff is one of the most transformative and powerful benefits for students engaged in our work.¹⁷ Building on the history of the Swearer Center's academic advising program — UCAAP (University Community Academic Advising Program) — and the strength of the advising and mentoring elements of the Social Innovation Initiative, we will design new systems and implement new practices that allow us to scale the intimate and personalized advising that has become a hallmark of the Center.

Design and Promote Multiple Entry Points for Students

Recognizing the unique pathways that Brown students often take, we will build and maintain multiple points of entry for students who discover the Swearer Center late in their Brown career but still want to participate. These alternate entry points will include an assessment of prior learning and development to ensure that students enter into the sequence of offerings — be they curricular, co-curricular, or experiential — at a level that is developmentally appropriate and challenging.

Develop a Cohort of Student Leaders

Given the successful existing peer leadership models at Brown (Community Fellows, Writing Fellows, Meiklejohn Advisers), we will seek to leverage and replicate best practices on campus around student leadership development. We will build and implement a **Bonner Community Fellows Program**¹⁸ as the highest level of community engagement fellowship. These deeply involved students will be intentionally trained in leadership competencies and will form a corps of engaged student leaders. As near-to-peer leaders, they will cultivate dynamic, accessible relationships with their fellow students and add strong capacity and student perspective to our programming as we scale Swearer Center programs and opportunities to the wider university. Bonner Community Fellows will serve as team and project leaders, teaching assistants to community engaged courses, community liaisons, and community engagement workshop facilitators.

Incoming Brown students will be recruited into this four-year, cohort-based developmental program and others may join later in their time at Brown. We will specifically emphasize the value added to the program by students from first generation and low-income backgrounds and provide the financial resources and other necessary supports for them to commit to the program's intensive leadership development across the four years. We will begin this process in the fall of 2016 establishing our first cohort of 40 Bonner Community Fellows. At full capacity, Brown will have at least 160 Bonner Community Fellows, spanning all four undergraduate class years.

Diversity and Inclusion

We believe it is essential — and a moral imperative for the University — that these opportunities be made possible for all interested Brown students. Yet the Center has struggled — along with the university as a whole — with issues of diversity, inclusion, and cross-cultural competence. Because our core work requires us to respectfully and equitably navigate diverse communities, this is especially troubling. Student participants in Swearer Center programs are majority white, upper-middle class, and female, and thus not reflective of the student body as a whole or the communities in which we work. Structurally, too many Brown students from underrepresented backgrounds are forced to choose between unpaid community engagement opportunities and paying jobs. Culturally, many students of color or other non-majority identities report not finding the Swearer Center a welcoming place that is comfortable for them to engage.

We must also provide increased student or community programming to open dialogue about power and positionality (race, class, gender, religion, sexuality, etc.) in our work. We must fully integrate into our work the learning and commitments that flowed from the Brown University Slavery and Justice Report. We must pay much closer attention to how inclusive Swearer Center culture is or is not to students and community members from historically underrepresented backgrounds. Many people from underrepresented backgrounds bring rich life experiences, an ability to relate to community participants, sophisticated and valuable language skills, and other qualities; our inability to level the playing field and create an inclusive Swearer Center culture leaves our work diminished and our goals — for equity and justice both on campus and in the community — unfulfilled.

In order to ensure equitable opportunity for engagement and for leadership development, to maximize the contributions of the unique talents and insights of all students, and strengthen community impact, we will make special efforts to identify, recruit, and support students who come from backgrounds that are underrepresented at Brown, including those who are the first in their families to attend college. We will provide additional financial support to ensure equitable participation and offset the opportunity cost of engagement, and work closely with students and colleagues (at Brown and nationally) to identify and develop the tools and resources required to fully support students from underrepresented groups.¹⁹

What's Next?

The University as a whole, the Swearer Center as a team, and each of us as individuals must own and engage in the ongoing work of diversity, equity, and inclusion. As we work to advance these critical issues, we will:

Develop a Diversity Action Plan for the Center

At a recent Swearer Center listening session, a student proposed that the Swearer Center team should not only write a diversity action plan, but also pledge to publicly report on our progress towards this plan every year for the next ten years. We commit to honoring this student's suggestion.

Engage the Campus with Communities in Conversation about Diversity and Inclusion

As we further develop and strengthen the ways that we solicit, listen to, and incorporate community voices and perspectives in our work, we will:

- Host opportunities for community members to meet with administrators in open and thoughtful dialogue to address Brown's engagement and actions related to issues of power, justice, diversity, and equity in its work with Providence individuals, businesses, and organizations;
- Convene a Community Advisory Board to provide an independent, external perspective and serve as a liaison between the community and the Center; and
- Advocate for a range of changes to enhance the university's relationship with and responsiveness to Providence community members, such as expanded access to campus resources, engagement of local experts and organizations as trainers, or new mechanisms to more effectively communicate with the local community.

Invest in People

The Swearer Center team commits to:

- Provide support for all students, with a particular emphasis on students from low-income backgrounds and/or first generation students;
- Partner with other advisors and mentors on campus, particularly in the Offices of the Dean of the College and Campus Life, to support these students with new and different types of support;
- Collaborate closely with and fully support the efforts of key Centers such as the Brown Center for Students of Color, Sarah Doyle Women's Center, and LGBTQ Center, and participate in the planning and activities of the new center for first-generation students; and
- Continue to address diversity and inclusion in future Center hires, in our own engagement as a staff, and as individuals learning about and addressing systemic racism and other forms of oppression. As a staff, we pledge not to place the onus of this work on the shoulders of unpaid students or colleagues whose understanding of these issues from personal experience may surpass our own.



Transforming Brown's Impact

With a talented and motivated student body, world-class faculty, and committed practitioner community, Brown has tremendous potential to build transformative community partnerships and social innovations that yield positive impact — in our own backyard and around the globe. As a Center that bridges the campus and community, Swearer has a unique role to play in collaboratively designing, facilitating, and assessing strategic community initiatives that co-create knowledge and produce meaningful change.



