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Building the Service-Learning Pyramid

Campus Compact

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• Campus Compact

SPECIAL REPORT

APRIL 1999

building

the **Service-Learning Pyramid**

Through a \$3 million dollar grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts, Campus Compact will undertake an extensive effort to increase young people's involvement in civic and community life.

This work will also focus on increasing higher education's commitment to its civic responsibilities.

IN JANUARY 1999, Campus Compact was awarded a \$3 million grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts to increase student participation in civic and community life. Campus Compact, with a steadily growing membership of 620 college and university presidents and a network of 21 state offices and a National Center for Community Colleges, was awarded the grant because of its unique ability to raise the quality of undergraduate civic education across America. It has long been Campus Compact's mission to assist higher education in providing young people with the values, skills, and knowledge of active citizenship. Equally important, Pew recognized Campus Compact's capacity to deepen higher education's commitment to its civic responsibilities, especially its role in strengthening communities.

Officials at Pew Trusts agree with Campus Compact that there is a great need for such an extensive effort at this time. Recent reports on student attitudes indicate a growing apathy towards civic responsibilities and cynicism towards government and political leaders (National Association of Secretaries of State, 1999; Astin, 1999; Hart, 1998). One indicator of this apathy can be seen in the low voter turnout among 18-24 year olds, with just 15% voting in 1998 (Committee for the Study of the American Electorate, 1999).

Even though recent reports indicate that involvement in community service is up, especially among those in high school (Astin, 1999), students are not connecting participating in the community with democratic behaviors such as voting and shaping public policy. Higher education is uniquely positioned to make this connection as many young people turn to their schools, universities, and colleges for skills and direction on how to become involved in their communities (Hart, 1998).

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The most recognized and effective teaching method to help students become active, responsible citizens is service-learning. Service-learning exposes students to the needs of the larger society, engages them in addressing those needs through community service, and connects what they learn in the classroom to real-world conditions.

At its best, service-learning is a powerful teaching method that allows students to reflect upon why such conditions exist and what their democratic responsibilities are in addressing them. A study by the Higher Education Research Institute comparing service participants with non-participants showed that participation in community service positively influenced every one of the 35 measured student outcomes, which fell into broad categories of academic development, civic values, and life skills (Astin, 1996).

With funding from Pew, Campus Compact will enrich and improve upon service-learning programs and introduce the service-learning model to an additional 120 campuses within the

Together these practices reaffirm and realize the historic commitment of higher education to citizenship building and civic responsibility.

next four years. Campus Compact will assist campuses where service-learning has already taken hold by helping them change reward systems for faculty to recognize participation in service and service-learning. Campus Compact will also assist colleges and universities in developing the necessary administrative support for effective campus-community partnerships.

Part of the work will focus on deepening the practice of service-learning within a range of academic disciplines. Campus Compact will also define the practices of an "engaged campus," a college or university that has a comprehensive strategy for its relationship with the community.

Together, these practices reaffirm and realize the historic commitment of higher education to citizenship building and civic responsibility.

The following pages outline concepts and key strategies to support civic education in post-secondary institutions. The ultimate goal of this effort is to move America closer to a nation of responsible, active citizens who are fully vested in the welfare of the democracy. ▲

Astin, A.W., Sax, L.J., & Avalos, J. *Long-term effects of volunteerism during the undergraduate years*. Higher Education Research Institute, University of California-Los Angeles, 1996. Referenced in Astin, A.W. *Liberal Education and Democracy: The Case for Pragmatism*. *Liberal Education*, Vol. 83, No. 4, 4-15, 1997.

New Leadership for a New Century: Key Findings from a Study on Youth, Leadership and Community Service. Peter D. Hart Research Associates for Public Allies, 1998.

Sax, L.J., Astin, A.W., Korn, W.S., Mahoney, K.M. (1998) *The American Freshman: National Norms for Fall 1998*. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA.

The New Millennium Project: American Youth Attitudes on Politics, Citizenship, Government and Voting. National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS), 1999.

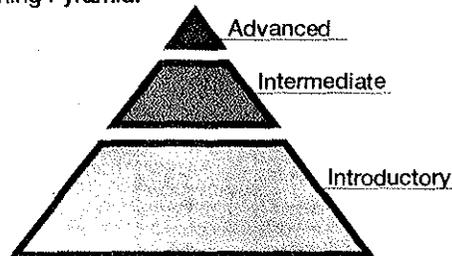
Voter Turnout Report. Washington: Committee for the Study of the American Electorate (CSAE), 1999.

