

Engaged Scholarship and Implementing an Implementation Revolution through University-Community-School Partnerships”

April 9, 2016

University of Pennsylvania, Department of Philosophy
Philosophy and Engagement Conference

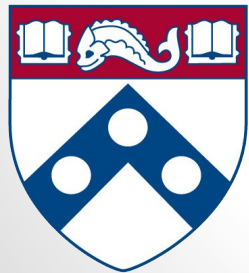
Ira Harkavy

Associate Vice President

Founding Director, Barbara and Edward Netter Center for Community Partnerships

University of Pennsylvania

harkavy@upenn.edu



Netter Center
for Community Partnerships

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA
www.nettercenter.upenn.edu

Why Engaged Scholarship and an Implementation Revolution

- Era of unprecedentedly complex problems, locally, nationally, and globally
- Universities have a unique responsibility (and resources) to *help* solve these problems and others intensified by globalization
- Given current state of the world, universities are not contributing as they could and should
- Engaged scholarship and a focus on implementation can significantly increase higher education's contributions to knowledge and society

Engaged Scholarship and Implementation Research: Some Roots and Connections

Goal:

- ❖ To produce significant change, advance intellectual work, and develop new discoveries at the frontier.
 - Francis Bacon: Knowledge is power “for the relief of man’s estate.”
 - Bacon (1605), *The Advancement of Learning*
 - Benjamin Franklin: “an *Inclination* join’d with an *Ability* to serve Mankind, one’s Country, Friends and Family . . . should indeed be the great *Aim* and *End* of all Learning.”
 - Franklin (1749), *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania*

Some Roots and Connections

Core Assumptions:

- ❖ Human beings learn from and through engagement and implementation.
- ❖ Research designed to realize large societal goals through developing and implementing programs on the ground, studying these programs, improving these programs, and engaging in an iterative process of study, reflection, and change, leads to significant learning and high-level theoretical advances.
 - John Dewey: "Thinking begins in . . . a forked-road situation, a situation which is ambiguous, which presents a dilemma, which proposes alternatives."
 - Dewey (1910), *How We Think*
 - Kurt Lewin: "If you want to truly understand something, try to change it."
 - Lewin (1890-1947), quoted in Franco Orsucci, *Mind Force: On Human Attractions*

Some Roots and Connections

General Approach

- ◆ **Theory is integrated with practice, and the test of knowledge is the ability of human beings to improve the world.**
 - Benjamin Franklin: “While they [students] are reading Natural History, might not a little *Gardening, Planting, Grafting, Inoculating, &c. be taught and practiced* [emphasis added]; and now and then Excursions made to the neighboring Plantations of the best Farmers, their Methods observ’d and reason’d upon for the Information of Youth. The Improvement of Agriculture being useful to all, and Skill in it no Disparagement to any.”
 - Franklin (1749), *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania*
 - Karl Marx: “Philosophers have only *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point is to *change* it.”
 - Marx (1845), *Theses on Feuerbach*
 - John Dewey: “The social philosopher, dwelling in the region of his concepts, ‘solves’ problems by showing the relationship of ideas, instead of helping men solve problems in the concrete by supplying them hypotheses to be used and tested in projects of reform.”
 - Dewey (1920), *Reconstruction in Philosophy*

Some Roots and Connections

General Approach

- ◆ **Incorporating a range of methods is seen as necessary if progress is to be made towards the solution of highly complex, real world problems.**
 - Ernest Nagel: “The difference just described can be expressed by the dictum that the conclusions of science, unlike common-sense beliefs, are the products of scientific method. However, this brief formula should not be misconstrued. It must not be understood to assert, for example, that the practice of scientific method consists in following prescribed rules for making experimental discoveries or for finding satisfactory explanations for matters of established fact. There are no rules of discovery and invention in science any more than there are such rules in the arts. Nor must the formula be construed as maintaining that the practice of scientific method consists in the use in all inquiries of some special set of techniques (such as the techniques of measurement employed in physical science), irrespective of the subject matter or the problem under investigation. Such an interpretation of the dictum is a caricature of its intent; and in any event the dictum on that interpretation is preposterous.”
 - Nagel (1961), *Structure of Science: Problems in the Logic of Scientific Explanation*
 - Donald Schön: “The varied topography of professional practice, there is a high, hard ground over looking a swamp. On the high ground, manageable problems lend themselves to solution through the use of research-based theory and technique. In the swampy lowlands, problems are messy and confusing and incapable of technical solution. The irony of this situation is that the problems of the high ground tend to be relatively unimportant to individuals or to society at large, however great their technical interest may be, while in the swamp lie the problems of greatest human concern.”
 - Schön (1995), “Knowing-in-Action: The New Scholarship Requires a New Epistemology”