Our community partnership work will be guided by two essential principles: community agency and reciprocity. We believe that the programs that seek to make change in communities are best designed, delivered, and lead by members of those communities and/or community-based organizations closest to the work. This is **community agency**, where power and decision-making authority exists at the individual and organizational level closest to — and most informed about — the community's challenges and assets. We will reimagine our role as preparing students, and partnering with community organizations and community members, to develop opportunities that are owned by, or in full partnership with, those community members and/or organizations.

To be successful, our work needs the significant contributions of practitioners as co-researchers, co-teachers, and co-learners. All too often, universities call upon community members to participate

in their educational and research enterprises without sufficient consultation, preparation, compensation, or true partnership. We recognize the value of the wisdom that practitioners hold and realize that, unlike faculty, practitioners rarely get the opportunity to have the time to focus more deeply on the issues within which they work. Genuine **reciprocity** in the university-community relationship calls for greater collaboration in defining objectives; improved communication and training; and support and recognition of the work of community members. However, even the term "reciprocity" suggests a transactional relationship; we strive to engage our community members around a shared purpose that moves beyond reciprocity into full mutuality. It is our moral and civic responsibility to cultivate in students a respect for community agency and reciprocity, and to encourage students to think about how their engagement can add sustainable capacity to communities.

By jointly identifying systemic needs and opportunities with community stakeholders, and grounding the work at the appropriate organizational level, the Swearer Center and our students will engage in issues of highest concern to community members and create the greatest promise for significant social change. We will focus in areas that have deep and established community-based capacity — and help develop capacity in new areas — to ensure that

our partnerships are strong and to tap innovative real-world practitioners as co-educators, co-investigators, and co-creators. We will pay special attention to topics that appeal to a wider range of Brown students (undergraduates, graduates, and medical school students); leverage the expertise and scholarship of Brown faculty from a variety of disciplines; and reflect the institutional priorities of the University (as reflected, for example, in the research and teaching priorities identified in part one — “Integrative Scholarship” — of *Building on Distinction*). Finally, Swearer will support a culture of rigorous outcome assessment and regular reporting of impact and results of university-community partnerships to ensure transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.

The Swearer Center currently has a number of long-term relationships with community agencies. This history of programs and partnerships is a great source of strength. Some of these programs have been running for more than two decades and our relationships are strong, candid, and mutually beneficial. However, some programs have not changed their model or approach very much in that time, or seriously asked questions like “Are we partnering with the right agency in this work?” or “What changes in the community landscape — policy, demographic, etc. — might require a re-examination of the ways we’re engaging?” The new model of partnerships will better train students engaged with our partner agencies, and place them in roles that add high value and capacity to the mission of the sponsoring organization. In early discussions of the new model with partners, we’re discovering new opportunities to engage Brown students and other university resources to support the missions of these organizations.

What’s Next?

In order to reframe and expand our partnerships in ways that hold community impact as co-equal to student learning as a measure of the Center and University’s success, we will:

Grow the Center’s Capacity for Effective Partnerships

We will build a team of community organizing and partnership professionals who specialize in developing deep reciprocal multi-year partnerships with community-based organizations and the communities in which they work. We will build the skills and capacity of current staff and create new positions to form a Community Partnership Team. This team will build robust and equitable partnerships through which Brown faculty, students, and staff may engage with communities in projects of shared purpose. The team will also develop a means for continuous collection of community partnership information from across the University to better coordinate, support, and report on all campus-community partnerships. Finally, team members will continuously solicit and scope new collaboration opportunities, research questions and projects, and innovation challenges with current and potential community partners.

Build an Ecosystem Approach to Community Partnerships

We will deepen community partnerships through increased outreach, community listening, and a strategic focus on a limited number of issue areas in which we believe we can play a significant partnership role, notably in education, health equity, the environment, the arts, and economic justice. We will build an ecosystem approach

to partnerships that emphasizes multiple points of connections between the University and each of our partner organizations. This multi-faceted approach to partnership increases the likelihood of success for each individual connection by strengthening the overall relationship between Brown and each partner, and will likely lead to interdisciplinary connections and innovative project ideas that engage students, faculty, staff, and community members. As we grow our capacity to facilitate this ecosystem approach to partnership, we will critically evaluate our current set of partnerships for alignment to our strategy and issue foci and seek new partners to add diverse insights and community knowledge to our work.

Improve Coordination and Integration between Brown and the Community

Often community stakeholders do not know which office at Brown they should contact to explore potential collaborations. At other times, a community partner may be working with multiple offices that are not coordinated and unaware that they are working with the same agency. This can be confusing and frustrating to community stakeholders. We will build the capacity to better coordinate, align, and integrate community collaborations across the University. We will conduct a regular inventory of University-community collaborations; build a community collaboration database and registration system; and launch a University-wide education initiative to help the Brown community understand best practices and the value of coordinated and integrated approaches to community partnerships for collective impact and better community stakeholder relationships. We also pledge to report on our partnerships annually — to both the campus and wider community — to celebrate our partners and extract and share lessons from our failures and accomplishments.

Emphasize Diversity, Inclusion, Power, and Privilege

In our partnership relationships and in the relationship of the University to the community, we will:

- Seek and sustain partnerships that represent an array of diverse communities;
- Focus our efforts on partnerships with Rhode Island organizations led by and engaged with underrepresented populations, especially those dedicated to addressing power and privilege;
- Engage with community members and participants in addition to professional or paid non-profit leaders and staff members; and
- Critically examine the role power and privilege play in our partnerships and seek productive ways to surface, discuss, and mitigate those issues.

Create High Value with and for Partners

Our community partners are essential co-educators and collaborators in the work of the Swearer Center. In order to build their capacity, help advance their missions and reciprocate the contributions that they make to our work, we will:

- Meet with all current partners to understand current engagement practices, partner appetite for engagement, and future options that will add value and meet partner needs;
- Provide professional development and support for community practitioners including open access to the competency-based co-curriculum as both participant and trainer;
- Rebrand the current TRI-Lab space (at 10 Davol Square) as the Community Collaborative as the key site for partnership activity and as a community space for ongoing coordination and professional development meetings;

- Identify and promote points of access to the University for Providence organizations and residents to help break down barriers of exclusion; and
- Leverage our ability to attract and sponsor speakers and events in ways that benefit the community.

