2021 SABBATICAL REPORT

PUTTING STUDENTS FIRST: A Comparative Analysis of Civic Engagement Efforts Across Three California Public School Systems

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PUTTING STUDENTS FIRST:

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS ACROSS THREE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS

Introduction

Community colleges (CCs) are the backbone of America's educational system. Whether exploring new interests in pursuit of personal growth, acquiring specialized skills to advance in a specific industry, or completing coursework needed to transfer to a four-year university, generations of Americans have counted on community colleges to set them up for success. Institutionally CC's are both the connective tissue between educational systems and bridges that span boundaries across communities and sectors. They have served as place-based campuses where youth and adults alike have gone to learn about what their local communities have to offer them, and what in turn, they have to offer their communities. For millions of individuals and families, they have been a continuation of what the K-12 public school system has historically represented---the offer of an accessible general education close to home with the opportunity to acquire knowledge and build skills for the next phase of the educational and career journey.

While CC's core mission would be recognizable to their turn-of-the-century founders, almost a century and a quarter after the first public community college was founded, much has changed. The most obvious is the notion of place as a territorial location. As the pandemic has moved teaching, programming and administration to the virtual world, the fundamental identity of community colleges has shifted. Beyond the immediate challenges posted by the pandemic, however, CC's have been under pressure. As the base of the U.S. economy has shifted from predominately manufacturing to one heavily based on services, deindustrialization and the communications revolution of the past two decades, coupled with the

accelerated growth of technological innovation, has fractured traditional career pathways and stymied employment prospects for many working class men and women, who have traditionally been the primary beneficiaries of the community college system. The impact is felt in both rural and urban communities as investment and human capital chase opportunity, thus accelerating rural-to-urban migration, which further depletes the rural tax base and intensifies pressure on the urban service sector, generating greater competition for well-paying, well-benefited jobs all around.[1] Further exacerbating the labor market situation is the explosive cost of higher education, which has made the price of admission to the middle class increasingly out of reach for many students, at the same time that the population continues to grow and has more access to information than ever before. Thus, a revolution in stymied expectations is occurring at the same time that economic inequality has exploded and pre-existing disparities are being exacerbated both within and across racial and ethnic groups.[2]

Though considerable efforts have been made to try to address these structural issues, the patch work nature of the responses, and their limited scope, have only exacerbated the fall out of the current COVID crisis. In an environment where we have unprecedented pressure on students and communities from mental health crisis, housing scarcity, and unemployment, the California Community Colleges have seen an unprecedented drop in enrollment. Whereas traditionally enrollment has increased in periods of

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[1] While the pandemic has greatly interrupted this trend with the mass exodus of workers from the labor force, and in many ways the community college system is set up to mitigate against it, the broader trend here regards a solidification of an insider-outsider labor market whereby interests diverge between an ever-smaller group of largely older, predominately whiter workforce who hold well-paying, well-benefited, predominately unionized jobs (or are pensioners from them), and those in the so-called precariate, who toil on the front lines with little job security, low pay, and no employment-based benefits.

[2] Even before the pandemic, California, was experiencing the highest rate of homelessness in over a decade, increasing 17% from 2018 to 151,278 homeless individuals in January, 2020—a number widely viewed as a significant underestimate of the real number of unhoused in the state (HUD, No 18 177; Levin and Bots, 2020). Not surprisingly, the pandemic has also ushered in a massive mental health crisis. According to the CDC, symptoms of anxiety disorder and depressive disorder increased considerably in the United States at the outset of the pandemic as has substance abuse, suicidal ideation. As with the adverse impacts of housing and food insecurity, these problems have disproportionally impacted working class black and brown folks. In its representative panel survey of mental health, substance use, and suicidal ideation among 5,470 respondents in 2020, the CDC found that the percentage of respondents who reported having seriously considered suicide in the 30 days before completing the survey (10.7%) was significantly higher among respondents aged 18–24 years (25.5%), minority racial/ethnic groups (Hispanic respondents [18.6%], non-Hispanic black [black] respondents [15.1%].
https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6932a1.htm

economic recession, during the global pandemic, community college enrollment has fallen, on average, much more than at four year universities, even though they are more exclusive and expensive. Whereas postsecondary enrollment saw a 3.5% drop in enrollment in Spring, 2021, over the previous year, Community Colleges' experienced a 9.5% decline in enrollment, totaling nearly half a million fewer students, with male students ages 18-24 seeing the largest decline (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, June, 2021).[3]

Clearly, the costs of the pandemic are not equally distributed across society. Lacking flexible funding streams and robust administrative teams, ill prepared for online teaching and student support, and saddled with a tsunami of student needs, it was difficult for community colleges to retain the students they had and now, more than eighteen months into the pandemic, with vaccines widely available, it has been difficult to get them back. Though we know that students need to be educated during a global pandemic, and most K-12 schools have had all staff and faculty back on campus since the summer, many of our California community college campuses still have few in-person classes the CCC system has not embarked on broad scale efforts to get them back. While individual colleges deal with a myriad of logistics and regulations around COVID testing and vaccine mandates, additionally they struggle through antiquated tele-communications systems, broad scale hacking attempts, most recently a financial aid scam in which more than 65,000 fake students applied for financial aid in 105 of the system's 116 campuses (Watanabe, LA Times, September 1, 2021).[4]

In light of these many, overlapping pressures and the considerable challenges that confront community colleges there is a considerable need for thinking through how community colleges can handle *both* crisis mitigation that relates to basic needs (food, shelter, housing), but as institutions whose

[3] According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, male enrollment in community colleges declined by 14.4% compared to 6% percent for female enrollment.
[4] Most of the fraudulent traffic was caught by Imperva Advanced Bot Protection, a new software only recently installed this July. Though the community college system is beefing up internal reporting and security measures after having discovered that 20% of traffic in its main portal for online applications was malicious and bot-related, the fake applications have negatively impacted colleges' ability to determine true student enrollment numbers at a time of declining community college attendance (Watanabe, 2021).

primary charge is education, to also think strategically about how they combine these important tasks with educational imperatives linked to academic integrity and student success for the future.

To some degree this work has been ongoing in California, home to the largest Community College System in the nation. Over the course of the last decade, significant advancements have been made in facilitating transfer pathways (The Donahoe Higher Education Act), increasing access for a wide variety of students, including those that are undocumented[5], and increasing access to financial aid as well as funding for key basic needs programs such as EOPS and OER/ZTC. More recently, the California legislature has passed bills to compel counties to establish a staff liaison to public higher education counselors (AB 1326), to require community college students to take an ethnic studies class in order to earn an associates' degree (AB 101), and to increase funding for housing (SB 169).[6] Considering that three out of every ten Californians age 18-24 were enrolled in a California Community College and of these individuals, 69 percent are "people of diverse ethnic backgrounds" (California Community College Facts and Figures), immediately prior to the pandemic, these changes are incredibly impactful.

This said, much work remains to be done to connect the promise of the California Community College system to a reality on the ground. Efforts to address setting students up for success constitute a variable geometry of approaches. While the California Community College system is considered a singular entity legally and rhetorically, in reality, it is a highly decentralized system in which the Chancellor has limited authority and legitimacy to achieve decisive outcomes. The 116 California Community Colleges are clustered into 73 districts, each having considerable autonomy, highly dependent on regional boards and collective bargaining processes that happen at the district level. Thus,

[5] In the same time that the CDC has restated Title 42 to protect the public against, "the danger of further introduction of COVID-19 into the US from covered noncitizen" and the Federal Courts have ruled DACA unlawful, thus blocking the Biden administration from accepting new DACA applicants, the California Department of Social Services has created a $3 million DACA filing fee assistance funds for those in the California Community College system, thus covering 100% of the $495 DACA application filing fees for students, faculty and staff affiliated with a California Community College.

[6] A key example of these efforts is CA Senator Nancy Skinner's Senate Bill 169, an education trailer budget bill that includes new programs to support affordable campus housing, including the appropriation of a $500 million one-time General Fund in 2021-2022 for student housing projects, fifty percent of which will go the California Community Colleges.

in addition to the significant challenges confronting higher education more generally, California's Community College system presents a number of governance challenges, as do the multi-college districts within it. In addition to conflicts that arise between district chancellors and boards, a faculty dominated participatory governance structure grafted on top of neo-corporatist bargaining arrangements segmented across employment categories, leaves non-employee student interests largely unrepresented. This institutional reality combined with polarized partisan politics and an almost total dependence of colleges on the state legislatures for funding leads to contentious politics around a myriad of important decisions that impact students, who, for their part, suffer from severe information asymmetries in a highly complex system of procedures, policies and mandates, with low accountability, and sparse outcome-based data collection.

Understanding the infrastructure of systems of higher education as hugely consequential for the institutional dynamics and incentives for action (and inaction) within them, but also the important role of agency and leadership in shaping organizational cultures and dynamics, a key goal of this paper is to examine how civic engagement education has been advanced in different educational contexts and to analyze the factors that have both facilitated and hindered its success. Within the community college setting, much attention is given to measures of compliance, the data on matriculation and transfer rates and job placement as pertaining to different categories of students. Though community is so fundamental to the identity of community colleges, very little focused attention has been paid to the specific mechanisms by which community colleges build civic and cultural competencies that help foster democratic relations within and between communities.

In this paper I seek to delve deeper into conceptual and analytic models that have sought to advance student and community engagement and to explore both empirically and analytically the organizational, strategic, and programmatic basis for these efforts, as well as the ways in which the institutional structures and processes embedded within educational systems impact them.

To do this, I adopt a multipronged approach. In the first half of the paper, I discuss a variety of challenges we face in advancing student success in the current moment and link them to an exploration of

the ways civic engagement 'education' addresses these challenges. Based on this secondary research into different models of civic engagement, I explore their conceptualization and operationalization in adjacent educational systems. More specifically, I use extensive primary research of two high school districts in Contra Costa College and two programs in four-year universities, the American Cultures Engaged Scholarship Program (ACES) at UC Berkeley and the Academic Advancement Program (AAP) at UCLA, to investigate the ways in which education systems (leveraging the distinction between high schools and four year universities) intersect with place-based institutional and structural conditions to impact how civic engagement education is pursued. This multileveled analysis establishes a foundation for exploring developments in the community college system in comparative context.

In the second half of the paper, I discuss the unique role of the California Community College system, both as the largest educational system in the country, but also one that has a unique historical role in California. Though overlapping and intersecting in various ways with both K-12 schools and four year universities, it's challenges and opportunities for pursuing civic engagement initiatives are nonetheless distinct. Within the Community College context, I discuss two distinctive 'visions' of civic engagement and pursue an analytically grounded empirical investigation of civic engagement initiatives, programs and activities within the community college system. More specifically, I combine in-person interviews, institutional observation, and an analysis of college and district documents and data to map out student and civic engagement within the three major colleges within the Contra College Community College District (4CD), with a particular focus on Contra Costa College. Comparing and contrasting experiences from a student-centered lens, I then turn in the last section of the paper to propose a variety of specific college-wide recommendations for innovation and advancement in our efforts to both effectively and equitably move forward civic engagement initiatives at Contra Costa College.

Before proceeding, it is worth answering the obvious question. Why have I chosen to undertake such a study? There are a few reasons.

First, I care deeply about students in the California Community College system, and 4CD, in particular. I have generational ties to this district and know personally how critical community colleges

are to working and middle class families in California. My father, a long time history professor, now retired from DVC, was born in a rural, working class farming community in the Central Valley, went to community college at West Hills in Coalinga and from there, via Affirmative Action, become among the first Mexican Americans to earn a Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Barbara. Now retired, he spent virtually his entire career at Diablo Valley College. My mother, now a retiree, was actively involved in DVC's early learning center and continues to take community-based enrichment courses at the college. My son, a high school student at El Cerrito High School in West Contra Costa County Unified School District took his first community course last year at CCC. I, myself, as a Mexican-American woman born and raised in Pleasant Hill and Walnut Creek, a faculty member at CCC for the past six years, had my first community college experience at the DVC pre-school learning lab, then took concurrent courses as high school student and later as a concurrent college student at UCLA.

Second, my research and educational background enables me to place our college and district in a broader discussion of comparative public administration, organizational politics, community development, and racial and social justice. I earned my Ph.D. in political science with an emphasis in comparative politics and organization theory (UCB, 2006) and my research and published work has focused on the politics of social reform, social enterprises and community development, and cultural competency in public and nonprofit service delivery. Though my doctorate is not in Educational leadership, a field in which many administrators with advanced degrees in the Community College system are trained, my academic background and the research I have undertaken in studying governance systems within and across public and non-profit institutions in the U.S. and abroad, have given me a unique perspective on higher education.

Third, having worked as a teacher, mentor, researcher, and administrator for over twenty years I am *both* an insider and outsider to the community college system. Of the six years I have been teaching in the Community College system three of those years I have been a department chair and heavily involved in college governance. This said, my previous teaching and administrative experience come from outside the Community College system. Having earned a Ph.D. from the U.C. Berkeley, I taught as

a graduate student and adjunct professor there for many years and in the eight years prior to coming to CCC I was an assistant professor at Arizona State University (ASU). In the transdisciplinary school of Justice and Social Inquiry, I taught a wide variety of undergraduate and graduate level classes, from international relations and comparative social welfare reform, to introductory statistics and community development and social entrepreneurship. Additionally, I served as ASU's first director of its Certificate of Economic Justice as well as a faculty affiliate of the Schools of Transborder Studies and Public Administration and a member of several community engagement initiatives, including the Arizona legislative internship selection committee, Obama Scholars mentorship program, social enterprise development through ASU's school of engineering, and the Barrett Honor's College scholarship mentoring program. In short, I have a deep passion for community engagement and helping to foster student success!

The Student Success Challenges We Face In 2021

Student success is in many ways a slippery term. To different people in different institutional and cultural settings it means different things. To professors in higher education, it has tended to be seen through an almost exclusively academic lens—doing well in classes. And by doing well, the scholar-academic does not mean showing up or even 'passing classes.' Student success, academically, means learning the curriculum and mastering the requisite skill sets needed to move on to the next level, whether advancing to an upper division course, or accumulating knowledge that justifies expertise in a particular subject. This is part and parcel of a 'merit based' system in which grades are a signal of a particular level of achievement and are earned on the basis of standardized monikers of achievement that are widely recognized and acknowledged within the field. The standard monikers of achievement are what assure the integrity of the grading process and 'equity' understood as transparency of standards, procedural predictability, and 'lack of favoritism'.

Within this 'merit based' model, widely and tenaciously defended and preserved with the 'best' four year institutions (flagship public and private universities), students are seen as 'experts in training'.

They are learning to be future leaders and as such they need to accumulate a cannon of knowledge as they move from predominately consumers of knowledge to producers of knowledge with all the weight of responsibility that entails. As 'experts' in training students are expected to treat their studies as a job. Much as apprentices earn very little and work very long and late hours, students toil away in libraries and archives, to achieve degrees that indicate to the world that they are ready to enter the professional world of work. To most people that graduate from these universities, many of whom are professionalized, middle to upper class white collar workers who are decision makers in the public, private, and non-profit institutions in which they work, this model has largely been taken for granted as right and appropriate. Thus, for these people, the sign of a "bad" education is related to low expectations around the accumulation of specialized knowledge; lack of rigorous reading loads, written assignments and standardized testing; little emphasis on analytic thinking; and few opportunities for students to achieve professional development skills.

Critics of this model abound and their arguments have resonated as more and more people feel that they are now (or have always been) essentially 'locked out' of this system. When the 'meritorious' model is the standard against which education is judged, most schools and school systems fail. Why? It depends on the discipline to which you pose the question and the theories of education, learning, achievement, etc. they draw from. For many critics, the merit model is one that is not achievable to most students. If you believe that intelligence is biologically or genetically hard wired and you either have it or you don't than some people will never 'succeed' in the merit-based model, and thus are 'set up' for failure. A variation on this theme is that those that are smartest will outcompete their peers and thus hog up all the 'meritocratic' goodies that befall people that do well in this system (i.e., have a lot of knowledge and thus get the best grades and land the best jobs, etc.), thus demoralizing those that can't compete and making them alienated not only from school but from the learning process. A distinctive, though not necessarily mutually exclusive set of arguments critical of the 'merit based' model is that the real world 'picks winners', not based not on intelligence but on status. Thus, folks who live in more 'resourced' districts, who themselves tend to be more well-off, get access to better facilities, more

competent, creative, and skilled administrators, and better educated, prepared teachers who have the luxury of providing the kinds of instruction, skill-building, and learning materials that allow all students to excel. They have more access to a professionalized army of parents who not only 'donate' their human capital and professional resources to support skill building outside of school via extra-curricular opportunities for students, but also offer direct value added to the classroom in terms of supplies and often highly competent volunteer labor capable of supplementing academic goals as well as social, emotional ones. On the other end of the spectrum, students that are poor or whose parents are part of the working precariat are too busy surviving to focus on academic excellence, let alone take advantage of or generate extra-curricular opportunities. Moreover, as the cost of high-end four-year universities has skyrocketed, graduation rates have stalled, and student debt has mounted, the prospect that investing in academic achievement will pay off in terms of not only acceptance to, but money for, earning a degree at one of these institutions (i.e., finishing with a BA or BA let along advanced degree) feels more remote than ever.

There is considerable truth in arguments made against the 'meritocratic' system. There are some students that will struggle disproportionately. For example, students that struggle with crippling health challenges, severe learning disabilities and/or significantly limited brain functioning. Other students, do not like the structure or rigor of academic expectations or see the material and psychic challenges of the academic environment as daunting given all that they have to juggle in their personal lives. For these students, the benefits they stand to gain from taking themselves out of the labor force for four years to suffer through an experience that are likely to find neither socially, culturally or material rewarding, may not match the rewards they can accrue by going directly into the labor force, particularly where there are employment opportunities that command a living wage and a more rewarding family-life balance.

Clearly, not everyone is willing or able to be a scholar, nor should they be. At the same time, it is important not to throw the proverbial baby out with the bathwater. The 'merit-based' model is *not* an all or nothing proposition. It recognizes a range of academic achievements that are acquired and cultivated rather than inherited (i.e., smart vs. not smart). Additionally, setting aside its loftier aspirational ideals, a few important inferences can be made that are worth underscoring. First, most students are responsive to

the kinds of stimuli they are exposed to. Like muscle mass, intelligence can atrophy or inflate depending on the workout routine; what you feed your brain and how much exercise you give it are decisive factors in your capacity to develop, pursue, and achieve *both* personal and professional success. Decoupling the person from the performance allows folks to recognize and appreciate a *spectrum* of accomplishments and thus a range of grades. Clearly, not everyone has the bandwidth to earn an "A" on most assignments, but who cares anyway, if the goal is not admission to a universally understood 'best' university or job? Moreover, if knowledge is power, then academic success is not just about grades, but cultivating both the hard and soft skills that give students the competence and confidence needed for life long success. Second, the rhetoric of universality clouds and confuses a spectrum of difference that is the norm within institutional settings. In a world of scarce resources and differing values, a hallmark of multicultural, representative democracies overlaid on capitalist economies, the 'bench' is deep, assets are varied, and people compete for attention and resources. In this environment the playing field will never be completely level, but at the same time the capacity for progress is alive and well but depends heavily on the ability of individuals and communities to come together to forge common interests, values and ideals in a world of otherwise fiercely contentious politics. Third, to aspire to a greater public good is important, but often undermined in practice by vested interests and their narrative spin. Somewhat ironically, evidence of 'lapsing' educational standards in the merit-based model, are sometimes touted by critics as desirable components of a more 'inclusive' and 'equitable' education. Examples include emphasizing student choice in attendance and participation; focusing on experiential learning versus theory-acquisition; prioritizing opinion versus 'fact-based' writing; and the adoption of non-standardized evaluation standards and approaches. While there is a lot to gain from incorporating non-traditional strategies into the classroom, it is important to confront the reality that under-resourced, under-funded, under-staffed educational institutions have a difficult, if not impossible time, keeping up and effectively competing. Because the mission of inclusion places a premium on openness to all and therefore it is difficult to set and maintain standards. Overtime, the constant failing to meet the standards, demoralizes and demobilizes a wide variety of institutional stakeholders, particularly students and teachers. Whereas

herculean efforts can be made for short bursts of time, they are difficult, if not impossible, to keep up over the long run. Yet, retreating into the spin factory where low expectations are actively embraced is not a legitimate solution, particularly when institutional missions are so closely linked to equity goals. This is because 'pass-through' factories ultimately set the most vulnerable students up for failure down the road because students are underprepared and therefore at risk of internalizing the message that they are not up to the task rather than the truth of the matter, which is that it is the educational systems from which they have come have failed them. At the end of the day, it is precisely those institutions that are mostly tightly connected to equity goals that are most in need of a standards on which to base 'success' that go beyond numbers of classes completed or degrees earned. Thus, we don't have to pit pipeline issues against racism. The bottom-line is that if we truly want to see a more equitable political, social and economic systems, we need to have students of color from low income areas prepared to step into leadership positions\

What follows from this discussion is that Community Colleges need to do a better job of preparing students to do this. Therefore, the first thing to recognize is that Community College is *NOT* high school. It is not a requirement of the state to attend college and students have considerable choice in what programs, classes and professors they want to take classes from. The key problem may be that they are not offered enough good choices, nor do they have good information about the choices available to them. This is particularly true for low income students of color who attend regional community colleges that are amongst the most under-resourced and understaffed, often because they are amongst the most low enrolled. In these settings, students are often herded into classes that are not a good fit for them either because they have little time with counselors and the time they have is not spent in working individually with students on skill and career development, they do not much information about universities or careers of interest to them, and they are sent to many time consuming forms and student services, whose job is to get them enrolled and into classes as quickly as possible.

Because many poor and working class students of color do not grow up in college-going families, they are not familiar with how to navigate the educational system. *But importantly, this is true of most all*

students who attend community colleges in low income communities. In under-resourced, under-staffed colleges *all students* need better intake processes and more access to quality information about courses, transfer pathways, and careers. Thus, it is no wonder that, after three years, only about 22% of community college students transfer (Zinshteyn, 2021).[7]

In order to better serve all students, it is critical to lean into more transparency, to have more information about individual professors, syllabi, and ultimately details pertaining to transfer destinations and career trajectories. Absent this information, students take classes in a vacuum and are not clear about what to expect. At the community college, it is rare to find posted information about professors other than basic contact information and many of the syllabi are one and two page outlines and have little detailed information and few expectations about the nature of the curriculum. In reviewing syllabi of many community college instructors, one notices a vast gulf between these syllabi and those students will encounter at transfer destinations. Thus, many transfer students are totally unprepared to handle the type of ten page syllabi full of expectations and requirements that they will encounter at four year institutions many of them will transfer to. As a result, they suffer precisely when the stakes are highest, the first year after transfer when low income students have already drawn down on financial aid and taken on significant debt; have less access to basic needs support services (food, shelter, free textbooks, etc.); and are in much higher stakes academic environment where professors with Ph.D.'s and heavy research agendas have less time or inclination to spend with students on study skills.

Similarly, a key component of skill-building for career success is to be exposed to and understand not only the availability of local jobs, but also the skills needed to effectively compete for them. In an urban environment where there is considerable competition for high paying jobs and paid internships, community college students are often disadvantaged. They are frequently working toward degrees (i.e.,

[7] Assembly Bill 928, currently awaiting Governor Newsome's signature, would require community colleges to place all would-be transfer students (even if they want to attend another college) on a 'guaranteed' transfer path to a Cal State campus unless they opt out. This is promoted as saving students from having to take excessive course work prior to transfer, which it may do, though it doesn't address the issue of providing students with the direction they need to make the most out of their transfer experience, and in fact may disincentivize students from taking advantage of career readiness

AA or B.A./B.S.) or institutional affiliations (i.e., student at a four year university) that serve as a baseline for consideration. This is the time then, that they need to be developing 'soft skills', such as career exploration, resume building, interviewing, 'how to request letters of recommendation', etc. that will enable them to build up a knowledge base to set themselves up for success. These skills are critical for all students, but particularly for low income black and brown students who don't have access to the kind of social capital and professional networks that often assist middle income folks in wealthy residential areas to develop these skills and/or navigate job acquisition processes (i.e., learning how to 'network', how to take advantage of linked-in or hand-shake, etc.).

If we assume that students from impoverished or working class backgrounds, many black and brown students, are only interested in/capable of entry level jobs, which from the pervasive lack of career-based supports, seem to be the message to students, then we make a mockery of equity because we fail to provide them with essential skills needed to compete in a 21st century workforce. Additionally, given continuing low BIPOC enrollment numbers in many four year institutions and voters' reticence to reinstate affirmative action in admissions, leaning into the hard work of raising the bar on academic achievement is critical to preparing these students for transfer success.[8] Still, as four year colleges become more out of reach for many students simply as a financial proposition, many of the skills they would attain there, never get acquired by the students that arguably need them the most. Thus, if we don't provide these skills at the community college, not only do we let down our most achieving BIPOC students, but we also fall into classist traps by assuming that certain types of jobs are easy to get or self-evident in how one goes about getting them, thus leaving students isolated and unsupported in the ways that matter tremendously for their financial futures in the workforce. This then, further feeds into the narrative that we have 'pipeline' issues with students of color. If they can't get the skills to compete for first rung, career building jobs, they are less likely to accrue the kinds of skills, responsibility,

[8] In 2020, more than 57% of California's voted no on Proposition 16, a ballot initiative sponsored by the UC employers union, which would have reinstated affirmative action in public hiring, contracting and admissions throughout California public universities.

connections, visibility and pay that is the hallmark of professional development that leads to 'deep diversity' of the kind that breaks into positions of decision-making power (i.e., seats on boards, participation in management, etc.).

In many ways, efforts to right-the-ship, so to speak, have been the mission of the new Community College Chancellor, Eloy Ortiz Oakley, one grounded in addressing the "student equity and achievement gap ("Chancellor Oakley's vision for Success)" In 2018, Chancellor Oakley (currently on sabbatical serving as an advisor to the Biden Administration), embarked upon a new, Student Equity and Achievement Program (SEA), which aimed to consolidate a number of competing and contending programs Basic Skills Initiative, Student Equity and Student Success and Support Program. In 2019, regional workshops were held to clarify for local colleges what the new program entailed and to persuade them that SEA would make it easier to utilize resources to better fit the needs of students, yet the inefficiencies Oakley identified as making it "harder, not easier, to serve students" remain ("Closing the Gap").

While this new model of student success sought to broaden expenditure guidelines it also sought to put local districts "in charge" of allocation, which has pushed heated political and administrative battles down to the individual college and district levels regarding both the establishment of priorities and benchmarks as well as their implementation. As put in the first sentence of the Chancellor's statement, Closing the Gap: The New Student Equity and Achievement Program, "It is one thing to talk about institutional change, and quite another to actually change institutional culture." Indeed. Rendered less public at the state level, decentralization has made reform no less contentious, particularly at a time when colleges are scrambling with a tsunami of conflicting imperatives in an opaque environment of contradictory rules and regulations. This is particularly the case with districts located in counties with high levels of residential segregation and economic inequality, where significant differences exist *between* colleges in the proportion of students: of different racial and ethnic backgrounds and/or that qualify for disability assistance and/or live below the poverty line and/or are undocumented. Similarly, *within* colleges, particularly those located in urban, low income communities, the student body is deeply

diverse, thus there are many ways to define the "achievement gap" all of which have different implications for the allocation of scarce and valued resources, and thus, virtually by definition, are the subject of contentious politics.

Thus, whereas in relatively affluent Irvine Valley College, SEA opened up wonderful dialog in which, "People aren't just talking at each other. They're listening, respecting each other's opinion, and most importantly, figuring out how to best accomplish our shared goals" according to the director of the Offices of Student Life and Student Equity, Anissa Heard-Johnson, (Closing the Gap: The New Student Equity and Achievement Program), this is not happening in many colleges, in other cases it has hardened pre-existing cleavages. In contexts where the student body is mostly poor and working class BIPOC students, to understand this new model as "freeing us from outdated definitions" and better able to "address the specific issues that are impacting our *regional* community colleges" (Michael Quiaoit, Dean of Integration and Guided Pathways for the Chancellor's Office) or even as more responsive to LGBT and housing insecure students, "just like it does other minorities" (Heard-Johnson) engenders considerable push back from many historically disadvantaged minorities who see the new framework as a proverbial wolf in sheep's clothing, threatening already precious few reserves for BIPOC students and traditional affinity programs that began as ethnically/racially based 'student success initiatives for low income students (i.e. Puente, Umoja). For them, it is precisely their students and their families that have been disproportionately disadvantaged by the pandemic, and as a result, many have doubled down on defending 'traditional' models of success.

Across higher education, but particularly within our community colleges, those in positions of leadership are facing immense pressure in the face of unprecedented challenges. Organizationally, the small number of administrators' working at colleges and the sheer volume of their responsibilities have made keeping up with daily work virtually an impossible task. At the same time that the pandemic has led to a smaller number of people working in higher ed more broadly, those who remain are forced to lean into monumental tasks that absorb energy, time and resources already in short supply. In this environment, it is difficult to recruit, retain and train highly skilled staff but also to engage in the

fundamental reforms needed to meet the challenges of the day. It is one thing to call for 'rethinking' old processes, but quite another to fundamentally reshape the roles and responsibilities of existing personnel and/or reorient entrenched governance structures to achieve results. Yet, this is precisely what must be done if we are to address not only the needs of faculty and staff, whose jobs have become far more complex, demanding and consequential, but also the long term impacts that current changes will have for the future of student success.

In a world of rapid and disorienting change where traditional norms and institutions are giving way to a dizzying assortment of possibilities in an environment where more and more people are falling into the precariat, we need to help as many students as possible connect to good information about the professional landscape and political economy they are entering into. We also need to better recognize that individuals are at the intersection of many different group identities that intersect, class, race, and gender but also personal family situations, past experience in education, ideological commitments, special skills and aptitudes, and of course dreams, passions and aspirations. We cannot fall into the trap, as educators, of reading these things off of individual's ties to the aggregate demographic categories they happen to fall into and as such we need to lean into helping students, at the intersection of many group identities, become more adept in coping with choice in conditions of uncertainty. To this end, the community college should be the locus of skill-building focused on helping students envision a promising future for themselves and their families and develop the analytical and strategic tools needed to actualize their goals.

In the section that follows, I focus on ONE aspects of student success that cross cuts traditional understanding within the community college setting. Rather than pitting core matriculation services against student support services or equity against academic achievement, I argue that leaning into community and civic engagement is critical for a multi-dimensional conception of student success.

Models of civic engagement across educational systems

As we round into the third decade of the twenty-first century, the need for civic engagement and more of it, is taken for granted among students, faculty, staff and the public at large. At both the

individual and aggregate level, ‘engagement’ is seen as having a wide range of benefits. At the individual level, the *experiential* benefits accrued to individuals are wide ranging, from self-discovery and emotional satisfaction to a wide range of material gains attributed to social networking and skill building. As individuals extend ties beyond family to reflect and share ideas and work on common goals and projects with others in their community, they build up emotional reserves and social bonds needed to deal with personal challenges. Beyond personal empowerment, they learn a variety of skills that are fungible. As individuals gain experiential knowledge, they gain confidence and social and problem-solving skills that parlay into other realms of life, from educational attainment, to workforce advancement, to child rearing. At the aggregate level, civic engagement is seen as leading to a parallel set of benefits for communities that, in the educational realm, cluster around: a) activating responsive and knowledgeable denizens of local communities to lean into the work of local democracy b) preparing individuals to thrive in an increasing fluid and highly segmented labor market and educational landscape and c) directing participation toward solving the complex socio-economic and cultural challenges facing an increasingly diverse American society in the twenty-first century.

While much of the literature on civic engagement literature of the twentieth century was devoted to making the case for its importance, as we round into the third decade of the twenty-first century, the issues are much more complex and, arguably the stakes are higher, as we recognize that there are very different philosophical and material basis from which educators think about community engagement. While American higher education is never static, in the rapidly changing social, cultural and educational context of the early 21st century, educators, now more than ever, “have the obligation to adapt and empower themselves and their students to become socially-connected, politically intelligent, socially aware, and economically self-sufficient” (Bryer, 2014). While most educators can recognize that leaning into community is positive, concepts and meanings abound as do models ‘how and why’ models for promoting engagement in educational settings. Thus, as conversations move down the ladder of abstraction from linking engagement to the creation of healthier democracies, a more robust workforce, and happier more resourceful populace, differentiation and contention emergences. It is one thing to

agree that engaging in and with community is good, it is another thing to delve into the distributional questions of how, to what degree, and for whom that are inevitable in the contentious politics of crafting and implementing policies and programs to promote and assess the impact of civic engagement within educational settings.

In the following discussion, I provide a brief overview of some of the key models or 'orientations' put forth for promoting specific versions of community engagement within educational settings. In addition to getting into the 'how and why' associated with broader policy goals and orientations, I draw on both primary and secondary research to highlight illustrative examples of each model from regional college, high school, and community colleges in hopes of providing a better understanding of how these initiatives work not only in theory but in practice.

There are three reasons why I think this approach is valuable. First, there isn't a lot of information generated on civic education that cross cuts disciplines, let along educational systems, when it comes to research on civic engagement. Thus, whereas every discipline in the social science, and increasingly the STEM fields, may issue some kind of associational report on the subject, rarely is this research ingested or considered across disciplines. Similarly, the way that educational administrators conceive of these issues (as student success or workforce issues), tends to be different from how academics/professors see them, which is frequently not the same as how community activists, see the issues. Second, educational institutions, whether individual colleges at the four year setting, regionally based community college districts, or local school districts in the K-12 setting, tend to be surprisingly insulated from developments that happen outside of their own system or jurisdiction. Most educational administrators do not 'travel' across systems as such, thus their point of contact, information, and references are typically from sources in their own systems and/or designated educational associations, a phenomenon that tends to lead to a certain amount of 'group think' around what is normal or appropriate. As a result, a certain 'taken for granted' understanding of how things are done or what is possible as people are exposed to similar understandings of desirable goals, problematic issues, and best practices. Lastly, in the public school setting in particular, administrators are often mired in putting out fires, and now in the pandemic a

seemingly endless forest fire of emergencies. Consequently, they don't have the time or inclination to access information on civic engagement, even when special reports or conferences are convened on the topic simply because they have bigger fish to fry.

While civic, community, and student engagement capture different 'traditions' of engagement and thus have different intellectual origins, historical antecedents, and philosophical and political commitments attached to them, given the goal of this paper, rather than exploring the rich conceptual and theoretical background (a task for another time), my key objective here is to investigate how distinctive 'traditions' of civic, student and community "engagement" are operationalized within the educational system and to show that as a framework for community building that resonates among a wide spectrum of Americans, 'civic engagement education' represents an important area of intellectual, economic and social investment for the future and thus an important area in which to investigate trends, particularly as we lean into both the challenges and potential opportunities of the current moment.

The High School Experience:
Civic Engagement Education as College and Workforce Prep--A Tale of Two Districts [9]

The roots of civic education can be traced back to John Dewey (1916/2012; 1938), William Heard Kilpatrick, and social psychologist Kurt Lewin, progressive scholars at the turn of the century who stressed the importance of linking formal knowledge and scholarship to societal problems as well as 'experiential education' as an alternative to or enhancement of a rote memorization style of learning then standard in most public schools. They believed that better learning could occur and education enhanced by connecting subject matters more directly with students' lives and engaging students with their

[9] This section draws heavily from my own personal experience, as an alumni of the Acalanes High School District and that of my high-school age son, who attended one year at Bentley High School and is currently a student at El Cerrito High School in WCCUSD, a school district in which well over half of students qualify for free and reduced price lunches.

community (Haupt et al, 2021). Emerging from a pragmatist tradition, Dewey's work called for a blending of theory with practice to encourage schools to develop a curriculum of relevance to local communities as well as a 'learning-by-doing' ethic that spoke to the methodologies and modalities by which students learn. Just as students need to be exposed to new farming methods and actual farmers who farm in order to prepare to work in agriculture, he argued, they needed to learn about democracy by engaging in it to 'prepare' for the responsibilities of citizenship.

While Dewey is often considered the intellectual father of the service learning movement, a significant part of service learning in the high school environment has also been about meeting students where they are within the communities they come from. The contributions of African-Americans to service-learning as well as people like Jane Addams, who believed that personal experience forms the basis of democracy, trace the origins of service-learning not just to educational theory but to engaged practice, in which identity and ties to place help shape how we conceptualize learning and teaching outside the boundaries of the formal school system (Stevens, 2003; Addams, 1904/1994). From this vantage point, service learning goes beyond a set of educational techniques justified within school systems on the basis of scientifically verifiable outcomes, to a vast array of social and political projects aimed at opening the public realm to new ways of thinking, not only about education, but the socio-economic and cultural conditions of people's daily lives and their agency in working to improve them.