Some Roots and Connections

General Approach

- ◆ **Methods, such as participatory action research, that promote the inclusive involvement of practitioners, community members, patients, etc., in all stages of the research process (as appropriate to the setting and problem) are particularly essential for successful implementation research that results in reliable findings and actual change.**
 - William Foote Whyte: “In PAR the researcher combines participant observation with explicitly recognized action objectives and a commitment to carry out the project with the active participation in the research process by some members of the organization studied.”
 - Whyte (1989), “Advancing Scientific Knowledge through Participatory Action Research”
 - William M.K. Trochim: “There is growing recognition in many arenas that our most fundamental problems are systemic, interconnected, and inextricably linked to social and economic issues and factors. Solutions will involve husbanding the resources, talents and insights of a wide range of people. The formulation of problems and potential solutions needs to involve a broad range of constituencies.”
 - Trochim (2006), *The Research Methods Knowledge Base*, “An Evaluation Culture”

Implementing an Implementation Revolution: How Do We Get There from Here?

- Serious mismanagement of the world as a whole exists today as it has for centuries. As concerned scientists and world citizens, we are deeply alarmed, particularly in a time of so-called peace. We do not understand (or cannot accept) why so many people are starving, illiterate, diseased, hopelessly bound by political forces; why the ecology of the world is threatened by major pollution and the lack of serious conservation efforts; why wars are still used to “solve” international problems; why racism, homelessness, and child abuse are still common, or why there is such widespread neglect of the plight of future generations.... Hence, . . .we ought (in an ethical sense) to create a science that knows how to manage the world of human affairs better.

University-Community-School Partnerships as a Way Forward

Why Colleges and Universities?

- Enormous resources, particularly human resources
- Development and transmittal of new discoveries
- Education of societal leaders
- Shape the schooling system
- Multi-faceted roles as anchor institutions



University-Community Engagement: A Global Movement

- Campus Compact
- Coalition of Urban Serving Universities
- Office on Urban Initiatives within the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities
- Anchor Institutions Task Force
- International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy
- GUNi
- The Talloires Network



Campus Compact



Anchor Institutions Task Force



Why Increasing Engagement from 1990-2016?

- Perceived Civic Crisis
- End of Cold War
- Urban Decline
- The Intellectual Case
 - Ernest Boyer, *Scholarship Reconsidered*, 1990
 - Derek Bok, *Universities and the Future of America*, 1990
- Increased Emphasis on Undergraduate Education and Citizenship

Democratic Mission of Higher Education

“An *Inclination* join'd with an *Ability* to serve Mankind, one's Country, Friends and Family ... should be the great *Aim* and *End* of all learning.”

- Benjamin Franklin, *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania* (1749)

The Wisconsin Idea was to make “the boundaries of the university...the boundaries of the state.”

When asked what accounted for the great progressive reforms that spread across the Midwest in the first two decades of the 20th century, Charles McCarthy replied, a union of “soil and seminar.”

- Charles McCarthy, graduate of the University of Wisconsin and the first legislative reference librarian in the United States (1912)

“[The academy should] make for less misery among the poor, less ignorance in the schools, less suffering in the hospital, less fraud in business, [and] less folly in politics.”

- Daniel Coit Gilman, first President of Johns Hopkins University (1876)

“The university is the prophet of this democracy... and its to-be-expected deliverer.”

- William Rainey Harper, first President of University of Chicago (1899)

Obstacles

- “Unaccountable prejudice in favor of ancient Customs and Habitudes” (Franklin, 1789)
- Forces of commercialism and commodification
- Misplaced nostalgia for “Ivory Tower,” traditional elitist, traditional liberal arts
- Intellectual and institutional fragmentation

“Communities have problems,
universities have departments.”

-Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
report (1982)

A Deweyian Approach

“Thinking begins in ... a *forked- road* situation, a situation which is ambiguous, which presents a dilemma, which proposes alternatives.”

- John Dewey, *How We Think* (1910)

“The true starting point of history is always some present situation with its problems.”

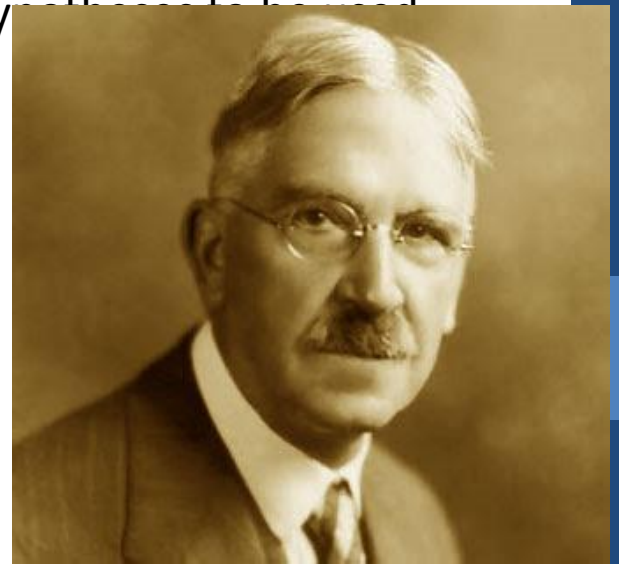
- John Dewey, *Democracy in Education* (1916)

“The social philosopher, dwelling in the region of his concepts, ‘solves’ problems by showing the relationship of ideas, instead of helping men solve problems in the concrete by supplying them hypotheses to be used and tested in projects of reform.”

- John Dewey (1920), *Reconstruction in Philosophy*

“Democracy must begin at home, and its home is the neighborly community.”

- John Dewey, *The Public and its Problems* (1927)



Local Engagement at Penn: From the Periphery toward the Center

“The picture that emerges is one of a relationship in which the University and the City are important to one another. We stand on common ground, our futures very much intertwined.”

- *University of Pennsylvania Annual Report, 1987-1988*

“At Penn, local engagement is one of the core tenets of the Penn Compact—Penn’s Strategic Vision for moving from excellence to eminence—and is an integral part of the University’s mission.”

- *University of Pennsylvania Financial Report, 2008-2009*



Organizational Learning: The Netter Center

Founded in 1992, the Barbara and Edward Netter Center for Community Partnerships is Penn's primary vehicle for bringing to bear the broad range of human knowledge needed to solve the complex, comprehensive, and interconnected problems of the American city so that West Philadelphia (Penn's local geographic community), Philadelphia, the University itself, and society benefit.

Rationale for Civic & Community Engagement:

- Penn's future and the future of West Philadelphia/ Philadelphia are intertwined.
- Penn can make a significant contribution to improving the quality of life in West Philadelphia/Philadelphia.
- Penn can enhance its overall mission of advancing and transmitting knowledge by helping to improve the quality of life in West Philadelphia/Philadelphia.

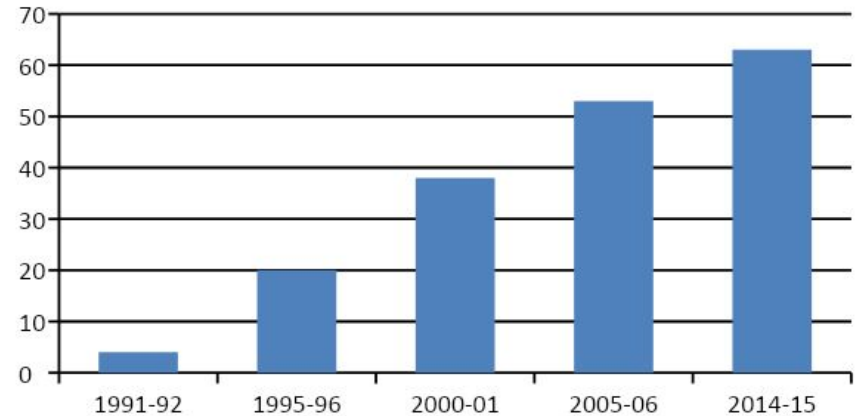


Vehicle: Academically Based Community Service (ABCS)