Recognize and Value Community Knowledge

We will more fully and consistently value the knowledge of community stakeholders as a necessary piece of our educational mission and the knowledge creation process. This includes developing and implementing new policies for the fair compensation of practitioners who contribute to our work by, for instance, facilitating a training workshop. We will also create an annual community practitioner award to recognize excellence and two new fellowships platforms that allow practitioners to bring their expertise to campus and build meaningful connections with the university, while recharging their own professional batteries.

- **Junior Practitioner Fellows** will be nationally competitive one- to two-year fellowships through which the most talented early career community-based practitioners can focus and advance their careers. These fellowships will allow the Center to build capacity and institutionalize community-informed innovation with a constant source of fresh new ideas.
- **Senior Practitioner Fellows** will be a nationally competitive one- to two-year fellowship through which experienced mid-career professionals will share their expertise with students in the classroom and through individual advising, as well as enrich their own learning and development through independent projects and collaborations with faculty members.²⁰
- **Community Practitioners** will be a status afforded to local and regional community partners who share their expertise with students in the co-curriculum and through advising and mentoring on a regular basis. These practitioners will have affiliate status with Brown and the Swearer Center.

We will convene our community partner network regularly and explore and develop new ways of soliciting, listening to, and incorporating community voices and feedback in our work. We will host regular community events to discuss the impact of Swearer and the University in the community, and build a Community Advisory Board to advise the work of the Swearer Center and Brown.

Transform TRI-Lab into the Community Collaborative

Community partners often have identified research needs that can be met by faculty and students, who in turn have research interests and skills that align well with community needs. Even when there is strong alignment between the university's research capacity and community research questions, connecting the two requires strong relationships, careful scoping and facilitation, and translation of different sources of knowledge and ways of knowing. The Swearer Center can and must actively build the institutional framework and processes to make these new connections for meaningful and innovative research projects. Building on the lessons of the TRI-Lab, the Swearer Center will work to build our capacity for community-based research partnerships with Brown faculty and students, and community members and organizations, using participatory research approaches to drive positive change in communities.

Integrating Academic Excellence

Brown and the Swearer Center's unique history and tradition, together with the bold vision for the University articulated in *Building on Distinction*, position us to reassert Brown's institutional leadership in the national discourse about engagement in higher education. The Open Curriculum seeks to value the learner in each student, encourage students' educational exploration and experimentation, and support the process of self-authorship. We believe that, by extending these pathways for inquiry and discovery through community-engaged scholarship and action, Brown and Swearer will lead the global higher education movement in creating a model for greater and more effective university engagement in the world.



The Faculty

Brown faculty members are central to the success of the Swearer Center's strategic plan. Faculty play a variety of roles at the Center: they advise and mentor students, sponsor Fellowship applications, review proposals and serve on selection committees, and participate as active members of the Swearer Center community by tapping their professional networks to help students. In collaboration with our faculty colleagues, Swearer Center staff members build community-engaged courses, concentrations, and research projects that provide unparalleled educational opportunities for Brown students. As key partners in our work, we must find ways to support, recognize, and reward faculty members at all stages of their careers. We will also work with departments to build community-engaged scholarship into the faculty reward system.

Additionally, research in the field of engaged scholarship tells us that faculty and graduate students from historically underrepresented backgrounds are disproportionately interested

in pursuing engaged teaching and research. As part of our commitment to diversity and inclusion, we will work to support these scholars in their teaching and research and highlight to University decision-makers the interconnectivity of diversity and inclusion and community-engaged scholarship.

What's Next?

In order to more fully support our Brown faculty colleagues who are already community-engaged scholars or wish to adopt community-engaged teaching or research practices, we will:

Build a Community of Engaged Scholars

Through reading groups, research colloquia, workshops, white papers, and conference hosting and attendance, we will engage faculty colleagues in a sustained dialogue about research in the field of community-engaged scholarship and best practices in teaching, research, and action. These efforts to build our collective understanding of the field, together with the fellowships detailed below, will enhance the capacity of academic departments to develop, implement, and institutionalize community-engaged scholarship and action.

Support, Cultivate, and Recognize Excellence in Community-Engaged Scholarship

In order to deepen and enhance the community-engaged teaching and research practices of faculty members at all stages of their careers, we will create new ways of supporting faculty and their collaborations with the community and the Center.

- A competitive **Community-Engaged Faculty Fellowship** will reduce the teaching burden for faculty (through departmental course release), allowing them to play a more significant role in and make substantial contributions to the Center. Responsibilities will include advising and mentoring students, teaching Swearer Center courses, and pursuing their own public scholarship, community-engaged teaching and research, and/or collaboration with practitioners. Supplemental funding will support independent community-engaged research projects or course development (research/teaching assistants) and public presentations on campus (to a group of faculty identified and convened by the Center and other audiences) and at national conferences.
- A competitive **Community-Engaged Graduate Fellowship** will enhance the capacity of select Brown doctoral students to develop and teach pedagogically innovative courses and pursue advanced research that directly engages with communities. We will also work with the Graduate School to propose that the Swearer Center become a potential assigned home for 5th and 6th year doctoral students interested in engaged scholarship as a professional field.
- In order to highlight the robust and complementary connection between diversity and inclusion efforts and community-engaged scholarship, we will propose as appropriate that the Swearer Center host a Brown **University Presidential Diversity Postdoctoral Fellow**. The Fellows are innovative and early career scholars from diverse backgrounds (with particular attention to historically underrepresented groups in the academy). Their teaching and research touch on the integrative themes outlined in *Building on Distinction*, including scholarship that promotes social justice and economic prosperity, domestically and internationally.
- In order to bring greater public recognition to exceptional scholars, we will create **annual faculty and**



doctoral student awards that recognize excellence in community-engaged scholarship and teaching by Brown faculty (pre- and post-tenure) and doctoral candidates. The awards will honor those who have demonstrated exemplary community-engaged work and will raise the profile of these efforts at Brown: on campus, in Providence and Rhode Island, and within national higher education circles. Specific recognition and support will be given to exemplary community-engaged scholars from historically underrepresented groups.