The historical trends that first animated attention to civic education and service learning in the early part of the 20th Century continue to be relevant as the pendulum in educational policy has oscillated between calls for greater flexibility, customization, and embedding of curriculum in local contexts, and the need for greater standardization, preparation, and academic rigor in teaching not only core competencies but a host of new knowledge generated by an accelerated pace of scientific advances and technological innovation (i.e. robotics, biotech, and artificial intelligence). As society grapples with a host of global issues, national discourse about civil rights, climate change, public health, and economic inequality, transcend the boundaries of school districts, cities, and states. Moreover, as the public's awareness of common challenges grows, an increasingly fractured internet and social media landscape

ushered in by the telecommunications revolution, combined with party polarization and thus increasingly rancorous partisan policy debates, has made the nexus between education and community an urgent area of focus for designing solutions to 'meet the moment'.

Thus, within the K-12 landscape, civic learning service learning takes on new urgency at a time when we are also experiencing an accelerating diversification of the educational landscape, due in part to Covid as well as long term economic and cultural trends. Traditionally, service learning has been synonymous with 'engaged learning' within the K-12 system, and thus has always been a key focus for a wide variety of educators. For educators that have worried about students falling behind in a context of increased pressure to meet or exceed standards of academic achievement particularly for poor and working class students who already experience a 'knowledge gap' at home, leaning into 'student engagement' has meant "meeting students where they are' and thus infusing the educational system with greater support services and diverse learning modalities to accommodate students with different learning styles, cognitive abilities, and real world pressures to survive. At the other end of the socio-economic spectrum, intense focus on college preparation, has led high school administrators to place more emphasis not only on test scores (now being jettisoned) but also finding and connecting students to value-added opportunities for enrichment that enable students to skill build, network, and set themselves up for future educational and career success.

In the following sections I look at experiences across two different high school districts, one high income, low diversity (Acalanes High School District) located in Central Contra County and a low income, high diversity high school (Richmond High School), located in West Contra Costa County. By looking at both outward and inward facing modes of engagement, I seek to highlight important distinctions in the ways in which engagement gets conceptualized and operationalized both inside and outside the classroom and the prospective benefits this has for both students and communities, recognizing deep and persistent differentiation in the way that high schools located in high income and low income areas, where more than half of students qualify for free and reduced-priced lunch.

Outward facing student engagement

While some states require high schools to teach specific courses or develop programs that are explicitly focused on community stewardship and/or the ethics of civic responsibility, in California, most high schools "outward facing" student engagement has centered around three key areas:

1) Service learning projects embedded within specific classroom curriculum or school-wide through special initiatives,

2) Volunteering or interning with community organizations, and

3) Student activism that is either organized by community-based organizations or bubbles up organically from society and spills onto campus.

Within the high school setting, most people tend to equate civic engagement with community service. Frequently, community service is something that happens 'incidentally' to education in that students and their parents and friends, as residents and neighbors, regularly participate in a wide range of community activities like setting up sports events in the park, attending local clean-up events on the shore, or planting flowers during community gardening days. Yet, many high schools seek to be more proactive by explicitly integrating service learning into the school's curriculum, providing professional development for teachers, and dedicating resources to campus-wide initiatives, or more implicitly by encouraging department chairs to facilitate curriculum that 'embeds' 'experiential learning' or 'study trips' into classroom lessons.

Whereas 'service learning' efforts in many public schools are institutionalized in particular departments and courses, for example, bio-tech classes that work with long term community partners to generate collaborative student projects, in many private school contexts, service learning is embedded as a value-added of their school's overall high school experience, with a wide array of opportunities generated for students from across campus. For instance, at Bentley, a small 340 student college prep high school in Lafayette, seniors are required to work with a teacher and community mentor to design and complete a senior service learning project during their third trimester. While not required for matriculation,

sophomores and juniors who are willing and able, are provided space in their winter schedule to enroll in one of several week long ‘enrichment’ experiences that involve faculty-led study trips locally, out-of-state and abroad, which rotate between departments.

Outside of the classroom, many high schools encourage civicmindedness by promoting, rewarding or requiring community service. Whether motivated by the recognition that students and their families are deeply tied to their schools as an extension of their sense of belonging to a place-based community or out of a sense of civic duty that schools feel toward community members frequently called upon to support student initiatives, most high schools cultivate ways for their students to ‘give back’ to their communities through service. They generate webpages devoted to different activities happening within the community, they host community meetings and forums on campus, and they pass on information from community members to students through social media platforms, e-trees, and posted fliers or announcements. In these ways high schools function as ‘recruiting’ grounds for a wide range of individuals and organizations seeking to improve the community. Beyond ‘hosting’ community events or providing students a list of local organizations, such as local hospitals, pet shelters, social services, etc., in which they can volunteer, civic-minded high schools often encourage students to keep track of their volunteer hours on volunteer service forms which are then signed by volunteer coordinators or organizations. Connecting service to other pedagogical objectives such as skill building or leadership training, administrators often organize ‘service opportunities’ into particular categories (by sector or location or interest) and encourage students to be thoughtful about the type of volunteer work they do and mindful of the hours they devote to this work, which is for the most part unpaid. Moreover, in elite private schools and public schools in well off districts, in particular, volunteer service is often required and/or linked to leadership development. For example, at Bentley High School students need to accumulate 60 hours of community service to graduate and at Acalanes High School also in Lafayette, students over 16 years of age who earn more than 100 hours of volunteer service over the course of an academic year are considered for a coveted “President’s volunteer service award that recognizes student’s

contributions for “outstanding volunteer service and civic participation.” (https://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/Page/2652).

Most large public high schools in California do not have civic engagement requirements and do little to promote volunteerism given the prevalence of paid work amongst their student body and thus concerns about students’ already having to juggle work with a full schedule of classes. Consequently, many of them, particularly those that are well resourced, promote external engagement predominately through student-friendly internships and/or summer service learning opportunities that counselors either screen for accessibility or pair with opportunities for financial aid. Paid community-based internships at places like local hospitals, peer counseling centers, regional parks, and social justice organizations, generate a wealth of experience for students who would otherwise not be able to otherwise afford to take an unpaid internship or don’t have time to volunteer regularly. Similarly, residential summer opportunities which offer grants or generous financial aid to low income students and/or students of color, like the Civic Leadership Institute at Northwestern, combine hands on education, meaningful service, and student-focused professional development to high school students who are not otherwise exposed to service learning opportunities in the classroom.

Unfortunately, because paid opportunities are rare and also hard to find and get, particularly in big schools where information is sparse and not easily accessible to students and young, low income students who are already gaining ‘real world’ experience at their paid job, often don’t see their value. Other students who have less of a time commitment in their paid jobs and so may be inclined to look into professional internship opportunities, sometimes view unpaid internships as exploitational given the emphasis placed on value-for labor in their own jobs. Overwhelmed by other commitments (school, work, family, etc.) and under-informed about how internships are relevant to their future educational prospects or career trajectories, they often remain disengaged, which then reinforces the impression that it is not worth school administrators’ time and effort to dedicate resources to seeking out these opportunities for students.

While the above examples tend to fall under the mantle of external facing *civic* engagement, high school students also involve themselves in *political* engagement, understood as "explicitly politically oriented activities that seek a direct impact on political issues, system, relationships and structures" (McCartney, 2013). In many urban school, where social issues such as gun-violence, policy brutality, and inequity in education pervades reverberate throughout the community, students routinely organize on high school campuses, both spontaneously and in the context of student government and/or student clubs to make their voices heard concerning pressing issues of the day. In Oakland, San Francisco, and Richmond, for example, high school students from across three of the largest bay area school districts organized and/or participated in numerous marches and street protests throughout 2020 to voice their solidarity with victims of police violence such as the killing of George Floyd and Briana Taylor.[10]
As youth movements around a broad spectrum of social justice concerns, from climate and gender justice to 'black live matters' to 'DACA students', direct action, in the form of walk-outs, protests, sit-ins, and flash mobs, have intersected with broader trends in American society, political action has become more broadly recognized as an important and legitimate component of civic engagement. Rejecting a public-service ethos for a 'rights' rhetoric linked to an ethic of self-help, the emphasis of politically engagement is less focused on responsibilities and obligations than to justice and social equity.

As students have become more active and vocal on campus about social issues affecting them, teachers and school administrators have been more inclined to encourage students to get involved in political advocacy campaigns. One such example is GENup, is a student-led, student-run state-wide advocacy coalition comprised of a diverse group of high school activists and student organizations that advocate for student concerns. By striving to increase youth representation in key policy efforts, GENup

[10] Richmond youth organized a march and vigil after Richmond police shot and killed Pedie Perez in 2014 and rallied again at City Hall in Richmond on June 3rd 2020, along with youth in San Francisco, following week-end rallies in Oakland, including students and former students of Oakland Tech and Bishop O'Dowd High Schools who rallied 15,000 people in wake of the killing of George Floyd (BondGraham, 2020, which followed significant organizing work by high school students to campaign for bringing down the age for students to vote for their school board members following significant budget cuts (SF Chronicle, 2020).

hopes to create a movement of youth leaders working closely with their student school board members to generate tangible change in education policy throughout the California education system. While the student board member serves as 'policy leader' of broader education policy campaigns, students set up GENup chapters within their districts to fill certain 'executive' positions, such as "Political Director", "Director of Organizing" , and "Communications Director" to generate actionable results by organizing effective campaigns to garner community support around policy authored and advocated for by students. Much like student 'change makers' that get active in social enterprises, student 'difference makers' pursue political (though not necessarily partisan) goals.

Inward Facing Student Engagement

On most high school campuses, both large and small, private and public, students are encouraged to build communities of interest and identity that help them not only navigate their own personal journey of self-discovery but also to build community within and across campus while also fulfilling a host of pedagogical goals established by the institution.

Public schools, for example, are particularly interested in encouraging students to learn from and explore friendships with other youth who are different from them. By developing ties to others outside their neighborhood and immediate social circle, students develop greater appreciation for diversity and are thus better able to navigate, if not contribute to, a thriving multicultural democracy. To this end, educators provide support for students to form a wide variety of student-led clubs and advise and facilitate a broad range of extracurricular clubs and teams across the campus, such as sports (e.g., school athletics teams), the arts and music (e.g., dance and theater troupes, band), the sciences (e.g., gardening and coding clubs) or the humanities (e.g., model U.N. and speech and debate teams).

While private schools do much of the same, they are often less focused on inclusivity or breadth of opportunity per se (i.e., a wide range of options for as many students as possible), than they are in making sure that individual students are connecting to communities of choice and finding fulfillment in often highly curated experiences tailored for specific aptitudes or interests. Thus, private schools often

have a variety of sponsored boutique clubs (e.g. Latin, 3-D printing, and film clubs) and/or specialized student organized 'workshops' or gatherings (e.g. "Racial justice on campus: we can't wait" or "Want to reform our recycling program?) that bring together smaller groups of like-minded students who interact intensely not only with one another, but often similar clusters of folks at high schools at special conferences or summer campus devoted to the area of interest. In the context of elite private schools and high schools in wealthy districts, these 'enrichment' opportunities often extend to pricey 'global engagement' experiences that link travel abroad and personal adventure to international service projects like those offered by Rustic Pathways, that works at the intersection of education, travel, and philanthropy to embed students in 'life-changing' sustainability projects or Where There Be Dragons, which gives students 'custom-crafted' experience of 'hands on engagement' living with families and apprenticing with artists, famers and 'sages' throughout Asia, African and South America. Regardless of the specific size or content of campus clubs and teams, they provide students with valuable opportunities to socialize and build community among peers in academic environments in which much of classroom learning remains a predominately individual experience.

Another area of inward focused 'engagement' that wraps around students across all high schools is 'college and career' readiness. Though on the surface, this work appears similar across contexts, the content and approach, particularly as related to 'student and community' engagement differ dramatically across 'high' and 'low' income schools. Given the increasing focus on career 'pathways' and 'job readiness' within American high schools, and the fact that most high school students either continue on to post-secondary schools or seek jobs and or careers after they earn their high school diploma, a key responsibility of American high schools today is to link 'student engagement' to 'College and Career Services." To this end, high schools provide students with a wealth of information, frequently, via school maintained websites, as do high school guidance counselors, about preparing course work and testing to be eligible/competitive for college and preparing financial aid and scholarship applications to afford college, and the various steps needed to complete the application process.

Beyond this superficial similarity lie extreme differences in both the approach and content of college and career readiness. In high income school districts and elite private high schools, college and career readiness tend to be treated as an extension of ‘student enrichment” and service learning. This is facilitated by a highly favorable counselor to student ratio, a high level of professionalism, and integrated community support networks. At large public high schools in low income districts such as WCCUSD, public schools struggle to meet students’ basic socio-emotional and academic needs pertaining to their high school experience. At El Cerrito High School, for example, in Spring 2021 there are only three full time counselors for approximately 1700 students, thus, each counselor has a case load of nearly six hundred students. By contrast, most private schools and many public high schools in well-resourced suburban school districts, have both more counselors and fewer students per class as well as a host of engaged parents whose human capital generates synergies across the school/community divide. For instance, within the Acalanes High School District, which lies adjacent to WCCUSD in East Contra Costa County, Acalanes and Campolindo High School counselors not only have half the case load, with one counselor for every three hundred students, but also an additional dedicated counselor with professional credentials focused on college and career readiness. As a result, much more attention is devoted to creating an experience in which college-going students have better access to high quality information, greater community support, and more active engagement in their own college and career planning. Instead of offering a single webpage barraging students with external links to resources and information that are outdated, hastily arranged, and don’t appear pertinent to students and their lives, career and college readiness specialists can thoughtfully research and curate information of specific relevance to what students and parents are asking for on the basis of workshops and gatherings organized around family and student ‘cohorts.’

At Acalanes High School, where 95% of seniors attend post-secondary institutions after graduation, college and career readiness is centered around an on-hub with multiple specialized pages devoted to the socio-emotional, academic, financial and cultural facies of college readiness. Each webpage is colorful and user friendly, offering a wealth of specific information about how to approach

standardize testing, financial aid, and college visits, complete with helpful timelines, graphs, articles from local news sources, and interactive exercises and detailed contact information connecting students to a vast social network of individuals and groups whose expertise and knowledge transcend school/community divides. Additionally, students are invited in their first year of high school to join Naviance.com, a sophisticated online software that provides students and their families with personalized college planning tools, thus multiplying the efforts of a single counselor by enabling students to take self-assessments, explore careers, research colleges, set up calendars and resumes, request letters of recommendation. At selective private schools, such as Bentley High School, also in Lafayette, software is enhanced by high touch efforts to making 'college' planning a communal experience via organized workshops, talks, and administratively supported peer-to-peer cohorts that seek to foster mutual support in navigating what is otherwise perceived of as competitive, difficult and alienating process for both students and their families.

In low income districts such as WCCUSD, where in 2019-2020, 66% of its students qualify for free or reduced lunch, there tends to be more emphasis on workforce readiness, at least rhetorically, yet in reality, like 'college readiness', this type of 'student engagement' is highly circumscribed. As with college readiness efforts, opportunities for students are undercut by a lack of experienced, highly skilled personnel (and the human capital they connect students with through their social and professional networks) and underinvestment in telecommunication, such as integrated software and skilled web-developers and technicians, that allow high schools to adopt to twenty-first century workforce realities. Here too we have a study in contrast.

In high schools in the Acalanes high school district for example, where over 90% of graduates go on to college (and not directly into the workforce), an abundance of well organized, highly curated career exploration tools is available to students beginning their freshman year. Through a "career and workforce exploration site" students are offered a wealth of online toolkits that connect them to career exploration,

including psychological and interest-based assessment and one-stop career exploration sites.[11] Thus, in addition to information about how to get a work permit and find a job in high school, which is a standard service offered by all high school guidance counseling departments, Acalanes students get access to and are encouraged to make use of a variety of state-of-the-art tools online to help students navigate the twenty-first century job market.

In low income districts, where high school graduates from low income families enroll in college at a much lower rate than their peers from high income families[12], these supports are either non-existent or woefully underdeveloped.[13] A key problem is obviously related to a lack of resources. As more need presents itself, particularly in large urban districts, large and unsustainable budget deficits turn into pressure to reign in expenses, borrow from reserves and eliminate positions.[14] Thus, in many cases, staff is so thin, computer and automated capacity so underdeveloped, and administrative processes so lackadaisical that when an experienced staff member retires or passes away, all of the know-how and value added that person contributed to the school disappears along with them since there is no data base or web presence to ensure continuity. At El Cerrito High for example, when a long time staff member, who played a role as a 'career center coordinator' passed away, all of the contributions she had made to

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[11] https://sites.google.com/view/campolindo-college-and-career/career-exploration contains a wide range of resources and supports for students seeking long term career guidance both in traditionally blue collar technical fields https://www.careeronestop.org/; https://www.bls.gov/ooh/; https://www.careeronestop.org/Videos/CareerVideos/career-videos.aspx
And white color professionalized occupations: https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip; https://www.cacareerzone.org/; https://www.zippia.com/explore/ ; https://www.onetonline.org/find/; https://www.careervillage.org/

[12] For example, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, only 52% of high school graduates from low-income families enrolled in college immediately after high school in 2011, which was 30% lower than their high-income peers (Wignall, 2021).

[13] Given there are over 1,000 school districts in California, there are clearly 'islands' of excellence within low income districts, for example Oakland Technical High School that has a comprehensive scholarship data base and other workforce related resources, the differences within low income districts are considerably less noteworthy than those across low and high income districts, though clearly with 77% of districts at risk of deficit spending, as of February 2020 (Tadayon, 2020), developing and/or maintaining key services in career and technical extends well beyond low income districts.

[14] In 2020 for example, in the midst of a pandemic recession (prior to the Biden Administration's American Rescue Plan and related funding from the State of California), WCCUSD projected a $48 million deficit for the 2020-2021 school year, which would have been even more severe without the $34 million the district received from the Trump administration's CARES Act. Consequently, the district cut around $30 million in ongoing expenditures from its budget, nearly seventy-five percent of which came from eliminating positions, thus expanding class sizes, losing support staff, and ending software contracts for teachers and staff (Tadayon, 2020).

'scholarship nights' and detailed bulletins for students went away with her.[15] The person that had filled this role subsequently was an intern who then became a counselor at another High School. Subsequently, the high school had to bring in an independent college counselor, who only worked part time and pay a clerk to take on additional responsibilities as a work permit coordinator.[16]

In these contexts, 'career and workforce readiness' tend to be subsumed in the idiom of 'community engagement' with a significant emphasis on connecting students to a broad network of basic services, from housing, to health, to food and social assistance, but also jobs and educational opportunities at the nexus of public services and non-profit services. For example, a six month content analysis of messages sent to El Cerrito High School on the WCCUSD 'student opportunities' board from January, 2021 to May, 2021, revealed that 10% of messages pertained to educational opportunities while 90% of messages pertained not to basic services available to students (i.e. assistance for food, rent/housing, transportation, healthcare, and assistance, transportation, housing, food assistance).[17] Moreover, the boundaries of community and 'student' engagement blur as less emphasis is placed on individual achievement, place-based definitions of civic obligation, or professionally defined communities of interest than "helping students help themselves' understood as connecting them to a set of obligations and responsibilities that link them back to peer based affinity groups on the one hand or public service agencies on the other.

In the West Contra Costa College Unified School district there are a variety of 'stop gap' programs, targeted at specific groups of students, largely from ethnic and racial backgrounds that have historically been underrepresented in college.[18] High schools target recruitment for these students, and for

[15] Interview Yesenia Campos, El Cerrito High School. A similar situation presents itself in Middle College High School embedded in the Contra Costa College School District. In Spring 2021, the school only had one part time counselor and one teacher lead who oversaw internships, whose maternity leave presented a dilemma for a skeletal staff of ten teachers, one office manager and the principal herself (Finny Prak, interview).
[16] Interview Yesenia Campos, El Cerrito High School
[17] Although clearly an anomalous year given the pandemic, it is telling nonetheless if we compare with public and private high schools in high income districts.
[18] In most urban school districts in California, low income districts overlap with students of color. In WCCUSD in the 2019-2020 school year for instance, 66% of students qualified for free and reduced-price lunches and 31% are English learners. Only 10% of the students are white, 8% Asian, 14% Black and the vast majority (56%) Latino.

example in the case of high schools in West Contra Costa High School Unified District, partnerships are formed with the Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP) to provide designated counseling hours with a UC Berkeley student.[19] Thus, as opposed to a trained professional, graduate students, who are themselves often products of affinity programs (i.e. EAOP, Puente, Mesa, Bridge, Quest, McNair, etc.), serve two year terms as 'embedded' counselors who supplement the full time professional counselors on campus. As such, there is a considerable learning curve for these 'counselors in training' who are themselves UC Berkley employees and/or students on scholarship.[20] Just when they get up to speed and perhaps in a position to have established some expertise, their position terminates. As a result, they have little time or incentive outside of working one-on-one with students to do the institutional work necessary to make lasting investments of time and resources in the school in which they are placed, for example, by developing data bases, improving inward facing communications flows, or outward facing websites. Moreover, as resources threaten 'community engagement' budgets, support for these programs and thus the graduate students and university personnel in them shrink and they are left without the type of professionalized training needed to do their job effectively.

The Academies Model: Spotlight on Richmond High School

In part as an effort to combine the goals of 'workforce development' with career exploration and community engagement, WCCUSD has established a nineteen academies linked to specific fields, designated career and college pathways (https://www.wccusd.net/Page/11614). While most schools have two or three, linked to multimedia, software and systems development, and engineering, Richmond High has 'wall-to-wall' academies in which all 9th-12th grade students participate in one of its five academies

[19] The Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP) is the UC's largest academic preparation program, serving students at more than 200 K-12 public schools in California. EAOP's stated mission is to broaden the pool of educationally disadvantaged students enrolling and succeeding in college preparatory "a–g" courses and ultimately gaining admission to college. The program also helps families navigate complex college preparation, application and financial aid processes---services that are increasingly of need throughout the high school population. [note the new legislation—now mandate that schools help all students navigate the FAFSA]
[20] Interview Yesenia Campos, El Cerrito High School.

spanning health, multimedia, engineering, ‘internationals’ and law. Embedded in different highs schools throughout the district, these ‘academies’ were designed to pipeline students into a career pathway over the course of their time in high school, from freshman to senior year, developing cohorts that take a series of sequenced courses to help gain knowledge of and skills related to particular fields to help prepare them for life after graduation. Having grown from the district with the use of state grants, more specifically the California Partnership Academy Grant (CPA), the academies do not cover specific industry or sector standards, but rather a focus on insuring experiential learning with ‘hands on’ methods of teaching basic skills required English and Math classes linked to the real-world curriculum and project-based learning of Career Technical Education (CTE) courses (https://www.wccusd.net/domain/3037.

Most high schools, whether high or low income, offer students a variety of CTE classes, such as woodshop, automotive tech lab, gardening, design studio, etc., in which a considerable amount of ‘experiential’ learning happens in the context of hands-on projects.[21] What is unique about the Academy model, as exemplified in Richmond High School, where it is most developed, is that it combines part of the official ‘goals’ of classic ‘tracking’ of low income students into technical vocations, with elements of ‘apprenticeship’ and classic enrichment activities of civically engaged learning. Though promoted as, “aligning curriculum with career pathways and industry occupation sectors,” academies like the ‘internationals’ are “designed for students who are new to the United States in the past six months,” and thus appear to be a way to meet the perceived needs of newly arrived English language learners (ESL students), without much emphasis on either career or civic engagement as students are tracked into an academic program of core classes, (i.e. world history, language, algebra, etc.) you would find in any standard high school curriculum for remedial students.[22] Other academies like the Health Academy

[21] In private schools and public schools in high income districts, ‘maker’ labs, and ‘robotics’ and ‘3-D printing” pair this experiential learning with a considerable degree of community engagement as students design projects to show case at community forums or in competitions or projects organized by local civics and private sector organizations.

[22] Though initially students were allowed to pick their own academies that has now changed. Students are now placed in academies by the administration and are then given a chance to apply to ‘switch’ out of their original academies in 10th grade. These ‘applications’ are subject to counselor guidance and ultimately, “acceptance from the new academy”. Students are introduced to the academy system in middle school and at the end of their ‘completion’

embed students with county public health professionals, thus giving students an opportunity to see professionals in action as they shadow them in their work place, are provided the opportunity to take paraprofessional courses at the community college as dual enrolled students and prepare for careers in public health and the medical fields. Additionally, throughout the academies students are exposed to some of the classic enrichment activities of civically engaged experiential learning such as field and study trips to businesses (i.e. Google, Chevron), cultural centers (California Shakespeare Festival, Disney Museum), and public agencies (i.e. Court Houses) around the Bay Area where they are able to gain first-hand experience (Wccusd). Thus, the academies create some of the benefits (and draw backs) of a cohort model with opportunities for personal and academic growth as students learn how to work together, acquire skills to solve real world problems, and persist in doing so with a host of supports that help them weather personal challenges that can pull them away from school.

The Richmond High School Law Academy: Service Learning in Action[23]

Richmond's Law Academy provides a window into best practices within the broader Academy model. The origins of the Law and Health Academies at Richmond High School, stem back to Lana Margarella, a long time teacher, who in the late 1990s applied for a federal start-up grant in the area of health and human services as a means of bringing in a variety of guest speakers (i.e., fire fighters, police offer, members of the coast guard) to teach students specific skills and provide career advice in their fields (Mooney interview). This student focused professional development initiative quickly morphed into two career and technical classes, targeted at sophomores, which Allen Mooney, now the faculty lead for the law academy, began to teach in 1998 (Mooney interview).[24] While the first group of students, who

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of the full cycle of path determined classes, they receive an academy 'sash' clearly designed to be an 'honor for students' that attempts to create a sense of identity with the academy. (Wccusd).

[23] Aside from the WCCCUSD and Richmond High websites, the key sources of information for material in this section were extensive interviews I conducted with the two faculty leads for the Law Academy, Allen Mooney and Ellen Rosenbluth.

[24] Mooney, who earned his B.A. in classical languages from UC Berkley was accredited in English and ELD and Latin, which Richmond High offered until 2010.

started as sophomores in 1998, graduated in the early 2000s, by 2003 when Richmond High School embraced the 'Academies Model" the state of California discouraged multipurpose academies and a separate CPA funded Law Academy was formed in 2005 (Mooney interview) and a second CTE teacher was designated to the Law Academy. While Richmond High has had a number of secondary CTE law teachers in the ensuing years, in 2018 Ellen Rosenbluth joined the Richmond High School faculty as a law professional, having previously worked as an attorney for nearly twenty years, and a coach of San Ramon's California High School mock trials team for sixteen years (Rosenbluth, interview).

Today, the Law Academy has a full curriculum that spans student's first through fourth years of high school at Richmond High School, funded by a $81,00 CPA grant (Rosenbluth interview). In addition to paying for prep time for academy leads and costs associated with mock trial, the grant helps to pay for student materials and computer equipment for two sections that cap out at a union negotiated 38 students per section (Rosenbluth interview). Because the State of California only allows academies to use funding only for students in their last three years of high school, freshman in the Academy, who typically number between 66-75 students, take an introduction to law course, using a Street Law textbook funded by the school district. Additionally, the Contra Costa County Bar Association contributes $20,000 every three years to enable their program to fund a variety of awards, T-shirts and other expenses such as food that are not allowed under CPA rules (Rosenbluth, interview). The Law Academy's Advisory Board also contributes to the program as a structural component of the CPA. Consisting of twelve members, educators and prominent professionals in the field, it meets four times a year and serves to guide teachers and students toward the most relevant practices in their fields and connect students to a broad array of individuals and experiences in their respective fields. For example, one of the supervisors for the District Attorney's Office routinely helps to connect the forensics lab class to the D.A.'s crime lab (Rosenbluth, interview).

During students sophomore and junior years at Richmond High, students in the Law Academy a take Forensic Science and Law and Justice classes with Mr. Mooney.   In the Forensic science course students are exposed to work-place learning through a variety of study trips to police departments,

prisons, and occasionally forensic crime labs. At the DA's office student's role play crime scene investigations, meet therapy dogs, and and work with the county District Attorney's Office to observe and gather information about various positions and roles that come into play during the investigation stage of criminal justice cases. The Junior year curriculum in law and justice then takes a deeper dive into career exploration and mock trial. Working with Bertha Romo of the City of San Pablo and a network of professional connections, often facilitated by Ms. Rosenbluth and the Law Academy advisory board, Mr. Mooney connects small groups of three to five students to a wide array of professional mentors who meet for two hours with students three times during the course of the year (Mooney interview). The first meeting is a meet-and-greet between student groups and their professional 'mentor' over pizza. In the second meeting with students, the person engages in 'mock interviews' and helps provide guidance on students' resumes students created in their English courses. The third and final meeting is then an a mini job shadow where students spend two hours with the professional who by this time they have come to know quite well. Sometimes these events take the form of reverse job shares where professionals from the DA's office, the public defender's office and non-profit immigration group will take over a classroom and students will rotate among them from class to class (Rosenblum, interview). Additionally, during the end of student's junior year, they are exposed to a wide range of classroom speakers and in the fourth quarter have attorneys come every day to help coach students in mock trial where they take a deeper dive into the process of law (Mooney, interview).

In their senior year, students take a Law and Democracy class from Ms. Rosenbluth, along with a Government and Economy class that is offered more broadly to the student body as a whole. These courses are explicitly structured as a work-based learning course. Students do more field and study trips (i.e., to federal and state courts of appeal and/or excursions organized by Junior Achievement) and are required to do a service learning project, which involves participant-observation at a select number of city council or school board meetings, or trips to the California legislature or state agency in Sacramento (Rosenbluth interview). For example, "Academies in the Capital" is a program in which students from every academy that want to go meet up and lobby for the academy in Sacramento. Because a large

number of students are already engaged in paid work, service learning is designed for flexibility and students are able to choose from a range of opportunities to attend participatory governance meetings from a rubric provided by Ms. Rosenbluth on the basis of her community research as well as input from the Law Academy's advisory board (Rosenbluth interview). In the future, Rosenbluth, indicated that Richmond High is working on developing courses with more of an activist bent. In part, this is an effort to capitalize on a year of activism to get back to the kind of campus-based and community-embedded service learning projects of the past, for example, under Mary Cadre in the early 2000s when students worked on air quality issues, studied reports, took measurements and filed paper work to get an attorney to file a law suit that helped Richmond High to get ventilators for some of the classrooms (Rosenblum, interview). Next year, they have been approved to offer a year-long Educational Justice elective course that will be offered as a year-long dual enrollment course, which is designed, in part, to encourage students to create service learning projects that focus on their campus and community, helping students learn about budgets, community organizing, a course that will accompany ethnic and women's studies courses that were also developed this year (Mooney interview).

An area of particular strength for the Law Academy, both as pertains to Richmond High school as students embedded in other low income/ 'at risk' high schools around the Bay Area, is the annual law internship/summer program, officially titled the Summer Legal Fellowship, offered by the California Youth Development League (CYDL). Organized by Nancy Schiff, the Executive Director at the Center for Youth Development through law at Berkeley Law (*formerly Bolt Law School*), students spend two weeks at the UC Berkeley law school engaging in mock trials with UC Berkley law school instructors, students and alums; learning about legal curriculum, including classes in Constitutional Law, leadership development, and life skills. Additionally, students are paired up with different law offices, government departments, non-profit agencies, and elected officials that provide students six weeks of paid work experience, typically about 100 hours in high minimum wage cities (Cohen, 2017; Mooney interview). In this highly regarded program, students also build their social and political capital interacting with high profile professionals, such as California State Attorney Generals' California Xavier Beccera (2020) and

now Vice President Kamala Harris, who each gave key note speeches at CYDL graduations. A key draw back, however, is that very few students get to take advantage of this opportunity. Supported by Pathways funds and the CCC Bar Association, students from several school districts around the bay area are allowed to apply for the program, but many students are turned down every year (Rosenbluth, interview). Typically, four to six juniors are accepted each summer to join about thirty other students from around the Bay Area; however, this is only about 6-8% of Richmond High's Law Academy junior class.

While overall, students within the Law Academy program are provided considerably more engagement and experiential learning opportunities than average high school students, whether low or high income districts, a few key challenges present themselves in terms of the support structures needed to maintain the integrity of civic engaged learning within the model over time. Problems related to staffing and lack of effective support within the school district are connected to structural features of large, urban school districts, while other features of the Law Academy, suggest that elements of this particular model of civic engagement have some important limitations that deserve note.

As with many of the civic engagement opportunities discussed above, within the high school setting, much of the quality of engagement that happens both within and outside the classroom is tightly linked to the energy, experience, expertise, talents and creativity of specific individuals, often as in this case, one or two people who serve as faculty leads but also essentially administer the programs on their own. This can lead to significant and abrupt changes in the quality of engagement. For instance, the exit of one of the previous teacher-leads, corresponded with the loss of Richmond High's chapter of Junior State of America. Because the teacher had invested personal time and energy in providing students the opportunity to participate in Junior State of America, they were able to go to Sacramento during legislative sessions and to debate bills and vote, an experience that provided students significant opportunity for individual recognition, which was subsequently cut out of the Academy when the instructor left.

Similar to the pattern discussed above in the context of internships and onboarding for college, the quality and character of civic engagement learning varies over time and across cohorts despite the formal structure that is established to promote them, in this case the Academies structure. In this particular setting, because the academies have become 'required' tracks, many students within them may neither be willing or able to take advantage of many of the 'opportunities' afforded to them either because they see them less as 'community engagement' opportunities than unwanted obligations linked to grades and logistical wrangling they have neither the time, personal maturity or familial support to effectively deal with. Moreover, whereas the kinds of societal expectations that are often taken for granted as background 'air they breathe' for middle and upper income students (i.e., a culture of 'volunteering', 'neighborliness' 'giving back' etc.) may not resonate for many students who are themselves 'out here trying to survive' and for whom the beneficious ethos of 'civic engagement' is often directed (i.e., at food banks, clothing donation drives, community health clinics, emergency hot lines, etc.). Add to this the multiple traumas that compound for people who are economically vulnerable (deaths in the family, catastrophic health issues, high debt loads, precarious housing and home loss, food insecurity, etc.) as well as the imperative to work, and the emotional and logistical challenges of generating effective, equitable and enriching student engagement efforts become apparent. When this falls to one or two individuals who have other 'main jobs', (i.e., teaching a core curriculum for multiple courses and sections of courses that are based in the classroom), one begins to appreciate the herculean effort it takes to do this work given the amount of emotional energy, organizational bandwidth, and logistical and time management skills that it requires of the individuals who do it.

The issue of skeletal staffing is compounded by lack of institutional supports. Lack of administrative bandwidth is important on its own, as it takes district-level support structures to be able to connect and integrate external supports, like College and Career Academy Support Network, (CASN) to individual instructors. But also lack of integrated computer systems, state-of-the art software, and even automation more generally, are critical in this regard. In many businesses these tools are considered imperative for project design, management, and delivery of projects. Where there are fewer personal, one

could argue these systems are even more important as otherwise, already overworked administrators and teachers don't have the tools needed to effectively and equitably manage work-loads and thus in effect, one or two teachers end up absorbing all of the 'costs' yet reap few personal rewards given formal reward structures often don't take the nature of 'civic engaged learning' into account (i.e. union negotiated salaries and benefits, classroom observations by other teachers that do not 'do' civic engagement, lack of 'parent or student' 'problems' taken to administration to 'deal with'). Because there are no systems set up data collection, teachers are not supported in being able to pass on and out important information to the district, or external donors, or alumni important information that would help them asses the 'success' of many of their initiatives, for example, keeping track of where student go to college after they graduate from the law academy, how many get internships or find jobs, or skills that they have learned, or specific goals they have achieved, beyond impressionistic and anecdotal evidence (i.e. we think that the analytic reasoning and logic we teach accounts for higher reading scores among our students compared to other students in the school).

Furthermore, teachers, and to some degree administrators, who are rewarded for 'inward' facing work, have few incentives to support the onerous 'outward' facing work needed (and the associated expertise, for instance in communication, public relations, marketing and promotion) to develop high quality 'civic engagement' that moves beyond 'observation' and 'participation' to the kinds of project outcomes, personal transformation, and positive externalities for communities typically assumed in the literature as not only desirable but expected. In reality, a lot of the work of civic engagement is invisible, to both the internal community of the school and district as well as the external communities, particularly when they are not directly touched by, or associated with, the Academies' work. Because districts rarely hire personnel with expertise in marketing, public relations, and the 'core' administrators associated with running a high school (i.e., Principals and Vice Principals) or who are 'in charge' of college and career activities at the district level, rarely have additional bandwidth for this kind of work, as they struggle to even keep up with what the state deems "essential' responsibilities and reporting requirements. As a consequence, the accomplishments and 'good works' of civic engagement tend to get buried and/or taken

for granted. Furthermore, given the emphasis on equity and management of scarce resources, most administrators have little incentive to broadcast achievements in a context in which many departments, students, teachers, are not privy to the same perceived ‘opportunities’. In places like Richmond High where not all students can choose their Academies and not all Academies have the same resources, this can politicize ‘successes’ that are showcased given uneven access to ‘opportunities’ and in other contexts, perhaps the impression that ‘cool experiences’ are hived off for a small segment of the student body as a whole. And even where Academies are not mandated, unspoken expectations for ‘delivering’ creates pressure from other units as they often assume the school grants more support for these “special programs’ than is often the case.