The Pyramid Defined

The pedagogy of service-learning has spread significantly in recent years. Evidence of this is found in the dramatic increase in Campus Compact's membership, from 300 campuses in 1992 to more than 600 in 1999. In a 1998 survey of Campus Compact's members, 99% of respondents reported having at least one service-learning course, up from 66% in 1993. Of the 99%, 19% had 40 or more courses, 48% had between 10 and 39 courses, and just 33% had less than 10 courses.

Although widespread, many campuses are only in the early stages of adopting the service-learning pedagogy and seek much guidance and outside expertise. Others, where service-learning has taken hold, grapple with the difficult issues of institutionalizing the practice on their campuses—issues such as redefining faculty roles and rewards and providing the necessary infrastructure. Finally, there is a small number where service-learning is widespread—campuses whose missions are inextricably bound to their civic responsibilities.

This broad range of representation, from introductory to intermediate through advanced practice, comprises what Campus Compact calls the Service-Learning Pyramid.



Introductory Level

At the *base* of the pyramid is the Introductory Level. Here, large numbers of campuses are experimenting with service-learning. On some campuses, there are just a few interested faculty. On others, campuses have sophisticated student service opportunities and are beginning to recognize how powerful experiences can deepen the students' commitment and understanding. On still others, presidents have become intrigued with the pedagogy and are urging faculty to try it.

In Campus Compact's 1998 member survey, 68% of respondents reported that no more than 10% of their faculty is using this pedagogy. Often these campuses have no designated service-learning contact person or if they do, the person is not well known. The service-learning courses at these schools are of uneven quality and many students do not even know they exist. While courses are "allowed to happen," no campus policies exist to support faculty teaching them and community involvement is on an ad hoc basis.

Intermediate Level

In the *center* of the pyramid lies a smaller but growing Intermediate Level. In 1998, 23% of Campus Compact campuses had 11% to 25% of their faculty conducting service-learning courses. Campuses at this level have enough courses in a variety of disciplines to begin to think of service-learning as a mainstream practice.

Here, a support system in the form of a community service center and/or a service-learning center likely exists. Just as likely is an exemplary service-learning course in more than one discipline and "advanced" faculty who are showcased on campus. Usually, there is some networking and communication among practitioners on campus. A network of community members is also likely developed.

These campuses are beginning to think about issues of faculty roles and rewards, starting work with chief academic officers and department chairs, looking at student outcomes, and improving their community connections. Intermediate-level campuses are seeking disciplinary support for their faculty. In addition, these campuses are also beginning to address questions of the quality of their service-learning courses, and sometimes, are measuring community impact.

Advanced Level

At the *top* are the advanced level campuses. These have significant numbers of service-learning courses, and these courses are often only one of multiple strategies to promote student and campus engagement with their community. These campuses enjoy abundant support from the highest levels on the campus, pay attention to faculty roles and rewards, emphasize quality and use in every discipline, have sophisticated community involvement and defined measurable outcomes.

Campus Compact's 1998 survey reveals that these campuses—as measured by having 25% or more of their faculty involved in service learning—show a significantly higher percentage of students engaged in service. These campuses are more likely to reward student service involvement through scholarships and loan forgiveness. Service-learning courses are more likely to be incorporated into departments, majors, and core curriculum and graduation requirements. ▲

Building the Pyramid

AT THE CULMINATION of the four-year grant, the ratios of the Service-Learning Pyramid and the standard at each level will be significantly altered. (See exhibit on page 5.)

By 2002, more institutions will have transitioned to the intermediate and advanced levels of the Service-Learning Pyramid and more of America's post-secondary institutions will be actively and inextricably bound to their communities and to their civic responsibilities.

Campus Compact will realize this vision by:

- 1 Broadening and deepening institutional support for service-learning
- 2 Supporting faculty practitioners at all levels of the pyramid
- 3 Exploring the implication of the advanced practice of civic education, deepening the commitment of higher education, and defining the practices of a truly engaged campus.

Major activities

Following are just some of the activities that will take place as part of the grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts.

A complete list of activities that will be carried out in the four years as a result of the grant is available on our web site at www.compact.org.