The University

Thirty years ago, President Howard Swearer established the Swearer Center for Public Service as a locus for civic engagement and public service in order to extend and deepen Brown's mission of preparing students for lives of usefulness and reputation. In recognition of the academic purpose of civic and community engagement — and of the value of engagement to the University's scholarly mission — he established the Swearer Center under the Dean of the College's Office and within the academic fabric of the university.

We recognize that our impact as a single center at Brown can be much more profound if we are able to understand, inform, and influence community-engaged practices across the University. Other campus units — such as the Medical School, the Education Department, and the School of Public Health — have existing community engagement initiatives and partnerships that can and should be leveraged and coordinated to maximize both educational outcomes and positive social change. We also recognize that the Swearer Center plays a unique role in connecting the University to the broader Providence and Rhode Island communities.

Throughout the history of the Swearer Center, we have taken our academic responsibility seriously. We have seen our role not only as facilitators of community engagement experiences for students, but as advisors working actively to help students reflect on those experiences and connect them with academic inquiry. The Swearer Center's fellowship programs (Royce, Social Innovation, etc.) support undergraduate research experiences and

other learning experiences designed to connect theory with practice. Swearer Center staff members have obtained adjunct faculty appointments in academic departments and have developed and taught courses in specific content areas relevant to students, faculty, and community interests and needs. Initiatives such as TRI-Lab have supported community-engaged research partnerships between Brown faculty and community organizations and agencies.

As we pursue the strategies outlined in this plan, we will seek to expand the Center's role as a catalyst for community-engaged scholarship at Brown by working even more closely with academic departments, institutes, and centers around curricular innovation and community-based research, and continue to invest in and develop our own academically rigorous offerings.

What's Next?

In order to advance community-engaged scholarship across the university as a whole, and enrich the university's relationship with the local community, we will:

Advocate for and Contribute to University Planning for Engagement

We will propose and lead a University-wide plan that comprehensively inventories all engaged scholarship programs, projects, initiatives, and activities at Brown; designs a means for real-time tracking of engaged scholarship moving forward; and spells out specific ways that the University can support engagement throughout the campus. This process will lay the groundwork for the 2020 application cycle for the Carnegie Foundation Engaged Campus Designation²¹ and facilitate the coordination and measurement of implementation efforts on this part of the university strategic plan. Comprehensive planning will also set the stage for a bi-annual University community impact report that clearly and compellingly documents Brown's contributions to and impacts on our communities.

Explore and Establish New Partnerships with Campus Units

In 2016-17, the Center will establish a Task Force on Engaged Graduate and Professional Education to explore opportunities for new and deeper partnerships with the Graduate School, the Medical School, the School of Public Health, and others to better meet the needs of these unique student populations and collaborate with these university units.

Develop and Implement New Platforms and Policies for Engagement

We will develop systems and platforms for evaluating and documenting experiential and competency-based learning that are relevant, useful, and accessible to other campus units who want to use them. Additionally, we will partner with departments to explore and develop disciplinary appropriate tenure and promotion standards and practices that recognize and reward community-engaged scholarship.

Convene Regular Community Listening Sessions

As we did with the University Diversity Action Plan, the Center will generate meaningful and regular opportunities for Brown's Corporation and senior administration to hear directly from a wide range of community members on topics of concern.



The Higher Education Field

In order to regain a national leadership role in the field, the staff of the Swearer Center will actively and intentionally contribute to, learn from, and lead national dialogues about the value and practice of community engagement and social innovation; about the integration of theory and practice; about the particular challenges of equity, positionality, and diversity in the field; and about the evolving relevance of higher education. For example, our engagement in the AshokaU network has established Swearer and SII as a leader in the field of social innovation education. We have tremendous opportunity to lead other national conversations about community-engaged scholarship in both higher education and practitioner circles, and to connect the dots between these different networks and dialogues.

What's Next?

In order to re-engage with and ultimately lead national conversations in the field of community-engaged higher education, we will pursue a variety of channels, partners, and audiences. Strategies will include:

Host and Attend Regular Convenings of national academics and practitioners (Ashoka, IARSLCE, Bonner, national Campus Compact, etc.).

Create and Disseminate Learnings, practices, theories, and impact assessments through peer-reviewed journals and mainstream publications.

Engage Thought Leaders in the Field as advisors, allies, and ambassadors to help guide, inform, and promote the Swearer Center's model of transforming student experiences, magnifying engagement impact, and capacity-building partnerships with a keen eye on diversity, positionality, power, and equity.

Strengthen Engagement Infrastructure

The ambitious direction outlined in earlier sections of this plan will require a sophisticated and adaptable infrastructure. This infrastructure — the people, systems, processes, and tools — will require significant change and realignment in the Center’s operations. We will improve how we invest in and align our human resources (staff, alumni); deploy existing and secure new financial resources; evaluate and communicate about our work; and listen and respond to our stakeholders.

Investing in Human and Financial Resources

This plan requires the contributions of many resourceful, creative people who will join us in building the model, addressing community challenges, and advancing educational innovation at Brown. Successful community engagement requires dedicated and well-trained staff to advise and teach students; develop, manage, evaluate, and continually improve partner relations; support faculty and departments; rigorously evaluate our work; and build robust systems to ensure high-quality programming. The staff members who work at the Swearer Center are our greatest asset, and we will take their education and development every bit as seriously as we take the education and development of our students. We will develop our esprit de corps to emphasize professionalism in our work, reciprocity in our relationships, and hopefulness in our aspirations.