Among the key advantages of outside supports built into the Academy system are the material and human capital that is generated from the CPA grant and local advisory boards but these supports present several limitation. First, state funding comes with significant and sometimes onerous restrictions that require administrative diligence and careful planning, both of which are in short supply in large districts with overburdened, undertrained administrative staff, who often lack the expertise to effectively navigate conflicting imperatives. When the Richmond Law Academy had their federal SLC grant, despite the fact that the academic leads, who had written and effectively ran the grant, the person responsible had to be an administrator, in this case, a school scheduler, who did not know as much about the ins and the outs of the program, yet was tasked with important decisions made on its behalf (Rosenbluth interview). In order to manage the then seventeen academies, in 2010, the WCCUSD created a department, headed by a former faculty lead that had been working as an academy lead, thus creating more stability, unlike at many other academies where leads come and go and data is hard to track down (Mooney interview). At the same time, the lack of transparent platform means that the district records are used almost exclusively for ‘compliance purposes” related to a yearly CPAAR report that is required by the State as well as administration of funds. The district keeps the books to take a cut of the funding generated from the state, but provides little by way of support to faculty leads. There is little interaction between faculty leads of

different academies as related to programmatic interaction or data sharing. Moreover, the state does not make the yearly CPAAR reports available to faculty nor to the public (Mooney interview).

Related to this, because the Academies are only required by the state to track a limited amount of information related, for example, to attendance and progress toward graduation, there is little 'useable' data for faculty leads and significant gaps in how they can use the data to improve their programs. For example, it is hard to build in monikers to gauge and track 'success' over time as linked to either project outcomes or student achievement as the grant on which the Academies are funded do not require reporting of things like college eligibility (i.e., meeting A-G requirements), GPA, or what students do in their field after they graduate (Rosenbluth, interview). While some states have done more to try to track students paths after graduation (e.g., Minnesota's Employment and Economic Development Career Pathways initiative), the data generated from CPA funded Academies is fairly restricted and restrictive. Funding is based on criteria related to 'at risk' students, which are then massaged by schools and districts to maximize funding under established criteria, administrative maneuverings that don't track to individual students, though in theory this is possible given that students are given state identification numbers. In order to keep up with students, Faculty leads of the Richmond Law Academy, rely on information means related to their own personal Facebook pages, alumni word of mouth and occasionally their advisory boards (Mooney, interview).

Lastly, the local advisory boards are useful as an important supply of guest speakers and source of feedback on curriculum changes and connections to prospective faculty-mentors, however, the 'big names' these boards attract, often have little time or initiative to devote to spearheading program-wide initiatives and rolling up their sleeves to get things done (Rosenbluth, Mooney interview). It can thus be frustrating to faculty leads who are presented with a host of recommendations and project proposals but without any specific support in making them a reality (Rosenbluth). Board members, who are unfamiliar with the 'inside' workings of the school system, let alone a Richmond High classroom, often assume more capacity and zest for learning than there is, and underestimate the time and logistics involved in navigating district processes and paper work and motivating students. While certain individuals are more

inclined to lend their personal time, they are ultimately ‘volunteering’ their time and over time, they get burned out or withdrawal, which can leave teacher-leads responsible for the program in a bind. This is further complicated by the lack of formal accountability that individual board members have to teachers, or teachers to boards. Though there are a dozen people on Richmond High’s Advisory Board, in point of fact, there are less than a dozen people on the board that attend every meeting and thus a handful do the bulk of the work in helping to connect students to opportunities (Rosenbluth interview). As a consequence, the Law Academy like other Academies often work with ‘shadow’ boards comprised of a network of programs (Junior Achievement) and helping professionals (often personal connections from other educators) placed in key (primarily public) agencies (specific courts, city halls, police departments, labs, etc.) who ‘know how to get things done” in the face of many public agencies that are either unresponsive or uninterested in establishing partnerships with the Academies (Rosenbluth interview).

Civic Engagement in the High School Setting: Systemic Inequities

Investigating the broad based contours of how civic education is conceived in the High School setting along with a deep dive into the inner workings of the Richmond Law Academy reveals substantial differentiation across school districts. Though by no means generalizable to a broader universe of experiences contained across California’s 1290 public high schools, if we concede that the portrait of Acalanes (and Bentley High) represents a typical set of opportunities in Central Contra Costa County and Richmond High (and El Cerrito High) represents the same in West Contra Costa County, then we recognize that students are provided significantly conceptions of civic engagement education as well as modalities of delivery.

In Central County schools (as exemplified by Acalanes and Bentley), students are given strong signals regarding schools’ expectations around civic engagement as a function of civic stewardship, driven in large part by a set of graduation requirements and institutional supports to achieve them (Bentley) or by establishing benchmarks for civic engagement along a well curated fairly universal path

to college admission (Acalanes). Moreover, the allocation of rewards and benefits (i.e., awards for hours volunteered) and the allocation of resources to devote to create expertise in the area of civic engagement, through specifically defined goals and procedures or the linking of specific experiences to curriculum) also generates a strong connection between student success and civic engagement.

Though superficially sharing many of the same trappings—websites with opportunities to connect with community and supports for college going —the emphasis and orientation is quite distinct across school districts in Contra Costa County. In West County schools, civic engagement is less place-based and more understood through the lens of identity and career. In these schools there is a much more segmented reality, most stark in the case of Richmond High's placement of all students into broad workforce based educational clusters, but also at el Cerrito High, via affinity group clusters through which students are encouraged to engage. This leads to a higher level of differentiation. Within the Richmond Academies model, students experience with civic engagement is highly dependent on their positionality within the high school as lead teachers and coordinators have a considerable level of autonomy in shaping students service learning experience. Within the context of the Law Academy in particular, led by highly experienced and dedicated professionals, curricular goals are tied to service learning objectives that directly advance career opportunities while also giving a wide range of 'high touch' opportunities to engage with professionals in the community. On the down side, in an environment in which most students do not have experience with academies and do not identify with targeted affinity groups, inward facing opportunities for student engagement are highly circumscribed. In this context community engagement becomes untethered from student success understood as academic achievement. In a context of chronic understanding (or frequently churning staff) and few structural supports provided by the school or district (tech specialists or career professionals), outward facing community engagement suffers as well.

The Four Year University Experience:

Educating for Civic Engagement – Laboratories of Democracy?

The animating visions and objectives that propel civic engagement discourse at the high school level overlap with those at four year institutions, albeit with loftier goals in mind. As emphasized by the National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement in 2012, community engagement in higher education is about preparing students "for their roles as citizens in the globally engaged and extraordinarily diverse democracy". A key emphasis in higher education is on helping students reach beyond their own individual educational goals and aspirations, to see themselves as having an important role to play in the broader society. As 'laboratories of democracy,' universities are said to have a key role to play in supplying the means by which students are able to transform themselves from passive, policy takers, to active change agents within their communities.

Yet, it is one thing to express a vision of engagement, and quite another thing to deliver on it. At the close of the 20th century, critics from across the educational landscape, had honed into the idea that universities had become largely dislodged from their communities and thus untethered from their social and economic responsibilities to society (Checkoway, 2001). Focused more on attracting intellectual capital, tenuring professors, and churning out graduates, they were seen as both more consumed with research than teaching and less relevant to solving society's most pressing civic, social, and moral problems (Boyer, 1996).

Responding to the widespread perception that universities at the turn of the twentieth century had become too insular and disconnected from society, and thus unable to make meaningful contributions to the communities in they are located, in the first decade of the twenty-first century many universities embarked on plans to build bridges within and across neighborhoods to bring more immediate and discernable benefits to local communities (Stanton, 2008). Similarly, academics, building on dissatisfaction with a perceived over-emphasis on career and professional education at the expense of

developing a ‘democratically minded’ citizenry (Boyer, 1996), have crafted programs to facilitate greater community-based research and experiential learning opportunities outside the classroom. Many of these programs have embraced an explicitly change-oriented social pedagogy whereby students are “encouraged to analyze and develop solutions to complex problems and bring about social change to benefit communities” (Kapucu, 2014 ; Strand, 2000). For others, civic engagement was a vehicle to reconnect universities to their role in nation building. As argued by Haupt et. al. (2018), because many public universities were established through land grants from the federal government with the purpose of essentially serving as ‘civic institutions’ in their communities, the idea of ‘developing a democratic citizenry’ is a return to its historic mission of lifting up individual students and connecting them, albeit indirectly, to loftier national ambitions, such as nation-building (Checkoway, 2001).

In 2012, the US Department of Education and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) published *A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy’s Futur*e, a document that issued a call to action on civic engagement education. This call to action was spurred by concern for the changing fabric of America’s civic life, more specifically, a decline of social capital in the United States as first articulated by Robert Putnam in his widely noted 2000 book, *Bowling Alone*. In highlighting the critical role that higher education plays in fostering healthy democracies and building trust in government, *A Crucible Moment*, aimed to amplify the breadth and depth of college and university initiatives. A year later, in 2013, the American Political Science Association (APSA), published *Teaching Civic Engagement*: *From Student to Active Citizen*, in which it reasserted its commitment to civic and political engagement education and the commitment of political science to work with all disciplines to generate quality civic learning opportunities for all students.

Though ‘civic education’ has a long pedigree dating back to the progressive era (Dewey, 2012), and has played an integral role in the development of a number of sub-disciples across the social sciences, the call-to-action in political science is noteworthy because, as a discipline, it has been the beltway to government, understood as a vast infrastructure of elected representatives,

public administrators and policy professionals as well as the broad array of organizations and professions (parties, political consultants, pollsters, political organizers, and public relations professionals) that connect society and the economy to the state. Given this vast 'portfolio' civic engagement has tended to be either taken for granted as a subset of political engagement or considered passe. For a discipline in which difference is understood as a baseline (demographic, territorial, racial, economic, partisan, etc.) and the very definition of politics is equated with the 'shaping and sharing of power," (Kaplan, 1957), the role of civic education in 'strengthening democracy" is far from straight forward. Moreover, because the discipline of political science is structured into five main subdisciplines (American Politics, Public Administration/ Constitutional Law, Comparative Politics, International Relations and Political Theory), only two of which focus on domestic politics and institutions, many students of political science study politics and government in other regions of the world or as a set of philosophical pursuits and are therefore not particularly tuned into or interested in initiatives that tend to focus on "the local politics of your country".

From the outside, the failure of political science to embrace a role in the academy as vast 'laboratories' of democratic engagement and participatory governance, feels to many like a dereliction of duty. Sociologist and anthropologists who focus on cultural and societal structures and dynamics roundly and routinely criticize political science curriculum for its failure to deeply 'engage' with communities and civic-minded pundits routinely chide us to be alarmed that only a minority of us participate regularly in associational life.[25] Meanwhile, citizen-commissions and public agencies routinely conduct studies that reveal the lack of knowledge and/or interest in political processes or institutions among the American populace. For instance, in 2014, the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania made headlines when they revealed that only 36% of adults in their survey could name all three branches

[25] In 2012, a Pew Center study found that a little less than half of Americans (48%) participated at least once in a civic group or activity or attended a political meeting on local, town or school affairs over the course of the preceding year (Smith, 2013). Still fewer Americans volunteer. For instance in 2015, only about one-quarter of Americans volunteered in their communities (The US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016).

of government, (about the same percentage were not able to name even a single branch), only 38% knew which party had the majority in the U.S. Senate, and only 27% knew the proportion of Congressional votes needed to override a presidential veto (Annenberg Civic Knowledge Survey, 2014). Similarly, in the aftermath of national elections, people are routinely reminded of a fact (long taken for granted in the field as a state of being) that the percentage of eligible American voters that turns out to vote in national presidential elections hovers consistently just above half of the voting eligible population and is routinely lower for mid-term elections (DeSilver, 2020).[26]

While political scientists have long acknowledged and communicated these trends out to our students, there has been relative widespread inertia related to what to do about it. Thus, in some ways, it is not surprising that the American Political Science Association's 2017 follow up report is entitled, "Teaching Civic Engagement Across the Disciplines" (Matto, E,C., A.R. Millett McCartney, E.A. Bennion, and D. Simplson, 2017). This title is revealing in three ways.

First, that political science, as a discipline, is and has always been a field riddled with the types of cleavages, divides, and seemingly intractable conflicts. Assuming incommensurate paradigms can happily go on existing forever, it sees itself as having a lot to 'teach' other disciplines, both in terms of methodology and approach as well as tolerance for difference in a polity that has always been a vast experiment in liberal, multi-cultural democracy, riddled with nastiness. Starting with a baseline assumption that pluralist democracies are founded on difference by the very fact that values vary and resources are scarce, a large part of politics is about studying "who get's what, when, and how" (Lasswell, 1936), and in this process we find that cultural commitments, ideological differentiation, social hierarchies, and institutional structures shape actors interest and behavior in ways that create a vast and differentiated set of struggles for influence. The struggle in American life to find commonality, has typically been a local one, based on 'territorially' defined notions of community. But the revolution in telecommunications has created not only unprecedented access to information, but also a vast and

[26] According to a Pew report published in 2020, among advanced industrialized countries of the OECD, the United States ranks 30th out of 35 in voter turnout (DeSilver, 2020).

enduring fragmentation and intersection of identities untethered from territory. In an era of monarchies, where there is little mobility and a lot of hierarchy, who wouldn't gravitate toward the aspirational ideal of liberal democracy? But the world has shifted and the compromises waged out of past battles, largely foreign (WWI, WWII, the Cold War, Vietnam), have been undone. In an era in which the United States stood for what Communism wasn't (Cold War of the 1940s-1980s), the perceived threat to the 'American Way' was seen as predominately from the Left, hence an ideological hard court press to forge unity around a myth of 'American Exceptionalism.' Given our opposition to the stalwarts of Communism and the communist and socialist governments around the world that they inspired, the threat of 'leftist insurgents' and 'foreign enemies' of the American state exerted considerable pressure on the academy. Thus, it leaned into its first amendment protections and attempted to insulate itself from political winds through the creation of tenure. While the ideological edifice of 'American Exceptionalism', has been eroded by decades of American hegemony and emerging foreign and domestic crisis threatening its economic and moral standing in the world, new ideologies have emerged and people mobilized---predominately those perceived to have been locked out of power by cultural and political elites of a bygone era still clinging to power. As new and old forces clash, the deep well of difference that has always been at the heart of American politics is now a lived, palpable, unsettling experience for many Americans, exacerbated the triple threat of a domestic cultural revolution, a global pandemic, and widespread, though rarely publicly acknowledged, cyberwar.

Second, and more to the point, the type of far reaching goals that the academy has been called to step up to, goals that reach into the heart of American culture, society and history, are too varied and too great to be contained within one discipline. Students, like the general public at large, tend to see politics as living in a particular set of institutions and institutional spaces (governments, political science departments, etc.). Yet, despite the rhetorical call to "stop being political' or to 'get back to the science', the reality of politics is that it *is* ubiquitous. The battle to win hearts and minds in a country of 'change makers' runs through every community via legions of interest groups, public relations firms, journalists, social media influencers, and social movement activists, not to mention voters, parties and elected

officials. In a world in which American's trust in government, the media, and indeed, 'facts' is at an all-time low (Dimock, 2020), and polarized partisan politics at an all-time high, it is important to recognize that politics impacts almost every aspect of our lives—how facts are 'massaged', and narratives 'constructed' and echo chambers created.

In light of these understandings the current civic malaise as not a problem of education systems per se, or particularly schools or departments within them, but rather a *set* of problems that *flows* through them. And this happens at many different levels, in many different forms, on the basis of a variety of different perspectives about what civicness is and how it connects to a robust democracy. Thus, what must happened to really gain some traction on the multiple crisis facing the nation, is not to 'go back' in time to a gold age of civicness and thus embark upon the mission of figuring out how to 'craft good citizens' for 'a healthy' democracy, first because there never really was a "golden age" of civicness for most poor and working class people and two, because we have always had many competing and contending theories of citizenship and civicness that have informed 'how democracy works'. Like 'democracy,' civic engagement is an inherently contested concept. operating in different ways across temporal, institutional, economic, and cultural contexts.

Three Approaches to Civic Engagement: Academic, Service-Based and Hybrid

Because each university is an enormous ecosystem unto itself, there are many ways in which universities' pursue specific visions of 'engagement.' The specific goals and strategies used to pursue them are in turn deeply connected to the university's historical origins, its' specific ideological "traditions," it's overall institutional capacity, and the profile of stakeholder(s) tasked with carrying forth the praxis of 'engagement' within the university and across the communities of interest it serves.

For the purpose of 'surveying' the field, it is useful to limit the focus to three student-centered models of civic engagement[27]:

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[27] This is by no means an exhaustive list. There are a host of education-focused community development models focused primarily on institutional objectives related to growth (i.e. raising revenue, attracting students and

1) Civic engagement as advancing teaching and research pedagogies embedded in community
2) Civic engagement as human capital formation linked to student enrichment and career enhancement opportunities
3) Civic engagement as a praxis for social transformation

In the discussion that follows, I provide an overview of each model and how they inform civic engagement programs and initiatives, incorporating several extended examples from the School of Public Administration (SPA) at the University of Central Florida, the Academic Advancement Program (AAP) at UCLA and American Cultures Engaged Scholarship Program (ACES) at UC Berkeley. In the case of the ACES program, I take a deeper dive to look at how the program has evolved and the specific tensions that exist in pursuing a transformational pedagogy around racial and social justice in the context of what remains UC Berkeley's only universal degree requirement for its undergraduates irrespective of discipline.

Civic Engaged learning as evidence based, community embedded pedagogy

A key component of civic engaged learning relates to providing students with applied knowledge and skills. For student service staff developing and staffing 'enrichment' programs and 'service learning' opportunities, a key focus is on community. The goal is to stimulate students to think about their role in the community and to give them agency in an academic environment in which they may otherwise feel stifled or constrained by limited modalities of learning. While all educators recognize the benefits of personal growth and community engagement, there can be a significant difference in how students service specialists and student life professionals conceive of 'service learning' from how academics and scholars

intellectual capital, and expanding capacity). In so much as I am interested here in student-centered conceptions of civic engagement, I do not deal with these models, which are less about civic engagement than fostering public-private partnerships.

trained in their field and responsible for teaching a specific cannon of knowledge, conceive of as desired objectives.

Scholars who have earned Ph.D.'s in academic fields and are teaching in four year institutions are by definition professionalized knowledge workers, or at least tend to consider themselves as such. They have written dissertations that make original contributions to their field, often having made enormous personal sacrifices to do so. Having invested years, if not decades, in their academic success as students and scholars themselves, they have cultivated a specific set of expertise and are typically deeply committed to particular theories and pedagogies that they themselves have researched and published on. Thus, as professional researchers, authors, teachers (and frequently mentors), they are as deeply committed to the intellectual development of their students as they are to their personal growth.

As a consequence, the main focus of many academic-based community-learning education is on *pedagogy* and community-based *research*. Pedagogies and research methodologies, are in turn linked to concepts, theories, and norms embedded within disciplines. In some disciplines, community-engagement is standard practice and therefore not only an expectation but a requirement. In para-professional degree programs, for example social work, clinical psychology, or public health, students are frequently required to acquire a particular number of hours of community-engaged praxis in order to earn their degree. Thus, staffing and faculty work flows are set up so that faculty have a great deal of instructional support *both* within the classroom as well as in the field. In these settings, disciplinary wide norms and expectations align closely with class-room level learning objectives, for instance, utilizing community-based research to "prepare students for public service roles within a diverse society" (Durant, 2002; Raffel et al, 2011, Haupt, et al, 2018).

A noteworthy example of this is University of Central Florida's School of Public Administration (SPA) (Haupt et, al). Guided by specific competencies expected of graduates from public administration programs as established by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration (NASPAA), the main accrediting body for public administration programs, SPA understood that to set students up for success in meeting professional goals they would also need to develop a wide range of

institutional and process oriented supports for *community organizations as well as students*. Internally, they determined that core PA competencies would need to be supported through a curriculum that also linked in moral, cognitive, civic, social justice and interpersonal development, to the standard cannon of learning objectives (Haupt et al, 2018). Thus, beyond a programmatic focus on core areas of competencies for student learning, they created a wide range of advisory boards across each of their five program areas and leveraged their coordinating capacity to create synergistic ways in which students could collaborate to offer community partners immediate and meaningful benefits. To facilitate these goals, they hired a full-time Experiential Learning Coordinator (in addition to the service-learning support offered by the University) to coordinate and develop student community engagement activities intentionally and collaboratively, thus building a solid framework and foundation not only for the growth of the program within the University but also the extent of its reach and influence into the community. To this end, students work closely on 'community capacity building' projects with their community partners—thus "developing and strengthening skills, abilities and resources that organizations and communities need to adapt and thrive in fast-changing networked world" (Haupt et al, 2018). Through these intentional collaborations, students create volunteer handbooks to highlight outcomes, conduct program evaluations, and assist with grant proposal and other research-specific functions requested by the organization. SPA also supports five active student organizations that function as student-led organizations, working collaboratively with active and engaged faculty to serve as a bridge between SPA and the rest of the student body, thus not only increasing student's interactivity with faculty, but also their social networks and problem-solving skill sets. As reported by Haupt et al (2018), an average of 85% or above for 'satisfaction was reported on internship, service-learning, and other experiential learning activities. By tying a host of metrics from in-classroom assessments, to student graduate surveys and employment satisfaction, they are able to connect to 'real time data' that enables the program to adjust to student, faculty, and staff needs.

Across many four year universities and within many disciplines, the type of civic engagement learning supports developed by SPA at Central Florida University are neither possible nor desirable. For

many disciplines, there is no agreement on standardized learning objectives for the curriculum and even if they did, few departments have promising prospects of developing their own 'in house' academic-focused civic engagement efforts given the 'turf wars' that often go on inside the academy. Moreover, many professors that move forward civic engagement learning within their field do so not from the mainstream of their discipline but from the margins, or as the case may be, within a department or unit at the margins of the university, is often the case with interdisciplinary clusters or schools of "justice "or "ethnic studies" For many of these scholars, their research agenda and/or theoretical approach to a particular social or political problem leads them to approaches and methodologies that are not widely accepted in their discipline or perhaps in the wider university. For instance, faculty who do research on environmental justice within basic research-focused biology department, or faculty who teach transpersonal psychology in a program dominated by industrial psychologists. Lastly, a key motivator for faculty engaged in 'community embedded' research in the first place is not necessarily to 'solve problems' (though this is certainly a key motivator behind a lot of STEM-based courses that have civic engagement components). Instead, they are interested in linking student's engagement with theory to the practical realities of 'the real world'. Thus, embedding students in community is a way for them to apply theory to practice and to analyze complex problems in action. In this way they are encouraged to think critically and to tackle what Eyler (2002), identifies as "ill structured social problems", or the messy world of real world dilemmas where students are confronted with contradictory information, lack of clear answers, and the need to gather multiple perspectives for analysis and action. This is the kind of work that helps to build field-based knowledge and critical thinking. Given these objectives, to the extent that their universities seek to frame knowledge creation and skill acquisition in keeping with a core institutional mission that may be very different, faculty (and students) are often put in challenging situations if their objectives, methods and/or findings push against it.

Civic engagement as human capital formation: 'enrichment' and 'career service' models

Civic Engagement and student enrichment

In the competitive world of college admissions, universities have made tremendous strides in linking campus to community through student engagement efforts via a vast network of enrichment programs and opportunities offered to students at every stage of their college career. In many ways, the focus on student engagement has always been the traditional draw of the 'college campus.' Students from different locations and walks of life, often away from their families for the first time, come together on a 'college campus' not only to learn a particular set of academic skills, but to have a wide array of new 'experiences' that ideally enable them to create memories and friendships that last a lifetime. In the traditional college experience, students spend four years of their life with a university and at each stage in their educational journey are emersed in a variety of enriching experiences, often created for them as part of the price of admission (i.e., student registration fees). At the outset students are placed in dorms, which resemble thriving hubs of interactivity where residential assistants (RAs), themselves seasoned student ambassadors, help establish friendship networks, thus supporting a host of university sponsored groups and events whose main purpose is to help integrate students into the social and cultural life of the campus.

The activity of 'student life' linked not only to residence halls, but inter-collegiate recreation (i.e., club sports teams, arts and fitness groups, and college booster groups), and a whole host of student-facing clubs and programs, is supported at most four year colleges by a vast infrastructure of administrators and support staff, often graduate and undergraduate students themselves, who work in campus-based activity centers. Whether in a small liberal arts school or a big public university, students are exposed to a wide variety of opportunities to enrich themselves in the context of these programs, for example by learning or teaching new skill sets like yoga, wushu, or modern dance at the recreation center; interacting with students from other majors or grade levels on intra-collegiate sports teams; and/or volunteering or working at youth camps for K-12 students on campus over the summers. Over the course of years of activity within the same programs, students gain competency and build social networks that help them

land part time employment while they are in school and increase their likelihood of additional job opportunities once they graduate.

Connected in a more formal way to university's outreach efforts, service learning projects and programs have been a key way that college administrators have attempted to bridge the distance between their campuses and the communities in which they are embedded. These efforts include a wide variety of programs and projects, from youth development and community education programs, to university course work and field research embedded in the community, to formalized partnerships with other educational institutions (i.e., adult learning centers, high schools, etc.) and public and on-profit organizations (service providers, cultural centers, advocacy groups, etc.).

Though the rhetoric of service learning is often used in tandem with more transactional goals and complex negotiations that go on between college administrators and community leaders, service learning in theory and practice focuses on social and educational interactions that are established either in tandem with the 'business' of community development, or as sometimes happens in praxis, in opposition to it.

At the systems level, the reality of service learning projects is that they can be expensive and time consuming propositions, which makes them difficult to sustain over time as there is always more 'need' and 'demand' than can be accommodated within and across communities. Moreover, service learning programs also create vested interests among participants whose goals and interests do not always align with university-wide priorities, which can complicate the ability of administrators it be flexible or respond to changes in their bottom line (i.e., plummeting enrollment and/or new fiscal imperatives) as they pursue their broader university mission as guided by the university boards to which they are beholden.

Despite these ongoing challenges, the benefits accrued to universities by service learning efforts are substantial. As university staff, faculty and students involve themselves in community community-based research and educational projects, the 'return on engagement' they produce is akin to a substantial 'return on investment' (Brier, 2014). These accrue both to university stakeholders and to the community. For students' enhanced skill building and memorable experiences generate greater satisfaction and greater competency in linking theory to practice, which can often translate into more positive feelings toward

their programs, higher graduate rates, and increased alumni involvement down the line (Cress, Burack, Giles, Elkins & Stevens, 2010; Bringle, Hatcher & Muthiah, 2010). Similarly, in 'giving back' to the community in a direct way, faculty and administrators often extend social and cultural capital to new areas of the community, ultimately leading to more awareness of, and preparation for, serving 'diverse' communities (Rice and Horn, 2014). On the community side, enhanced visibility of the university and the 'good works' it is seen as doing and facilitating, help cultivate positive attitudes toward it and generate greater synergies, thus opening up new prospects for partnership down the line.

Many student enrichment and service-based learning opportunities for students within four year universities come from within academic departments, usually directly from faculty and the resources or projects they generate for their programs (for instance, undergraduate journals, etc.), or as part of broader grant-funded research (i.e., participatory-observation, community action research, etc.). Centered on department and disciplinary-defined needs and objectives, research opportunities and teaching assistances provide not only graduate but undergraduate students important opportunities for professional and academic advancement. Professors with endowed chairs or departments or individuals that set up centers or projects with research grants, typically generate a wide variety of opportunities for students to both 'get engaged' in research projects that often blend together a variety of valuable opportunities. They create valuable 'professional experience' in arrangements that often look like apprenticeships, where professors work with graduate students, and graduate students train and supervise undergraduate students. In turn students supply valuable labor to the research centers. Because many of these centers are set up in large part by grants that do not pay for overhead, the university often supplies a variety of resources, including, office space, and in some cases small stipends for undergraduate students who, in the academic hierarchy, are low on the food chain, but are 'compensated' by the career enhancements these types of arrangements provide like clerical, technical, and research skills, but also a wide arrange of 'soft' skills. They also gain exposure to 'insider' norms and processes simply by observing what is happening around them and absorbing the plentiful "tip" giving advice that graduate students and faculty often depart to the undergraduates they work with. Thus, in addition to providing students with greater knowledge of the

research at hand, they are enculturated into their 'field' as well as a wealth of connections and opportunities that often parlay into future career opportunities via letters of recommendation from individuals that are influential well beyond the campus community, thus extending students' social and professional networks.

Civic Engagement and career advancement

At the aggregate level, career advancement, has become one of the most important 'selling points' of a four year college education. In an environment in which there is much public and private hand ringing about the academic job market and the wisdom of encouraging undergraduate students to pursue advanced degrees in disciplines that are producing fewer jobs and/or less generously compensated ones, much greater attention has been paid, particularly by college administrators, to career advancement as a core mission of four year universities. This emphasis on connecting academic success to career prospects overlaps internally with a changing profile of student and parent demand for greater access and more course offerings in fields with high-value propositions in terms of future job prospects , many of which cluster in STEM fields.

These internal trends have been reinforced by external pressures on 'the academy'. First and foremost is a now decades long debate over America's educational future, which over the course of the last four years has generated a great deal of public and industry scrutiny of the ways in which four year institutions are failing to keep up with labor market trends at a time when their tuition rates are at an all-time high. Second, America is in the midst of a profound rethinking of its economic future in light of a profound shift in the profile of jobs available and its waning growth and competitiveness in the global political economy. A third distinct, but interrelated pressure point, is the renewed focus on who has been left behind by recent trends in education and employment, and thus louder and more forceful calls on universities to redouble their efforts to deal not only with exacerbating inequities within their student bodies, but also as leaders in tackling inequalities in the broader economy and society in which they are embedded.

In this context, there has been a great deal of movement in career services. In the twenty-first century, internships and externships have become, much like standardized testing and college admission preparation, a growing industry in and of itself, and increasingly one that is both highly professionalized and increasingly specialized. Counseling and education departments now provide masters' degrees in career exploration, and a wide variety of for-profit companies, non-profit agencies, and self-employed individuals offer a wide- range of career development and 'life coaching' services to prospective student clients. In the past decade, internships have also become subject to increasing regulation, not only by professional associations and industry groups, but also by state and national labor regulators. The Fair Labor Standards Act, for instance provides "for profit' employers with regulations regarding minimum and overtime pay, guidelines for wages and overtime pay. In this environment, the legitimacy of internships as forms of professional training are increasingly tied to formal educational programs and the receipt of academic credit, as has typically been the case for students in professional programs required to earn a certain amount of work hours to earn a degree, but also "The extent to which the intern's work complements, rather than displaces, the work of paid employees while providing significant educational benefits to the interns" (U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division Fact Sheet #7).

Unlike in public high schools where very few professional development services are available, four year schools typically have robust career development centers and/or trained professionals that are able to help students prepare competitive applications for highly coveted *paid* internships. Because most students don't get any formal introduction to internships in high school, and those students that do are either slotted into them through their schools or via informal social and professional networks, students often have the impression that internships are not as desirable as paid entry-level jobs. Yet, for many companies, paid internships have become an important form of employment and recruitment, enabling managers to 'test out' new employees without going through an often much more complicated H.R. process of recruiting, interviewing, onboarding, and training that may end up providing jobs to folks that are not a good match for the organization but difficult to replace. Because students lack work experience and for the most part, are not industry 'insiders' they are often unaware of the degree to which

internships have become important pipelines into *careers*. As a result, universities have spent a great deal of time, energy and resources to generate tools, programs, workshops, and support staff that raise students awareness and competency about what internships are available, why they are relevant (i.e. their increasing importance as pipelines into job opportunities), and how to gather and curate all of the information needed to apply for an internship and communicate effectively with would be employers, all skills that are critical for setting students up for success in the twenty-first century labor market.

Enrichment and career advancement for whom? A spotlight on access and inclusion

Because many four year research universities represent complex, mega-institutions that operate more as mini 'city-states' then they do large companies, it is difficult to fully capture the complexity of civic engagement in the maze of academic centers, enrichment programs, and initiatives. As a result, universities themselves often do not have a clear picture of what is happening across their institutions, thus making it difficult to 'capture' and make visible for their students as a whole. More often than not, it is in response to specific requests or initiatives of external constituencies (donors, alumni, accreditation bodies, etc.) that spur public relations officers at the university to create outward promotional materials that highlight particular segments of the university's work in this area. As such, this material is outward facing and often designed to highlight the most positive aspects of programs and initiatives as experienced by specific groups. Given the complex structures and decentralized nature of many four year universities, where educational priorities and resource streams change and administers and faculty come and go, more often than not, even 'student success' or student engagement specialists are not themselves fully aware of what is available to students in purviews for which they are not responsible.

As a result, from the student's perspective, access to opportunities for engagement can be obscured by the hodgepodge of pet projects and stand-alone programs. Moreover, as many academic programs are connected to particular professors within specialized academic centers, they remain largely out of reach for students who have not already distinguished themselves academically in the classroom because it is through these professors (and the grants and donor streams they cultivate) that many of these

research positions, teaching assistanceships and/or applied projects in the community are tied. For the most excelling students these opportunities are valuable precisely because they are widely seen and recognized as competitive and reserved for those who are highly committed and/or excelling academically in their fields. Mathematically this can only be a small segment of the campus community.

The vast majority of students are not in the top 10% of their class and therefore may not be highly visible or sought after for special projects and/or opportunities, nor do many of them have the confidence and/or soft skills needed to successfully pursue available opportunities that may be announced to them. Increasingly students are working more hours to be able to afford their education and many of them, through no fault of their own, did not receive the type of rigorous academic preparation that is often the gateway, albeit it rarely acknowledged, to these kinds of 'jobs'. In a state like California, where a response to deep inequities in K-12 education has been a series of band-aids and taranakites like guaranteed UC admission to the top nine percent of students, they tend to have different levels of preparation, some having had a host of challenging honors and AP classes and high standards of academic rigor and support, while others from low-income neighborhoods held to a very different standard with many fewer resources and supports. Moreover, given the financial realities faced by many poor and working class students who can't rely on familial support, a tsunami of high tuition fees combined with a rising cost of living and high unemployment rates (in California, currently the second highest in the nation), has meant that attention and effort are spread thin across classes, work obligations, and helping family survive.

From this lens 'enrichment' opportunities feel a lot like unattainable privileges that add insult to injury given the harrowing journey and pricey cost of admission to get into the university in the first place. For them, student engagement is less about enrichment than about survival given the varied struggles they face to pass classes in the midst of dealing with financial programs, food insecurity and/or homelessness, not to mention the emotional and psychological tool it takes to deal with these things in an environment of plenty. For poor and working class students of all races, genders, ethnicities and nationalities, relative deprivation can easily get internalized as personal failure or feel at the aggregate

like massive institutional gas lighting, which tends to lead students into activism rather than leaning into their personal academic success in the classroom.

With this in mind, it is valuable to highlight institutionalized efforts beyond the classroom that have been able to fuse the mission of student success with the spirit of community engagement in a way that is accessible to a broad range of students across the university. In the two sections that follow I highlight two such examples, one from UCLA that follows a more traditional service model and the other, at UC Berkeley emergences from a civic-education model that attempts to expand beyond the traditional limitations of the citizen-scholar model to embrace a pedagogy linked to social and racial justice.

Civic Engagement Education in the service of Social and Racial Justice-

UCLA's Academic Advancement Program

The University of California, Los Angeles' Academic Advancement Program (AAP) is a paragon of civic engagement education harnessed to an inclusive vision of student success, serving over fifty thousand students as of 2021. Created in 1971 in the aftermath of a merger between UCLA's Education Opportunity Program and the High Potential Program, in the ensuing fifty years, it has become the country's largest university-based student diversity program (Cheng, 2021). While it has gone through many phases of development, and weathered many political and administrative battles, what has led it to become so successful as a model of engagement is its ability to fuse both community and institutional objectives. Administratively, its main function is to recruit and retain UCLA's most vulnerable student populations. However, its mission extends well beyond its core institutional purpose to include the way it defines 'student success', the organizational and process-oriented decisions it has made about how to achieve its goals, and its long term vision of its place within the university as a central hub of overlapping communities of interest.

Whereas many universities have a broad, hodgepodge of initiatives and programs that are broadly tasked with supporting students during their educational journey, what makes AAP so unique , and I

would argue so successful, is its ability to have a centralized leadership structure with a devolved set of initiatives and supports that can flexibly transform to meet a wide range of objectives. From the outset, UCLA made the decision to create a program that would operate much like an academic center, but would infuse into its purview a variety of support services, which has always included academic advising, peer-to-peer counseling, and recruitment and retention specialists. As a result, it has included administrators, faculty, classified professionals, and students all under one program/center. The result of this is to be able to create a common purpose among stakeholders that would otherwise have very diverse institutional incentives, whether in terms of organizational priorities or the allocation of resources.