Campus-based Activities

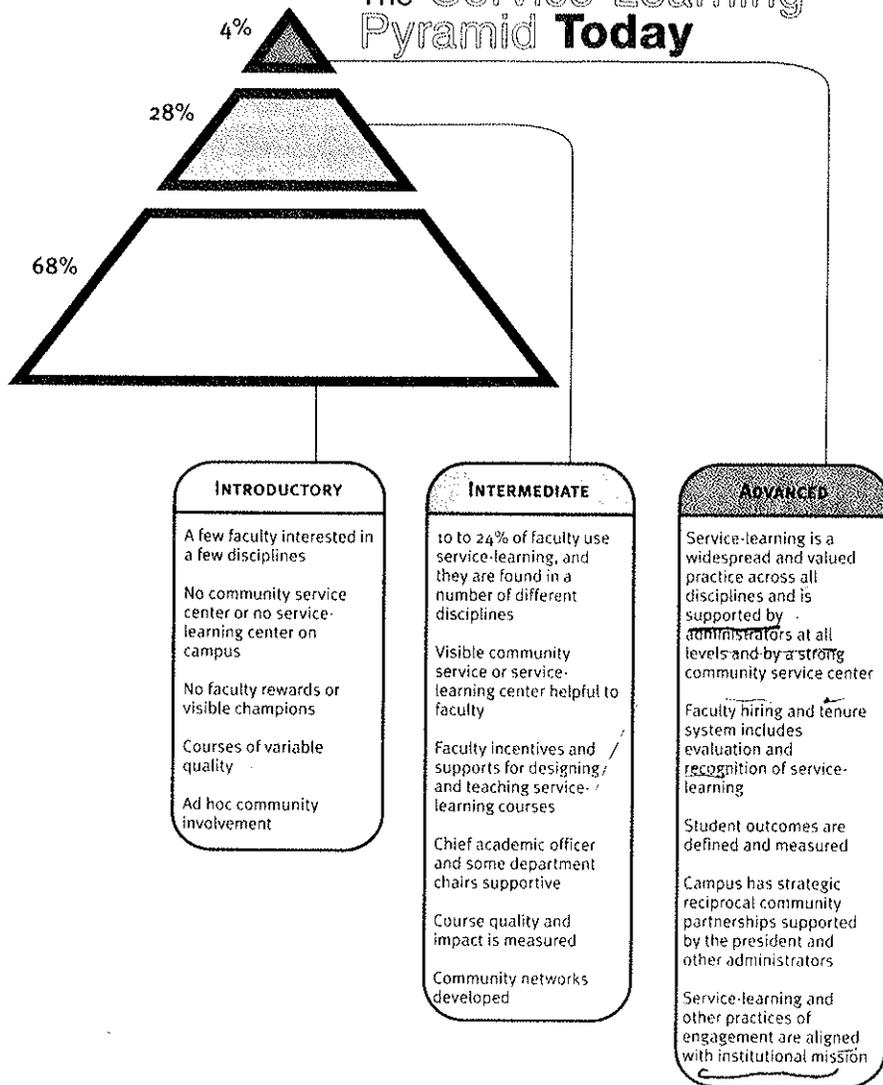
Introductory Institutes

Campus Compact will conduct eight regional Introductory Institutes for 120 campuses. Basic information on what service-learning is, why to do it, how to

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page 4

The Service-Learning Pyramid Today



Level

Advanced

Institutional

3 advanced institutes
 Conference and workshops on the
 Capstone Conference on Engaged C