Our human resources are not limited to our paid staff members. Currently, Brown alumni are an underutilized resource in our work. Alumni can serve as mentors to our students and champions of our work, connecting students and staff with professional opportunities and networks beyond Brown’s campus and around the world.

In order to bring the ambitious ideas outlined in this plan to fruition, we also need new financial resources. We will build on our organizational strengths toward excellence in fiscal planning and reporting for sustainable growth and impact; and work to increase our ability to attract, win, and successfully steward donors and other funding sources.

What’s Next?

In order to leverage existing and strategically grow our staff capacity and financial resources, we will:

Invest in Our Staff through...

- **Regular professional development** in the field as well as in general higher education skills, trends, and competencies.
- **Aligning staffing** to the goals and objectives outlined in this plan.
- **Strategic creation of new staff positions** — including maximizing opportunities for graduate fellowships and other types of staffing models — to expand our capacity to meet the goals of this plan.
- **Diversifying the demographics of our staff** through new hires while also significantly enhancing the cross-cultural competence of our new and existing staff members.

Strengthen and Expand our Ability to Mobilize Alumni

The Center will engage alumni as advisors and mentors for our students and increase their engagement with the work of the Center. We will develop data and communications systems to track and coordinate contacts and more regularly engage alumni in our work.

Attract, Secure, and Successfully Steward Donors and Funders

New resources will be required to implement this strategic plan, and donors and funders are essential and invaluable partners in this effort. We will work closely with Brown's Office of Advancement to identify, inform, and inspire new champions of our work. We will also explore and develop opportunities for revenue generation consistent with our mission and goals.

Achieve and Maintain Excellence in Our Fiscal Practices and Procedures

We will create and implement a comprehensive integrated budgeting process and model for maximizing the strategic and sustainable use of our existing financial resources.

Enhancing Transparency, Accountability, and Inclusion

In order to fulfill our commitments to reciprocity, justice, and rigor, we must build a culture of evaluation, transparency, and accountability into all that we do. In recent years, we have developed new communications vehicles like Swearer Sparks that have allowed us to tell the stories of our work more effectively and reach new audiences. We will build upon our existing outlets to share the results of our work — both the successes and failures — extracting lessons and best practices to contribute to our network of colleagues in the community and in higher education.



What's Next?

To ensure that the Center's work is transparent, accountable, and inclusive, we will:

Rigorously Assess Our Work

We will lead Brown and our higher education peers in rigorous assessment of experiential and co-curricular learning and community impact. We will collect and analyze data that help us understand:

- **Student Learning and Development Outcomes:** We will define Center-wide and program-specific student learning outcomes and build assessment mechanisms into all Swearer Center programming and Center-supported courses; we will strongly advocate for and support the evaluation of these same outcomes in community-engaged courses not supported by the Center. We will build and administer a regular Center alumni survey to measure longer-term impact of participation in community-engaged activities and Swearer Center programs.
- **Faculty and Staff Attitudes and Engagement:** We will build and deploy an annual assessment survey to measure faculty and staff members' understanding of, sentiment towards, and participation in community-engaged scholarship.
- **Institutional Engagement:** We will participate in the National Assessment of Service and Community Engagement²² and other national assessment initiatives²³ to measure the overall institutional level of engagement and set benchmarks for increasing overall engagement. We will work closely with the Office of Institutional Research to build a comprehensive panel of available relevant data from existing University assessment tools.
- **Community Impact:** We will maximize existing mechanisms of tracking and reporting on community impact, while creating new methods of measuring community impact at all levels (site placement, project, course, program, department, and university).

Communicate Effectively and Regularly

- Our communications will clearly articulate a **bold branding statement**, grounded in the historical narrative of Brown and the Center's values and commitments, that is easy to understand, inspires stakeholders to engage, and communicates our value promise in accurate and compelling ways.
- Using the new brand, we will develop and implement a **dynamic communications and marketing strategy** that builds on our existing communications platforms (including Swearer Sparks, the Bridge newsletter, websites) to tell our story and the stories of our partners and participants. This strategy will draw in new participants and stakeholders and increase understanding of and buy-in for our vision and our work.
- In order to **recognize excellence in community-engaged scholarship** at Brown and build broader awareness and understanding of this important work, the Swearer Center will highlight the accomplishments of students, faculty, and community partners pursuing exemplary community-engaged teaching, learning, and research.
- Finally, as we work to comprehensively assess our efforts, we will issue an **annual accountability report** reflecting on our progress toward achieving the vision and principles articulated in this plan, specifying the measurements we have deployed, and reporting on our findings and use of the results.

Enhance Stakeholder Inclusion and Participation

Based on insights gained through the strategic planning process, as well as a review of best practices across the field, the Center will establish a new system of stakeholder advisory committees and boards. Members will serve as advisors to the Director and other staff on the Swearer Center's programs and strategic direction, and also function as Center ambassadors and champions in their constituent groups and beyond. Except where otherwise noted below, committee or board members will be appointed by the Center Director, and will convene at least quarterly with clear terms of service and roles/responsibilities.

- **Student Advisory Committee:** In the fall of 2015, we formed a Swearer Center Student Advisory Committee (SAC). The SAC has played an important role in providing student feedback on the guiding principles of the plan. The inaugural SAC will work with the Director to develop bylaws and membership term rotations.
- **Community Advisory Board:** Building on our success at convening community partners for reflections across the strategic planning process and in response to the University Diversity Action Plan, we will build a Community Advisory Board (CAB). The CAB members will serve as Center advisers and community ambassadors within greater Providence and Rhode Island, and include both paid staff at partner agencies and community members who bring other valuable perspectives.
- **Faculty Advisory Committee:** Building on our success with the inaugural Engaged Scholars Program Steering Committee, we will establish a Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC) to more broadly advise the Center. The FAC will function in similar fashion to the SAC and CAC.
- **National Advisory Board:** As we re-enter the national community engagement dialogue, we want to be sure we have the active guidance of national leaders in higher education, community engagement, and social innovation. We will build a National Advisory Board (NAB) whose members exemplify cutting-edge thinking about our work and are drawn from across the country and world. The NAB will meet in person twice per year and receive and review periodic reports and publications of the Center. The NAB will also advise the Director and the University on programs and approaches to community-engaged scholarship and social innovation.