Because, AAP was born out of an imperative to both increase access for students from historically underrepresented backgrounds while raising students' *academic* achievement, it started off from the outset as a program that wrapped around the student rather than a particular affinity group. Thus, students from many different backgrounds and walks of life were actively encouraged and recruited to get involved (i.e., Black and Asian students from middle class school districts, Latinos from inner city barrios, white students from the foster system). Though largely unarticulated as such in its initial literature, the initial architects of the program realized that in order to truly accommodate the vision of a deeply diverse flagship campus, AAP would have to lean into the intersectionality of identities that is the lived experience of every student from a historically underrepresented community. Students can no sooner be separated from their gender, then their race, culture or economic circumstances. Moreover, building with the whole student in mind, meant not just academic supports or identity-focused peer groups, but a wide range of opportunities for students to take advantage of and thus, intermix and share perspectives and ideas across races genders, cultures, and economic stations in life. Thus, doing the work of building for greater democratic engagement was never seen as antithetical to fostering individual academic achievement, via professionalized services. While faculty and professional staff engage in program development and problem solving with individual students to supplement supports provided to all UCLA students, peer tutors and counselors, often upper classman, gain valuable work experience, including pay and skills, while also benefiting from other AAP social and academic supports themselves.

Moreover, by encompassing a wide range of students across different disciplines and graduating classes, AAP helps to foster collective empowerment across meta-communities that cross cut both academic divides as well as the ethnic or geographical-based affinity groups that students would often gravitate towards in their social lives. This enables students to develop cultural and social capital that helps them to leverage their degree in culturally diverse job markets. It also enables them to be important ambassadors to UCLA when the matriculate, cultivating not only a sense of pride in their affiliation with UCLA, but also a sense of connection to intersecting communities. For instance, former AAP students often cycle back into the AAP pipeline through a host of expansion programs (Cheng, 2021), such as the Vice Provost's Initiative for Pre-College Scholars (VIPs) program, which works in partnership with LA county school districts to assist high school students in becoming competitively eligible for admissions at UCLA and other top universities, and AAP's summer onboarding programs that help incoming freshman and transfer students transition into their first year at UCLA. Having been there themselves (85% of AAP staff members are from historically underrepresented groups), they serve as role models that can be trusted to realistically, yet empathetically, prepare students for the rigor and demands of academic life while also creating connections that can endure as professional connections for career opportunities beyond the B.A./B.S.

Aside from its multi-faceted mission, AAPs organizational structure has enabled the program to weather numerous political and administrative 'attacks' over the decades because it is able to mobilize support from across the various constituents represented within it. At the same time, because most of its directors have had dual positions, heading AAP while also occupying a significant management role with a direct connection to the Chancellor (e.g., the current director of AAP is also the associate vice provost for student diversity), it has enabled the program to overcome information asymmetries and lack of representation in rooms where important decisions are made in crisis or transition situations. Thus, where as many programs and centers that are run by faculty heads or associated with specific departments find themselves particularly vulnerable to the winds of change that come with fiscal pressures, isolated performance reviews, or administrative loss at the top, AAP has enjoyed considerable stability and as

such it has been able to build on past successes to make the case for growth within, thus expanding to include an ever wider assortment of programs, which become more easily acclimated to the organizational culture of AAP as it is focused on wrapping around the student. For example, whereas in other contexts, a student that was in the foster care system might have to bear the burden of having to shuttle paper work and perspectives across administrative units, because the 'Guardian Scholars Program' is part of AAP, students benefit from *both* peer-to-peer counseling and staff having knowledge of each other's programs, thus a common way of seeing the student at the intersection of many different interests and needs rather than equating students with a particular 'problem' or 'identity', as often happens when disability or affinity-based services are divided into small service units that individually serve few students.

Similarly, the stability and longevity of the program has generated both direct and indirect benefits for both staff and students. First, having a well-known and visible institutional presence on campus, means that departments and units that may not know exactly what happens within AAP, trust that because it is associated with UCLA's core mission and deeply held value commitments, it is a place to send students. Second, it has no 'competitor' administrative units and thus it can better 'capture' the investments it makes to human capital formation and student success. This is both part and parcel to its institutional longevity and the material resources accumulate with staying power, which in turn generate the bandwidth to create support structure that help it to leverage experience to properly onboard and train new staff members, where most organizations of its kind are typically 'staff strapped.' This benefits students in the peer-to-peer programs because they learn from competent professionals and thus their experience provides a wide range of skill building opportunities, that are frequently unavailable in peer-to-peer base programs. Additionally, it benefits direct service recipients, in that staff have a wide network of peers to engage with to create a realistic plan of action for students who present with real world problems that need solutions rather than just a sympathetic but ultimately impotent staff or peer counselor. For example, when Maripau Paz, who graduated from UCLA in 2020, faced the possibility of having to drop out her freshman year due to an unexpected problem with her financial aid, instead of

getting shuttled between administrative offices, she was able to rely on AAP as a kind of 'one-stop shop' to leverage both well informed strategic advance, with important administrative processes, and people that could actually help her to get them done—in her case an AAP staff person that sat down with her to develop a "really intense scholarship regimen" in tandem with resources supplied by a sister center on campus, UCLA's Scholarship Resource Center (Cheng, 2021). A third, indirect benefit is the cultivation of more cooperative and less conflictual relations among affinity groups within historically underrepresent groups within higher education. Rather than becoming entrenched in educational and identity-group infighting, AAP intentionally leverages communities' strengths. For example, AAP has created an Arts' Initiative cohort that engages students in interdisciplinary research within the arts, humanities, social sciences and sciences, raises up the achievements of its members within their respective fields, thus helping students to build community and friendships across disciplinary boundaries and identity groups while celebrating individuals' academic success.

UC Berkeley's American Cultures Engaged Scholarship Program

In contrast to UCLA's AAP program, which is generally seen as a college-wide multi-service center, UC Berkeley's American Cultures Engaged Scholarship Program (ACES) is an example of a program developed out of an academic requirement, established in 1989, which sought to braid together traditional components 'civic engagement education', such as active learning and community embeddedness, with a more critical service learning pedagogy devoted to social and racial justice objectives on a college-wide scale. Joining 'diversity education' with 'civic education' activist scholars created "one of the most important curriculum reform projects in the history of the campus," (Akin, Robinson, Gordon da Cruz, 2018), a singular course, known as the American cultures requirement, dedicated to 'multicultural education."

What makes the American cultures requirement at UC Berkeley particularly unique is two-fold. First, it remains UC Berkeley's only university-wide graduation requirement for undergraduate students irrespective of discipline (interview, Victoria Robinson). This is all the more remarkable considering

Berkeley's size and status as a research one university as well as the strength of faculty governance and high level of autonomy that departments and schools have traditionally enjoyed at UC Berkeley. Second, ACES is unusual in that it emerged *not* as a product of student services or administrative objectives but rather campus politics and activism manifest through the universities' academic senate, but also heavily influenced by broader political currents of the day. According to Akin et al, it was heavily influenced by the, "Campaign Against Apartheid," formed in the mid 1980s by student, community and staff groups, to pressure the University of California to divest from the $3 billion investment portfolio it had in South African Companies, which in turn was inspired by period direct action against South Africa's Apartheid regime by unionized workers at the Port of Oakland. Though the original proposal debated the Berkeley academic senate was for an Ethnic Studies requirement that ultimately became an 'American Cultures' requirement, its establishment was the product of faculty mobilization (and student activism) seeking to move forward pedagogical objectives linking cultural representation in higher education curriculum to a critical analysis of race (Akin, Robinson, Gordon da Cruz, 2018).

Whereas the American cultures requirement started out as a purely co-curricular endeavor between engaged activist-scholars and a subset of student leaders, over time its organization and orientation has changed substantially. In 2010, as a product of considerable restructuring around then Chancellor Robert Birgeneau's campus-wide strategic plan, ACES emerged as a new program spanning the divisions of academic affairs, student affairs, and a newly formed division of Equity and Inclusion. Incorporating public service into its core mission, ACES focused on three key goals related to "teaching, responsive research and public service": 1) enrolling 3,000 students in 30 new or revised American Cultures courses that foreground community partnerships as central to their learning goals; 2) building the scholarly resources and infrastructure necessary to support the highest level of teaching, research, and community-based learning within the American Cultures curriculum, and 3) transforming ow UC Berkeley engages its community partners, how students understand societal issues, and how faculty's community-engaged scholarship is valued (Akin, Robinson, Gordon da Cruz, 2018).

Motivated in part by the Chancellor's concern for the campus climate as related to underrepresented students and faculty and in part by fiscal pressures associated with the Great Recession and thus a need to better connect university-wide initiatives and human capital to community need and calls for partnerships, the ACES model incentivizes faculty, in most cases non-senate faculty and graduate student instructors (Robinson interview), with stipened Chancellor's Public Fellows (CPFs). These CPF's teach an American cultures required course, of which there typically ten new offerings per year, supported by ACES and Berkeley's Public Service Center (PSC) staff for a period of 6-18 months (Akin, Robinson, Gordon da Cruz, 2018). These courses, typically taught by about 110 individual instructors who enroll about one-third of all UC Berkeley undergraduates, are housed across fifty departments throughout the Berkeley Campus (Robinson interview). As such they vary widely, from large 200-person ethnic studies courses that partner with community organizations around the 'prison-industrial complex', to student-directed regional social histories developed in collaboration with Bay Area activists to foster students, "democratic imaginations," to senior seminars devoted to documenting California's Paiute tribe's ancient irrigation system based on primary sources (Akin, Robinson, Gordon da Cruz, 2018; Burns, 2018; Robinson interview). Regardless of course type, a small grant is provided to support community partnership project needs, generating an additional set of resources beyond staff support for group 'trainings' and individual instructor support and faculty are also able to apply to 'continuity' grants to help support them in either offering their course again or developing a new course around a partnership they have already established with community partnerships (Robinson interview).

Lessons for Educators:

With over a decade of experience ACES's 'engaged scholarship program model,' presents a host of pedagogical and administrative lessons for civic learning that seeks to engage students in pressing social issues of the day.

Pedagogically, ACES provides a wide range of teachers and learners an opportunity to advance a variety of goals that enrich student learning. Through courses that enhance problem-solving, team-

building, and high levels of interactivity with a diverse array of individuals, organizations, and institutions in conditions of uncertainty, ACES fosters modes of learning that take students out of the 'ivory tower' and into 'real life'. Additionally, by providing a distinctive stream of support for both projects and CPFs, faculty are able to work with a wider range of community organizations and co-develop assignments for students initiated from community partners themselves. For example, Ricardo Huerta, a lecturer in urban planning who is affiliated with the Unity Council in Fruitvale, has developed courses around projects that advance the non-profit's work while also providing hands-on experience for students looking for meaningful community development experience. At the institutional level, ACES has facilitated the cross-pollination of a number of initiatives. For example, with a Change Maker technology grant, ACES affiliated faculty have created new synergies with lasting benefits beyond the classroom by bringing together community organizations working at the intersection of health and housing to collaborate on new health care apps that focus on advancing equity and social justice concerns in the community. Similarly, ACES speaker series enables them the invite speakers from their founding faculty cohort to interact with and inspire new Fellows. This stimulates rich intellectual exchanges that cross-cut disciplinary lines and build bridging and bonding social capital given that these scholars live and work outside the region, but have research and teaching agendas that overlap with those teaching ACES courses at UC Berkeley.

While Robinson, who has served as ACES coordinator for the past fourteen years, agrees that fostering 'engaged' scholarship is a huge value to the institution as a whole (Robinson interview), she stresses that the positives of pedagogical plurality, can also be seen as a 'watering' down of original goals. As originally conceived the American Cultures requirement was a form of "critical" service-learning and 'active citizenship' aimed at integrating an understanding of race and power in developing students' engagement (Robinson, interview; Akin, Robinson, and Gordon da Cruz, 2018). However, as UC Berkeley aimed to make ACES a more central part of its mission in 2010, it's public facing mission changed to become one of "advancing the university's commitment to building students' ethical and active participation in public life" by linking diversity education with public scholarship and engagement," thus leading to considerable frustration among the activist scholars, whose commitment to

curricular advances was a key impetus for the requirement. “Not only is there obfuscation of social justice education and opportunity on campus, but after just over 20 years of offering American Cultures courses at the University of California, Berkeley, the resources, energy, and attention that accompanied the requirement’s initial racial justice anchors have been countered by a growing national and local pressure of ‘color-blind’ and ‘post-racial’ climates” (Akin, Robinson, and Gordon da Cruz, 2018). Moreover, as practiced, ‘engagement’ involves multiple forms of communities, that differ considerably in their conception of how American cultures relates to civic education as well as what are considered social problems and the ways in which these problems should be addressed. Thus, it is not always clear that students in American Cultures/American Cultures Engaged Scholarship courses are exposed to the kinds of ‘justice-oriented citizenship’, and ‘structural thinking about racial inequality’ that were at the heart of the co-curricular benefits of the American Cultures requirement as originally conceived by the ethnic studies faculty and ‘democracy and diversity educators’ who initially conceived the curricula.

Despite the recent pendulum swing generated by intense political activism around racial justice, frustration remains around the value of programs like ACES to meet the moment (Robinson interview). In many ways, this sentiment reflects that of many other scholar-activists and practioners of critical pedagogy similarly situated in public research universities. Though public awareness and support has grown for social justice issues, so too has weariness about the excessive politicization of the academy. Thus, as campus climates have indeed changed as a result of renewed activism, many social justice programs around the country continue to experience a gas lighting of their relevance for the moment (Haglund, SJSI ASU, interview September 26), as financial woes related to the pandemic and deeply entrenched political divides at big universities leave faculty and administrators of these programs feeling under siege and largely unsupported. However, it is also part of a broader philosophical and ethical dilemmas regarding civic engagement education in which small, boutique or ‘mentoring model’ programs long admired for their ability to enrich individual students, has come to be seen as exclusionary for leaving communities of color behind. In the “post George Floyd era, you just can’t do this” (Robinson, interview). Because part of the goal of ACES is to reach all undergraduates, and thus often those that are

perceived to need the curriculum 'enhancement' the most, perhaps students in departments and divisions like engineering and the life sciences that are less likely to seek out this curriculum on their own, for scholar activists the lack of focus on critical pedagogies can be frustrating.

Clearly there are a host of ethical, logistical and organizational dilemmas that arise in trying to maintain 'pedagogical integrity' while also trying to ensure adequately supported institutionally and administratively. On the one hand, it is understandable for professors like Robinson to view pedagogical integrity as key to success, but on the other hand, it is precisely 'academic freedom' at the level of individual instructors and disciplinary divisions, given the breadth of courses involved, that lead to a wide range of understandings of what 'multicultural democracy' or "critical thinking' or "cultural understanding" actually looks like in practice, not to mention the various framings of the folks with whom students and faculty engage ('public service sector'; communities understood as affinity groups, 'community partners' understood as for profit start-ups, etc.). This is particularly the case given that there is no targeting of 'preferred partners' (e.g., advocacy organizations or public services) or institutions that congeal around particular academic clusters (e.g., public health or law). In this multi-faceted institutional environment, there are a range of pragmatic imperatives that arise in the process of trying to meet the needs of multiple 'stakeholders'. While faculty typically like to stress the most innovative or positive aspects of their pedagogy, lack of positive externalities for community members is not an uncommon reality, particularly where student learning and classroom responsibilities frequently take priority for faculty, which can then impose additional work requirements on already time and resource strapped community members as they absorb responsibilities for 'training' and overseeing student learners (Stoecker and Beckman, 2010). Lastly, the emphasis on pluralism, also suggests that pragmatic imperative in the face of difference. As in pluralist democracies more generally, the university is a microcosm of diverse values and interests and differing political commitments. At the broadest level, university-wide initiatives and partnerships with communities routinely get bogged down by endless controversies about who will benefit from them and how they will be paid for, thus triggering not only internal fault lines between administrative units within the campus community, but often inter and intra-

partisan divides within the community, as happened with UC Berkeley's Global Campus initiative. These cleavages run through faculties and student bodies as well. Take coursework in San Quinten prison that involves inmates in co-curricular efforts to create more robust after school mentoring programs, or templates for online literature to better understand the 'carceral state.' In its pursuit of 'civic-minded' pedagogy, it partners with 'Critical Resistance' to create zines that seek to 'interrupt the 'prison industrial complex' and block the creation of new jails as part of the prison abolition movement. This makes it vulnerable to counter-'resistance' by both external to the university (victim rights groups, police, etc.) as well as those internal to it (faculty and students who are uncomfortable with the universities' role in fostering "political agendas"(perhaps criminal justice faculty, young Republicans, etc.) thus generating contention that (when multiplied across the program) can divert time and energy away from supporting other components of the program.

In tacking the question of how to encourage a social justice approach that facilitates development of students as social justice oriented denizens, ACES, also has to confront sustainability issues related to recruiting instructors within a research one institution. In early 2010s ACES targeted well known academics established in fields like public health and engineering, already doing 'embedded scholarship' as part of international projects. This was a way of demonstrating 'proof of concept' by communicating how this work happens as a way to attract tenured faculty to the program (Robin, interview). It was also a means of legitimizing what it is often seen a diversion, or time suck in a research one university where basic research is the gold standard. From this perspective 'civic engagement' is viewed by many as the job of classified 'staff.' Moreover, tenure is not particularly connected to teaching outside student evaluations for a requisite minimum number of classes, usually one to two per semester. Due to lack of incentives for departments to promote ACES among their faculty and a general bias against 'civic engagement' education within research one universities, ACES has had to rely heavily on lecturers and adjunct faculty (i.e., mainly non-senate/non-tenured faculty). According to Robinson, 70% of faculty teaching ACES courses are non-senate faculty (Robinson interview). Yet, given the various demands on their time and the institutional incentives to publish, ACES has had a harder and harder time recruiting

these faculty. Whereas interested faculty can frequently be convinced to apply to become a Chancellor's Public Fellow (CPF), the relatively sparse administrative support provided to faculty combined with the relative precarity of their position at the University, not to mention the small amount of their stipends granted as 'add ons' to their existing appointment, make continuity a significant issue.

On top of these logistical issues is the desire by the ACES coordinator and support staff to recruit and attract people who teach with the right ethic (Robinson interview). These people often work very hard to create their courses but because the rewards are fairly meagre career wise, the experience of many non-senate faculty (who often, as non-tenure track faculty, still seek a job in academia) is that they are unable to sustain the level of energy and time to continue teaching their courses. Consequently, they are frequently "one and done" (Robinson interview). As a result, ACES has come to focus increasingly on graduate students. The American Cultures Engaged Scholarship fund (ACESF) was designed to support relationships with graduate students who are often highly motivated to do this kind of scholarship, embrace the role of 'thought partner' with (instead of for) community partners, and are willing to roll up their sleeves to support students in working through complex learning objectives. But here too, leaving aside equity considerations (graduate stipends are considerably lower than faculty stipends for essentially the same 'job') sustainability continues to be a key issue. Even with a $500 stipend (Bass interview), many students lament that it is hard to do social justice work and see a future in academia. Because they too have a lot of pressure to teach core courses for their disciplines and do research in their own departments, it is also hard for them to consistently prioritize their engagement or continuity of effort, even in the most successful of courses (Robinson interview). One could also argue that as recruitment efforts become ever more salient (and departments themselves dangle the ACESF to graduate students as part of their own recruitment and retention efforts), goal displacement ensues as learning objectives (and investments) related to critical pedagogy and experiential learning take a back seat to 'feasibility' and ease of execution considerations. As a result, the leverage that program administrators have in generating particular types of process or output 'deliverables' related to "civil or political engagement learning' is minimized given that the stipend is a guarantee upon 'acceptance' into the ACES program.

Another set of challenges relates to administrative capacity. While Robinson claims that the vision of administrative centralization that created the impetus for ACES in 2010 didn't work in creating greater momentum and funding (Robinson interview), it is also true that at a research one university in the San Francisco bay area, labor is not cheap and for the most part, it is center directors that are responsible for pulling down grants and/or attracting donors to either fully or partially fund their own sustainability. Though the facilitator of the ACES program, Victoria Robinson, holds an adjunct appointment in Ethnic Studies and is an affiliate of the UC Berkeley Labor Center, her position at ACES generates no FTE of its own. Thus, the totality of directing and coordinating the program lies with her in a part time position supported by a part time administrative assistant who divides her time and responsibilities with other administrative units. As is typical of non-grant funded and/or endowed centers, programs and projects like ACES are typically run by non-tenured or non-tenure track faculty.

As non-research faculty or trailing spouses, these people are particularly vulnerable to budget short falls and highly dependent on administrative higher ups, typically Chancellors, Vice Chancellors, and Deans, who function as the 'king makers' in allocating coveted grant dollars within administrative units and departments that do not self-generate revenue. The development of American Cultures Engaged Scholarship Fund and the American Cultures Center (ACC) in 2010 was part of a generous one-time infusion of twenty six million dollars to fund the Othering and Belonging Institute, and an associated cluster hire, as well as two other broad campus-wide initiatives, the Multicultural Education Program and Students Innovation Grants. Because the one million dollar grant provided for the ACC was never renewed after the first year, it has subsequently languished from lack of attention (Robinson, interview). Thus, the kind of capacity-building work that is needed to fund curriculum developing and robust training supports for faculty, develop and conduct program evaluations; research, support and manage multiple grants; and build and sustain mutually beneficial partnerships with other university programs and organizations, remain are largely out of reach. While the American Cultures requirement is fortunate to have an established fund designated for community partners, according to Robinson, one of the best 'design' features of the 2010 initiative in that it enables a level of buy-in from community partners

independent of faculty, the lack of administrative band-width or reliable resources in the administration of ACES and the American Cultures Center makes it difficult to develop the types of academic support and administrative work that would provide a more robust presence in the university.

To compensate for a lack of administrative support on the academic side of the university 'house' Berkeley's Public Service Center (PSC) offers co-curricular support, helping to establish learning agreements and objectives for ACES, training for graduate students, as well as facilitating relationships with community partners (Bass interview). While the PSC is not a full Service Learning Center, it helps scaffold in support for a variety of programs and initiatives designed to create and sustain communities of students. In addition to supporting a wide variety of student 'service groups' it has five stand-alone services and works with about 5,000 students yearly to try to build up student leadership (Bass interview).

Although the PSC has designs to function as university-wide central service hub for civic engagement learning, it operates primarily with graduate student labor and a streamlined full time administrative staff. Of the eleven staff, there are only two full time professionals, one of them is the director, Karren Bass, who holds a Ph.D. from the Political Science Department and the other is a full time administrator that handles things like internship liability issues and the payment of program participants. Thus, unlike many Offices of Experiential Learning, which invest heavily in developing research, assessment and training for faculty and community partners, PSC has developed a peer-to-peer model of service learning that focuses its attention on supporting students connected to UC Berkeley's many diversity initiatives. Because labor is expensive and working with students is labor intensive work, this cohort based 'mentor model' enables the PSC to invest in eight to nine programmatic staff, most of whom are responsible for a particular PSC program. These classified staff, work in turn with three to ten graduate students, largely first generation students of color, as a way to help to train them regarding expectations related to 'service'. As Bass notes, most first generation students are largely recipients of programs and between work and family commitments, they have not necessarily cultivated a robust 'service ethic' or the type of civic volunteerism that is prevalent among students that engaged in many civic learning centers (Bass interview). By embracing a 'train the trainer' model, PSC supports ACES by

supplying cohort of four or five graduate students that help facilitate workshops for other graduate students teaching ACES classes (Bass interview). These students get paid via PSC while the students that teach earn stipends through ACESF, enabling low income graduate students to lean into service, mentoring, and supporting community embedded work, while getting paid. At the institutional level, this makes the quality of support uneven and highly dependent on the character and effort of individual graduate students who have a high degree of turn over (Bass interview). It also makes it difficult to achieve key administrative 'wins' for undergraduate students, for example, getting additional 'experiential' units for course work beyond the standard two granted for 'student engagement' (Robinson, interview).

While the mentor-to-mentor model holds some promise for generating a constituency to advocate for greater support for 'student engagement' or opportunities for 'professionalization' within the graduate division, the general lack of career professionals, limits the growth potential of the PSC to have more than a 'light touch', in for example, program evaluation, harnessing the potential benefits of community partners for enhancing career development, etc. As exemplified by some of the most well-known university-based centers for civic engaged learning, such as the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) at Tufts or the Citizen Scholar Program (CSP) at the University of Massachusetts, achieving high quality curriculum and positive feedback loops between community embedded projects and student success involve considerable infrastructural investment in human capital. For example, CSP at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, has a curriculum structured to encourage students to embrace an identity of engaged scholars within a structured two year program, through which students take four required courses, an elective, and several co-curricular options where students engage as cohorts in an effort to aggregate up concrete projects and actions that together constitutes a tangible "movement for making the world better" (Arches and Hung, 2018). Similarly, through their Public and Community Services Studies Program, Providence College offers both a minor and major for undergraduate students, utilizing a model of sustained development for civic engagement

and service-learning in which students move through the curriculum taking on more complex tasks and roles as they get closer to graduation.

Of course, the disadvantages of these larger centers are that they threaten to undermine the cultivation of more social and racial justice orientations at the base of critical engagement pedagogies, such as critiquing the social and economic power imbalances upon which more critical analysis of service learning is often predicated (Peterson, 2009). And in many ways, they are less equipped for dealing with 'deep diversity' given that service learners in these programs tend to be predominately white, middle-class students, though service sites have typically been in low income communities of color (Butin, 2006). At a place like Berkeley where the PSC is primarily focused on community building among and between 'underserved' communities, and academic departments control curriculum, hiving themselves off as a semi-autonomous all-purpose service center, does not seem likely. This said, PSC operates within a complex environment of competing and contending priorities that can undermine its ability to effectively leverage external opportunities and resources for the students it serves. Given the breadth of 'target communities' its' identity is difficult to pin down outside its role as a source of financial support for students it works with, almost all 180 of whom get a stipend or work study funding (Bass interview). Because leadership development and entrepreneurship are perceived to lie elsewhere in the University, PSC misses out on opportunities to showcase its accomplishments and capture the benefits of external partnerships that have the potential to generate huge opportunities for students of color, such as Berkeley's new 'Changemaker' program developed in an effort to utilize the Bankruptcy of Mills College to house students, more specifically guarantee residency at Mills to provide a more 'boutique' experience for freshman run through university extension, complete with community engagement opportunities supported by the city of Oakland, a development that PSC was never consulted on or told about (Bass interview). Of course, this is a broader problem of the University of California, as it has historically been reluctant to centralize and articulate its multiplicity of efforts resulting in significantly disconnected programs and initiatives across campus.

The Institutional Architecture of Community Engagement

Whereas my discussion of the high school experience focused largely on civic engagement education from a student-centered lens, and thus the different ways in which students experience student engagement efforts within the high school setting. In my discussion of four year universities, I have focused more on the programmatic level—the specific contours of professed civic engagement education programs, how they are set up and the factors that influence how they operate over time. In so doing I have placed much greater emphasis on the organizational and logistical complexities of pursuing pedagogical goals within the structure of four year research universities.

As complex institutions most Universities have multiple models of civic engagement education happening simultaneously. Since there funding is predicated principally on tuition and fees, usually the largest single source of revenue for U.C.'s.[28], many of its administrative efforts are oriented toward attracting students, thus community engagement is closely tied to student engagement via a host of student activities and centers on campus. In an increasingly competitive and globalized labor market for highly skilled professionals, significant investments in career centers and professionalized competencies in building out external relationships broaden and deepen opportunities for external facing engagement with a broad range of private, public and nonprofit organizations. Similarly, because universities have a broad reach, extensive alumni networks deepen and broaden community engagement opportunities as well as do a myriad of professional programs, like the School of Public Administration at the University of Central Florida.

In delving into AAP at UCLA and ACES at UC Berkeley, I focused on civic engagement programs that are quite unique in that they have eschewed a citizen-focused service-learning approach in favor social and racial justice pedagogies and have managed to persist in weaving themselves into the fabric of their respective' universities' broader public missions. In this sense they offered a particularly

[28] At UC Berkeley for instance, the tuition and fees charged to enrolled students represent 34% of its budget, and thus its largest source of revenue, followed by state taxes (14%), (Office of the Chief Financial Officer, UCB)

interesting set of cases to explore, also because AAP is predominately a service-based program and ACES predominately a co-curricular program. As a comprehensive, integrated center at UCLA AAP has thrived in large part because it overlaps with and enforces core university objectives. As a University located in LA county within a majority-minority state seeking to provide greater access to people of color in its own back yard, the AAP mission, developed decades ago, meets the moment. But the organizational design of AAP, originally a joint faculty-administrative venture, and the subsequent choices made in its development have been key to fostering a positive feedback loop over time. By contrast, the tension that have always existed between ACES' pedagogy, grounded in a commitment to racial and social justice, and its programmatic elements as a co-curricular requirement for all UC Berkeley undergraduates, have become more acute over time as its relationships both internal and external to the university have expanded.

This multi-level analysis of both the high school environment from which community colleges draw students and the four year university to which community colleges transfer their students, provides a fertile context in which to investigate civic engagement within the California Community College System.

In the second half of the paper, I look at how the mission of community colleges, as part of a distinctive system of higher education, joins up with civic engagement discourse as well as the ways in which it intersects with the conceptual and analytic frameworks discussed above. I then turn to an extensive empirical analysis of engagement initiatives, programs, and activities across the 4CD system, with a particular focus on Contra Costa College. Taking stock of the strengths and weaknesses of current endeavors, the last third of the paper is devoted to laying out a variety of specific proposals for moving forward civic engagement education at CCC in six major areas: 1) Administrative reforms 2) Strengthening career and professional development opportunities 3) Creating a campus-wide infrastructure for student-focused professional development initiatives 4) Reforming Cooperative Extension to develop more robust synergies with non CTE programs and 5) Advancing a variety of

“unity-in-diversity’ initiatives in two key areas of strength, Democracy-in-action and racial and social justice and 6) Advancing pedagogically innovative interdisciplinary certificates.

The California Community College Experience: Civic Engagement across the Contra Costa Community College District

Conceptions of community engagement are arguably the most varied within the Community College setting. Competing and contending understandings of engagement coexist in an environment in which different visions of the community college mission have evolved over time. Born out of distinctive, though in practice overlapping, views of what community colleges are and how they connect to society and the economy, civic engagement is in the community college setting is linked to a combination of student enrichment, democratic practice, and community development.

As indicated in the nomenclature, community colleges have always been conceived, in one way or another, as local institutions that connect communities to not only educational but cultural resources. Thus, they have been widely appreciated as places where people can go to find recreational sports teams and exercise classes, cooking and art enrichment, day care and early childhood development programs, and summer programs for kids. In a broader system of generalized, yet highly fragmented. K-12 experiences when compared to educational systems in most advanced industrialized democracies, community colleges in the United States have been seen as a place where community members can enhance and enrich their personal lives while strengthening communal life by engaging in cultural exchange, crafting mutual benefit societies and associations, and participating in local governance and decision making to solve common problems.

This idea of the community college exists along-side one in which community colleges are predominately institutions that reach up and out to the economy and society as pathways to professionalization. For many folks in higher education and most white collar working professionals, community colleges are seen as a ‘junior’ on ramp to four year institutions, a place where young students or mid-level professionals looking to change careers, can take classes and earn the credits they need on

the way to earning a BA and BS from a four year institution. From this vantage point, community colleges are seen as 'pass through' institutions whose focus is on skill improvement, career pathway exploration, and the next step on their journey to an enriching career as a white collar profession. A variation on this theme is a vision of community college as less a gateway to higher education than to industry and/or a pathway out of poverty. In this vision of the community college mission, the Associate Degree enables students to acquire trade specific skill sets that that onramp them onto predominately blue collar jobs, often in manufacturing or front-line service industries (IT repair, warehouse management, broadcasting, nursing, emergency services, construction, food service etc.).

Though not necessarily competing, these distinctive visions of community college are often promoted by distinctive sets of politicians and policy makers who, through state government, have a strong influence on local districts since community colleges rely so heavily on state funding streams. Meanwhile, local college boards, embedded in territorially defined regions, often have their own priorities and perspectives on these visions of the college that may in turn conflict with that of college administrators (Chancellors, Presidents and Vice Presidents) hired to run them. As a result, community engagement efforts within and across community colleges are channeled through multiple inflection points and thus highly variable.

California Community Colleges: A primer

In considering community engagement efforts within the California Community Colleges in particular, a key consideration is its enormous size and thus its breadth and scope as a state-funded, state-regulated educational system. By almost all measures, California community colleges are distinct, both from community college systems in every other state, but also the two other major systems of higher education in California. While California's 75 private colleges and universities (AICCU) serve some 148,000 students, and California's nine UC campuses and twenty-three California State campuses, serve approximately 517,000 students, California's 112 Community Colleges serve over 2.6 million students, making it the largest post-secondary education system in the entire country. And while many California

high school students do not attend college, those that do, mainly go to its community colleges.[29] Unlike the UC schools that select from the top 12.5% of high school students or the CSU's who select from the top 33% of students according to California's Master Plan for Higher Education, the California Community Colleges offer access to all residents.

As a result, not only does California have the largest number of community colleges of any state, a reflection of California's status as the most populous state in the country, it also has the most variety among those colleges and within them, an incredibly diverse student population. Reflective of California, a majority-minority state since 2013, the CCC system has the most, ethnically and culturally differentiated systems in all of higher education. Additionally, it is incredibly expansive territorially, thereby occasioning significant regional variation between California's urban coastal counties and its rural central and eastern counties, which in turn reflects significant differentiation in political cultures and levels of economic development, which are highly uneven.

California's community colleges are also reflective of extreme income inequality across the state, often cross cutting single districts. California has the highest level of functional' poverty in the country, with an average of 18.2% of California's roughly 40 million residents having experienced poverty from 2016-2019, according to a supplemental poverty method report published by the U.S. Census Bureau (Fox, 2020; Blankley, 2020) and more than a third of its population (36% of residents) are considered at or near poverty.[30] A quarter of full-time freshmen enrolled in four year universities and colleges in California come from families making less than $30,000, and approximately 50% of these students enroll in community colleges, compared to only 10% who begin at UC schools and 30% at CSU schools (PPIC, 2017). At the other end of the spectrum, California has among the highest proportion of high income households of any state, with 12.2% of households in California making over $200,000 a year, compared

[29] In 2014, California ranked 47th among the 50 states in the share of recent high school graduates who enroll in four-year colleges (PPIC, 2017).
[30] The Public Policy Institute of California, which created a California Poverty Measure which also takes into account individuals not included in the official poverty measure due to government programs that assist low income families and individuals, puts California's poverty rate at 17.8 and the near-poverty rate at 18.5

to 6.9% nationally (income by zipcode, 2019)[31] While most full-time freshman from wealthy families go straight to four year institutions, an increasing number of students from middle class families attend community college in order to afford to go to a college of their choice given restrictive enrollment policies, rising tuition, and rising costs of housing, books, and other living expenses not fully covered by grants.[32]

Given the size and scope of the community college system in California, its institutional differentiation and its broad reach across societal cleavages that in past decades tended to separate and segregate communities on the basis of class and race, it is easy to see why it is impossible to talk about one overarching model of civic engagement that is ubiquitous across the community college system. Even within multi-district system in the same county, such as the Contra Costa Community College system, plurality is the rule rather than the exception. On this note, it is not just the external environment that generates different opportunities for, and understandings of, civic engagement across colleges, it is also the complicated infrastructure of the Community College system itself, and subsequently, decisions made and inherited regarding the governance structures of the colleges that generate different opportunity structures for civic engagement both within and across the colleges over time.

The Contra Costa College Community College District: Connecting vision to praxis

In the following sections I discuss how the two predominate meta-models of community engagement play out in in the community college setting, as based on the experience of the Contra Costa Community College District. Beyond laying out distinctive 'visions' of community engagement, I examine the ways in which both external and internal context contributes to different approaches "on the ground' within 4CD. In so doing, I draw on primary documents, extensive interviews and my own

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[31] $200,000 is the highest threshold in the Census Bureau's American Communities Survey.
[32] According to a December 2016 PPIC Statewide Survey, 66 percent of Californians believe that the cost of college keeps students from enrolling in four year colleges (PPIC, 2017) Moreover, rising tuitions combined with the cost, can make the cost of college unattainable for many middle class families (i.e. those making California's median household income prior to the pandemic ($75,235, 2015-2019)

participatory observation to provide a preliminary analysis of how these visions reflect distinctive orientations and, largely path dependent, capacities of the different colleges. In addition to ongoing conversations with various faculty, administrators, students and classified staff over my six years teaching at Contra Costa College, I draw heavily from interviews I conducted from January-September, 2001, predominately via zoom with twenty-three individuals from across employment designations (managers, classified staff, faculty, and students) and divisions (Workforce and Development; Career and Transfer; Student Life; teaching and counseling faculty in NSAS, LAVA, and Liberal Arts) across 4CD's main campuses (DVC, LMC, and CCC).[33] During this time frame, I also interviewed over a dozen, professionals and civic leaders in the community, including CCC Foundation board members and incorporated the insights of many additional individuals from various Contra Costa County communities with whom I have interacted over the years in my roles as chair of the political science department and faculty advisor to CCC's Community Organizing and Political Action (COPA) club. And of course, I have also drawn on my own observations gathered over the course of forty years of personal interaction within the district both as the daughter and niece of two DVC faculty members and my own experience teaching for nearly a decade at four year institutions and now for six years at the community college.