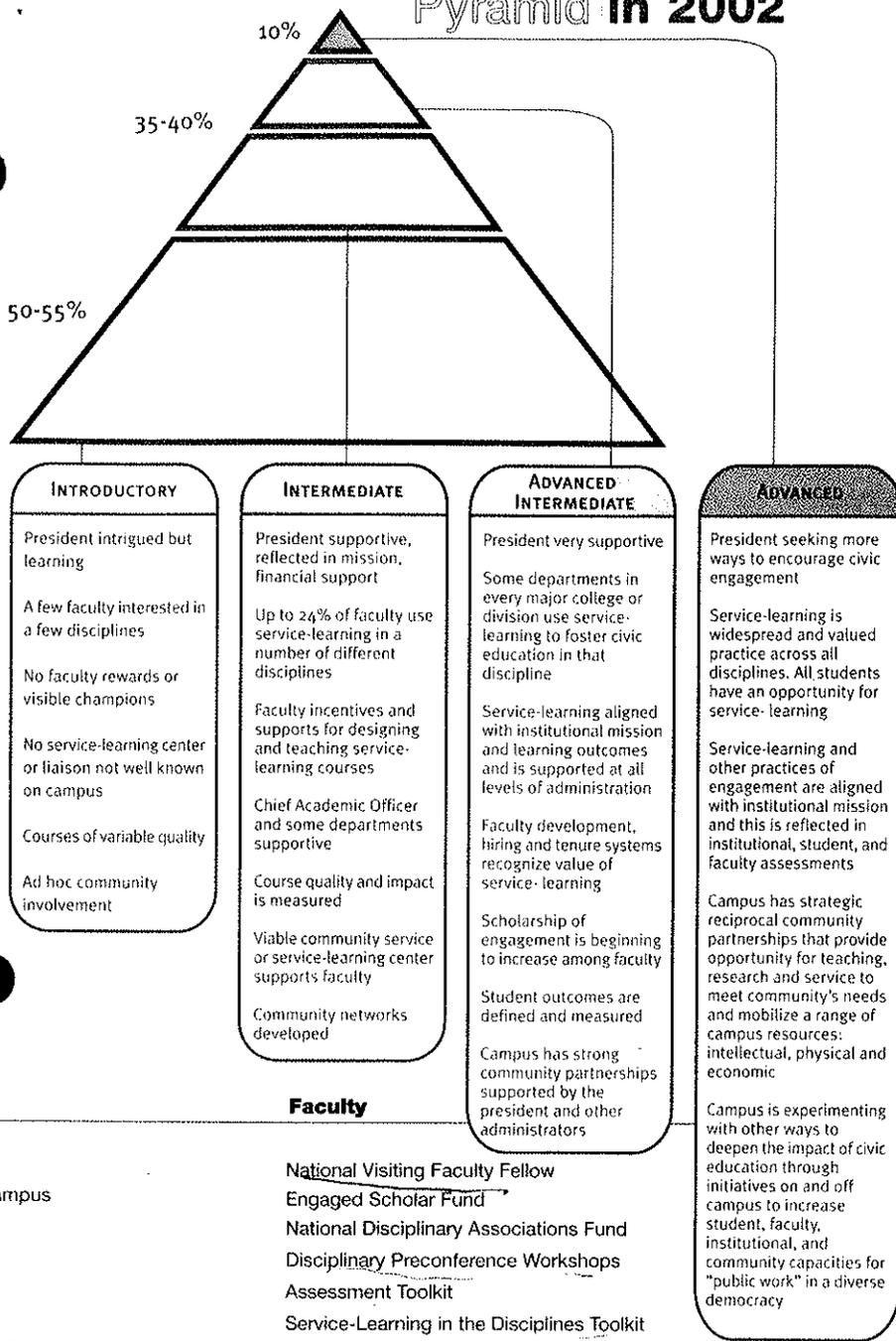
Intermediate

5 Disciplinary Institutes and follow u
 Disciplinary Association initiatives /
 State meeting of Chief Academic O
 CAO National Conference Worksho
 Capstone Conference on Engaged C
 Assessment Toolkit

Introductory

8 Regional Summer Institutes and st
 Fundamentals Toolkit
 Capstone Conference on Engaged C

The Service-Learning Pyramid in 2002



Major activities

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do it, how to assess it, and what the research reveals about its effectiveness will be covered.

State Meetings for Chief Academic Officers

Campus Compact will organize Chief Academic Officers (CAOs) at the state level by offering the opportunity to organize meetings of CAOs to three state Compacts (or consortia of Compacts).

Engaged Campus Institutes

Campus Compact will host two institutes for advanced-level campuses. Modeled after the Wingspread meeting of April 1998, these institutes "push the field" by addressing the impact of civic pedagogy on other aspects of campus engagement with community and on the organization of learning on campus.

Topics will include: strategic, reciprocal, community engagement for maximum impact and its implication for the student-learning experience; the community role in the knowledge enterprise; creating a citizenship climate on campus; and the scholarship of engagement and undergraduate research.

Discipline-based Activities

Discipline-based Institutes

Campus Compact will host five discipline-based institutes for 50 intermediate-level campuses to deepen the practice of service-learning on their campus and in the particular disciplines. The institutes will focus on a group of disciplines, and each campus team will be required to bring faculty and a department chair in one of those disciplines, as well as a community partner and a senior administrator.

National Discipline Association Fund

Campus Compact will create and administer a technical assistance sub-grant program for selected

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building the **Pyramid**

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national disciplinary associations and serve as a central organizing point for activities that deepen faculty commitment to service-learning. Each year, Campus Compact will award technical resource development grants to disciplinary associations on a competitive basis.

Resources for the Field

Faculty newsletter

Campus Compact will create a special section in its newsletter, *Compact Current*, that specifically addresses the needs of faculty at each level of the pyramid.

Toolkits

Campus Compact will develop comprehensive technical assistance tools designed to meet the developing needs of faculty and other campus constituents throughout the Service-Learning Pyramid. There will be three distinct toolkits aimed at specific needs: 1) The Fundamentals of Service-Learning, 2) Service-Learning in the Disciplines, 3) The Assessment of Service-Learning.

Full text containing the goals, strategies, and other activities to be carried out with the grant from The Pew Charitable Trusts can be found on Campus Compact's web site at www.compact.org.