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Elizabeth Strong  
Associate Director, Citizenship and Service-Learning  
Missouri State University  
PSU 209  
901 South National Ave  
Springfield, MO 65897

Dear Ms. Strong:

On behalf of the Carnegie Foundation, congratulations! Your institution has been selected for the 2010 Community Engagement Classification. We are pleased to inform you of this classification decision before its public release on January 5, 2011, when we will announce the entire set of newly classified institutions.

Your application documented excellent alignment among mission, culture, leadership, resources, and practices that support dynamic and noteworthy community engagement, and you were able to respond to the classification framework with both descriptions and examples of exemplary institutionalized practices of community engagement. You also documented and coordinated evidence of community engagement in a coherent and compelling response to the framework's inquiry.

Your campus is one of 115 institutions that will now be added to the Community Engagement Classification completed in 2006 and 2008, bringing the total to 311. It is heartening to see this level of commitment and activity. Clearly, higher education is making real strides in finding ways to engage with and contribute to important community agendas. There is much to celebrate.

There are also areas in which more work must be done. During the selection process, we noted that even among the most effective applications, there are categories of practice in need of continued development. Those areas include: (1) assessment, (2) reciprocal partnerships, (3) faculty rewards, and (4) integration and alignment with other institutional initiatives:

- (1) The assessment practices required by the Community Engagement Classification must meet a broad range of purposes: assessing community perceptions of institutional engagement; tracking and recording of institution-wide engagement data; assessment of the impact of community engagement on students, faculty, community, and institution; identification and assessment of student learning outcomes in curricular engagement; and ongoing feedback mechanisms for partnerships. That range of purposes calls for sophisticated understandings and approaches to achieve the respective assessment goals. We urge institutions to continue to develop assessment toward those ends.

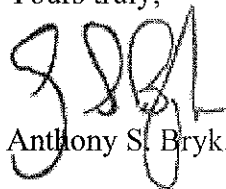
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- (2) Partnerships require a high level of understanding and intentional practices specifically directed to reciprocity and mutuality. In the 2010 applications, we noted that institutions have begun to attend to processes of initiating and nurturing collaborative, two-way partnerships, and are developing strategies for systematic communication. Maintaining authentically collaborative, mutually beneficial partnerships takes ongoing commitment, and we urge institutions to continue their attention to this critical aspect of community engagement.
- (3) With regard to faculty rewards for roles in community engagement and community-based achievements, we see little change in institutional practices related to the scholarship of engagement. This year's applications reveal two common approaches to conceptualizing community engagement for promotion and tenure. The first is to place the engagement achievements in the categories of teaching or research and to require traditional forms of scholarship (articles, presentations, and grants). The second is to consider community engagement in a broad category of service along with campus-based and discipline-based professional service, and community service that ranges from volunteerism to consultation; this second approach may or may not carry expectations of a scholarly approach. We urge Community Engagement institutions to initiate study, dialogue, and reflection to promote and reward the scholarship of engagement more fully.
- (4) Community engagement offers often-untapped possibilities for alignment with other campus priorities and initiatives to achieve greater impact—for example, first-year programs that include community engagement; learning communities in which community engagement is integrated into the design; or diversity initiatives that explicitly link active and collaborative community-based teaching and learning with the academic success of underrepresented students. There remain significant opportunities for campuses to develop collaborative internal practices that integrate disparate initiatives into more coherent community engagement efforts.

As noted above, the 2010 Community Engagement Classification is scheduled for public release on January 5, 2011. Once again, congratulations to you, your faculty, staff, students, and community partners on this achievement. We hope you will see this as an opportunity to push your own efforts to a next level and also to mentor and support campuses that are in earlier stages of institutionalizing community engagement. Your guidance will contribute significantly to the strength of community engagement in higher education.

If you have any questions, please contact John Saltmarsh, Director of the New England Resource Center for Higher Education ([john.saltmarsh@umb.edu](mailto:john.saltmarsh@umb.edu)), or Amy Driscoll, Consulting Scholar for the Community Engagement Classification ([driscoll@carnegiefoundation.org](mailto:driscoll@carnegiefoundation.org)).

Yours truly,



Anthony S. Bryk, President

cc: Dr. James Cofer