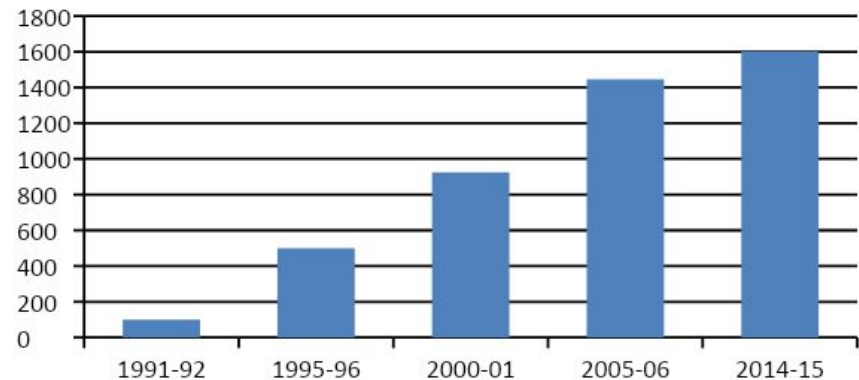
- Service rooted in and intrinsically tied to research, teaching, and learning
- Addresses universal problems as they are manifested locally through collaborative problem-solving, K-16+
- Helps students to become contributing, creative, democratic citizens



ABCS Courses



ABCS Students



In 2014-15, **63** ABCS courses (40 undergraduate, 10 graduate, and 13 cross-listed as both) were taught in **26** departments and programs across **8** schools by **49** faculty. Approximately **1600** undergraduate and graduate students were enrolled in ABCS courses.

Helping to Solve Universal Problems as they are Manifested Locally

Development of ongoing, faculty-led projects:

- Agatston Urban Nutrition Initiative
 - Frank Johnston, Professor Emeritus, Anthropology
- Moelis Access Science
 - Larry Gladney Associate Dean of the Natural Sciences and Professor of Physics & Astronomy

W.E.B. Du Bois in his 1899 classic *The Philadelphia Negro* wrote that the purpose of his research was to “serve as the scientific basis of further study, and of practical reform.”



University-Assisted Community Schools

- Builds on the work of Jane Addams and other activist feminist settlement house leaders, and John Dewey's "school as social centre"
- Focus on the school as the core institution for community engagement and democratic development
- Serve educational, social service, health, and recreational needs of students and entire community
- Engage universities as lead partners in providing academic, human, and material resources
- Improves quality of life and learning in the community while advancing the academic mission of the university

In 2015-2016:

Approximately **2200** Penn students, **49** faculty, and **110** full and part time staff worked with approximately **3000** K-12 West Philadelphia youth and their families through University-Assisted Community School programs.



Regional, National & Global Networks

- Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development (1987)
- University-Assisted Community Schools Replication & Adaptation (1993)
- Anchor Institutions Task Force (2009)
- International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy (1999)



Conclusion: Realizing Franklin's Vision

"An *Inclination* join'd with an *Ability* to serve Mankind, one's Country, Friends and Family ... should be the great *Aim* and *End* of all learning."

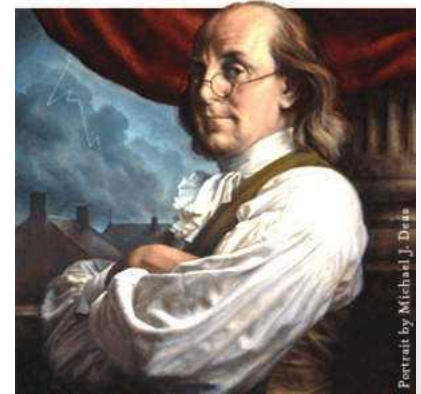
- Benjamin Franklin, *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania* (1749)

"Nothing is of more importance to the public weal, than to form and train up youth in wisdom and virtue."

- Benjamin Franklin, *Letter to Samuel Johnson* (August 23, 1750)

"But there is in mankind an unaccountable prejudice in favor of ancient Customs and Habitues, which inclines to a Continuance of them after the Circumstances which formerly made them useful, cease to exist."

- Benjamin Franklin, *Observations Relative to the Intentions of the Original Founders of the Academy of Philadelphia* (1789)



Portrait by Michael J. Dean