Realigning the Center's Identity

Since the Swearer Center was founded, the Center and our field of community-engaged higher education have both evolved. The work was originally framed as "public service," a concept that is now perceived as paternalistic, non-academic, and insufficiently reciprocal by many.

As Brown animates and institutionalizes the vision of engaged scholarship articulated in *Building on Distinction*, the Swearer Center will play a pivotal role. Our name and identity should reflect this important position and our sophisticated and rigorous approach to our educational mission, reciprocal partnerships, and community impact.

We have engaged a communications consulting firm to guide us over the next several months through branding, logo, and redesign of our web page, and will look to the consultant for advice and guidance on the final choice of name for the Center that reflects the direction, values, and strategies of the University, the field, and this plan.



As we look forward to the next 30 years, the Swearer Center is poised to make significant contributions to and reassert its leadership within the University and the field.

Conclusion

Brown University has been leading higher education for more than 250 years. By comparison, the Swearer Center's 30 years of work seem youthful. Yet those 30 years have been rich with learning and evolution: the Center can proudly look back on a legacy of leadership and innovation in the field of community-engaged learning and action, a wealth of talented students and alumni who are making positive change in the world, and community partnerships that have endured for decades. We are humbled by and deeply appreciative of the contributions that our insightful, creative and generous colleagues have made to the Center's history and to this plan.

This is an exciting time at Brown and in higher education, and we find ourselves on the threshold of a new era. As Brown implements its own strategic plan and the new capital campaign, we will create a "new wave" of community-engaged learning and scholarship by: transforming the student experience, magnifying Brown's impact in the world, integrating academic rigor into all that we do, and building a robust and innovative infrastructure for community engagement.

We hope you are inspired by the vision articulated in this plan, because we will not achieve our goals without you. We invite you to give us feedback, to challenge these ideas, to offer new ones, and to be an integral part of the Swearer Center community. Our ambitions—for Brown, for our students, for ourselves, for the future—are grand. We can't do it alone. It takes a community, and we welcome you to join us as we reshape and reinvigorate the Swearer Center. Together, we will reaffirm the power of a world-class liberal arts education and demonstrate the transformative potential of community engagement for students, faculty, and communities. Through our joint efforts, Brown will stand at the forefront of community-engaged higher education, in the United States, and around the globe.

Appendix A: Strategic Planning Process

Brown is unquestionably the best, most fertile environment for community-engaged scholarship in the nation. Community-engaged scholarship is the application and creation of scholarship to impact a public good, within the context of a specific community, and with community stakeholders as partners.

Community-engaged scholarship takes many forms including community-based research, social innovation, direct service, community organizing, policy research, public arts, etc. Our culture and mission uniquely align with this view of the university's role in the world, and President Paxson has clearly defined the need— and the opportunity— for Brown to assert and build on its leadership in this area in the university's own strategic plan.

With the release of *Building on Distinction*, and the launch of the Brown Together campaign, the time has come for the Swearer Center to envision and plan for our future. Our process for this plan began with a retreat facilitated by Dean of the College Maud Mandel in the summer of 2015; continued through the early fall with written individual staff reflections and several facilitated staff meetings; and branched out to meetings with many stakeholders (students, community partners, Brown faculty and staff colleagues, national leaders in the field) across the Fall semester. In September, Mathew Johnson joined the process as a strategic planning consultant prior to his assuming official duties as Director in January 2016.

In these stakeholder meetings, we reviewed core ideas underlying the plan; listened for feedback about the Center's current strengths and challenges; and solicited advice and guidance about aspects of the plan. We are grateful to all who gave their time to talk with us and contribute their insights to this plan.

Swearer Staff and Campus Events

The staff of the Swearer Center participated in two half-day planning retreats, multiple staff meetings with significant focus on the development of the plan, and multiple individual and program team meetings. Swearer Center staff also hosted and attended several events across the fall semester and into the Spring at which we gathered insights that informed the creation of this plan. These included the Swearer Center Open House; Swearer Center Community Fellows retreats; and the Provost's open meeting to discuss the University Diversity Action Plan.

Students

Several student focus groups were held early in the planning process; these conversations led to the creation of a Swearer Center Student Advisory Committee (SAC). The SAC provided input and reflected on core ideas of the plan in three meetings last fall and also gathered student opinion and reflections on the Center through semi-structured conversations with students across campus. Swearer staff also met with the student group representing the interests of first generation students at Brown and with the Academic and Administrative Affairs Committee of the Undergraduate Council of Students to share, discuss, and solicit input on emerging ideas that now animate the plan.

Community Partners

Community partners, current and prospective, were invited to provide feedback on their experiences and hopes for working with the Center and with Brown students. Current and potential partners were also invited to an open conversation regarding Brown's draft Diversity and Inclusion Plan. At these conversations, partners enumerated the value, opportunities and challenges that they encounter when engaging Brown students and discussed the roles that Swearer currently plays - and could expand upon - to help build the

capacity of community organizations. We discussed issues of equity and access among Brown students and with the University as a whole. Feedback from community partners about increasing student training, expanding the types of volunteer opportunities, more closely linking academics and engagement, and diversifying the volunteer base provided important frameworks for the strategic plan.

Brown Faculty and Administrators

Many Brown administrators and academic leaders provided insights that are reflected in this plan. Some consultations were focused on high-level strategies in the plan, while others addressed the feasibility of specific components. We are grateful for the contributions of our Brown colleagues including: Office of the Dean of the College; Office of the Provost; Office of the Dean of the Faculty; Office of the Dean of the Graduate School; Office of Financial Aid; Office of Admissions; Human Resources; School for Professional Studies; Brown Center for Students of Color; Office of Campus Life and Student Services; Advancement; and faculty and staff from numerous departments.

