

Catholic Inspired Community Engagement Task Force Mid-Year Report

The Catholic Inspired Community Engagement Task Force [CICE] met three times in the fall and also held an open forum for the community as well as participation in a student forum. The committee was divided into five sub-committees. The five sub-committees are listed below. Members from each subcommittee met with the stake holders in each of their respective areas and their reports are as follows:

Faith-Based Sub-Committee

Becca Swiler, Father Erich Rutten, Nancy Sannerud

- University must build an infrastructure that is sustainable over time.
- Build student/university member skill sets to include empathy, cultural literacy and the ability to communicate during difficult situations to ensure positive engagement with external communities.
- Ensure reciprocity in the sustained relationship - be “of” the community not just in the community.
- Make decisions based on data.
- Do not repeat what everyone else is doing but seek to fill the gaps

Business & Social-Entrepreneurship Sub-Committee

Father Larry Snyder, Frank Forsberg

- Create a culture focusing on building-up and contributing to the common good.
- Define the university community broadly to include students, staff, faculty, alumni and neighbors.
- Focus a distinct amount of its resources on particular communities or populations to have a greater impact.
- Build an understanding of social enterprise that engages and crosses all educational disciplines, and provides many ways for students to see themselves actively engaged.
- Map our asset’s to listen and respond to the needs of the community; develop metrics to measure impact.

University Sub-Committee

Kim Vrudny, Brad Pulles, Karen Lange

- Bring curricular and co-curricular efforts together in one centralized location.
- Create a logical university-wide structure that enables reasonable independence and leverages student leader talent and passion for community engagement.
- Continue to discuss place-based models and critical service learning.

- Identify strategic and thoughtful ties to academic curriculum.
- Institutionalize community engagement so that it is a valued part of the UST experience for faculty, staff, and students.

Public Sector Sub-Committee

Elise Amel, Amy Gage, Jim Ennis

- Advocate best practices for student-community transformation:
 - Reflection to build student empathy & understanding
 - Address community-identified needs
 - Address underlying systems
 - Build collaborative, reciprocal community relationships
- Try to go “deep,” where UST has an obvious academic strength and connections, and go “broad”, by making sure we’re engaged in numerous places: municipal, nonprofit, for-profit and neighborhood organizations.
- Interdisciplinary work is key to engaging in community research and problem-solving, necessitating bigger, organized, long-term oriented programming.
- Recognize real costs of outreach: staff support, space, time.
- Community collaboration results must be made public and high profile.

Non-Profit Sub-Committee

Pat Stankovitch, Eva Solomonson

- Foster formal and structured alliances with partner non-profits.
- Leverage our expertise in Catholic social teaching, business and marketing, mental health, among others.
- Develop students with genuine compassion, concern and care for the common good.
- Focus on partnerships that bring the most “bang for the buck”:
 - Promote innovation and more efficient/effective ways of doing non-profit work
 - Encourage students to use their academic skills in real-life setting as well as deepen their compassion and comprehension of social justice issues
 - Seeks partnerships that reach the largest stakeholder group i.e. university-wide
- Make learning about social justice issues part of academic curriculum.

Some common words and common themes came to the forefront as the subcommittees shared the results of their work.

Common Words:



Common Themes:

- *Build university-wide, institutionalized culture of engagement*
- *Deepen compassion and empathy of all university community members that leads to action*
- *Build sustainable, structured, strategic alliances seeking reciprocity and collaboration all while enforcing humility and humanity aspects of community work*
- *Leverage recognized university expertise and move toward aspirational innovation*
- *Seek academic integration to include learning goals and holistic learning*

The CICE Task Force will meet again on February 12, 2016 and will soon begin making recommendations.