A Vision of Civic Engagement as Civic Duty and Crafting of Citizens

A key way in which California Community Colleges see civic engagement that is different from broader framework elsewhere, revolves around the notion of citizenship. Until well into the early part of the twenty-first century, it was largely uncontroversial in higher education and within the main stream media to talk about the importance of the educational system as laboratories for the creation of engaged

[33] Within 4CD, as with the community college system more broadly, employment contracts are collectively bargained in a tripartite mode across faculty, classified professionals, and managers, the ladder constituencies enjoying union representation while the former does not. Managers, otherwise understood as college administrators, are therefore under short term contracts, which, in a very real sense, are not only subject to approval and renewal by governing boards but are subject to faculty approval through their role in the evaluation process, gained through collective bargaining.

citizens (cites from APSA, etc.). In this framework, the concept of civic education was fairly tightly coupled to citizenship, which largely resonated with long-time residents and multi-generational Americans taught that their fight for political, civic and social rights was largely connected to the status of citizenship, provided as a birthright in the 19th Century by the 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America. This understanding of citizenship as a gateway to rights, and shared obligations was fairly broadly accepted in the post-World War II era among urban area community leaders as well as bedroom community PTA presidents and soccer moms and was likewise embraced throughout much of rural America were 'citizens' were recognized as distinctive category from 'foreign nationals', often recipients of particular work-based programs (e.g. the bracero program) who themselves rarely considered themselves as 'Americans' nor had much interest in becoming Americans in a world in which national identity was strongly shaped by the contours of the Cold War and seasonal work was the key draw to the US for many migrants.

In many ways this link from civic engagement to citizenship was part and parcel of and understanding of the American political system as one that combined communitarian values of self-reliance, obligations to your fellow man, and civility and respect for authority with the *need* for unity in a pluralist democracy. Thus, the liberal creed that is so closely tied to classic American ideals of democracy is also strongly linked to duties and obligations of self-governance through classic Republican philosophies of citizenship evidenced in the U.S. Constitution and many conventions of naturalization (i.e., citizenship tests and oaths). Thus, for many people, to truly appreciate the diversity that underlies American pluralist democracy is to recognize that *without* some sense of common purpose or identity, there are deep centrifugal forces that threaten the power and purpose of the American nation-state, which, after WWII and the collapse of the Soviet Union became *the* global super power. And in this role, for more than half a century, the connection between citizenship and democracy was propagated globally, including to many countries from which today's community college students and their families originated. Meanwhile, from the vantage point of many working class households, whom include military service members and public civil servants among them, as well as upper middle class, suburban

households who can support stay-at-home spouses free to engage in a wide variety of civic and associational activity, a civic engagement framework linking the rights of citizenship with community responsibilities and civic obligations to serve, continues to have traction not only as a lived for white folks, but also a wide array of people of color in California, since 2013, a majority-minority state.

A universalistic vision of civic engagement as fulfilling the rights and responsibilities of citizenship is one that motivates a wide variety of top down initiatives and projects across all community college understood to be a key locus of citizen formation. These initiatives have always existed alongside bottom up efforts to foster equal opportunity as community members 'give back' to students and students are encouraged to 'pay it forward' to deepen or expand the dense network of civil society organizations that comprise the backbone of civic life in many cities around the state. This is particularly true in community colleges located at the fortuitous intersection of robust, well-functioning public institutions and dense networks of community-based non-profits. A classic example of this would be Diablo Valley College, a large college of over 20,000 students in the San Francisco bay area that includes within its service area among the highest income communities in the United States (i.e., Blackhawk, Danville, and Orinda) as well as surrounding surrounding communities--Pleasant Hill, Concord, Walnut Creek---a dense network of well resourced, well organized civil society organizations.

The benefit of location, linked to a middle class base of professionals, dense networks of social capital and a fairly unified commitment to a vision of the community college as an 'equal opportunity' employer has enabled it to cultivate a wide array of 'bottom up' civic engagement opportunities. It has a sizable Community Education program, that includes a broad range of classes and community events for students from across the life cycle. In its early child development program, which for many decades, operated as a parent/worker cooperative, community members and employees were encouraged to get involved in child development activities and events that draw community members to the campus, as a vital source of teacher training, caregiving and community education for a broad base of college students, staff, faculty, and community members, thus a place where poor and working class families regularly comingled with middle class families to build bridging capital across residential communities. Similarly,

for children and youth, DVC offers a robust summer 'College for Kids' program, career development courses for high school students, and a myriad of classes targeted at school age children, including innovative specialty classes in partnership with civic organizations and community members to on a year round basis.

All of these various 'touches' the college provides to a wide variety of demographics across residential communities and sectors, generate significant 'in reach' from civic engagement groups that then offer valuable opportunities for students to increase their personal and professional networks. Thus, synergies in the community create their own momentum in combination with faculty-based initiatives that generate a wide variety of activities within and across departments. DVC for example, has robust education abroad and honors programs that offer students a wide variety of opportunities to enhance their resumes. Moreover, given the number of full time faculty and the administrative staff to faculty ratios, faculty can plan initiatives and work with administrators to craft professional opportunities for students, both through student government (ASU) and a robust infrastructure for student clubs, that provides significant opportunities for student leadership. For example, during flex week, staff and faculty, come together as club advisors to share resources and ideas to supplement a thinly staffed Student Life office and thus offer greater coordination, communication, and ultimately greater access for students. Similarly, students in leadership forums are able to take advantage of closer ties between classified staff and faculty, and ultimately a broader network of resources and opportunities, to better coordinate amongst themselves and generate synergies within the broader campus community.

Because it is so well known and many of its students and faculty are themselves engaged in civic organizations, there are routinely student led and supported initiatives to get-out-the vote as well as a host of organizations within the local community that can be relied on, such as Moven and the League of Women Voters, to do this work on campus with enough regularity that it is seen as an expected, and for the most taken-for-granted, component of community engagement on campus. Perhaps most importantly, due to a broad ethic in which voting cycles are seen less as an opportunity for local politicians to get in front of students, and more as a non-partisan opportunity to engage student in registration drives, faculty

and administrators see it as such as well and therefore it is non-controversially framed as a form of civic responsibility.

A Vision with Limited Appeal for the Twenty-First Century?

Critiques of the traditional project of civic engagement as tying civic responsibility to notions of developing good citizens abound, particularly among colleges that serve a working class base of people of color. For a college that serve mostly poor and working class students of color, the citizenship narrative is fraught, both given the historical legacy of residential, educational and occupational segregation, as well as the extremely varied understanding of the American citizenship narrative in the first place. Additionally, the student population includes many more foreign born students that have little direct experience with American political culture outside of California. These students and more generally, generation Zero born after 1996, are more racially and ethnically diverse than any previous generation. They are a fully post-Cold War generation that is the first to have had little or no memory of the world as it existed before smartphones, they are more global in orientation, and less likely than older generations to see the United States as superior to other nations (Parker and Igielnik, 2002). As creatures of the telecommunications revolution of the last two decades, they tend to consider themselves more as global denizens of the world than part of any specific nation-building or democracy-building project. Therefore, ideals of citizenship understood as loyalty and obligation to country, or a particular national identity have little resonance, particularly among students who see themselves as binational, transnational and/or anti-nationalist

In the context of colleges like Contra Costa Community College, the enmeshing of civic engagement with citizenship formation is one that is problematic on a number of fronts.

First, the lived experience of poor and working class students and their families' as takers and not makers of public policy, generates an acute awareness of the tiny minority of people who occupy decision-making authority within the major social, political, and economic institutions. Upwardly mobile students see within their own family and communities evidence of that mobility all around them, thus

making it easier to see civic engagement as citizenship obligation part of a broader blueprint for future success. However, for students who see they and their families hard work and struggle not aggregating up to individual or collective successes, it is easy to see politicians or policy makers, whether elected or not, as societal gatekeepers. In firm control of the political economy, and thus resource allocation, they use their power to promote a particular vision of the public good, one that is often seen as disadvantaging poor and working class families, whether in the form of sin taxes that punish the most vulnerable, environmental regulations that block access to affordable housing, balanced budgets off the backs of poor children by depriving them of educational necessities. From this vantage point, the model of citizen engagement cum citizenship building as one that is perceived to function more or less as a propaganda tool for a particular strata of the largely white, middle class, one that stresses common destinies and mutual obligations as tools of self-preservation—an opiate for the masses that perpetuates inegalitarianism by diverting attention away from status hierarchies and power dynamics.

Second, a new generation of social justice and human rights activists, a fairly large portion of the urban youth in the San Francisco bay area, vociferously and adamantly reject the long held American exceptionalism thesis. The civic engagement model as connected to forging healthy and engaged citizens, assumes that if you are living and working in this country, you want to become a citizen and if you become a citizen you want to do so because you understand and accept a particular set of values associated with the 'liberal creed' (Hartz, 1954)—individual liberties, private property rights, free enterprise, and equality of process rather than outcome. Whereas those who have not shared the 'liberal creed' have historically been pressured to exit or demonstrate loyalty to a set of aspirational ideals that did not reflect their lived reality, increasingly they are exercising their voice and actively seeking to change the terms of the broader American 'social contract' around them.

This presents particularly challenges for civic engagement discourse as evidenced by contestation generated by the mobilization of undocumented students and the successes they have had in lobbying/advocating public officials within the state of California, particularly within the education system. In tandem with greater party polarization and increasing differentiation among regional political

cultures, this development has produced new fissures in the political and social fabric of community life, which trend toward the more political, less civil side of civic engagement. As undocumented activists have sought to *achieve* greater inclusion by disconnecting engagement from citizenship, in so doing they present a threat for many people of long established frameworks that guide public decision making around civic responsibility and unity of purpose. This in turn makes citizen engagement a hardening fault line representing different visions of community as well as what 'engagement' is supposed to achieve. If people that don't believe in or accept the 'liberal' creed are considered 'bad' citizens, it is easier to justify keeping them away from decision-making power. Yet, to those who understand themselves as fighting for greater inclusion, attempts to dictate the terms of inclusion looks a lot like a continuation of age old patterns of marginalization and injustice. This propels identity-based interest groups to lean further into natural rights discourse, which in turn presents ethical and legal challenges for multi-racial constitutional democracies whose legitimacy is linked to voting majorities and the rule of law as opposed to a shared religion or culture. In the political discourse around citizenship and immigration, you have advocates for undocumented students, for instance, who, argue vociferously for programs and policies that are, in the context of federalism and established legal cannon antithetical to the rule of law (i.e. open border), or counter current to established Constitutional norms or are perceived to subvert Congressional authority (i.e. abolishing ICE, use of Presidential powers to create policies such as DACA and DAPA,), which subvert Congress' legislative authority). In so doing, critics argue that these groups undermine the concept of the public good by reinforcing the idea that it is impossible to pursue equity goals without including groups that, are *defacto* legally excluded. In a system in which the rule of law excludes or prohibits resources from going to undocumented people—diverse in all other ways but their legal status---the goal for interest groups is to win hearts and minds to the cause of changing rules and regulations. Yet, those tasked with defending 'the rule of law' become alienated from the cause because it appears to them an attempt by an organized and vocal minority to overcome the will of the majority.

Third, model of civic engagement is difficult to pursue in an environment riddled with political factionalism. This political reality presents itself in West Contra Costa County, thus making the pursuit

of civic engagement much more political at Contra Costa College. In a state and district which is overwhelmingly blue, Contra Costa College is located in San Pablo, a city with a strong base of Republicans and independents. At the same time, the largest city in the county closest to CCC is a perennial battle ground between centrist and progressive democrats, which essentially divides municipal government. In the former camp are Democrats led by Richmond's mayor and the significant community and business alliances that are part of a growth and development agenda. On the left are progressives that coalesce in a powerful local coalition of activist-politicians, The Richmond Progressive Alliance (RPA), that has significant allies in the region and across the state. Inevitably these kinds of ideological divides bubble up though the student body as well as politically active staff and faculty. In an environment rife with political contention, citizen engagement can easily be construed as simply towing a party line established and promoted by social and political influencers (e.g., professionalized lobbyists, public relations firms, professional activists and consultants) than the type of voluntary, bottom-up collective mobilization and participation that the civic engagement model holds up as the gold standard of Tocquevillian democracy. In an era of increasing party polarization *and* social and cultural fragmentation, party platforms and interest group ideology become more, not less, important, and thus civic action that cross-cuts party and interest group fault lines, more constrained. This in turn is exacerbated by a landscape dominated by the public sector and an ethos in which labor politics and public funded employment, services and assistance pervade community life (i.e., health care, education, the court system, social services, transportation, fire and police, electric water, etc.).[34] While the public sector is strong, the profile of civic organizations most prevalent in West County, as opposed to East County, are decidedly more advocacy based than professionalized.

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[34] Most middle class workers in Contra Costa county are employed in the public sector. In 2009 (as in the half decade prior), employment in Government, public utilities and public transportation (18.7%) far surpassed that of private sector industries like retail (13.7%), finance, insurance and real estate (8%), manufacturing (6.3%) whole sale trade (2.3%), farming (<1%) and construction and mining (9.6%) as a proportion of the county's civilian labor force (CCC Community Assessment, 2011-2013).

Another set of factors that undermines civic engagement as a universal project for promoting 'equal access' engagement, is institutional. For instance, institutional and administrative factors at play at Contra Costa College, form a powerful rip tide that both undermines and overwhelms capacity for promoting civic engagement as a collective, public good.

Perhaps the most central issue is its dysfunctional shared governance structure, codified in 2013 in a collectively negotiated, *Procedures Handbook for Administration, Classified, and Faculty*. Initial reform efforts spurred by district fears over accreditation and administrative gridlock were initiated in 2018 but remain unfinished business in large part because of deep divides among college stakeholders regarding major structural reform, fueled by midlevel managers fears of centralization and loss of autonomy and faculty fears of undermined influence and eroded faculty governance. While a mildly reformed version of the handbook awaits administrative approval, it is largely untenable as a means of achieving much needed improvements in administrative functioning. Dividing decision making across fifteen different committees, many of which have not been in existence or do not function according to their charge, creates a cumbersome administrative quagmire in which decision making is slow and cumbersome, responsibility for results is undermined, and accountability nonexistent as most committees lack a clear charge and their chairs do not have clearly articulated responsibilities nor oversight. In this environment, there is little impetus for administration, staff, or faculty to move initiatives through the committee structure, given the time and veto points that greet proposals. Because managers have ultimately responsibility for administration and faculty, staff often have a variety of perspectives and reservations regarding change, managers, usually under pressure to act quickly and decisively, tend to avoid the committees for important initiatives or introduce things ex post facto in ways that are frequently viewed by committee members as undermining trust, which then in turn makes committee votes and processes more cumbersome as faculty and staff slow walk proposals they don't see as benefiting their own departments or divisions. Thus, while the participatory framework enables 'voice' it is largely ineffectual as a decision-making body as the 'real' decisions are made in the shadows because the vast array of decision-making bodies that are established serve as obstructionist 'veto' points rather than as

forums of collaboration and collective dialog or decision making. As thin veneers of participatory governance, most people accept the writing on the wall (loyalty), disengage (exit) and/or become frustrated and vocal (voice), leaning into formal processes in a desperate attempt to ascertain the 'rule of law', which only serves to further confuse and alienate the other participants. In this environment, it is easier for the President and VPs to work with a small handful of advisors, often people who are already wearing a number of hats, for example, as union representatives, deans, and department chairs, and thus have little band with for extra 'special projects' as civic engagement initiatives are generally categorized, given the extent to which the needed work of the college already suffers from lack of administrative staff, project management software, and robust communication systems.

A related though distinctive feature of the institutional landscape that undermines college-wide civic engagement initiatives is the extraordinary degree of churning within the highest ranks of the administration (five Presidents and four Vice Presidents in six years), which relates to a more pervasive problem in the inability to recruit and retain highly skilled staff for much needed mid-level administrative positions. With so many veto points in the system and lack of standard operating procedures and practices that constantly shift and change, leadership (Presidents and VPs) are constantly in a tug-of-war with mid-level managers who are incentivized to act in ways that shield themselves from negative consequences of lack of productivity due to the broader dysfunctionality of the administrative system. Because the basic administrative functioning of the college suffers as a result, full time faculty must then pick up the slack though they have no administrative support and often lack administrative expertise and technical know-how. Already over extended with five-five teaching loads and administrative duties in their own departments, they do what they can to move college-wide work forward within the committee structure, ultimately lacking any accountability for results. For their part classified staff, overworked and operating in silos, have little incentive to overcome significant collective action problems absent administrative sticks and carrots to incentive them to pursue non-administrative work outside their own departments and units. The unpredictability of the planning cycle, constantly changing procedures and protocols, and lack of integrated project management systems, combined with skeletal budgets undermine initiative. Given

these constraints, lack of adequate and accurate communication systems, and the slow and tedious nature of the shared governance structure, even the most motivated and organized staff and faculty have to go to extraordinary lengths to move civic engagement forward college wide.

A vicious cycle is then created whereby inward facing difficulties reinforce outward facing challenges. A persistent lack of leadership in supporting college-wide initiatives, in turn both the cause and consequence of a lack of strategic enrollment management and marketing/public relations plans, make it difficult to create positive externalities vis-à-vis outside constituents. At the same time, it is difficult for new Presidents to gain traction because of already strained relations with surrounding communities due in part to a deeply divided political culture, lack of bonding and bridging social capital, and reputational issues born of disappointed expectations for the colleges' failure to play a larger role in regional development, itself, a problem that is significantly conditioned by the politics of the governing board and district administration.

These problems trickle down to student initiatives designed to enhance leadership and civic engagement. In the case of student government, for instance, Student Life Coordinators, themselves struggling to increase capacity in the face of administrative churn and students that have little experience with college or leadership. In an effort to jump start participation, administration often rely on quick fixes such as over reliance on the same small group of individuals who serve in paid student governance roles. This model benefits individual administrators because they have more control but it dampens transparency and discourages broad based civic participation. There is no incentive to spread the word broadly or rotate positions or run elections, or get too much of the pedagogy around building respect for and interest in democratic practices. Thus, while ASU is assumed by outsiders to be helping students cultivate 'democratic practices,' instead, it appears to many from the inside, to be a lesson in bureaucratic politics. Feeling marginally exploited by being asked to take on work that in most institutions receives higher pay and benefits, students often treat the position, not as an incentive for civicness or democratic participation, but rather as a favor to the administration for taking on extra work for the college, for example, in their role as helping to organize and staff first year experience, financial aid, etc. This is

particularly the case for students that are already overworked as they struggle to balance family, school and paid work opportunities—particularly those students with the highest level skill set and access to social capital to begin with (here I am thinking about re-entry students, hardworking, academically inclined students, business owners, community organizers already active in the community, etc.).

VISION TWO: Civic Engagement as community development

A model of civic engagement much more prevalent among California Community colleges is one that centers on community development, tied, both to community college's workforce and diversity missions.

Within California's three tiered system (UC, CSU, and CCs), the latter were seen not only as a preparatory for four year institutions but an opportunity for new migrates, late bloomers and a vast array of working class students to pipeline into California's expanding industrial, agricultural, and retail base as well as a host of new and emerging paraprofessional careers and trades (automotive, plumbing, electrical, computer technology, etc.) To help facilitate the flow of workers into the work force, community colleges all over California's many urban and newly emerging suburban communities established a robust network of contacts with rapidly growing chambers of commerce, local and regional business associations, labor unions and regionally based community development corporations,

Though largely excluded from California's prosperity pipelines, on the backs of the civil and women's rights movements, by the late 1960s and early 1970s, communities of color were agitating for greater consideration. Thus, in pressing colleges to re-orient themselves toward a more inclusive vision of their future, people of color, largely blacks, women, and Mexican-Americans, mobilized largely on the basis of their excluded status, used their identity and ethnic and gender pride to mobilize movements that ultimately pressured colleges to create specific opportunities for them. Thus, was born the intersegmental infrastructure in the California community colleges, organized around Title IX compliance, affinity-based student support groups, like Puente and Umoja, and categorical funding to accommodate populations thought of as perpetual minorities.

While much has changed over the course of the last half century, including the labor markets, industries, and demographic profile of regional community colleges, much of the institutional infrastructure still in place today can be seen as path dependent vestiges of mobilization and institutionalization that occurred many decades ago, perpetuated and further entrenched by the weight of vested interests. Thus, a highly segmented form of student engagement with community.

Student engagement, affinity groups, and categorical funding

For many poor and working class communities of color, particularly those in deeply diverse urban areas where immigrants live alongside Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) with deep roots in their neighborhoods, community is defined less in territorial terms than as an ethnic or cultural moniker. In this context, the civic engagement so hardily embraced by surrounding suburbs, and in many rural communities alike, is largely associated among BIPOC with a lived or historically recounted 'nightmare' of exclusion and interference.

In this context, the 'civic republicanism' of the early 20th century, what many view nostalgically as the height of communal progressivism and the can-do spirit of associationalism, is seen as the heyday of white majorities rallying around their own, circling the wagons around, 'community schools', institutionalized redlining, and wide spread segregation and discrimination that enabled the white middle class to masquerade as democratically appointed arbiters of values, virtue, and moral authority. Because California has been a majority minority state for nearly twenty years (since 2013), having experienced centuries of immigration, and decades of culture wars and nation-defining landmark civil rights victories, this is a familiar narrative to most college educated Californians, particularly among the younger generations.

Whereas scholars operating within elite four year universities have only recently begun to critique power and racial dynamics of civic engagement projects, particularly the ways in which pedagogy can often reinforce white privilege (Mitchell, Donahue, and Young Law, 2012) and white supremacy (Cann & McCloskey, 2015), this has long been understood by those working in public schools in poor urban

districts serving predominately communities of color. Here, the language of service learning or civicness is subsumed by the dominant narrative of community. For struggling white communities, particularly those with a more radical progressive bent, communitarian versions of 'engagement' lean toward mutual-aid societies, employer and worker coops, intentional communities, and fluid, less institutionalized advocacy groups associated with a wide variety of rights-based, voice-driven, social, economic, environmental and racial justice causes. This ethos resonates also with many rural and 'inner city' communities of color, who, having been born into or immigrated into highly racially and/or ethnically segregated areas, cultivate and embrace a vibrant ethic of mutual aid and cooperation within their own ethnically and racially defined communities centered around cultural heritage or country-of-origin. In this setting, there is a taken-for-granted understanding of community as affinity based.

The commingling of student and community engagement with social activism lies at the heart of key developments in the creation of the infrastructure of California community college, more specifically the building out of programs for specific populations, and thus funding streams, to help support a wide variety of populations, largely sidelined from the American promise in the immediate aftermath of WWII. As minority students of color, largely the children of working class migrants, service workers, and petite bourgeois shop keepers, aspired to the middle class, they organized for greater inclusion in the educational pipelines to white collar jobs. For many folks, subject to racial and ethnic discrimination and lacking inherited wealth, this meant pressing for affirmative action through both the four year colleges as well as the community colleges. Thus, by the late 1960s, Community colleges, traditionally educational pipeline from the working class to the middle class, had become organizational havens for a wide variety of social action, from women's rights, to anti-war activism, to ethnic pride. In the face of demands to diversify, first an all-white student body and later the staff and faculty employees, Community Colleges and California institutions of higher education more generally, experienced tremendous pressure to combat segregation and classism through affirmative action that extended to 'investments' in uplifting future generations of underserved students.

A classic example of this initiative is the University of California's Student Academic and Educational Partnerships (SAPEP) designed to improve access to UC for students from underserved schools, targeting low-income, first-generation college, and minority students traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education. Retooled in the 1990s to "reinstitute equity' of those impacted by Prop. 209, California's ban on Affirmative action, SAPEP programs focus on 'underserved' students across all 112 California Community Colleges as well as large numbers of parents, teachers, and administrators. Programs like Community College Transfer Programs (Transfer Prep), Mesa and Puente provide services such as regular and sustained advising, peer mentoring and early identification models to improve student outcomes (SAPEP). Originally conceived of as helping educationally underrepresented communities gain a foothold into the UC system, subsequently, these programs have become an important way in which the UC system signals to the California legislature its efforts to raise achievement among students across a wide variety of demographics. For instance, Berkeley's Berkeley Experience create partnerships with "*underperforming*" community colleges and in the process create their own informational outreach programs and their own research and evaluation teams tied to the UC system (Gazmen, Nguyn, and Van Daily Cal, 2021). By "helping to enhance students' academic experiences throughout their K-12 academic settings, SAPEP programs developing their cognition skills while also providing preparation, opportunities and pathways to complete A-G course requirements" (UC Office of the President, SAPEP 2017-2018 Program Outcomes) for under-represented communities and thus are the main avenue for underprepared, first generation low income students of color to enter many of the top UCs.

It is within this framework that many of the funding sources that 'top off' legislative allocations on the basis of raw enrollment (FTE), are allocated to community colleges. Unable to trust local administrators to allocate funds on the basis of particular needs, populations who had mobilized to secure the funding in the first place rallied for programs that would benefit the targeted students (Latino/as, blacks, poor students) for fear administrators would divert them for general purposes, thus undermining the affirmative action intent. In this way, programs focused on race, class, and ethnicity became

entrenched in the community college governance structure---geared predominately for populations who originally organized and agitated to get them, predominately, black and brown students whose very existence in post-graduate educational institutions had come to pass on the basis of Affirmative Action acquired through pressure from below.

Over time, however, these programs like all categorically funded, targeted programs face a variety of pressures. First, it is difficult to keep up with the scale and scope of need as other targeted, categorical programs proliferate with the identification of new excluded groups and needs. Consequently, unless there is significant revenue growth, internal competition for resources either generates less revenue per program or more pressure to circle the wagons to resist competition for funding. For instance, most funding for SAPEP is woefully inadequate considering that the "underperforming community colleges to which they are designated" don't have additional general streams of revenue they can draw on beyond what is generated per pupil. Thus, the most highly funded SAPEP program at the community college level, Community College Transfer Programs faces tremendous pressure to expand while Puente is squeezed as UC California's budgeting for SAPEP programs has been drastically cut through the years. Whereas the combined UC system and California budget for SAPEP programs was $85 million in 2001, by 2018, it had been cut by more than 70%, leaving funds at a mere $24 million, in the years prior to the economic fallout of the global pandemic. (UC Office of the President, SAPEP 2017-2018 Program Outcomes). Moreover, from below, most community college administrators, recognize that categorical programs set up to pipeline underprepared students into the UC system are poor substitutes for the kinds of infrastructure that is needed to truly achieve the heavy lifting needed to move people into the middle class. Realistically, modest expansions in Puente, Adelante, Metas or Umoja, and/or marginal increases in UC funding are unlikely to make much of a difference, yet, colleges that are predominately comprised of people of color are constantly referred to these categorical funds to make due.

Second, targeted programs leave themselves vulnerable to backlash as the 'investment' in students who benefit from the programs are seen as creating a protected status as there are inevitably more students who, given adequate and accurate information, would want to partake in the programs, than

resources allow. As there are fewer general supports, higher costs associated with them, and more competition for admission, issues of fairness and access (the very rhetorical justifications for these programs existence in the first place) are raised given the exclusivity of the benefit (i.e. additional support in the college preparation and admissions process, etc.).[35] Under the weight of proliferating needs and wants, tanking enrollment, and a revolution of expectations among today's students living in an information saturated world, the "affinity group" model faces significant pressures, particularly in institutions like Contra Costa College with 'deep' diversity and a majority Latino population that is also the states' largest ethnic majority. If the vast majority of its grant money is designated to this population, via HSI stem grants, in addition to categorical funding coming from SAPEP, this looks like a familiar majority-minority problem to many BIPOC where these extremely under represented students are asked yet again to take a back seat to the majority population. Moreover, as educated, middle class Black and Latino parents in West County do not see enough opportunity for their children, for instance, in enabling them to pursue academic excellence and career development, they will seek to raise standards, questioning the absence, for instance of honors programs that accrue students much needed opportunities for academic recognition, like Rising Scholars, or more highly resourced programs such as Mathematics, Engineering and Science Achievement (MESA), a nationally recognized *academic* program, which served over one hundred students at each of CCC's sister colleges in 2019 (data source from CCC website).[36] Meanwhile, the number of poor and marginalized Asian and middle eastern students, for instance, who were never explicitly included in the categorical structure of funding and programming to begin with, have grown exponentially in California over the last decade but continue to be left out of

[35] As the backlash against affirmative action picked up steam in the late 1980s and early 1990's, California became the epicenter of many political battles that, three decades later, are playing out in much of the rest of the country. The fight over proposition 209, which ended affirmative action in the UC System in the mid 1990s, is significant in that many of today's community college faculty of color in California, particularly those who earned their degrees within the UC and CSU systems, were themselves personally active in, and effected by, these battles to retain affirmative action.
[36] Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) provides support to thousands of educationally disadvantaged students through both high school and community college programs to pursue the goal of increasing the number of educationally underserved students entering four-year colleges *with well-developed mathematics and science skills*.

opportunities. For instance, political asylees and immigrants from the middle east are ineligible for the Kennedy King Scholarship, one of 4CDs most lucrative and widely regarded scholarships. Furthermore, the vast majority of students of color who are not privy to counselors and mentors provided by programs like Puente and Metas must make due with a single transfer counselor serving 3,000+ students, which they rightly view as undermining their success. As more second, third and fourth generation working and middle class students come to community college because they can't afford four years of a four year college price tag, they will (or are) see that their needs and interests for high quality services and supports are not being met and will turn away.

Third, in an effort to minimize competition and/or exposure of these programs to external attack, affinity programs are frequently rendered less visible and thus less accountable, hence generating more mistrust among 'outsiders' already prone to view these groups as 'special interests'. As competition rises and resources become scarcer, which is often the case in cyclical economic downturns or once in a generation crisis, such as the global pandemic, bureaucratic politics makes these programs more vulnerable. As faculty, students and administrators try to defend their shrinking piece of the pie, there is increasing pressure to deploy the tools of interest based lobbying on their programs' behalf.

As a consequence of these dynamics, categorical programs are both vulnerable and difficult to reform. Given the benefits programs accrue to existing students and those employed by the programs, the pain of change is more concentrated than the diffused benefit that may be accrued to the institution as a whole of forcing a change against mobilized resistance. As a consequence, it is easier to reform around the margins than to restructure. This is how programs like the Puente Project**,** supported by the University of California to improve the college going rate of predominately Latino students expanded its charge to an intersegmental program serving all educationally disadvantaged students with college-preparatory English skills. However, in so much as a key mission of its originators was culturally sensitive community building to support Latino students, programs that encourage and accept a broader range of students inevitably loose this core community building function to become more similar to other academic success programs. On the other hand, without intentionality around inclusivity, affinity based programs can

create exclusivity and/or pressure for parallel services for those that don't identify with the 'community' orientation. For instance, if Muslim students perceive their identity and that of Puente as distinctive, and resources do lot enable a substantial expansion of the program, *defacto*, it becomes a program that creates an exclusive inside track or is perceived of as not welcoming for certain students though technically 'available'. Thus, while at the aggregate Puente students remain predominately Latinx (SAPEP report, 2014), decisions made by coordinators are critical to understanding the community engagement function of the program beyond basic skill building as well as its reach across identity groups.

Fourth, blending a highly decentralized commitment to 'student centered programs', with a centralized funding model (demonstrating the effectiveness of these programs back to the CA state legislature to justify their funding), SAPEP, foster a model of 'community engagement that is different from the way that community is defined fiscally and politically (through place based districts and territorially based municipalities/counties), which is how college administrators, for the most part, have to navigate external governance structures. While these SAPEP programs are no longer linked explicitly to ascriptive ethnic and racially designated group, as newly designated 'affinity groups' they are expansive (undocumented students, recently resettled asylum seekers, students with ambulatory challenges and long term mental health issues, etc.). As potential mechanisms for recruitment or student-centered programing, or career and technical, or transfer, the consequent is a fragmented infrastructure, not to mention extremely challenging financial constraints to implementing and actually providing supports as students mature through the college.

The consequences of this are all the more tragic for under resourced minority majority institutions like Contra Costa where nearly all of our students have significant disadvantages. If the presence of less than 1% white students in schools are considered an indicator of extreme segregation (Atlantic, 2015), Contra Costa College, which has only 10% white students despite 24% of West Contra Costa being white (census reporter, 2019), the 'general student body' not included within the intersegmental niches of the college, mean that the vast majority of students of color are being left behind. If we concede that the vast majority of our white students are also poor, then we can extend the generalization to virtually all

students. This begs the question, if the median household income in West Contra Costa County is $78,316 (higher than the State's average, $75,235, and squarely within the middle class), why are more middle class white students not willing or able to attend Contra Costa College, and how much enrollment could be gained if the college were to attract more of them?

Asking this question does not suggest a re-orientation away from equity nor advocating for the elimination or sidelining of specific supports for populations that need to be lifted up, but rather lifting up more people by providing a wide range of supports and high quality infrastructure is an important aspiration. There are clearly some high school students that need a vast majority of supports to wrap around them, but students learn from one another and the inclusion of middle class students, or students from across the income range, bring benefits to the student body and they in turn are benefited from rubbing up against and experiencing the realities of poor and working class students in addition to the benefits of an institution infused with an orientation around equity. Moreover, legitimacy is eroded among students of all classes, races, ethnicities, and gender orientations when programs: a) do not deliver on promises because of capacity issues and b) suffer from reputational issues because they are not integrated into the college, supported and communicated out as a source of pride.

Despite these limitations, what affinity groups provide a highly successful framework for providing students' social and emotional support as they navigate uncharted waters. Puente, Umoja and Metas, for instance, generate resources to expose students to new experiences, for example, field trips to colleges or conferences, meet new friends, and develop relationships with mentors that create a connective tissue between the individual, their family and the educational system. They are also a powerful outward facing advocacy group that raise up student voices and articulate and defend student needs not only within the community college system but within a variety of forums, for instance, relationships with the CSU and UC system, and state, county, and local public administrators and elected politicians. In this space, they are a key nexus of community engagement as student activism. Yet, ultimately, if the goal is to achieve greater integration and more access to opportunity for the majority of

students, there has to be more attention to greater coordination and integration not only among affinity groups but across these programs and the rest of the student body.

Workforce development, Apprenticeships, and the Cooperative Work Experience Education

More than ever before, students are facing a complicated assortment of jobs and career choices and are expected to interact with a wide assortment of people in communities that are increasingly more virtual than territorial. Additionally, they are more mobile than ever. Students move between residences and individual colleges' service areas at a rate that could not have been conceived when the community colleges were first established. In this environment of boundless information on the one hand, but lack of skills, connections, and direction, career and educational pathways are more disorienting and harder to navigate for *every* core demographic of the community college system-- young people right out of high school, older, non-traditional students looking to change careers, folks looking to reboot their education after a period of incarceration, life-long learners in retirement, and new immigrants or transplants from other states or regions looking to resettle in a new area and get to know their community.

For many people who think about generating opportunities for students and communities at scale, workforce development conjures up a portrait of colleges as hubs of education and innovation that help catalyze investment and business development and thus jobs and wealth creation throughout a region. Though community colleges have developed strategic partnerships with businesses in specific industries, workforce development among colleges in the East Bay are not focused on cultivating robust business relationships/public-private partnerships centered on "growth". Significant regional development efforts tying the community colleges to broader regional development have been limited. Though economic development funding under the Obama administration created some limited regional college-industry engagement, which a number of local colleges, like Berkeley City College, were able to take advantage, regionally scaled efforts are uncommon and have not been particularly fruitful for the community colleges. For instance, efforts to develop regional synergies around UC Berkeley's Global Campus in STEM areas, particularly biotech, have sidelined local community colleges, in addition to becoming

embroiled in well-known political cleavages within the San Francisco Bay area around development (Krowlikowski interview). Given the political cleavages around development in the East Bay, the high cost of labor and housing, and the lack of robust manufacturing (though there is robust oil and chemical industry in West County), there is limited traction that can be gained for community college presidents to do what is a core responsibility of many four year presidents over the last two decades which is to establish partnerships with private sector enterprise to help bolster colleges' revenue base.

Additionally there are significant legal, administrative and political cultural factors within 4CD which push against private sector partnerships, not least of which is a strong and firmly entrenched system of collective bargaining and a regulatory regime that disincentivizes flexibility. The 4CD collective bargaining framework was established via the Educational Employment Relations Act (EERA) in the 1970s, an era of labor power, a strong and growing middle class, and people of color largely absent from the negotiating tables. At the table for unions are instructors strongly committed to the mission of public education but also a structure that benefits their material interests, which are about more and better paid and benefits. Despite the precipitous decline in the unionized workforce in the United States since its heyday in the 1950s (the portion of private sector workers that are unionized hovered around 7% in the years prior to the pandemic), unions have remained for many Californians, particularly those with working class origins, the difference between poverty and access to a middle class lifestyle, not to mention a variety of worker protections. Having weathered the ideological pressures of neoliberalism, the ascendancy of big business, and the challenges of globalization, public sector bosses are not about to jeopardize their members jobs for the prospect of making inroads with private industry.

