



Executive Summary Carnegie Community Engagement Classification



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For information about the USU Center for Community Engagement or the 2020 Carnegie application, email kate.stephens@usu.edu or call 435-797-8135.



Background

As the Carnegie Foundation's only elective classification, the Carnegie Community Engagement designation requires voluntary institutional application. The classification is far more than an award: successful institutions engage in rigorous self-assessment and strategic planning. Classified institutions have documented an impressive range of existing community-engagement practices and created thoughtful strategic plans for future institutional growth, development, and assessment of community engagement.

Carnegie Foundation Definition of Community Engagement:

"Community engagement describes collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the

mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

The purpose of community engagement is the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good."

Utah State University's Commitment to Community Engagement

As the state land-grant institution, Utah State University has integrated community engagement into its mission statement, campus framework, and institutional goals. In keeping with USU's General Education mission is to prepare Citizen Scholars, the institution engages in high-

impact educational practices to shape alumni who participate and lead in their local, regional, national, and global communities.

USU Mission Statement:

*The mission of Utah State University is to be one of the nation's premier student-centered land-grant and space-grant universities by fostering the principle that academics come first, by cultivating diversity of thought and culture, and by **servicing the public through learning, discovery, and engagement.***

USU Principles of Community:

USU is committed to embracing diversity, human dignity and social responsibility. All Aggies are challenged to acknowledge and act upon these principles, which elevate the academic experience and prepare Aggies to become global citizens and leaders.

Specifically, the *Social Responsibility* principle states, "We believe service and civic engagement elevate the academic experience. By putting classroom learning into practice through meaningful acts of service, students learn important lessons in civic responsibility while strengthening communities. Aggies who participate in service-learning graduate as citizen scholars equipped to help transform communities in the state, country, and world."

The Carnegie Application Process

In 2016, USU committed to apply for the Carnegie Foundation's 2020 Community Engagement classification. In preparation, the university focused on building and strengthening systems and policies supporting community engagement. The pursuit of the classification allowed USU to document and assess community engagement

across the institution and to identify areas for improvement. In 2017, the USU Civic Action Plan defined and extended a statewide institutional culture of meaningful and pervasive community engagement. In spring 2018, Carnegie Task Force members were appointed by deans and directors from each college and unit. This task force was charged with identifying and sharing



USU student, Noemi Molina, works with a community-driven youth program in Guatemala.

community engagement activities across campuses; offering advice on the development of USU's application narrative; advocating for self-assessment of community engagement within each college or unit; and making recommendations for deepening community engagement at USU. In July 2018, USU appointed a three-member Carnegie Core Writing Team to structure material gathered by the Civic Action Planning Team and the Carnegie Task Force and develop a compelling narrative for USU's final application. USU submitted the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification application on April 15, 2019.

The Carnegie application process united the institution in completing a community engagement self-study. In 2017-18 alone, the Community Engagement Impact Assessment (CEIA) revealed 1,465 active campus-community partnerships, 722 of which were led by faculty. In addition to 242 Community-Engaged Learning courses, these partnerships included both departmental programs and

community-engaged research. Partnerships such as the Logan River Restoration Project, USU Permaculture and Moab Bee Inspired Gardens, Painted Horse Diabetes Prevention Program, the Trauma Resiliency Project, and the Cache Refugee and Immigrant Connection exemplify the reciprocity and mutual benefit that meets the Carnegie standard for community engagement. These collaborative partnerships encourage the community to identify assets and challenges and to work with university partners to develop sustainable solutions. CEIA survey data demonstrate the depth and breadth of community engagement across the institution and thus support USU's recent effort to foreground community-engaged work in Digital Measures, faculty role statements, and faculty code.