National Partners

National partners in the field were also consulted and provided valuable feedback and perspectives. Among the national partners consulted were: John Saltmarsh, Director of the New England Resource Center for Higher Education and Professor of Education at Boston University; Robert Hackett, President of the Bonner Foundation; David Scobey, Founding Executive Dean of the New School for Public Engagement; Diana Wells, President of Ashoka; Don Levy, Director of the Siena Research Institute and Co-Director of the National Assessment of Service and Community Engagement; and others.

Across these conversations and listening sessions, we heard the following about the strengths of the Center:

- Students engaged in Swearer Center programs take great pride in their work, the programs they facilitate in the community and the innovations they are developing.
- Brown students often play a key capacity-building role in partner agencies.
- Mentoring and advising are the most important attributes of Center activities for students.
- Partners appreciate the strong leadership qualities that the best prepared Brown students bring to their work.
- The Swearer Center is a key partner to K-12 education in Providence and beyond.
- Student management, training, and preparation are the most important functions of the Center to partners.
- Faculty appreciate the transformative impact of experiential learning and research opportunities offered by the Center, including those offered by the Social Innovation Initiative, TRI-Lab, and the far-reaching potential of the new Engaged Scholars Program.
- Community partners, students, and faculty express high regard for the professionalism, commitment, and efficacy of the Swearer Center staff and appreciate the Swearer Center's commitment to social justice.

The following recommendations emerged from the planning process:

- Articulation of a bold vision for the Center, one that builds on existing strengths, draws from leading examples nationally and internationally, and supports — from a social justice orientation — Brown's commitment "to serve the community, the nation, and the world."
- Better integration of Center initiatives, in accordance with a clear and unified theory for our work.
- Stronger, more explicit commitment to student development and outcome-based learning through systematic preparation and training of students before and during active community engagement.
- Expansion of structures that support student voice and leadership in the Center's work.

- Renewed/unwavering focus on diversity, inclusion, positionality, and social justice in all activities.
- Tighter integration of engagement experiences with academic studies, achieved through deeper relationships with faculty; academic departments, centers, and institutes; the Graduate, Public Health, and Medical schools; and the academic governance bodies.
- Strengthened university-community partnerships through resource sharing, increased participation of partners in decision-making, and commitment to partner capacity building.
- Increased leadership in national dialogues on the importance of community-engaged teaching, learning, and research for higher education.
- Increased engagement with Brown alumni around all aspects of the Center's work.
- Development of Center-wide platforms and infrastructure that make the high touch model of work with students and partners more efficient and effective as we scale.
- Assertion of capable and strong leadership, within both the Center and broader University, to make our vision a reality.
- A robust and clear communications strategy that conveys the story of our work to our stakeholders and other key audiences.

Throughout this process, and in response to what we have been learning, we have implemented a few immediate changes even before the completion and release of the strategic plan. For example, a Student Advisory Council was created in October 2015 and provided feedback on the core principles and proposals herein.

Appendix B: From Public Service to Engaged Scholarship

Nationally, the **community service** movement took shape in the late 1980's as both students and campus administrators embraced service as a counterweight to the characterization of students as part of a "me" generation." In this early conception of service in higher education, centers like Swearer simply brokered volunteer placements for students, providing extra-curricular opportunities for altruistic, socially responsible activities. Connections between those activities and bigger questions about the common good and civic participation were just emerging.

The term and practice of **service-learning** also emerged in the 1980's as it became apparent that, for service to broadly infuse academic culture and have deeper cognitive and civic dimensions, it would have to be closely linked to the core educational mission of higher education. Service learning marked a shift from the student-initiated and extracurricular community service movement to service that was integrated with academic study, mostly at the course level.

In the 1990s, **civic engagement** became the dominant language and paradigm. Advocates for civic engagement believe that democracy is a learned activity and that universities must provide deliberate opportunities for students to actively participate in the processes of democracy. A seminal 1998 report on civic disengagement from the National Commission on Civic Renewal served as a wake-up call and rallying point for higher education by virtue of the absence of institutions of higher learning in the report's recommendations.

In the early 2000s, energy in higher education shifted to a focus on measurement and research related to **outcomes** of service learning. Evidence began to suggest that the episodic nature of service learning was not the most effective form of **civic engagement** for either student learning or community impact. New language and a new paradigm of community engagement emerged in which community interests were re-centered; long-term, intensive, reciprocal relationships with local non-profits and community agencies were emphasized; and "partnership" emerged as a key organizing principle for higher education.

The ambitions of this approach stretch far beyond previous iterations. Community engagement is increasingly being integrated into other institutional priorities including undergraduate and faculty research initiatives, and diversity and inclusion initiatives; and is reflected in the funding requirements of major research funders like the National Science Foundation and others. Recommendations from a recent and influential report from the National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement reflect the scale of these ambitions for higher education and include:

1. Fostering a civic ethos across all parts of campus and educational culture;
2. Making civic literacy a core expectation for all students;
3. Practicing civic inquiry across all fields of study; and
4. Advancing civic action through transformative partnerships, at home and abroad.

Social innovation/social entrepreneurship has emerged more recently as a model that emphasizes the value of innovation in addressing pressing social needs. Social Innovation has renewed focus on outcomes - and pushed the field of community engagement to think more carefully about impact and innovation. At Brown, social innovation is unique as it emphasizes scholarly consideration and rigor in its approach and in as much seeded the consolidation and articulation of engaged scholarship.

Engaged scholarship is the next generation of this work and Brown is the right institution to lead the next revolution. By engaged scholarship, we mean the purposeful integration of teaching, learning, and research that confronts community challenges - in partnership with those communities to explore, analyze and develop approaches to addressing those community challenges. We believe Brown has a unique position and history from which to lead this alignment of research, teaching and practice in an effort to address community need in a significant and sustainable ways.