Additionally, the participatory governance structure, existing in tandem, though apart from collective bargaining makes decisive action difficult, thus disincentivizing upper and mid-level managers from making inroads into establishing robust plans of action, let alone follow through. Because there are no clear lines of authority and job descriptions remain wildly different on paper from what they are in practice, uncertainty and internal conflict reign as lack of accountability creates an environment in which entrenched interests routinely slow walk, roll back, and obstruct efforts to lead from above to reform

operational systems that could generate greater efficiency and accountability. When and where administrative leadership is able to act decisively, it is often met with political and legal challenges either from its board or employee unions. Strong faculty governance coupled with vocal and consistent opposition to private development in much of West County, has acted as a significant undertow to administrative attempt to develop more robust partnerships both locally and regionally, not to mention a virtually impenetrable regulatory regime that repels many would be partners.

Due to these issues and the limited bandwidth of many understaffed Community College Presidents, most of the Community College partnerships that have been built around workforce have tended to link up to the public sector. Workforce development has focused on supplying administrative labor (primarily) to public sector agencies at the city and county levels (i.e., clerical workers, police officers, and accountants, social workers, etc.), and training them for blue collar employment in, for the most part, unionized trades (i.e., automotive, electrical, and a variety of allied health fields), through CTE programs and specialty certifications, like CCC's hazmat certification. Where specialty programs have been created, for example, CCC's only strong workforce program, Forklift Operator Program, which is now defunct, they have been funded by special workforce grants that are significantly limited in duration and cannot be sustained if they don't attract enough students (Evan Decker interview). Similarly, Apprenticeship programs within 4CD are quite limited as well. The Bay Area Community College Consortium created a website this year that lists all Registered Apprenticeship programs, of which there are twenty four in the East Bay, spanning nine colleges. While Chabot has seven such programs, most colleges, including each of the 4CD colleges only have two, those at CCC and LMC, essentially state based programs: The Automotive and Machinist Joint Apprenticeship Committee of Northern California and Advanced Manufacturing and Transportation Apprenticeships of California.

The most salient area of workforce education in the Community College system are Cooperative Work Experience Education programs (CWEEP). While they are different at each campus, CWEEP is designed to provide hands-on work-based learning opportunities to community college students by generating college credits for general and occupational work, both paid and unpaid. Students are able to

two to four units per experience for which colleges earn FTES-based apportionment for the units completed. Through a coordinator courses are offered in different departments for which students gain work experience, in internships or jobs that are both discipline and non-discipline specific. Learning outcomes are established largely by the employer with the coordinator or by the faculty member responsible for the supervision in the case of disciplinary specific work experiences. At DVC, which has the most structured, centralized CWEEP model, Work Experience Education (WRKX), there is a senior dean and a coordinator and eleven to thirteen, predominately adjunct faculty who offer up to sixty sections (work experiences) focused on workforce and internship experience mainly in CTE areas but also fields in the social sciences. Through these 2-4 unit experiences, college instructors and cooperative work experience coordinators building connections with employers, assisting students with the creation of cooperative work experience agreements with employers, and supporting employers with supervision of students, ensuring compliance with all cooperative work experience regulations.

While these efforts rarely scale up across employers or colleges, some community colleges have come together with the public sector to generate synergies around workforce education for targeted populations, such as health care professionals or specifically vulnerable populations. For example, the Bay Area Systems Impacted Consortium (BASIC), established in 2017 is comprised of several Departments in Alameda County, and subsequently Contra Costa and Solano counties in partnership with colleges in the Peralta community college system and a number of Oakland and Alameda based nonprofits to help formerly incarcerated students achieve success in their post-secondary education career pathway. Recognizing the extreme challenges faced by this population in accessing and persisting in post-secondary degree completion, a board of directors was created to develop synergies in generating and seeding sustainable programs, strong inside and outside pathways, and broader system change to accomplish this goal over time.

Beyond the classroom and specific targeted program, most students experience strong workforce "assistance" via individualized counseling in the context of Career and Transfer centers or through programming they, often in conjunction with workforce managers, organize on campus such as 'career

launch' job fairs and 'Earn and Learn' programs. Where community engagement is most explicit is via Adult and Alternative Education Specialists who go into the community to work with students one-on-one through structured educational partnerships. For instance, Demetria Lawrence, CCC's Adult and Alternative Education Transition Specialists works with formerly incarcerated students via the adult school at the county to help youth transition into degree programs (Demetria Lawrence interview). Additionally, community opportunities are brought to students through community laisson embedded on campus. For example, in West County the Richmond Foundation supports a Sparkpoint 'counselor' embedded on the CCC campus who provides financial literacy workshops but also connects students to resources, workshops and community-based opportunities around priority areas such as housing and health (Bill Bankhead, interview).

Proposals and Recommendations for Advancing Student- Centered Community Engagement Opportunities at CCC

In light of my broader discussion of civic engagement across multiple systems of public education, a fairly comprehensive analysis of Contra Costa Colleges structural position in light of economic, cultural and institutional realities, the remainder of this paper is devoted to meeting the moment by advancing recommendations that can improve the way that we connect students to community engagement opportunities. Though we are still in the middle of a crisis context as we head into the end of a second long year in the global pandemic, we also have a unique opportunity, and indeed responsibility, to offer insights and ideas that can help our new College leadership, headed by a strong and experienced President, set the college up for future success.

Along these lines one of the most important things that can be done is to set in motion institutional reforms that move the college toward greater integration of effort. If the status quo can be characterized as paralysis, achieving meaningful change will require elevating and prioritizing a vision of success that embraces both internal and external partnerships and catalyzes synergies between fragmented realities and moving toward the institutionalization of campus-wide benchmarks that "make community

involvement more attractive for students in partnerships with community stakeholders" (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000). Given the centrifugal forces at play, the college would benefit from leaning into a broad range of bold initiatives, that woven together, create centripetal synergies and positive feedback loops not only for constituencies internal to the campus community but also the various communities in which the college is embedded.

This means moving beyond mission statements into a concrete set of objectives and action plans that can be translated into specific policy agendas, budget allocations, and tasks for dedicated personnel. While adopting and implementing proposals require college-wide input and deliberation within and across departments, they first need to be envisioned as concrete plans that advance best practices in the in-between spaces of civic and career education, community development, and student enrichment. To do this I will advance the six following recommendations for administrative reforms, initiatives, projects, and programs that taken together, provide the bread and depth to achieve the kind of institutional transformation capable of moving us from the rhetoric of student success, equity, racial justice, community engagement, etc. to an empirically observable, results oriented, reality.

1) Implement administrative reform to build capacity
2) Strengthen career services
3) Establish a strategic plan for campus-wide student focused professional development initiatives
4) Reform cooperative extension to catalyze collaboration
5) Foster 'unity-in-diversity' initiatives within and across communities
6) Advance Pedagogical Innovation

1) Implement Administrative Reforms to build capacity

There are a number of issues endemic within the California Community College system that are often seen as a blockade against the kind of administrative reform needed to truly build institutional capacity for student and community-focused initiatives. An obvious point is the aggregate amount of

resources that flow from the state of California, which is limited in comparison to those available in other public high education systems in California. While the aggrege level of resources, whose distribution is largely linked to a funding formula that will soon be much more restrictive than in the past, the mechanisms around the allocation of budget and decision-making at the local level are much more consequential to administrative reform. This in turn circles us back around to the confines of collective bargaining arrangements and the participatory governance structure.

Within the tripartite framework established for collective bargaining framework, all stakeholders are at the negotiating table (managers, faculty, and staff) with the exception of students. But who then speaks for low income students in this system? The conceit is that faculty interests are students interests, but this is like saying doctors speak for the patients—we know students, like patients, suffer from sever information asymmetries. Indeed, many an educational reform has floundered in trying to deal with downside of collective bargaining, including but not limited to escalating benefit costs that crowd out other educational spending priorities and conflicts of interest and ethics, particularly in fairly closed systems. As both administrators and union representatives attempt to tether their interests to the interests of students, students get caught in the middle, frequently sidelined as a source of input, suffering from significant information asymmetries and diffuse interests, their ability to see or understand the broader system is hindered by their structural positionality within it.

In certain ways, then, the system of participatory governance, with its attempts to extend broader opportunities for engagement to faculty, staff and students through a vast expanse of committees, can be seen as an anecdote to the limitations of collective bargaining. Yet in other ways, for example its structural and procedural complexity, simply exacerbates core problems. In a system in which no one truly knows all the rules and regulations because they are so impenetrable, and specific responsibilities and lines of authority are not well defined, legal and human resource professionals wield outsized organizational power, and politicos, adept at interest based lobbying, electioneering, (and threatening litigation), tend to thrive. Students who have arguably the least incentive to lean in in the first place, are underwhelmed by procedure and overwhelmed by the discourse. As a consequence, they are often

disinclined to speak out or act up as change agents for fear of accidentally or unintentionally breaking a rule, revealing an 'ignorance' of the topic at hand, or 'taking sides' given the frequently divergent interpretations and positions of management and faculty voices. Moreover, very few of them have any comparative reference to work from so they may see simply a seat at the table as a much improved step up regardless of the impact.

These trends and observations are obviously not universal across the community college system, nor are they unique to it, but they are real and important to consider with eyes-wide-open, particularly as they are rendered invisible to many students, staff and faculty. As with legislative politics, most people don't have the time or inclination to take a hard look at how the sausage gets made. Yet for those that are involved in governance, there is little incentive to call attention publicly to these issues because it can feel like exposing skeletons in the closet, something to be done in private, if at all, so as not to taint your family's reputation. It is also true that staff and faculty stakeholders benefit from this system, not only from job security, benefits, and a high level of autonomy but because the structure of participatory governance structures gives a wider range of people access to information from on high as well as well as veto opportunities. Thus, for the vast majority of 'participants' it is more comfortable and/or convenient to accentuate the positive than to call out the adverse impacts accrued to students' collective experience.

While many of these dynamics are less salient in large, well-resourced institutions, in small, under resourced, understaffed, highly diverse colleges, they can be a source of tension, particularly whether there is a high value placed on 'equity' and 'democracy', and high expectations about what a 'participatory' structure can achieve. As the actual experience of the accumulation of meetings and discussion and lack of a plurality of voices is revealed, active participation can wane, thus further eroding the rationale for student inclusion in the first place.

Signaling seriousness about capacity building via administrative reform

These tough realities have to be a starting point for any conversation that gets to significant movement toward the kind of college-wide institutionalization of service learning and/or student centered

community and political engagement. Ultimately, dealing with much needed administrative reforms is a signal of seriousness to college stakeholders as it provides a necessary, though insufficient, foundation for cutting through the institutional statisficing that undermines the advancement of strategic initiatives focused on students. Yet, if we know that "a supportive infrastructure around service learning, and collaborating with academic leadership, are better able to maintain the integrity of college/university efforts and demonstrate the value of service learning programs more effectively to their external constituents" (Haupt, 2021), the key question is how to get there, particularly given the conflicting imperatives that present themselves between administrators seeking to achieve a public good on behalf of the college as a whole and employees (staff and faculty alike) who often see the colleges' educational mission through the lens of their own employment contract and or specific committee and/or departmental agenda given the extreme decentralization of the participatory governance structure.

One way to tackle this dilemma is to recognize that skilled, highly motivated leadership can accomplish extraordinary feats through focused, strategic planning that links needs to assets and the power of persuasion backed up by a toolkit full of sticks and carrots. Envisioning a variety of initiatives that connect positive aspects of the colleges' current identity to aspirational ideals for its future is a key first step.

To then get to greater reliability and efficacy in the administrative functioning of the college to be able to execute these plans requires a shift in the organizational culture which can be advanced by:

a) Identifying roles within the institution that are most closely related to service learning and community engagement

b) Elevating the status of individuals within those roles that are goal oriented, public minded change agents, and where possible,

c) Hiring administrative support staff, whether full time managers, classified, or hourly workers with mission in mind and

d) Creating fused systems of accountability via the establishment of new norms and more integrated project management.

In a system in which there is chronic understaffing due to tight budgets, the individual competencies and talents of those who are hired are magnified in importance. The ill effects of hiring people that are not appropriately fitted to the job or under qualified has significant multiplier effects. For instance, other employees or student workers who excel in their job may informally be asked to do more, particularly in the area of community engagement and service learning, thus carrying on an increased workload, though it is never explicitly recognized or rewarded. Over time, this can undermine motivation and lead to churn. For employees who are well attuned to their worth and the condition of the labor market, which in today's market favors movement given high demand, there is an incentive to exit, thus depriving the institution of a valuable employee. Conversely, long time employees who are *not* particularly committed to their job, are less inclined to focus on mission over interest if they see that leadership is not producing any inducements (either sticks or carrots), to incentivize a change in their behavior.

By hiring people with a particular dedication to the community engagement, service learning agenda and finding aspects of current employees jobs in this vein that leadership can reward and help them excel at, is key. By giving these people responsibilities and decision making power to work toward what they are naturally interested in, helps facilitate a scaling up benefits for work already being done.

Another way to help set faculty, staff and students up for success is to work to streamlining administrative procedures and processes that shift the organizational culture toward one more conducive to fostering student success. Clearly if burnt out employees are having to revisit the same work multiple times because they have not been given access to appropriate systems and instructions, they suffer psychically, but the institution as a whole suffers as well from lack of morale. For example, if a faculty member has to submit a form three times because there is a lack of clear procedures and directions, which are not appreciated by staff the effect can be that that busy faculty member, who teaches five classes and suffers no penalty for lack of persistence, learns that it is not rationally worth the effort given more immediate concerns related to the students in front of them, (i.e., lecturing, grading, preparing for their classes). Conversely, if staff set up detailed instructions and videos about how to accomplish a task and

then they are still asked by a wide range of faculty repetitively to walk them through the task, they may feel that their effort to infuse professionalism into the system is redundant or wasted. In all of these little ways, the effect of lack of policies, procedures and norms, generate an organizational culture that is not inducive to working effectively. By establishing stable systems, predictable norms, and widely understood procedures, leadership can establish the conditions for employees to be more productive and efficient with their time, and thus more satisfied with their work life as they see themselves progressing in their goals.

To link these elements of administrative reform to outcomes that pave the way for greater student success, the college could harness a longer term planning cycle to a more fused system of accountability that can generate integrated project management. In some ways these elements are the most difficult to implement because fundamentally they rely on resources to purchase and adopt new software which also mean having the technical and management competencies in place to allow the projects on which this work relies to proceed in a timely manner. In the absence of integrated communication systems, work arounds like peachjar and Microsoft teams can be useful, but a communication plan for developing their use systematically is critical to harnessing their benefits for college-wide benefit. Similarly, developing monitoring and evaluation capacity facilitated by project management software allows for the kind of 'related activities' that make service learning plans and community engagement targets successful on a broad scale by allowing for the more effective and efficient collection of data (Haupt, 2021). Yet, to construct and integrate project management software requires the expertise of a computer and information systems manager that can work closely with communication specialist to create a workable system of integrating a highly decentralized organizational structure to generate effective outward facing communication.

In a system in which faculty governance is so strong, clearly, faculty initiatives and skill sets need to be better harnessed to the service learning/community engagement mission not only to facilitate support for the adoption of administrative software but for the actual faculty work needed to be done. Here there is a substantial role to play for presidential leadership in motivating new hires and department

chairs to explore how better to integrate community engagement and service learning into curricular spaces. Working with the chair of the curriculum development and pathways committees to streamline processes that seek to adopt curriculum innovations and minimize competition between departments is critical. At the same time, at a college in which 97% of the budget spent on salaries and benefits for faculty (Dr. Robinson Cooper, October 21), and in which faculty unions lobby for increased full time faculty lines in a situation of declining enrollment to the tune of $100 million (Michel's UF update, Tuesday, June 29, 2021), faculty leadership in the Faculty Senate as well as the union, need to appreciate the degree to which professionalized skills sets are imperative to establishing high priority goals, such as stabilizing and reversing precipitous enrollment declines and thus be brought on board to support professionalization in areas such as marketing, computer and information systems manager, and career services.

2) Strengthen career services

With the average student at Contra Costa College graduating with an average of 92 units, only 36 units less than what it takes to get a B.A. or B.S. at a four year college (Robinson-Cooper, October 21st), we are not doing a good enough job moving students "up and out" along a transfer and career pathway. It is also important to remember, however, that many students are not predominately transfer bound, nor do they feel they need a degree to work. For students negotiating complex family situations or committed to part-time employment, they may be less focused on 'graduating' or finding a career path than juggling family-life balance with young children or finding the right profile of specialty classes to take to work toward a significant career change when their depends leave the house or to start their online or local business, for example. Others who enroll in community college in order to qualify for social assistance via TANF/CalWORKS, may be more focused on surviving everyday life as a low income person in the bay area, than planning for the future. Alternatively, at a time when many people, young and old, have re-prioritized quality of life issues, they may be seeing community college as more of an opportunity for pursuing personal goals relating to enrichment or self-fulfillment rather than a pathway to either a four

year degree or a professional goal. From these vantage points, the high number of units a student accrues at CCC could be indicative of persistence rather than failure.

This said, community colleges are still the primary means by which poor and low income people climb into the middle class. According to the director of the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, Doug Shapiro, "College is [still] the best chance you have to get into well-paying jobs in this economy. It is not the only path and its' certainly not a guarantee, but it's the best path we have right now. And so if more students are thrown off that path, their families and communities suffer" (Nadworny, 2021). If the mark of future mobility is not a current pay check, but a degree indicating minimal qualifications and the accumulation of a set of skills that will lead students to be competitive in the twenty-first century labor market, we need to do better at fostering opportunities for students to balance personal enrichment, career exploration, and community engagement.

Career exploration and development

Currently, career development at CCC focuses heavily on helping students that need temporary jobs find work, often within the college itself, and servicing employers requests for referrals to build their workforce (Natasha Dealmeida, interview). As part of student services, separated from CTE, the Career and Transfer Center, a fairly new development at CCC as of 2017/2018, was run until this year by a single full time career development staff person, also its founding director. While the director collaborated with her counter parts on other campuses to organize a yearly job fair, with only one additional part time staff person, most of the career centers work at CCC focused on meeting the needs of individual students one-on-one, either on a drop in basis or upon referral from other programs on campus, who were in turn referred to other programs and services on campus to solve immediate needs. Additionally, the inadequacies of the SARS software, which presented onerous processes for employers to post jobs and limited access to designated career counselor, made it a cumbersome tool for employers and career counselors alike (interviews Dealmeida, Luna). Thus, the lack of job opportunities available to

students, and their knowledge of them, was extremely limited, requiring a considerable amount of staff time to engage in search, and less time building student skills for longer term career development.

The adoption of Handshake throughout the district adds considerable additional capacity to connect needs generated from within the college to outward facing opportunities. As a multifunctional software that has long been used throughout four year colleges, its adoption within 4 CD three years ago allows students to connect with a wide variety of opportunities generated from outside the campus, including but not limited to employment, apprenticeship, and internship opportunities, career and technical trainings, innovative educational opportunities and scholarships, and online workshops and career events. In Spring 2021, Los Medanos hosted its first virtual 4CD conference, therefore enabling a valuable opportunity for students that would have not been possible otherwise given the pandemic[37]. However promising, currently, most of Handshakes functionality remains under-utilized, particularly at CCC. While LMC is utilizing the tool to build out connections on behalf of its students to the California Internship Network (CAIN), a leader of paid internships and over 1500 paid internships for students across the state prior to the pandemic (interview, Rachel Anicetti) and DVC is the first and only college to use Handshake to schedule appointments (interview, Rachel Luna), CCC has only begun to pilot the tool and it is widely unknown with the campus community.

Clearly, it is not enough to purchase a software and assume there will be pick up. The capability and utility for students has to be built. For instance, because internships come in so many shapes and sizes, and span a wide variety of professions and industries in the public, private and non-profit sector, students are often simultaneously overwhelmed by choice while underinformed about how internships are relevant to their educational or career trajectories. Internships provide invaluable in depth experience on the job; however, most community college students can't afford to give up part-time jobs for an unpaid

[37] As a participant, I can attest to the incredible utility of the Spring, 2021 conference, which included a wide variety of external participants and faculty and staff led workshops and panels dedicated to student success. However, the participation of only twenty-two students across the three colleges (interview, Rachel Anicetti), which speaks not only to the challenges of utilizing the tool in a pandemic environment, but also the need to develop functionality and better embed such opportunities within the life of the college campuses to make more stakeholders aware of it and its functionality and promote uptake among the student body of each campus.

internship. They need to be paid a living wage and so expanding the range of opportunities beyond the key contacts that currently exist, predominately in the public sector, is a key job for the future. They also need to be better informed about how unpaid internships have become a pathway to employment in some organizations. While it is often assumed that faculty foster career connections to opportunities through their programs, which they do, they also have extremely limited bandwidth or capacity to prep students on how to apply, lack access to department websites for information sharing, and have limited reach with class-based announcements. Thus having a centralized resource hub or clearing house for student opportunities that was more visible and accessible to students through the career center, would go a long way in fostering more extensive connections between students and the community.

What is also needed is human capital that can effectively connect Handshake to students and make it an effective inward facing tool by also looking outward to make the case to a targeted group of employers as to why they should include Contra Costa students as among their potential contacts for new job and internship opportunities by actively outreaching, particularly among smaller employers, like the myriad of ethnic entrepreneurs or non-profits in West County that have flexible opportunities for students, but also among would-be employers that already have connections to programs across the college. In order for students to get access to employment opportunities or internships via Handshake, employers who generate ads have to intentionally select which institutions they want to receive them. Given lack of knowledge about this tool by many employers coupled by the reputational issues of the college more broadly, student opportunities are diminished by lack of effective deployment of Handshake. This is all the more salient given CCC's proximity to UC Berkeley and other larger colleges like DVC that are well known. Lacking a strong outward facing presence with the public, private and non-profit sectors in the region, the flow of information and opportunities into the college is highly impeded, thus leading to low pick up of career services as student see little use for them given the lack of opportunities generated.

Given the magnitude of work needed to set students up for success, to have only one full time staff dedicated to career and professional development is to signal to students that the institution is not dedicated to their transfer or career success. It is even more baffling for a college that has a designated

'Career and Transfer Center', which should be getting workforce development funding. To be able to build a serious culture of college and career going, and thus professional development that generates positive externalities for community development, not least of which is broader reach in the community and thus the potentiality for greater enrollment, there needs to be at least two full time designated staff to career services, among them a fulltime coordinator whose administrative and outward facing work can complement the inward facing work of classified staff who interface with students.

A professional full time coordinator with twenty-first century technical skills is essential given the imperative for optimizing the functionality of Handshake, but also the need for strategic planning so as to optimize programming without duplicating effort, but also to generate metrics and integrating software that will produce the kinds of data, and student success narratives, that allow the career center to scale up its efforts into the future with additional grants. Moreover, marketing and communication skills are critical to be able to interface effectively with a wide variety of employers (nonprofit, public, private) across a wide variety of sectors and communities. Unlike four year institutions like UC Berkeley that have over a thousand established partnerships (Bass interview), CCC has to create them, which is made even more difficult, by reputational issues that beset the college. Thus, generating 'handbooks' for internship coordinators and employers that highlight the diversity of students and efforts of the center to prepare students, is critical to the outward facing work, as is the inter-personal skills and professionalism of someone who defacto becomes the outward facing representative of the college in many community forums.

We don't do our students any favors by failing to expand a knowledge base, arguably most directly relevant to *community* success. It is incredibly valuable to be able to relate to and identify with students, and this is the value 'high touch' services can provide for fellow students but there is considerable expertise needed to match skills to jobs effectively, and that comes from professionals with specialty credentials and training, for instance an advanced degree in career development and/or significant experience in industry are needed. Moreover, motivated, academic achieving students doing serious work in the classroom that are looking to improve their job and career prospects, can be

disappointed by lack of professionalism in a space that is supposed to help prepare them for success in the twenty-first century workforce. Negative or unhelpful experiences can create reputational problems that lead to lack of uptake. This point is worth emphasizing given pressure many college campuses face to prioritize basic needs and services that serve as a gateway to classes rather than a pipeline to career advancement.

Leveraging funding to invest in external facing educational supports should not be considered in opposition to inward facing student services, but rather a multiplier to the goal of helping students succeed in their post transfer career pathways. Here, student hourly workers become a key source of support as 'peer advisors'. As currently happens at DVC, federal level student worker monies could be used to enhance the work of full time staff for example by assisting in creating workshops, soliciting information from and sharing it with internal stakeholders, and assisting in creating workshops and other events that scale up career development opportunities for current and prospective students (interview, Rachel Luna). However, part time hourly student work cannot be a substitute for professionalism because when we undervalue career development we risk undermining students' opportunities for *professional advancement* by not developing programming and capacity that explicitly helps build skill sets expected by the most coveted employers in labor markets saturated with well qualified candidates, for instance networking and promotion, resume writing and interviewing.[38] Thus, while some may view the expenditure of funds for professional expertise in this area as contrary to equity goals, that is largely if you see equity from the lens of basic needs rather than student and community success. The professionalization of transfer *and* career services advances equity because it is almost always students in

[38] At CCC, though foundation support staff supported by Richmond Community Foundation are often seen as offering additional free services, they are not trained career development professionals but often student support specialists more akin to social workers who adopt an advocacy model of student support (Jim Becker interview, Roxanne Carillo Garza interview), offering students valuable information about community engagement opportunities and workshops akin to what one would expect in county social assistance offices (i.e. basic financial literacy skills, tax preparation services, etc.).

low income communities that are the ones deprived of this expertise, thus perpetuating, if not exacerbating existing inequalities for individual families but for whole communities as well.

Obviously a robust Career Center can only do so much outward facing work without cultivating strong synergistic relationships with counseling, workforce that in turn require strategic planning. While these components will be discussed in subsequent sections of the paper, what is critical in terms of capacity building for the longer term is initial investments in efforts to create data bases and websites that can be curated for individual use by students as well as deployed to advance internal and external partnerships that then can support students in their career journey. Yet to be useful, these websites and data bases need to be well planned, integrated and curated. Obviously, there are key limitations given California's failure to develop integrated systems across its public education system. For example, many states have longitudinal data systems that span high school and college, while California has never invested in such infrastructure. Just as this lack of integrated data basis creates problems for four year universities in improving public high school student access to their programs, it limits Community College's ability to identify programs and practices that aid them in assisting students with career development. Institutionally, setting up workable data bases, most realistically district wide, would allow for a much broader range of student-centered programming and empower students to do more career planning on their own by giving them the tools to successfully navigate what is too often a vast and confusion web of data, resources, and information.

While access to better more integrated information, data bases, and websites should never be considered a substitute for in person counselor and career professional advice, it is a critical enhancement and necessary supplement in career search in the twenty-first century. Some students are willing and able to take a designated career class from the counseling department to figure out their pathway, but for many students their schedules do not permit them to take an entire class to get a particular subset of career information. Thus, the career center should be a place where more flexible, professional workshops and opportunities are provided consistently to students each semester, a place where career and transfer specialists share out important information such as free, and highly beneficial workshops or online forums

like, "College-to-Career, Post Pandemic", a virtual forum looking at the ways the career path after graduation could continue to evolve after the pandemic. It should also be a place where students can find short video presentations and mini workshops tailored to them, as well as high touch help with specific issues, such as looking over resumes. Recognizing that there are too many students to be able to rely exclusively on one-on-one interactions that aren't exclusionary simply due to lack of availability, investing the time and resources in strategic planning around career planning would go a long way to help set students up for success over the long run, particularly given the critical inflection point in career development that community colleges intersect with in the course of people's lives.

3) Establish a strategic plan for campus-wide student centered professional development initiatives

Ultimately, creating synergies around educational and professional development that build student and community engagement needs to be a college-wide effort and therefore, whether exposing students to new experiences and community stakeholders, or helping them find their career pathways, it is critical not only to build synergies between Career, Counseling and Workforce but to join up these efforts with academic departments and student life.

Because most community college counselors are focused on onboarding new students, grade and enrollment issues, degree requirements, social and emotional well-being of students, the average counselor cannot be expected to be particularly attuned to the complexities of labor markets that await students beyond their AA and BA/BS degrees. This presents a degree of difficult in relying exclusively on community college counselors to do career exploration, particularly for counselors that have a significant caseloads and a wide variety of student profiles and interests. Moreover, though some counselors in the community college setting have specialized competencies in career exploration or career development, most have generalist M.A. degrees in Counseling with backgrounds in social work or psychology and teach career exploration courses as four year transfer preparation courses. Counselors that focus on CTE programs may have more knowledge of labor market analysis and industry trends, but given the significant institutional pressure to guide students to programs already offered within the college, as well

as time and resource pressures, students are rarely given the opportunity for deep or meaningful exploration of career pathways during counseling sessions (Kubischta interview). If most of the course offerings for 'career exploration' are offered by counselors whose own experience is limited and for whom career development is not an expertise, greater efforts have to be made in drawing on the expertise faculty beyond CTE as experts within their fields familiar with educational expectations and career dynamics and opportunities within their field.

There are considerable gains to be made from harnessing faculty assets within the broader campus community to create a more professionalized culture that blends workforce and transfer goals. In many departments, faculty do their best to provide opportunities for students to gain exposure careers in their discipline. For example, in political science, I have organized and led student field trips to Hastings Law School, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, UC Berkeley's Institute of Governmental Studies, and UC Berkeley School of Law. I have also arranged panels of community activists, politicians, judges and lawyers to share with the campus community the work they do in their field and have arranged panels of former members of the political science student club I advise to share their college and career pathway post transfer.[39] Similarly, many science faculty, for example, working through the Center for Science Excellence, provide a variety of opportunities for professional advancement (interview, Dr. Setiati Sidharta. While one or two non-CTE faculty have external grants to bring in speakers or arrange for more immersive professional development experiences, for the most part, for most community college faculty in small colleges, particularly those in department with only one or two full time faculty members and limited budgets (i.e. most social science departments), there is limited bandwidth to generate consistent programming in this area.

Thus, a key way of enhancing capacity is by developing a framework for collaborating with faculty and students. Working with the Chair of the Counseling Department (as Pathways lead), the Chair of the Student Success Committee, and the Dean of Student Services, the head of Student Life, and the

[39] See the Democracy in action section below.

Marketing Director, three initiatives could serve as the basis of a two year strategic plan to strengthen the culture of student-centered professional development: *Careers on Campus; Project Internship; Envision Your Future*.

Careers to Campus

Careers to Campus, would be a campus wide ‘career day’ (to supplement, rather than substitute for the ‘jobs’ fair) each spring. Organized on a two year planning cycle beginning the summer prior to the first ‘career day’, *Careers on Campus* would be an all-day event that would showcase careers in two designated pathways year one and two designated pathways in year two. Pathways for the first ‘pilot’ two year cycle would be determined by the President and organizing committee (Chair of Counseling/Pathways; Director of C&T; Chair of SSC; Dean of SS; Coordinator of SL), with input from the Council of Chairs. Seed funding for this event would come from a combination of employer sponsorship, foundation seed money, and workforce funding.

Once the pathways and departments were determined, the Director of Career &Transfer, who would chair the standing committee, would work with faculty and designated staff to designate a theme and organize and coordinate the specific events within the parameters established by the program. In addition to the designated calendar date and time frame, *Careers to Campus* would be based around four key ‘event’ types:

◊ a panel of external and internal professionals in the fields represented by the designated pathways;

◊ an targeted employment fair of invited employers and/or paid internship providers in the designed pathways fields

◊ a round table event in which students would have personal interactions with external professionals;

◊ a student led activity or event, organized by Student Life, ASU, and ICC (i.e. atrivia game and raffle, an invitation to jazz band or theater to perform, or a special guest speaker invited as related to a Student Life/ASU/ICC theme, such as "Dream Jobs" as related to the disciplines included in the pathway clusters).

In addition to providing a great way for students to immerse themselves in career exploration, acquire new skills and resources, this would an opportunity to get potential 'partner' employers to campus and to facilitate personal connections and relationships between the campus community and professionals in the field. A great example of initial work in developing this kind of model is the work of Rachel Anicetti, the Director of Career and Transfer Center at LMC, in spearheading 4CDs Spring 2021 career fair. Leveraging her previous connections at Sacramento State as well as the bringing together of staff and faculty under the Dean of Student Success to develop innovative and multifaceted opportunities for students, enables the development of a multi-layered event which includes not only employer 'recruitment', but unique value added elements for students in terms of internship and education advancement opportunities and practical advice related to key themes, like how to network using social media.

Project Internship

Project internship would be an ongoing program that would be the responsibility of the Chair of Student Success, working closely with the Director of Career Services, the Head of Student life, and the Scholarship Coordinator. It would be comprised of one in-person and two online student-focused seminars which would correspond to key due dates for internships offered in the spring and summer predominately, in the social, physical and life sciences. The first in-person seminar, strategically scheduled for the beginning of February. would consist of a round table of experts discussing the different types of internships, reasons to apply for them, how to research them, and what employers look for in candidates as related to their own public, private, or non-profit experiences. This would be followed by

two hands-on online workshops, one facilitated by the Chair of Student success on application preparation strategies, for instance, acquiring high quality letters of recommendations, and the second, would by organized by the Career and Transfer center on subjects like resume writing.

All three workshops would take place in February to prepare students to submit summer internship applications in March and would be linked to targeted recruit meant through four key venues: The Career Center, ASU, ICC (where most institutionalized affinity groups also have clubs); and the Council of Chairs, where department heads would be encouraged to recruit students from within their units and to forward internship opportunities to the Career center to contribute to a CCC specific data base.

Because internships available for the fall often have due dates posted over the summer prior to CCC's fall calendar start date), other online seminars could be students to students in the late fall and early spring. These professional development seminars would be focused on preparing students to research, apply for, and interview for paid internships, and could include off campus guest speakers as well as speakers from inside campus in rotation from year to year. Recognizing that many low income students of color lack knowledge of key (often competitive) opportunities in their own back yard, as well as 'just-in-time' skills needed to take advantage of them (i.e. producing a resume, reference and writing sample with a few days turn-around), project seminars would attempt to fill this gap and in the process help to connect students with one another across affinity groups and disciplines, thereby building social capital.

In this way, *Project internship* also constitutes an intentional way of harnessing the expertise and know-how across the campus by establishing an ad hoc committee comprised of faculty and staff from across several key affinity groups: Puente, Umoja, Metas, and the SCE, and two key student service positions, the Student Life Coordinator and the Scholarship Coordinator. Given that many of these programs are focused either on supporting students' academic success in the classroom or furthering their transfer goals, many of the faculty coordinators have knowledge of opportunities in the community for students as well as useful advice and/or resources, yet given limited time and capacity, they may not be

able to provide high level support for students that seek to take advantage of the internship opportunities faculty coordinators receive and pass on to students. This structure enhances their efforts.

Additionally, *Project internship* would attempt to solve the issue of scale by essentially coordinating efforts around this important component of student success, whether defined in terms of either career or transfer. As the UC system has moved away from standardized testing, essays and extra-curricular activities and experiences have become important aspects of a successful transfer application, along with grades. Moreover, paid internships in many fields are essentially a pipeline into a full time employment, yet many community college students are unaware of the importance of these opportunities or how they may be a useful supplement to classes during the summer months or during the course of the semester for those students who do not have paid work. Finally, this program has the potential of creating synergies with folks looking to help students learn about and apply to scholarships and fellowships. Because CCC scholarships are due in early March, *Project Internship* presents an opportunity to collaborate with the Scholarship coordinator to increase the number of scholarship applications, particularly for external sources of funding. Similarly, it presents an opportunity to work with Berkeley Experience, a Student-initiated Program (SIP) at the University of California, Berkeley that recruits low income Community College Students to the UC System by helping them with the FAFSA and preparing their PIQs. As a pipeline project, it offers a Summer Fellowship program, "Acquiring Social Capital Theory in Action", which could serve as a basis for recruitment of CCC students that are interested in transferring to UC Berkeley. There are undoubtedly other internship/fellowship programs connected to HBCU's that could offer similar opportunities for recruitment and guest appearances.

To enhance the quality of effort each yearly programing cycle, the project could be conceived in three states, which maximize stakeholders ability to plan and helps in integrating the project with other career development and academic initiatives:

- ◊ Stage One: Outreach to faculty and staff to send well known internship opportunities to the
- ◊ Career and Transfer Center Director to put into their data base

◊ Stage Two: Recruit panelists, assembly material and establish marketing strategy to promote the program in collaboration with Student Life, the Marketing Director and the Career Center Director

◊ Stage Two: Solicit feedback and set up analytic tools to assess impact and enhance the utility

Envision Your Future

Envision Your Future is an initiative that, under the purview of the Career and Transfer Center, would infuse career exploration and professional development into CCC recruitment events, in particular CCC's first year experience.

Working with the Enrollment Outreach Coordinator, the SSC chair, and the Student Life Coordinator, the Transfer Coordinator and Career Services Coordinator would design a mini program that would integrate online career exploration tools with a self-paced 'career exploration' assessment that would produce automated results students could view as an email report sent to their insite in box. Set up as a brief 15 minute 'online training tool' via Handshake, the assessment would spur students to connect their self-assessed academic pathways to longer term career aspirations. In so doing it would introduce students to jobs related to their self-identified pathway and the different degrees and certificate associated with career advancement in their self-administered assessment. It would also ask participants a battery of questions about their personality traits, lifestyle choices, and work-related preferences to produce a preliminary automated analysis that they would then be encouraged to discuss further with their assigned counselor as well as the Career and Transfer Center Staff. The key goal of this exercise would be to get students thinking more about the connection between their educational, personal and career goals and to offer them a clear enticement to utilize counseling and career services. It would also generate a resource list for students as well as a list of Career and Transfer events sponsored or co-sponsored by the center, including Careers to Campus and the Internship Project

Additionally, *Envision Your Future* is have a two hour in-person in person program (and conceivably on line) integrated into the first year experience program comprised of a key note speaker,

followed by an immersive conference-like experience in which students would be able to choose to attend three of six workshops; two "blue: workshops on making the most out of your time in community college; two 'red' workshops on how to set yourself up for transferring to the college of your choice and two 'white' workshops and setting and pursuing career goals. Students would be asked to choose one red, one white, and one blue workshop to ensure that they were exposed to key topics in each area of education and professional development. The workshops would be 25 minutes in length with a five minute period in between to walk to each classroom. Each student would be given a color coded punch card at the outset of the event along with a goodie bag with pen and paper to take notes at each workshop they attend. Students who attended three workshops and filled out an event feedback card would be eligible to enter a raffle to win one of three classes of prizes (i.e. free parking passes, free meals at AquaTerra, and computers) funded by the CCC Foundation.

One potential enhancement to the program, which could offer synergies with *Project Internship*, would be to partner with 'Career Launch' an innovative social enterprise incubated at Santa Clara University, founded by former DVC student Sean O'Keefe. Purchasing Career Launches' publication, *Launch Your Career: How ANY Student Can Create Relationships with Professionals and Land the Jobs and Internships They Want* for first year experience students would provide them a valuable asset as they start their journey at CCC and would enable the college to incorporate some of the books' best practices related to career and professional development in our workshops. Also, since the organization is based in the South Bay, the college could leverage this partnership to procure dynamic keynote speakers for 'Envision Your Future' as well as cross pollinate additional professional connections and community partners for both Careers to Campus and Project Internship.

4) Reform cooperative extension to catalyze collaboration across academic programs

While the above initiatives provide a variety of on campus professional development opportunities, the college also has a role to play in catalyze synergies around workforce within the

campus that can be harnessed to more robust external partnerships. Among the key elements of such an endeavor is to create an institutional environment in which CTE and non CTE faculty can learn from one another, particularly in relation to building out curriculum that incorporate project based, service learning objectives.

As it exists, all cooperative courses are taught by CTE faculty across a wide range of departments, most notably, automotive, culinary, allied health, and biotech. While HSI funding has recently enabled the creation of a community embedded class in Chicano Studies (Lorena Gonzalez, interview) thus facilitating curriculum development, for the most part, non-CTE faculty have no access to additional resources and little interaction with CTE faculty, thus missing out on valuable opportunity to build human capital via collaboration. Largely run by practioners with deep experience working in their sector, CTE programs are naturally outward facing, tied to external communities through a variety of mechanisms, such as advisory boards, professional associations, and local, state and industry training and accreditation standards. Consequently, CTE faculty are not only responsible for normal teaching and administrative functions related to scheduling, staffing classes, etc. but are also for a host of additional duties connected with sector based reporting standards and due to the significant workforce funding they receive, more oversight. As a result, there is not a lot of integration across CTE departments nor occasion for cross-fertilization between CTE and liberal arts faculty outside of individual representatives on shared governance committees.

In many ways, this is not a unique situation. Divides between liberal arts/social science faculty and career and technical programs are deeply embedded in the norms and structures of institutions of higher education more often than not (Jones, 2016). However, both faculties have a lot to gain by creating intentional mechanisms to disrupt this divide for mutual benefit. This is particularly important for revitalizing Coop as a mechanism for supporting experimental learning and community engagement efforts among non-CTE faculty. As emphasized by Jones in *Bridging the Workforce and Civic Mission of Community College*, collaborating across the divide presents significant opportunities not only for mutual

learning among faculty for the benefit of students, but also for generating a more visible, impactful presence of the College in its service area.

Revitalizing Cooperative Extension

One such effort that could be catalyzed though Cooperative Extension at CCC is a college wide approach to 'community-based' learning. Given its significant untapped potential, Cooperative extension could be an ideal locus of curricula development that connects innovative classroom pedagogy to real world experiences within the community. Additionally, as a long established feature of the California Community Colleges, it could serve as a focus for program building around not only designing new courses but developing a more robust infrastructure to support them, particularly as related to interactions with and coordination of external partnerships.

Non CTE faculty in community colleges face a broad array of challenges in moving forward service learning, community engagement courses. First and foremost, unlike CTE faculty, they have no dedicated resources. Outside of English departments, department budgets are typically extremely restricted, as are the number of fully time faculty, typically only one or two of which are full time professors and part time faculty are not incentivized to be engaged in programming given their contract structure. Moreover, full time faculty that are most likely to be the catalyst of programmatic development, department chairs, typically have a wide range of other administrative work they are responsible for (all committee work, hiring and training, department reviews, faculty evaluations, recruitment and paperwork associated with student enrollment and contracts, student club advising, managing student grievances, etc.). Yet unlike CTE faculty (or four year faculty) who often hire student assistants, this is not the norm among non CTE professors at the community college level because of research issues but also the high number of classes taught and the high ratio of students per class. Regular full time faculty are typically contractually obligated to teach a five-five load each year with a 40 student cap). Though in theory full time faculty have a significant degree of autonomy and flexibility in their schedules, in actuality, due to committee, department and division meetings, and administrative duties on

top of their teaching and grading obligations, they are extremely busy and not incentivized to harness their efforts for collective purposes. Finding ways to incentivize linking non CTE faculties' teaching and service duties to project based learning could make better productive use of faculties' time while fostering greater student success and community engagement via synergies with CTE faculty.

There are several distinctions between CTE and non CTE faculty that make synergies salient to both student and community development goals. Unlike CTE classes where the vast majority of students are focused on a career pathway early on, in the social sciences, humanities, and to a considerable extent the majority of STEM fields, most students are neither degree or certificate seeking students per se. They are exploring college for the first time and are fulfilling general education requirements that count for many university requirements while they do so. Therefore, unlike students at the university level, they do not often follow a sequential pattern of course development nor are they as materially or psychologically vested in their discipline or department as they are when they have more sunken costs associated with pursuing their BA or BS. It is easier for community college students to switch degree tracks without penalty and many students who take classes in the liberal arts are transfer bound so they know that they do not need an AA degree or stackable certificate in order to transfer. Connecting students to service learning projects helps students see the application of what they are studying.

An additional element to consider is that non CTE faculty have a fairly intensive academic curriculum and thus must build knowledge that degree-going students will need for higher division classes while also building skill sets among a large portion of students who come to community college academically underprepared. The time and emotional dedication it takes to teaching such a wide range of students with the objective of preparing them to thrive academically, is considerable. Thus, while managers and staff often exert considerable pressure on faculty to maintain enrollment, either for targets related to funding or because particular aid programs require students to maintain a specific number of units, liberal arts, social science and life science faculty, are frequently focused on students' *academic* preparedness, establishing a base of knowledge and specific skill sets that will set them up for success

once they transfer. From this reference point, the gold standard is earning a B.A. or B.S. (if not an advanced degree), to enable students to pipeline into the middle class. Because of this, a key concern is providing students realistic expectations about performance standards, particularly since so many students come from poor performing K-12 schools. Teaching the full curriculum with added tools and techniques to help students meet widely accepted standards of competency helps builds skills, confidence and resiliency so that they are in a better position to persist in earning the degree to which they aspire, usually a B.A. or B.S. for which they will typically be paying tenths of thousands of dollars to acquire. The logic here is when instructors pass underperforming students along, those students are not set up for success because they are prone to internalize the lack of preparation at the university level as an individual failing rather than an institutional one and/or see their struggle as a specifically cultural one, particularly when they become accustomed to many of the 'high touch' communal supports within the community college setting, thus obscuring what is often a brutal reality at the four year institution where academic success is a much more individualized, sink or swim proposition, unfortunately.

In light of these differences, the way in which liberal arts and CTE faculty approach curriculum within the context of their classes is distinct but there is a lot of room for mutual learning to move forward benefits for all students. While both CTE and liberal arts faculty recognize embedding students in community offers greater exposure to learning opportunities suited for a wider array of learning styles and cultural diversity (Arches and Hung, 2018), the pedagogical objectives of liberal arts faculty tend to be more akin to that of four year professors and could thus benefit from the techniques and skill sets of CTE faculty. There is also obviously a steep learning curve for all faculty new to teaching service learning courses. CTE faculty could thereby play a valuable role in realigning expectations and helping liberal arts faculty work through a myriad of different logistic challenges that reveal themselves through experience, not least of which is dealing with unmotivated students and sustaining partnerships over time. Also, they can become allies in pushing back against unfortunately misperceptions among many deans, faculty, and administrators alike, that community embedded courses are somehow extended field trips rather than logistically and pedagogically complex undertakings that often take more rather than less time and energy

to execute. For their part, CTE faculty gain a valuable form for discussing and recommending needed administrative reforms and additional supports to better move their work forward. They also benefit from synergies that can be gained from the inclusion of non CTE faculty, such as expanded community connections, expanded opportunities for professional seminars, with invited community guests and special topic workshops around common themes relating to teaching, mentoring and supervising students in the community. In addition to the mutual personal and professional support they generate for faculty, these activities help build the foundation for successful courses and much more robust community partnerships and thus both on and off campus strategies for program recruitment.

Re-envisioning the role of Cooperative-extension in the College would entail bringing together Workforce and CTE faculty that currently run Coop, with a range of additional college stakeholders, including the Career and Transfer staff and Liberal arts faculty chairing the SSC, the Curriculum Committee, and the Academic Senate. While the long term strategic plan would involve fostering a wide range of service-learning and community engagement courses, a more proximate goal would be to create a strategic plan for increasing the visibility and transparency of Coop and to develop goals, objectives and timelines for making Coop a more robust hybrid space between Workforce, Career and Transfer, and Curriculum development. Among the benchmarks to include in such a plan would be a broad analysis of the programs in terms of the departments teaching coop course, the number of courses being taught, students enrolled, and sectors and employers to which they connect. This would help establish a framework for creating synergies around marketing, promotion and administration as well as internship-based COOP courses, which have not previously been developed at CCC (interview, Cile Beatty), though are offered at many other Community Colleges (interview Marissa Greenberg).

Additionally, an initiative of this magnitude would inevitably require the direct involvement of the College President and Vice Presidents to support administrative restructuring. Among the key administrative challenges in attempting to move to a more hybrid model would be to resolve funding and staffing issues, for example dealing with stipulations and restrictions tied to CTE funding (e.g. federal

Perkins grants), hat limit funding for support staff and or programmatic expenses incurred by non-CTE programs and faculty. The type of coordinating function that could move forward a broader agenda around internship, community engagement, and service learning involves additional work above and beyond what the current CTE faculty member is responsible for as the administrative lead for Coop. Yet, to move forward co-curricular ambitions, non-CTE faculty would essentially need to fulfill a 'service-learning' coordinator role to be able to work with both CTE faculty and Career and Transfer staff while also serving as a liaison with the Faculty Senate and Curriculum committees. One solution is to fold this role into the faculty release time already designated for the Student Success Committee or Professional Development committees. Another solution, is to designate release time for a 'service learning' coordinator role that would also include responsibilities related to the student-centered professional development initiatives laid out above as well as an obligation by the end of year one (or two) to apply for grants to sustain the position and/or institutionalize the broader set of initiatives by pursuing grant-based support for a 'Service Learning Center' that would allow for future growth and thus type of external partnerships highlighted below.

Coalition Building around Youth Centered Cooperative Development

The heavy lifting of creating internal structures that can facilitate community engagement and service learning work can be painstaking, yet it also offers a variety of (albeit future facing) rewards such as the opportunity to contribute to a broader coalition around 'youth centered' community development, centered on the Contra Costa College campus.

An example of such an endeavor are the partnerships that many colleges throughout the country have created in conjunction with AmeriCorps's Public allies programs. This program offers stipends, health and education benefits for ten months of service and learning to "opportunity youth" from low-income backgrounds. Thinking about the model of 'youth leadership development' that is already

prevalent in Richmond and West County through the work of organizations like RYSE Youth Center,[40] the partnerships that AmeriCorps's Public Allies programs have developed in other big cities in California, such as Los Angeles's partnership with CDTech, provide a template for how to catalyze broader regional synergies by strategically partnering with Community Development Corporations and local non-profits. AmeriCorps's Public Allies provides a professionalized volunteer training program, which helps to staff local non-profits but also generates funding for free enrollment in community college courses in specific disciplines and fields that corresponds with the work of local community-based nonprofits. Across a variety of areas, computer science and after school coding programs with elementary school kids, or a local governance course and community-wide advocacy projects around green initiatives and/or rental assistance, engagement that cross cuts the college and community holds the potential of creating opportunities not only for experimental learning but also for sustainable institutional partnerships and the social capital and enrollment gains that come with them as 'opportunity youth', and the volunteer staff that work with them discover additional classes that they can take at the community college. Additionally, and fundamentally, programs like these also *generate* socially responsible jobs. In New York City's Association for Neighborhood Housing and Development, for instance, 85% of the 80 young people placed for on-the-job experience with nonprofit members of the association moved directly into jobs with nonprofits in the city.

While CCC faces a number of current limitations that may make this kind of partnership seem indulgent, bold visions meet the moment. The pandemic has occasioned a massive, once in a generation disruption of the status quo. Due to the inertia that befalls Community Colleges which are almost totally dependent on state funding, it is precisely the massive fiscal weaknesses laid bare by the pandemic that present an opportunity for transformational change. As the Biden Administration is on the precipitous of

[40] RYSE center has partnered in various ways with CCC over many years and recently generated national recognition this summer as one of a number of bay area nonprofits to receive a multi-million dollar grant as part of the $2.7 billion that MacKenzie Scott, former wife of Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, granted to 286 nonprofits this year (Trujillo, 2021).

passing a nation transforming set of spending bills in social and physical infrastructure, there are likely to be a variety of opportunities for external partnerships to catalyze around community development initiatives. Meanwhile, Newsom's recently passed California budget increases the Career Technical Education Incentive Grant by $150 million and offers the hope of positive consideration for high-quality regional-based career technical education programs if and when the federal infrastructure bill passes. These are opportunities of the moment to be poised to take advantage of. However, to be able to do this and *achieve* positive transformation over the long term, heroic efforts need to be undertaken NOW by stakeholders internal to the college who are unfortunately themselves depleted by the amount of work and stress the pandemic and associated changes within the college and district have created for them in their personal and professional lives. In this vacuum, a transformational vision, accompanied by a bold, plan of action, offers the potential for boosting morale and moving forward a variety of synergistic reforms needed to not only interrupt vicious cycles of self-defeating processes and procedures, but to catalyze virtuous cycles of growth and maturity.

5. Foster 'unity-in-diversity' initiatives within and across communities

In addition to promoting career and workforce development opportunities for students, community colleges have an obligation to foster students as stewards of democracy, equity and justice. The ideal of civic responsibility, so engrained in the traditional American ethos of what it means to be a self-governing republic, is connected not only to being a productive citizen or contributing to the economy but to individual rights and responsibilities as well as mutual social and cultural ties that individuals feel toward their fellow denizens. In a world in which administrative sclerosis, partisan polarization, and severe economic inequality functions as a centripetal force ripping through the fabric of multicultural, pluralistic American society, to dismiss civic engagement as a misguided white, middle class, citizenship project disconnected from the fundamental mission of Community Colleges, is to be both pollyannish about the state of American democracy today (and indeed around the world), and to

underestimate the cultural power that institutions, and the individuals that run them, have in shaping communities' understandings of the public good.

This power is substantial in the case of California Community College system, whose physical infrastructure embedded throughout the state. When we consider that California is by far the most populous and diverse state in the country and that in 51 of our 58 counties, the enrollment in community colleges is greater than the enrollment in UC and CSU combined, we get a better appreciation of the fact that what happens in our community colleges influences American society more broadly (PPIC, 2010).

Yet from a political science perspective, California community colleges face a conflicting imperative regarding their role in society in the current era. On the one hand, they must harness their power to confront systemic inequities that undermine student academic achievement and on the other, they need to foster tolerance, understanding, and respect for differences across a wide range of societal, economic, and partisan cleavages. In our state of deep ideological and cultural diversity (and substantial economic inequality), it is no longer tenable, if it ever was, to default to a philosophical conception of natural rights (or human rights for that matter) as universally understood and accepted as one thing. If conceptions of natural rights come from a pluralist set of religious beliefs, political ideologies, and cultural values, it stands to reason that ethics, interests, and economic status will be pluralistic as well.

In this context, if we focus the college mission too narrowly on one or two sets of standard administrative goals, whether hitting enrollment and transfer targets or shoring up labor markets, we risk understating the extraordinary times we are living through. Today's students have to navigate exceptionally challenging academic and work environments and exponentially diverse and complex social, cultural and political landscapes from that of the late twentieth century. In that bygone era we were a much less mobile, much less informed society. Parochialism was the norm and the vast majority of Americans were ignorant of the gatekeeping function of powerful elites (whether in corporate board rooms, state and national party committees, newspaper and television editorial boards, or faculty lounges in research one universities). Today, people are on the move and exponentially more information is being

communicated and shared; hence, while there is less capacity for gatekeeping, the dark rooms of power persist even as they become more dispersed, and perhaps more consequential in people's daily lives.

From this standpoint, now more than ever, we need to appreciate one of the core values of the traditional liberal arts mission of community colleges, which is to instill in students both a deep respect for difference and a strong capacity for critical thinking, while also forging the types of bonding and bridging ties that help create the conditions for positive social change. If we are not actively pursuing the public mission of educating and exposing students to a wide range of peoples, cultures, organizations and perspectives, we are derelict in our responsibility to establish the conditions under which a multi-ethnic, multi-racial democracy can thrive, and indeed, survive, give the current challenges it faces. If we do not lean in to providing knowledge to students about history, cognition, social dynamics, political institutions and the 'hidden' or invisible architectures of power, we deprive our students of the understanding they need to pursue the very kind equitable and just societies and economies we purport to want to see, not to mention the kinds of leadership skills needed to identify, analyze, and solve real world problems. Moreover, if we fail to generate community engagement opportunities for students, community colleges miss out on opportunities to create a variety of positive externalities for local communities in the form of collective identity formation and collaborative partnerships that can cross cut, if not mitigate, against bitter political, economic, and cultural divides.

Perhaps now more than ever, as Covid-19 has profoundly weakened social connections between Gen Z-ers, particularly their willingness and ability to partake in the 'normal' social aspects of collegiate life like hanging out with friends in real times, playing sports, and building new friendships, colleges need to embrace their role as social and cultural institutions. This is because the global pandemic will be the defining experience of the generation due to arrive on campus in the decades ahead. More proximately, today's students have come into adolescence and young adulthood in a period of profound upheaval, rising extremism, and increased violence, a potent cocktail of societal ingredients further exacerbated by severe economic precarity and partisan ideologs on the move to mobilize working class people across the spectrum of races and creeds, precisely the base of students that California's community colleges serve.

In this context colleges need to find ways to construct themselves as spaces of social regeneration. They also need to be especially mindful of the various lenses with which fostering the social life of students is viewed and pursued. More specifically, it is important to understand and appreciate the security lens with which many campus administrators view student activities and efforts, and at the same time interrupt and transform a mentality that frames student activism and activists as detrimental to the collective wellbeing and safe operating of the institution. At the same time student activists need to understand that political conflict reverberates throughout educational settings and can alienate students and educators who seek to make campus and college life an oasis of constructive engagement around democratic ideas associated with cross-cultural dialog, democratic participation and collective empowerment.

For its part College leadership has a significant role to play in fostering appreciation and respect for the authentic experiences and lived realities of a deeply diverse student body, while also creating the conditions for more cross fertilization. In the first instance, this happens by creating a campus climate and culture that openly and enthusiastically embraces civic and political engagement as integral to of the mission of the college and seeks to harness shared concerns to campus-wide opportunities for dialog and inclusion. In the second instance, it involves scaling up efforts via mission-driven priorities and action plans that unify the campus. Considering the mission of the college, its core strengths, and previous collective engagement, I propose that the campus support an array of '*unity-in-diversity'* initiatives around two principle thematic areas related civic and political engagement: *Democracy-in-action* and *Racial and Social Justice*.

Below I discuss three specific initiatives *Community-on-campus projects*; *Experiential Immersion Programs*, and *pedagogical innovative interdisciplinary certificates* that together create the architectural design for greater centripetal force both within campus and between campus and the communities of interest, practice, and identity which shape students everyday lives off campus.

Community on Campus Initiatives:

As in many colleges, via departmental programming, particularly in the arts departments and CTE programs, Contra Costa College offers a variety of outward facing opportunities for students to connect with community of interests. Prior to the pandemic, the music department's award winning jazz ensemble regularly performed in the community and at Carnegie Hall, its journalism department produced a nationally recognized student paper, *the Advocate*, an enduring source of school and community pride, and its culinary department generated a wide variety of immersive programming, including culinary expeditions abroad. While many of these discipline specific events and activities have slowly re-emerged, in most cases the pandemic has severely undermined capacity, both directly (i.e. enrollment declines due to fear of Covid and/or undesirable masking and vaccine mandates) and indirectly (retirements, exacerbated fiscal and staffing challenges, moral issues, etc.), and is likely to generate ongoing challenges due to ongoing uncertainty about health and labor market trends. Moreover, for most departments and faculty, even before the pandemic, chronic underfunding and related staffing challenges, prevented many departments from generating robust outward facing student-focused inter-collegiate activity (i.e. debate and speech tournaments, mock trial events, math decathlons).

In thinking about community-on-campus initiatives as a whole it is important to consider that most funding for on-campus events at CCC has come from campus service centers through categorical funding and activities or grants monies funded by HSI STEM, seeded to various equity initiatives and affinity groups across campus through the Dean of Equity and Institutional Effectiveness. While Faculty have professional development funds that they can avail themselves of, for the most part, these funds are focused on professional associational work related to teaching and research endeavors rather than student-focused professional development opportunities or activities. Similarly, because classified staff have no specifically designated faculty development committee, they are limited to categorical funding or revenue raised independently, for example, via Athletic events to help fund programming of organizations like the Black Faculty and Staff Association. For their part, students have largely relied on designated activity funds managed by Student Life via Student Services, which they access via their participation in student government and student clubs. However, much of this money goes toward paying stipends to student

senators and officers. Student activity funds designated to the clubs have a variety of confusing and ever changing procedures and protocols attached to them, not to mention specific funding requirements that involve multiple signatures, making students access highly dependent on Student Life coordinators and/or faculty advisors. Thus, normally, most funded activity on campus, with the major exception of sporting events, has been focused on attracting students to programs, whether financial aid, or EOPS, or a variety of affinity programs connected to STEM.

If students are the heart of the campus, classified staff the backbone of the college, and faculty members its engine, then structurally, we need to get creative about finding mechanisms to bolster revenue generating opportunities for community and civic engagement and connecting students to clubs, clubs to faculty and staff, and projects and initiatives that generate multiplier effects for the collective benefit of students and the college community as a whole. This will enable all stake holders to render the fruits of their labor more visible both internally within the campus and externally outside of campus with the help of better communication systems and more professionalized marketing efforts.

A key way to move this agenda forward is through many of the administrative reforms discussed previously: streamlining an overly fragmented and complex participatory governance structure, creating more centralization in the budget process, and a developing a strategic plan able to support more consistent planning cycles around events and activities. Like career and professional development opportunities, integrated planning models and centralized budget allocation processes allow for the campus leadership to plan more intentionally about ways to harness existing efforts and assets to not only forge greater synergies across campus but also build outward facing pipelines to the college.

One particular administrative innovation in moving forward an organizational infrastructure that supports coordination and cooperation among key college stakeholders would be the creation of a "programming and activities board" involving the President, VPs, Classified Senate President, Faculty President, ASU President, Foundation Director, and the Student Success Committee co-chairs. The SSC co-chairs would have the ability to reach across the instructional and service side of administration as well as the faculty, classified and student divides to gather and communicate information not only within the

SSC but across the participatory governance structure. They could also work with the board to establish benchmarks to focus stakeholders attention on the opportunities for, and benefits of, greater collective action as well as an inventory of department, program, committee and club activities opportunities and constraints. Implemented with well-defined timelines for advancement, preparations could be made to help set diverse stakeholders up for success by enabling them time to adjust their own planning cycles and maximize opportunities for coordination around rotating Community-on-Campus themes every two years.

In the meantime, in order to provide students with the best experiences possible by supporting a diverse range of events, activities and opportunities related promoting Comet spirit and pride and fostering civic and political engagement, the board could move forward an initial set of Community-on-Campus initiatives focused on areas in which we have already demonstrated strength as a campus: Racial and Social Justice and Democracy-in-Action. Harnessing campus-on-community efforts to these two intersecting themes has the benefit of meeting individual students where they are, but also focusing the energies of faculty and staff around specific student-centered objectives and in the process help to resolve issues of duplication of effort, lack of visibility, and inconsistency of participation. Moreover, by minimizing competing and contending priorities and scaling and coordinating efforts, the college is able to better recruit, retain and prepare students across our various affinity groups to help rise up West Contra Costa communities more broadly by preparing students to contribute while elevating the college's profile.

Racial and Social Justice

The most consistent, common unifying themes on the Contra Costa College campus have been related to Racial and Social Justice. As a campus embedded in a historically black community that is now majority Latino, ethnic and racial pride has been a core part of CCC's identity for well over forty years. Reflective of these origins, most movement around racial and social justice has focused on these two dominant ethnic and racial groups, which themselves encompass significant diversity, in terms of gender, religion, national origin, etc.

Historically there have been two highly influential staff and faculty associations on campus: The Black Staff and Faculty Association and the Latinx Staff and Faculty Association. A new Asian Pacific Islander Association, was recently constituted during the pandemic. Though the Latinx Staff and Faculty Association has rarely assembled over the course of the last five years, in theory, it, like the Black Staff and Faculty Association, provides a place for faculty and staff to socialize and collaborate on common projects. In practice, due to limited bandwidth regular meetings are not held and because the self-appointed leaders of the associations already talk and collaborate amongst themselves as individuals, the key role of these organizations is to foster relations between affinity groups on and off campus and to advocate and lobby on their behalf within 4CD (i.e. to college and district administrators and the 4CD board).

Student organizations connected to racial, ethnic and cultural identities, particularly for Latinx and black students, are also a tradition at CCC, based largely on historical countermobilization against a pervasive and persistent legacy of segregation and discrimination. The Black Student Union (BSU) has historically been a strong and influential club on campus and via an overlapping faculty advisor and club members is interconnected to CCC's Per Ankh Academy, a learning community akin to the state-wide Umjoa community that addresses the academic support service and curriculum needs of African Americans and members of the African diaspora, for which participation in Per Ankh sponsored cultural activities are required.[41] Similarly, La Raza is a persistent student club on campus whose students substantially overlap with students in the Puente Project, the campus's largest affinity based academic support program, which together with a state wide network funded in large part by the UC system, supports Latinx students, which continue to constitute the majority of students it serves on the CCC campus. Whereas the California Community College provides a transfer guarantee to CSU campuses it does not to the UC or private schools. Thus, categorically funded support groups like the Puente Project, are a main pipeline program to the University of California, whereas Umoja has a transfer pipeline

[41] Professor Manu Ampim is the Director of Per Ankh Academy, the Faculty Advisor to BSU, and the Faculty President of the Black Staff and Faculty Association.

program to Historically Black College and Universities. Each program connects their students to these opportunities through counseling coordinators/counseling faculty who themselves share the ethnic/racial identity of their students. Lastly many of the STEM programs, funded by HSI STEM monies, target specific identity based intersections, thus funneling students via Adelante STEM Academy, through culturally sensitive mentoring and leadership and field trips opportunities, many of which are focused on Latinos students as is the Metas program, which focuses on skill building among predominately Latinx high school students.

This institutional infrastructure supports a host of activities on campus that cluster around a combination of mentoring and professional development focused on identity based groups. In addition to programs widely institutionalized throughout the Community Colleges (i.e. Per Anhkh/Umoja and Puente), Contra Costa College has also developed targeted mentoring initiatives, both organized a single day event and as an ongoing set of supports woven into its STEM initiatives. Harnessing the strength of a broad range of African American male faculty and staff from across campus, CCC fosters leadership skill development through its African American Leadership Program. Founded by long time Athletic Director, John Wade, it hosts an annual speaker event and has sought to connect new college students to African American leaders in the community. Though less visible and more decentralized, Adelante STEM Academy, offers mentorship for STEM students of color, which takes place through its student clubs, Woman Advancing Via Engineering and Sciences (WAVES), Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), and Engineering and Math Club (EMC). Through these clubs, and via CCC's Center for Science Excellence, students are connected with faculty and other STEM professionals who, though thematic events, or organized brown-bag talks, provide students valuable guidance and insights into future career pathways.

Lastly, there are a variety of Community-on-Campus initiatives that cluster around day or month long observances, such as Black History Month, International Women's Month, and more recently, Undocumented Student Action Week. Unlike the mentorship programs described above, which have steady streams of external support (i.e. Athletics and HSI STEM), many of these initiatives are

spearheaded by faculty. For example, in 2019, I worked with the College President, and a coalition of staff and students, to organize an International Women's Day Event that brought together District Attorney Diana Beacton, Contra Costa County Chief Public Defender Robin Lipetzky, and three Superior Court Judges, all women of color to campus, to share their personal journeys, the experiences that shaped the way they approached their career and education choices, and the most pressing challenges they saw facing women and immigrants in the legal system. In preparation for the event I helped students in the Community Organizing and Political Action club I advise, craft questions, and prepare to support and moderate the panel following the keynote speaker, Immigration Judge and President of the National Women's Judges Association, Tamila Ipema. While a high profile event for the college community as a whole, including invited members of the community at large, by working with students to infuse them into the planning of the event, they are given the opportunity to skill build and expand their social networks, which can have consequential impacts on individual students' lives. For example, when it came time for Nicole Slaton, an African American student who helped moderate the event, to decide where to apply to Law School, her fifteen minute interactions with one of the judges in the post panel reception helped influence her decision to apply to the judges' alma matter, the University of Santa Clara, where she is now in her first year of law school. Moreover, these events are particularly beneficial to students because they not only create personal connections with individuals within the community, but they also introduce students to new career paths. As students here from speakers that share their own journey's they begin to expand their thinking about how one reaches particular 'destination' careers. In the often nonlinear stories that are shared, students can begin to relate their own complicated stories to speakers journey's to career success. Also, in the case of the choice to focus on the judiciary in the 2019 women's day event, personal stories by professionals inspire across mixed audiences. Male students begin to contemplate the additional barriers faced by the women in their life, and perhaps future colleagues, while female students can appreciate the tips and advice about navigating these barriers to achieve career goals.

Via the strength of our mission-driven focus, programs, activities and events, have enabled the campus to meet the moment in funneling student upheaval into advocacy activity both on and off campus.

With the killing of George Floyd and the protests that erupted in the Spring and summer of 2020, college leaders, spurred to action by activist students, staff, faculty, came together with members of the community to form a Racial and Social Justice Alliance comprised of students, staff, faculty and staff. This alliance spearheaded a march through the community and subsequent rally on campus, working with the Dean of Equity and Institutional Effectiveness, Myra Padilla, helped seed a variety of initiatives to carry forward the work on campus, including passing campus wide resolutions committing the campus to the fight against systemic racism, moving forward a project to solicit solidarity statements for the Black, Staff, and Faculty Association's call to Action for Racial Justice. Subsequently, in fall 2020, the political science department and its affiliated student club (COPA), brought nationally recognized Muslim rights advocate and former executive director of the Arab American Association of New York, Linda Sarsour, and local city councilman Jael Myrick, to our 'virtual campus' to discuss protest actions and political movements in support of Briana Taylor, civil rights, and comprehensive criminal justice reform.

Democracy in Action:

Distinct, though complementary to racial and social justice initiatives, are what I am calling "Democracy in Action" initiatives. Addressing in part ongoing challenges within the community as well as a long standing tradition of civic and political engagement education in the social sciences discussed at the outset of this paper, these initiatives focus students', and the campus community's attention on perceptions of and relationships to democracy as well as political, legal, administrative, cultural, social and economic issues related to on a local, regional, state, national and global scale.

As mentioned in the first half of this paper, traditionally, many of the national concerns about the state of democracy as pertaining to youth have revolved around their perceived ignorance of the U.S. Constitution and American Government and the need to educate them about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. Dating back to the height of the Cold War, for instance, the U.S. Department of Education has required all educational institutions that receive Federal funds to hold an education program every

September to commemorate and raise awareness about citizenship and the founding of the U.S. Constitution in 1787.

More recently, the concern has turned to the quality of democracy, related not only to persistently low voter turn-out when compared to other advanced industrialized countries, but the corrosive impacts of political marketing, increased cynicism about partisan politics, and a pervasive 'democratic deficit. According to the Pew Research Center, about six in ten adults now say they have little or no confidence in the wisdom of the American people when it comes to making political decisions (Dimock, 2020). Thus, beyond a sense that America's youth could benefit from more information and greater mobilization, there is a deeper fear that American democracy is in 'crisis' as captured by Dimock's summation of Pew survey data related to Americans apprehension and distrust of one another, "In the U.S. [and abroad], anxiety over misinformation has increased alongside political polarization and growing fragmentation of the media. Faith in institutions has declined, cynicism has risen, and citizens are becoming their own information curators" (Dimock, 2020). Corresponding with an onslaught of state voting laws in the aftermath of Shelby, Alabama v. Holder (2013), which undermined key anti-discrimination provisions in the landmark 1965 Voting Rights Act, educators in the social sciences have redoubled efforts to foster civic literacy and voter mobilization. In California, the California Community Colleges and the Chancellor's Office, launched a *California Civic Impact* pilot project in 2016 to encourage twenty five California Community Colleges to use the 2016 election cycle, "as a way to build interest in civic engagement and expand existing non-partisan voter registration efforts," (Civic Impact Project, 2016).[42]

For many of today's politically engaged youth and seasoned politicos alike, there is a credibility gap in seeking to promote civic engagement from within a political machine that seeks to undermine it. However, this analysis, risks throwing the baby out with the bathwater. It is precisely because of the deep partisan entrenchment in civic organizations, the tremendous influence of money in electioneering and

[42] NextGen America, the PAC which funded this initiative, was created in 2013 by Democratic donor and billionaire hedge fund manager Tom Steyer, who in 2019 launched his primary campaign as Democratic candidate for the presidency in California.

lobbying, and pervasive lack of vertical accountability within many of our democratic/participatory processes, that students benefit from civic and political engagement efforts on community campuses. It is also why responsibility for these efforts can't be left up to partisans and activists, whose informational lens is often narrowly focused on specific causes, agendas, and interests.

Recognizing that the potency of American identity politics, deeply held partisan attachments, religious beliefs, and ideological commitments, make developing and executing civic and political engagement education a delicate, and inherently fraught task, the political science department, working with its affiliated student club, COPA (Community Organizing and Political Action), has developed a multipronged approach centered around:

a) Leadership development to strengthen community stewardship with social change

b) Politically engaged, non-partisan community forums

c) Voter education and mobilization efforts

Lacking reliable funding or infrastructural support, as chair of the political science department I have adopted a public service role in working with political science and COPA students, ASU students, and a variety of club members, classified staff and administrative partners, to plan, organize and execute events and activities in areas that foster civic and political engagement to enrich the lives of individual students while fostering collaborative ethics and practices across the campus and beyond.

a) Leadership development aimed at combining community stewardship with social change.

A central pedagogical component of advancing civic and political engagement at CCC has been working with a core group of students for a sustained period of time to build leadership capacity. Over the last five years I have worked to build COPA, the Community Organization and Political Action club as an incubator of student leadership capacity and springboard for professional development, community stewardship, and social change. Grounded in a public and community service ethnic, my work in COPA is grounded in a pedagogy aimed at generating exposure and experience for students that is conscientiously boundary spanning. This involves intentionally recruiting students across affinity groups

with multiple gender identities and professional and political interests and to create opportunities for peer-to-peer engagement in developing students leadership capacity.