Notes

¹Hoy, A., & Meisel, W. (2008). Civic engagement at the center: Building democracy through integrated co-curricular and curricular experience. Washington DC: AAC&U. See also [The Engaged Campus: Certificates, Minors, and Majors As The New Community Engagement](#). Edited by Dan W. Butin and Scott Seider. New York, N.Y.: Palgrave, Macmillan, 2012.

²Kuh, George D. (2008). High-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter. AAC&U, Washington, D.C.

³Swaner, L. & Brownell, J. (2009). Outcomes of High Impact Practices for Underserved Students: A Review of the Literature. Prepared for AAC&U.

⁴Eyler, J. (2002). Reflection: Linking Service and Learning—Linking Students and Communities. *Journal of Social Issues*, 58: 517–534.

⁵Today, these community engaged courses include: SOC 0310: Theory and Practice of Engaged Scholarship; SOC 1870A: Investing in Social Change ; EDUC0950: Learning About Learning: Classrooms in Context; PLCY1701Q: Leading Social Ventures: Social Entrepreneurship in Action PLCY1800: Investigating Modes of Social Change; PLCY1910: Social Entrepreneurship; PLCY1810: Models for Sustaining Social Transformation; and TRI-Lab: Designing Education for Better Prisoner & Community Health.

⁶The Swearer Center will build on earlier work done to develop an undergraduate Community Teaching/Research Fellows Program. See: <https://web.archive.org/web/20100616081314/http://swearercenter.brown.edu/what/awards.html>

⁷Eatman, T., Weber, S., Bush, A., Nastasi, W., Higgins, R., & Imagining America (2011). Study of publicly engaged scholars: Career

aspirations and decisions of graduate students and early career professionals and practitioners. Unpublished research study. <http://www.ia-research.org>. See also: Strum, S, Eatman, T., Saltmarch, J., and Bush, A. (2011). Full Participation: Building the Architecture for Diversity and Community Engagement in Higher Education. *Imagining America*. Paper 17.

⁸Community partners consistently express a desire for better prepared students, achieved through training and development. See: Bell, S. M., Carlson, R. (2009). Motivations of community organizations for service learning. In R. Stoecker, E. A. Tryon, & A. Hilgendorf (eds.). The Unheard Voices: Community Organizations and Service Learning. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.; CCPH Board of Directors. (2013). Position Statement on Authentic Partnerships. *Community-Campus Partnerships for Health*; Barrera, D. (2015). Examining Our Interdependence: Community Partners' Motivations to Participate in Academic Outreach. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, 19(4).

⁹Community engagement in higher education now centers around competencies, as highlighted in several reports including: The National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement. A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy's Future (2012). Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities; Core Competencies in Civic Engagement, by The Center for Engaged Democracy; also see Hoy, A., & Johnson, M. (eds.) (2013). Deepening community engagement in higher education: Forging new pathways. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

¹⁰Pittinsky, Matthew (2015), "Credentialing in Higher Education: Current Challenges and Innovative Trends," *Educause Review*.

¹¹Purdue University has pioneered an open source platform that serves this function; we will assess the potential of using this platform, along with others or one of our own design. See: <http://www.itap.purdue.edu/studio/#section1>.

¹²Kuh, George. (2008). "High-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter." AAC&U, Washington, D.C.

¹³American Association of Colleges and Universities (2008). *College Learning for the New Global Century*.

¹⁴Schmidt, H., Rotgans, J., Yew, E. (2011) The process of problem-based learning: what works and why. *Medical Education* Volume 45, Issue 8, 792–806. Hmelo-Silver, C. Problem-Based Learning: What and How Do Students Learn? *Educational Psychology Review*, September 2004, Volume 16, Issue 3, 235-266

¹⁵Pascarella, E.T., Terenzini, P.T. (2005). How College Affects Students: Vol. 2. A third decade of research (2nd edition) San Francisco. Jossey-Bass

¹⁶Colby, A., Ehrlich, T., Beaumont, E., & Stephens, J. (2003). *Educating citizens: Preparing America's undergraduates for lives of moral and civic responsibility*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass. Brandenberger, J.W. (2005). College, character, and social responsibility: Moral learning through experience. In D. Lapsley & F.C. Poer (Eds.), Character Psychology and Character Education, 305-334. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press. C. McTighe Musil. (2009). Educating Students for personal and social responsibility. In B. Jacoby, Civic Engagement in Higher Education. Jossey-Bass

¹⁷Keen, C., & Hall, K. (2008). Engaging with difference matters: Longitudinal college outcomes of co-curricular service-learning programs. *Journal of Higher Education*.

¹⁸The Bonner Fellows program will adopt the premier national model of student engagement, developed and promoted by the Bertram F. and Corella Bonner Foundation.

¹⁹See Response from the Swearer Center: "Pathways to Diversity and Inclusion":

<https://www.brown.edu/academics/college/special-programs/public-service/news/2016-01/response-swearer-center-pathways-diversity-and-inclusion>

²⁰ An early version of this concept, the Social Entrepreneur in Residence, is being piloted by SII in partnership with the Taubman Center in Spring 2016.

²¹ The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has developed a comprehensive evaluation system for measuring institutional commitment to community-engaged scholarship. As of 2015, 361 campuses nationwide have received the Carnegie classification for community engagement. New applications for classification will be accepted in 2020. See: http://nerche.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=341&Itemid=92#2020CEC

²² See: <http://webdev.siena.edu/centers-institutes/siena-research-institute/national/about-nasce>

²³ The Bonner Network has assembled an excellent resource list of tools and rubrics for assessing institutional engagement at: <http://bonnernetwork.pbworks.com/w/page/13113211/Tools%20and%20Rubrics%20for%20Campus%20Civic%20Engagement%20Assessment>. The Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service at Tufts University coordinates the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement; see: <http://civicyouth.org/>.

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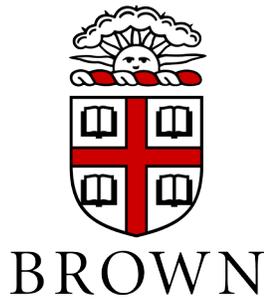
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