As faculty advisor to the club, I also strive to help students skill build for the future, for example, guiding students through the process of creating a club charter, facilitating an organized process of democratic elections of club officers, navigating intra and inter-club communication and conflict, and applying for grant funding. Additionally, I work collaboratively with students and campus partners to plan, organize and implement a broad range of activities and events at scale and to facilitate bonding and bridging ties between club members and the campus community as well as a diverse array of community organizations around Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. For example, I have helped to facilitate connections between COPA students and the San Francisco Bay Area National Lawyers Guild, the JFK Law Program, and a variety of political and public administrative internship and have taken students to lectures, events, and tours at places like UC Berkley law, the Center for Intergovernmental Studies, University of California Hastings College of the Law's, and the World Affairs Council.

Through COPA I have sought to help facilitate students' understanding of complex governance systems and associated political processes. As highlighted in her 2017, *Why do we need Government? The Role of Civic Education in the Face of the Free-Rider Problem*, as we will confront more and more state coercion to produce the free-use goods that we will increasing need, "Civic education and the lifelong civic engagement that it brings can help ensure that coercion is well constructed and that citizens have the knowledge to monitor and help shape state power" (Mansbridge, 2017). Thus, a key part of building students leadership competencies around civic and political engagement is about sharing robust and accurate information about political institutions, policies and practices, helping expose them to new ways of thinking and help them develop their analytic skills. One example of putting this into practice is when I brought a group of CCC students to a panel a colleague teaching at DePaul University had assembled on the status of sanctuary spaces in The United States at the 2016 American Political Science Association Conference. In order to both acquaint students with the work of professional political scientists and introduce them to scholar-activists doing work in their area of interest, I facilitated their day

long attendance at the conference and arranged an informal meeting between the students and two of the Sanctuary panelists.

Recognizing that for some students, the perception of civic engagement resides more in service and individual responsibility while for others it is intimately connected to pursuing collective action for social justice and/or political advocacy, I try to meet students where they are while expanding their reach. Recognizing that the majority of CCC's approximate 5,000 students are women of color, over the years I have cultivated a number of long term one-on-one relationships with individual students who I have continued to mentor as they have gone on to pursue B.A. degrees and now graduate degrees.

b) Politically engaged, non-partisan community forums

Through campus-wide basis are Film and Community Forums organized in collaboration with COPA, the political science department is able to accomplish several key civic and political engagement goals. First, to help address widespread ignorance and mistrust of politics and government (Somin, 2014, Dimock, 2020), campus-wide community forums serve as opportunities to build out a base of knowledge of politics, law, public administration and public policy in ways that resonate with salient debates and developments of the time. Through Fall Film Forums, we have typically used film as both a way to generate conversation as well as expand on key themes. For example, our fall film forum on Constitution Day in 2016 consisted in a screening of Unconstitutional, the war on Our Civil Liberties followed by a talk I gave on the Patriot Act, its replacement by the USA Freedom Act, and the consequence of this for civil liberties. The following year we focused on campaigning and local elections, screening *Street Fight*, featuring the early political struggles of New Jersey's first African American Senator, Cory Booker followed by presentations from a panel of elected office holders across five cities in West Contra Costa County. In addition to facilitating these types of forums I have also developed presentations requested by other programs, such as a talk/workshop for METAS' Peace Day on the Media, Politics and Fake News, in which I talked to incoming high school students about the uses and abuses of political marketing in the age of social media, cyber warfare, and increasingly politicized partisan politics.

A second key objective of community forums is to build students' appreciation for open dialog and deliberation and cross-pollinate student talents. In the wake of racially motivated hate crimes and racial violence accompanying protests of the Trump administration policies, we screened 13th, a documentary by UCLA alumna Ava DuVernay, which connects contemporary activism to historical legacies of racial oppression, after which students engaged in thirty minutes of peer-to-peer dialog facilitated by two COPA students around politics, racism and micro-aggressions followed by an art exhibit and sharing of resources for future advocacy around civil rights and racial justice. Another example of this is a debate we organized on campus around California's Local Rent Control Initiative in 2018 (Prop 10). Inviting community speakers from the Richmond City Council and El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce to debate each side of the proposition, faculty, staff, and students gained a wealth of knowledge about rent control and rental assistance both locally and state-wide, while also providing COPA an opportunity to help register voters. By engaging the campus community in a Kahoot trivia game and lively post-debate discussion, we helped the campus community gain greater insight into the working of local government and the proposition system in California.

A third key objective of the forums as 'community-on-campus' events is to intentionally aim to span generational, occupational, and disciplinary boundaries to cross-pollinate ideas and social and professional networks both within and across the campus community. A great example of this is the 2017 International Women's Day we spearheaded, Press for Progress, which was a four hour event celebrating CCC's female students of color, who comprise the majority of its student body. This event brought together over twenty invited professional women leaders across three areas of public life: law and politics; public policy/administration; and activism/community organizing to engage students in round table discussions about what Bay Area women (particularly low-income women of color) were doing to meet the emerging Me Too movement's call to action while also celebrating female empowerment through speakers and round table activities designed to foster relationship building, enhance students awareness of diverse educational and career pathways (and personal stories), while also extending personal and professional networks of women professionals across the East Bay.

c)Voter education and mobilization efforts

Another key way to foster 'Democracy in Action' on campus is through voter education and mobilization efforts.[43] Because voter education and mobilization drives take place over weeks and months and bring students in close contact with one another and the community, they accomplish a variety of goals related to civic and political engagement, among them build civil literacy, particularly around election systems and the voting process, deepen dialog, as related to candidates running for office, but also specific public policy positions.

Election cycles are ongoing but campus-wide efforts around voter education and mobilization tend to cluster in the fall around the general and midterm elections. During these times the political science department in tandem with the COPA club has been engaged in three key types of activities: 1) Tabling on campus to facilitate voter registration 2) Working with civic groups and the Contra Costa Election board to mobilize the vote off campus and train poll workers and 3) Organizing debate watch parties, candidate forums, and film forum's focused on raising awareness and generating constructive political discussion.

During the election cycles in 2016 and 2018, political science helped establish get-out-the-vote drives on the Contra Costa College campus with different campus and community partners. In fall 2016, we worked with an established community organizer and youth development specialist at the Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN), to help train COPA and political science students to work with her to get out the vote through a series of eight pre-arranged tabling sessions. In exchange for the students' help with hour-long tabling sessions, they were provided valuable information about the registration and election process as well as mentorship and experiential extra credit points based on their participation. In 2018, political science and COPA organized our own campus wide voter drive,

[43] While the state of California passed a bill (AB 963), in 2019 requiring colleges to create a plan to increase student civic engagement resulting in increased student voter registration and voting in elections, this activity had been in place at the CCC campus, though with limited campus wide coordination, as the case continues to be today.

embedding voter registration in a variety of campus activities and hosted candidate forms for our California Assembly Contest. In tandem with these efforts, I craft email for the campus community synthesizing key developments (both related to national trends and CA propositions) and dialog with different student advocates about possible action that they can take to improve voter knowledge of candidates.

Other internal facing activities we have organized included debate watch parties and a reoccurring film forum featuring "Electoral Dysfunction," designed to address student interest in and confusion about the electoral college, redistricting, and gerrymandering. In 2016, political science working closely with COPA students, organized a debate watch party for the third Clinton Trump debate, which attracted well over one hundred students, faculty and staff members. In addition to acquiring the many permissions, documents and materials needed to host this event, we developed a multifaceted program with food, political trivia, a raffle, and on-site voter registration.

Political science has also sought to foster CCC students awareness of their potentiality as stewards of democracy while also serving a clear need in the community to enhance community-based voter mobilization efforts. In 2018, we worked with outreach coordinator of the Contra Costa Election Commission to organize a poll worker training on the CCC campus, for which the political science department recruited student volunteers. Though we were ultimately unsuccessful in our efforts in designating CCC as a polling place in 2020, working with professor Amy Hamblin who has served as an election monitor abroad, the Dean of Enrollment and the College President at the time, we helped lay the groundwork for having a ballot drop box on campus for future elections. As chair of the political science department, I have also helped recruit students to the ACCION voter drive focused on mobilizing Latinos in key precincts in Richmond (the VP of COPA in 2018 served as their lead organizer in 2020) and also organized last year a variety of opportunities for political science and COPA students to participate in an out-of-state voter drive via text and phone banking with Power Coalition, a Louisiana based organization and local census canvassing.

Experiential Immersion Programs:

Another way to harness the assets of the CCC community to foster bonding within and bridging without is through crafting experiences that immerse students (and faculty and staff) in a totally different environment then they are used to for a prolonged period of time. Four year institutions typically provide students with a wide range of such opportunities through education abroad programs or specific initiatives funded by well-endowed departments and/or alumni. Though Contra Costa Community College is part of a broader Bay Area Consortium that offers students semesters abroad opportunities in Italy, England and Spain, high costs and lack of consistent engagement of coordinators with CCC make access to this opportunity difficulty for both CCC faculty and students. While a few faculty have organized fantastic trips abroad, for example, Culinary has gone to Italy and Professor Ampim has taken multiple study groups to Egypt, these faculty largely have to organize these immersive experiences on their own, relying on significant financial support from their personal networks and going to extraordinary efforts to help students fundraise through hosted events, go-fund me pages and the like. Even then, the kind of funds that would allow low income students to afford these kinds of experiences is largely out of reach.

Two possibilities for developing campus-wide initiatives that help more of our CCC students to provide our community opportunities for immersion are to facilitate faculty led study-trips that involve inter-departmental collaboration and what I am calling a 'Democracy Now' summer leadership program for both middle school students and second year CCC students.

Interdepartmental Faculty Led Study-Trips

Within a framework of unity-initiatives that seek to coordinated around common themes, significant opportunities present themselves for innovative ways to build for success, both financially and via strategic marketing.

By designating a specific time frame that becomes well known to faculty students and staff over time, interdisciplinary study trips could be organized around themes and places that attract a critical mass

of students. Both winter intersession (between fall and spring semesters) and summer intersession (between Spring semester and summer semesters), lend themselves to five to seven day excursions that, with enough advanced planning, would be short enough to enable people to afford the resources and time to go (through braided founding sources), but long enough to be able to generate a mix of travel, service and study for an unforgettable bonding experience.

Synergies for such experiences include interdisciplinary certificates (discussed below), as well as inter-departmental collaborations generated out of key community-on-campus events or campus wide themes discussed above. As one example, organizing around civil and voting rights as a common theme, faculty from three or four faculties such as Criminal Justice, Political Science, History, and Sociology, working with the CCC Athletic director, could organize a total immersion trip to Alabama, where students, staff and faculty participants could tour the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute and Voting Rights Trail Interpretive Center, and visit the jail where Dr. Martin Lunther King, Jr wrote the famous “Letter from the Birmingham Jail” and organize a service learning project that could be carried into their classrooms as a curriculum enhancement the following semester.

To enable each ‘cohort’ of students to have the opportunity to take advantage of this innovative enrichment trip (and to rotate it around different divisions and departments), the campus could aim to help mobilize around an immerse experience on a biennial basis. This two year cycle would allow time to mobilize grant money and fund raise, efforts that could be spearheaded by ASU and the sponsoring departments the year of the trip. In years in which there were not enough faculty available, the San Francisco Bay area has a number of non-profits that provide service project trips which could be promoted to students in partnership with those organizations. Given the cosmopolitan profile of the bay area, the proximity to transportation, and the regularity in which neighboring cities and local chambers of commerce offer trips abroad (at least pre pandemic), this kind of innovative ‘immersive program’ could also double as an opportunity to build external facing partnerships and well as enhancing enrichment opportunities for interested students.

Democracy Now Summer Leadership Program

Another alternative idea for generating a total immersion experience that blends both the goals of 'community on campus' with the spirit of campus and community unity is for Contra Costa College to develop a two week summer leadership program focused on cross-cultural as well as intergenerational exchange in the service of training a new generation of diverse leaders who seek to chart a path toward meaningful public and community service and social and political change.

As an inter-cultural, inter-generational program rooted in our two broad thematic areas, the leadership program would include two full time CCC faculty and two part time adjunct faculty from at least two different departments who would be joined by staff from local community organizations (the Practice Space, the RYSE Youth Center, IYIP etc.) to run particular workshops. The interdisciplinary, service learning curriculum would blend multicultural restorative justice practices, with civic engagement and leadership skills, which would then be paired with immersive experiences and events locally and across the east bay.[44] Moreover, it could tap currently enrolled CCC students in ASU and ICC as well as recently graduated alum to serve as trained "community engagement coordinators" (see description below) who would laisson with guest speakers, study trip hosts, and parents. Additionally, synergies between CTE and liberal arts faculty would be generated through participation by culinary in a lunch and gardening program for the middle school participants.

Given the desire to get younger students both thinking about college and to introduce them to campus, the summer leadership program would target seventh and eighth graders from public, private and parochial schools in West Contra Costa and Berkeley for the two week program which would run concurrently with a three week 'leadership institute' targeted at incoming ASU senators and officers as well as any students that wanted to enroll in the three week summer session course (designated as a political science cooperative education internship course). Programming would be front ended in the

[44] Among the sample topics include "Who's your hero: Civic and Political Leadership" and "Know Your power: Grassroots democracy in the fight for equity".

three week course so that students could engage as ‘peer mentors’ to the middle school participants during their two week program. In the final week of the program ‘deliverables’ would be produced could then be utilized to both fund raise and recruit for the program (and college).

Though Contra Costa College does not have dorms or on campus housing to enable it to offer a totally immersive residential experience, a model that allows many four year college to bring in additional revenue from sources external to the community, CCCs beautiful campus and new buildings, as well as abundant parking and easy access to the I-80 make it a great location for an all-day summer leadership program for pre-teens. While students’ families would be responsible for paying a minimal fee for the program, out of pocket costs would be kept to a minimum since the majority of the program would be funded by a combination of equity money, community fund raising by local CDCs, and corporate sponsorship secured by the CCC Foundation working with the college president. Additionally, middle school PTAs and CCC Foundation advisory board members could help crowdfund to support students from specific middle schools in the region to assure broader access to the program.

Because the San Francisco Bay Area is an aspirational destination for many students and educators, it may also be possible for CCC to partner with another community college out of state to create a ‘student exchange’ that could be tied to both to the leadership program as well as the ‘Total Immersion” experience described above. In this scenario, a community college or HBCU, say in Chicago (for example Chicago State University), might mobilize twenty to thirty students to take a cluster of pre-designated summer school classes in tandem with the leadership class, which could then be reciprocated the following year with an organized program for CCC students (which could be extended as an opportunity to all students in the district).

6) Advance Pedagogical Innovation

The ‘learning by doing’ that inevitably comes with launching new programs can generate a fertile ground for experimentation. Though often inadvertent, the types of coordinated effort needed to launch immersive programming of the kind described above creates defacto, ‘laboratories of democracy’

as new ideas and practices make their way back to standard transfer curricula. However, in conditions where there is not supportive infrastructure in place, it is often hard to sustain such efforts. If key leaders leave and faculty and departments get pushed and pulled in too many different directions, 'learning by doing' can look a lot like muddling through.

As enthusiasm for the novelty of projects and programs wanes, initial gains in adopting innovative practices can be rolled back or crushed over time. To avoid this, faculty and administrators should find ways to institutionalize synergies around pedagogy and curriculum across disciplines. In many ways it is easier to try to do this in the midst of broader college-wide restructuring or 'institutional renewal' initiatives. Not only is this the time most likely for resources to be mobilized, but it also creates an impetus for dialog around topics that rarely capture the interest and attention of a broader variety of stakeholders at the same time.

The three interdisciplinary certificates proposed below represent curriculum innovations that empower student engagement with community. Taken as a whole they can be seen as an attempt to envision synergies for political science in fostering political and civic engagement education across different educational and career pathways. Following the discussion of the development of certificates in community development, community organizing and social transformation, and global studies, I discuss the challenges of interdisciplinary collaborations and advance ideas for a faculty led center.

Certificate in Community Development

A promising way of advancing pedagogical goals around community engagement within the community college setting is to work with faculty across disciplines to create innovative programs and certificates that seek to harness assets from across departments. Once such example is provided by Minneapolis Colleges' Community Development Associate Studies program. Located in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the A.S Program offers the community a set of core classes housed in American Indian Studies and Political Science, along with additional required classes in a variety of departments

throughout the College. This program took four core courses[45], developed in 2008 to teach students about the theory and practice of community development into a comprehensive Native American Community Development Institute (NACDI) designed to foster greater external impact by developing a valuable skill set around community development project management, culturally relevant to its native American and other BIPOC students as well as many associations, organizations and businesses in the greater Minneapolis area.

This model presents a potential road map for future development at Contra Costa College. It speaks to the possibility of stitching together an interdisciplinary certificate that can help develop sustainability across small departments experiencing enrollment and staffing challenges in the pandemic era. Though there is limited institutional capacity for birthing new transdisciplinary programs whole hog, it offers a road map toward a sustainable model of innovative, community embedded curriculum development that could mature into greater institutionalization by bringing together courses from existing programs. As CCC inches forward in the consolidation of its transfer and career pathways, for students that seek to pursue careers and opportunities in public administration, public policy, business, journalism, a “community development certificate” would offer an attractive value-added to an AA degree, particularly for those students that are looking to develop their skill sets for work they are already doing in the community. Pairing the local government and civic engagement course with some combination of courses in business management, California politics, community journalism, media and marketing, and potentially community development and ethnic entrepreneurship (as a co-taught, cross-listed course in Business Administration) could provide a solid basis for a certificate based on an interlocking interdisciplinary curriculum centered around the theory and practice of community development

West County has a variety of non-tradition and returning students, undocumented students, small business owners, and non-profit staffers that are looking to advance the work they do both in pursue of

[45] The four principle courses of the NACDI program included: Community Development and Indigenous Cultures; Community Organizing- History, Theory and Practice; Politics, Media and Community Organizing: Indigenous Understandings and Practices; State and Local Government; Introduction to Public Policy.

higher order degrees (i.e. Master's in Business Administration or Masters in Nonprofit Management) and in their communities. A certificate in community development would be an attractive way for students to group together needed classes with the value-added framework with which to generate synergies among communities in West County, particularly since most students attracted to such a certificate would be people of color located in ethnic enclaves in West County. They would also be interested in tapping into a significant network of professionals and/or businesses that cross cut their own ethnic enclave since often it is hard otherwise for individuals to develop social and professional networks that span across what would be a diverse set of communities.

A community development certificate would enable participants to engage in career and educational exploration with like-minded individuals while at the same time generating multiplier effects across West County as they extend social capital across class and ethnically and racially defined community groups. Moreover, West County has a considerable number of ethnic entrepreneurs that could serve as excellent community partners in developing the visibility of the College as well as their own contribution to and work in the community, not to mention synergies that could be created between government and private partners in the context of cross-fertilization generated by guess speakers and cross-promoting community events. For instance, Contra Costa county is home to many different groups, including native Ohlone people, the Lytton Band of Pomo Indians, whose tribal council owns and runs the Casino San Pablo, technically their "reservation" (in and of itself a fascinating case study! [46]) as well as vibrant Black and Mexican-American communities stemming back to the growth of the area in the interwar years as well as Brazilian, Vietnamese, Pilipino, Tibetans, Yemeni, Afro-Caribbean, Sikh, and Afghan communities.

Certificate in Community Organizing and Social Transformation

[46] In 2000, the tribe established a 10 acre reservation where the CSP is now, earning, in 2015, an estimated $182 million annually (Mason, 2015).

Another potential direction for programmatic development includes a tighter connection to with synergies that have developed around state-wide initiatives that intersect with students interest in social movements. As a result of decades long advocacy and renewed urgency in developing curriculum that can foster greater understanding of ethnic diversity, the State of California has recently passed legislation requiring Ethnic Studies be taught as a requirement in California's public high schools. This development, combined with the newly established CSU Ethnic Studies requirement, generates institutional space for greater program development in the area of Social Transformation and Social Justice. Because the knowledge needed to engage in transformative social change is by definition transdisciplinary, this second initiative would need to have stakeholders across several departments that have the institutional capacity to make sure that the courses offered would be offered on a regular rotation and that tenured faculty were themselves committed to cultivating and maintaining meaningful connections with community partners and issues to assure that the program would gain resonance beyond the novelty and excitement of the initial offerings.

As Diablo Valley College's newly established Social Justice Center attests, the potential benefit of generating synergies in this area is substantial for faculty and students alike. In the past, CCC has developed a number of initiatives that have attempted to harness this energy both on and off campus, and in this vein, partnering with other departments to generate an innovative programmatic commitment to racial and social justice in the form of a certificate in Community Organizing and Social Transformation would help students highlight their interest and knowledge base in this area. It would also provide a programmatic incentive for outward looking curriculum development across a variety of departments, as faculty sought to develop specific curriculum to develop a unique set of programmatic learning objectives that could expose students to a range of pedagogies in this area while also developing greater synergies across departments in the social sciences that often cover similar topics in their respective curriculum (i.e. civil rights, institutional racism, political and social advocacy, etc.). It would also be an ideal anchor for some of the community-on-campus initiatives previously discussed.

Certificate in Global Studies

A third possibility for developing a certificate is in the area of Global Studies. This certificate gained traction during the Obama years as a stackable certificate leveraging the position of the United States as a ‘global leader’ in advancing a variety of global agendas, from mitigating the adverse impacts of climate change, to advancing human rights through global advocacy and international law while also harnessing the interest of a broader profile of international students, in addition to stepped up efforts by the California Community Colleges to recruit and retain documented and undocumented immigrants. In this environment some political science departments in large colleges moved forward certificates in Global Studies. As a scholar trained in comparative politics and international relations, who has substantial expertise in both political and social economy, and who co-created and directed Arizona State University’s Certificate in Economic Justice, I have had a substantial interest in developing such a certificate, particularly as both the courses that I regularly teach, International Relations and Comparative Politics are, in most political science departments, are the core of this certificate as well as core courses in the Political Science ADT.

However, several factors have mitigated against moving forward in this direction. First, due to persistently declining enrollments at the college, which have translated into considerable ebbs and flows in the International Relations and Comparative Politics courses, I have not been able to offer each of these courses consistently every term. Thus, though I was able to hire an excellent adjunct instructor, a Muslim, male from Contra Costa with a Ph.D. from Santa Cruz, due to lack of enrollment, I was unfortunately not able to retain him. Given his dissertation research in labor relations and teaching expertise in comparative politics, we lost a prospective excellent addition to the faculty who would have had the versatility to help build the Global Studies certificate.[47] Second, though initially driving students to political science classes

[47] This is an unfortunate trend with the extreme and prolonged institutional instability we have faced at CCC. Over the course of the year, this adjunct faculty members’ two courses turned to one due to a combination of preference rights and lack of enrollment and consequently, he was forced to accept an adjunct position out of state. This was not only a substantial set back at the moment, but a major disappointment given the lack of leadership continuity at CCC is directly attributable to the inability to stabilize enrollments and thus the loss of an important hire, who would

the Trump administration, perhaps also in tandem with changes in counseling or pathways within the college, seemed to dampen broader interest in American as well as Comparative politics among CCC students (though fall 2019 was a high point). Whereas many four year political science departments have appeared to experience an increase in majors over the course of the last four years, at least according to the Chair of the Political Science Department at UC Berkeley (Interview, Ansell), this has not been a pattern that has maintained itself over time at CCC. Noticeable in the survey of interests I take of students in my American Government classes, there continues to be interest in International Relations courses but lack of ability to teach it in person over the last year and a half has dampened enrollment. Lastly, though there are currently courses offered in the department of History, Geography, and Anthropology, and potentially Ethnic Studies, that could be included within a certificate in Global Studies at CCC, but given the precipitous decline in international students and the need to prioritize areas of salience most in keeping with the direction of the college, which has not in the past been in this area, this initiative has been on the back burner.

The Challenges of Interdisciplinary Collaborations:

What we learn from examples of scaffolding together courses that integrate community engagement into the curriculum is that they not only develop students' civic mindedness but also the college or university's capacity to strengthen partnerships with their community (Bryer, 2014; Sandmann et al, 2008, Milllican and Bourner, 2011). Yet, the experience of faculty at Minneapolis College also present a cautionary tale of the hurdles that the establishment of interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary programs can face given their need to "be frequently fed and watered to survive". The history of this program illustrates an element of swimming upstream in an attempt to provide sustenance within institutional structures built to support and perpetuate disciplinary boundaries. A key consideration is

have been an excellent asset to the Contra Costa College faculty and students alike as a full time professor, but now holds a tenure track position at a community college in Oregon.

funding structures that only allow for budgetary support to go to academic programs that align with well-established disciplines. Since within the community college system, there are not designated "Community Development" courses for instance, institutional funding beyond the instructional costs of running core classes becomes a significant issue in terms of attracting students and participants over time.

In the context of a small community college that has a wide variety of stackable certificates, equity issues and administrative cost structures become a key consideration not only for college leadership but for faculty alike. This is primarily because the costs of running certificates are essentially totally absorbed by department chairs who are already under compensated (comparatively) for the amount of administrative work they are responsible for above and beyond their heavy teaching load. For instance, at four year institutions such as ASU or UC Berkley, chairs are provided a separate contract, compensated at levels far above their baseline salary as tenured professors for a guaranteed three or four year cycle in which they are only obliged to teach only one course per year (which they frequently 'co-teach'). Additionally they are provided a personal budget to spend at their discretion in carrying out their responsibilities as chair (i.e. compensated meals, travel, and other discretionary funds). Within 4CD on the other hand, chairs of small departments can *either* take a percentage of a single course release for the year (thus still obliged to teach nine courses for a normal 5-5 course load), *or* a small stipend of, depending on their step and load, between about $1,000- $3,000, a small fraction of the amount usually given to top off chair budgets for chairs at four year colleges. Though faculty chairs at four year colleges arguably have many more supervisory, disciplinary, and outward facing responsibilities, essentially this is a matter of scale, as community college chairs have the same responsibilities just at a smaller scale although with arguably less pressures as there is little expectation that they can square the circle given that they essentially do this work for such low compensation and receive stipends at the *end* of each semester thus ostensibly being asked to do the work for free. In this way the incentive structure to take on the coordination and logistical work is substantially undermined given the poorly compensated labor they are already taking on in the course of their 'normal' chair duties. In some cases, given the amount of work

faculty do, the amount they are compensated for the hours of work they put in would come out to substantially less than a part time hourly student working toward their AA degree at CCC.

Developing a Faculty led Transdisciplinary Center

One of the ways that many colleges compensate for the funding and labor issues that plague interdisciplinary certificates and/or clusters of innovative service learning courses, is to create a centralized 'service center' that benefits the college as a whole. At UC Berkeley, the Public Service Center fulfills such a role in its capacity as a support structure for ACES. As such, some of the human capital 'costs' of running these types of interdisciplinary programs, like the creation of learning agreements and interfacing with external partners, can be absorbed by 'shared' staff that are centrally hired for a broad range of units.

Another example of such a model that encompasses a more integrated campus-wide effort is the Vasconcellos Institute for Democracy in Action at DeAnza College. With its long history of cultivating civic and community engagement efforts in the Silicon Valley, it serves as an institutional leader in helping prepare community college students to be informed, and active democratic leaders. As part of the Community Colleges for Democracy (CC4D) network, itself part of Campus Compact, a key component of its success, which other California Community Colleges have sought to emulate, is to create a university wide presence through a physical center that has the ability to then create centripetal force around its work. A key to DeAnza Colleges' ability to do this was faculty and administrative leadership coming together. Chancellor's and/or College Presidents who become central to conceptualizing the ways in which such a center operates can not only harness the varied assets already present within the college, but also be able to establish a personal and professional stake in its success, and thus be able to plan for the inevitable contingencies and challenges that arise in trying to initiate let alone sustain any campus-wide initiative of this magnitude, particularly one that is embedded within a governance structure in which faculty governance is strong and stakeholders are organized around collective bargaining units (i.e. faculty, classified staff, managers).

In this environment creating synergies is key as well as identifying key faculty and staff seeded throughout the college that are able to see their core mission and ongoing activities as part of the larger leadership vision, and that this endeavor is not drive solely or predominately by monied interests or state-based directives. A considerable degree of legitimacy can be accrued in leaderships' role in developing a project that fits the needs of constituencies internal to the college as well as a wide variety of communities it serves.

The considerable benefit of framing a center around civic and community engagement or democracy, is that it is conceptually flexible while also immediately identifiable to a wide variety of vested interests that cross cut internal boundaries created by divisions, departments, and employee classifications established by collective bargaining. Similarly, it has the benefit of creating synergies with a wide variety of outward facing communities and constituencies, whether in the public sector or private sector, or across communities understood territorially or as identity groups. For example, as recounted by Thomas Ehrlich, President of College of the Canyons, and key architect of its college-wide civic initiative in 2015, civic engagement resonates because fundamentally it is a pluralistic conception of "working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes" (Ehrlich, 2000, p. vi).

Another advantage of a center is that it is easier to develop a resource hub that can live as an autonomous entity from the college yet, be integrated into it for purposes that elevate the College's broader efforts. Thus, it has the advantage of drawing partnerships and resources to the college without putting an undue burden on already stretched classified staff. Examples of centers who have resource hubs as a key pillar of their activities, include Deanza College, Salt Lake City Community College, and the at the Thayne Center at Berkeley City College, all of whom have, in various ways, built out from a modest beginning in connecting students to resources that enable small staffs to create a broader reach to current as well as prospective students.

The Importance of Strategic Planning

One potential way to square the circle is to develop a one to two year planning cycle that starts with a bricolage of different certificates throughout the college. A strategic planning framework could be used as the basis for agreements that enable the administration to support key certificates in cycles as they relate to college priorities. In essence, strategic hiring of both part time and full time staff that amount to 'general funding' as negotiated with the Faculty Senate and the UF. Given that new programmatic initiatives will only survive if there is a dedicated faculty members who are willing to take on coordination duties, strategic full and part time hires spread across core departments in each pathway, would allow programs to grow toward a set of specific purposes laid out in the College's Strategic Plan.

Many of the coordination efforts that are needed to maintain interdisciplinary certificates or programs could be managed across small departments with increased stability, coordination and strategic planning. If we conceive of the core elements as: promotion, which includes making sure academic advisors have accurate information; recruiting and supporting students; maintaining partnerships with community partners; and making sure the core classes are promoted and scheduled in way that maximizes enrollment, it is not realistic that one or two full time faculty, doubling as department chairs can maintain these initiatives over time. Additionally, a strategic full time hire who has substantial experience in two or more of the concentrations of the certificate and is able to split time between two faculties, could add scheduling flexibility to multiple departments and serve as a key connector between chairs, students and administration, given that each plays a role in each of the key coordination duties. Due to the way that I have designated the minimal qualifications in the political science department, which includes, for instance, masters/degrees in public administration or planning, as well as JD degrees, it is realistic to imagine that candidates being asked to teach U.S. or local politics classes would also be able to teach a course in community development or incorporating a business in California and that the same person who has this degree could also hold an MBA. Furthermore, if the chairs and the joint hire could be guaranteed a two year cycle in which the new classes would be guaranteed to make, a sustainable plan of action could be created, bolstered by bold-campus-wide initiatives that would initially

provide outward facing support in for example maintaining partnerships with key community partners and making sure that core courses are promoted vis-à-vis external interactions with the community.

Getting Creative About Funding

A key source of funding for these initiatives would be foundation grants. In the first instance, the CCC Foundation could be envisioned to play a similar role that was underscored by the Director of ACES, Victoria Robinson. The "particularly smart move" made by the Hass Foundation was to designate funds that would go directly to community partners as incentives to sustain participation in generating curricular benefits for students in a more structured way (interview, Victoria Robinson). Unlike the four year university where departments have attained a high degree of fiscal autonomy, Community College administration can better harness donor investments in ways that help to facilitate synergies.

Another idea would be to develop partial funding to put toward a 'matching fund' that could be solicited from ethnic entrepreneurs for two '*community engagement scholars'*, who would be outstanding students who are nominated by faculty to apply for this position via the March CCC Scholarship cycle and then selected to serve as scholars the following year. They would be paid a stipend on a quarterly basis (two times in the fall and two times in the Spring) to 'support staff' for pre-prescribed roles for a designated number of hours during the course of the Fall and Spring semesters. This model could then be replicated for students seeded across different divisions, who would commit to attending (for free) the *summer democracy camp* (see above), that brings together designated students from across the 4CD campuses. This student fellow model creates synergies not only with career and transfer but also generates substantial Comet pride as well as enhanced visibility, and hence future opportunities, for these student as they help to build bonding and bridging social capital between the college and community organizations with whom the laisson. Additionally, they alleviate the work load for otherwise overburdened faculty who benefit from administrative assistance as they manage a wide variety of roles.

Similarly, community foundations that look to move forward community development work, of which there are many in the Bay Area, are a potential source of support as are start- up grants by bigger

foundations such as the Spencer Foundation, the Gates Foundation, the Knight Foundation, and the Kaufman Foundation. These organizations look for innovative initiatives at scale, thus scaffolded together, the interdisciplinary programs proposed here could in theory be harnessed to more ambitious college-wide and/or district wide proposals designed to go after regionally impactful funding. On a more modest scale, supports from Adobe Creative or local tech companies, or regional leaders such as Wells Fargo Bank, could be enticed to generate sustainable revenue for projects that are focused on student and community engagement.

As has proven the case in the past, these types of external contracts can become political lightning rods within the community college setting, therefore calling into question their ability to be sustained over time even if they are adopted as a one-off pilot. Thus, to move these efforts forward would take visionary leadership from both the College President and Chancellor's offices not to mention a significant sea change in the political culture of 4CD, which would need to involve champions on the board as well as union representatives in the UF and Public Employees Union Local One.

Conclusion

In this paper I have set about evaluating civic engagement approaches and practices across a broad swath of educational institutions and contexts in order to capture both the systemic and structural features that shape civic engagement as well as the more agentic and proximate ones. To do this, I have adopted a comparative framework that approaches civic engagement from several different angles.

In my discussion of the high school experience, I deployed a paired comparison of a high income, low diversity school district in Central Contra Costa County with a low income, high diversity school district in West Contra Costa County. Looking systemically at the factors that shape high schools influence on students' experience, I identified specific differences in the way high school students in WCCSD experience civic engagement education when compared to students in Central County High Schools. These patterns of differentiation across high school systems within Contra Costa County match

on to those between colleges within 4CD, thus underscoring the degree to which economic inequities and political cultures in which educational institutions are embedded profoundly impact civic engagement initiatives both as a set of valued goals and lived realities.

In my discussion of four year universities, I delved into the contours of specific civic engagement education programs. In so doing, I focused on the institutional complexities of pursuing pedagogical goals related to social and racial justice within the structure of UC's as research one universities. Treating the AAP Program at UCLA and the ACES Program at UC Berkeley as exemplars of student-centered civic engagement, the former primarily centered in student services and the latter on the academic side of the house, I analyzed the ways in which administrative and organizational dynamics both shape and are shaped by the programs' original mission.

Leveraging the insights of my research into high school districts and four year universities that 4CD students pipeline out from and into, combined with an exploration of the political, cultural and economic forces that have shaped conceptions of civic engagement within the California Community College system, in the second half of the paper I provided a comprehensive descriptive analysis of student and community engagement initiatives, programs and activities across the Contra Costa Community College District, with a particular focus on CCC. Because the governance of the community colleges, particularly in multi-college districts, is so opaque to inside and outside observers alike, a key contribution of this paper is to illuminate the conflicting imperatives we face as we navigate a brave new world of perpetual crisis. Thus, in addition to underscoring key strengths in generating student-centered opportunities for engagement, I also seeks to shed light on the real dilemmas posed by organizational politics, informational asymmetries, and lack of administrative capacity in effectively moving student and community engagement forward.

Taking stock of the overall picture of opportunities and constraints revealed by this analysis, the final third of my discussion offered a wide range of proposals for advancing student centered engagement opportunities at CCC across six broad areas: 1&2) Administrative innovations and organizational reforms to build capacity within the Career and Transfer Center and across service and academic committee leads

3) A two year strategic plan to strengthen the culture of student-centered professional development around three projects: *Careers on Campus; Project Internship; Envision Your Future*. 4) Revitalizing and reforming cooperative extension to develop more robust synergies across CTE and academic programs 5) Scaling up mission-driven, action plans around core strengths via '*unity-in-diversity'* initiatives centered around *Democracy-in-action* and *Racial and Social Justice*. 6) Generating greater synergies within campus and between campus and the communities of interest, practice, and identity through *Experiential Immersion Opportunities* like *campus-wide study trips out of state* and a *transdisciplinary summer leadership program* focused on middle school students and second year CCC students and *pedagogical innovative interdisciplinary certificates*.

Because we are in the midst of an unprecedented set of interlocking crisis impacting the lives of all students, staff and faculty in one way or another, concrete and detailed proposals to foster greater student and community engagement make an important and timely contribution to college wide efforts to re-establish the campus a space of social and cultural regeneration. Given the strategic priorities advanced by Contra Costa Colleges' dynamic new President, Dr. Tia Robinson-Cooper, around boosting enrollment growth, advancing social justice and equity outcomes, and fostering greater empathy among college stakeholders, my hope is that my recommendations can serve as additional tools to help set Contra Costa College students up for the success they deserve.

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