This institutional self-study process revealed not only the strengths of USU's statewide engagement, but also some areas for growth and improvement. Even before the institution submitted the Carnegie application, USU administration and faculty recognized the need for—and worked together to include—specific community-engagement language in promotion and tenure criteria. Similarly, the institution foregrounded the importance of using of existing platforms (such as AggieSync and Digital Measures) to record, track, and assess community-engaged teaching, learning, and research. Most importantly, the self-study process resulted in common institutional language and goals that laid the groundwork for not just the Carnegie classification, but also the deep and evolving statewide partnerships that foster continued reciprocity, community voice, and mutual benefits in USU's community engagement.



USU students work alongside coffee farmers and learn about Guatemalan workers' rights.

Highlights & Accomplishments

The Carnegie designation is the highest level of recognition for community engagement at an educational institution. The classification recognizes and makes publicly visible USU's ongoing commitment to the highest standards of ethical community engagement. As a Carnegie Community Engaged Institution, USU has demonstrated both the capacity and desire to build and maintain mutually beneficial community partnerships.

The Carnegie designation recognizes five key parts of USU's existing infrastructure for community engagement:

- 1. Statewide Campuses and Extension:** All 33 USU campuses are deeply rooted in—and responsive to the needs of—their local communities, creating unprecedented opportunity for mutually beneficial collaboration and community engagement throughout Utah.
- 2. Measurement and Assessment of Learning Outcomes:** USU's established learning outcomes for community engagement have allowed the institution to

measure and assess community engagement in community-engaged learning classes, across designated community engaged departments, and through co-curricular community engagement.

3. The Center for Community Engagement:

Serving as the USU hub for community engagement, the center ensures respect for community voices and campus-community reciprocity through programs such as the “Community Bridge Initiative.”

4. Aggies Think Care Act (ATCA):

This campus-wide initiative for fostering diversity, human dignity, and social responsibility serves as USU’s umbrella organization for ensuring ethical and responsible engagement of all students, faculty, and staff.

5. USU’s Civic Action Plan:

Serving as the strategic plan for community engagement, this document has guided—and will continue to guide—university leadership in taking proactive steps toward greater institutionalization of community engagement.

The Carnegie designation also rewards four significant early steps that USU has taken toward institutionalization of community engagement:

1. Messaging and Mission:

USU includes community engagement in its mission (which defines core themes of learning, discovery, and engagement), faculty role statements (which explicitly outline general employment parameters and expectations, including the importance of community-engaged work), and student entry and exit surveys (which measure civic awareness, knowledge, and action among incoming and graduating USU students).

2. Tracking and Reporting:

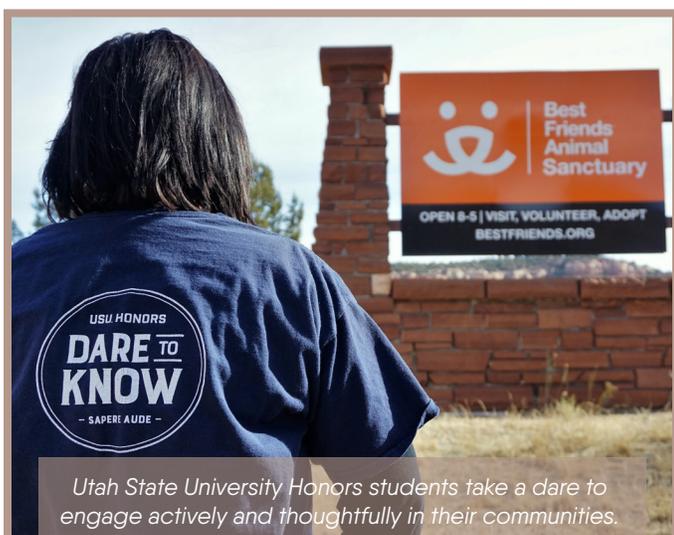
USU tracks faculty engagement efforts through Digital Measures, an online reporting system for all areas of work (teaching research, and service) that typically shape faculty role statements. USU also tracks student and community partner engagement through AggieSync software.

3. Promotion and Tenure:

Beyond USU’s role statements, current faculty promotion and tenure policy, revised in 2019, features specific language about community engagement for all types of faculty, at every rank and explicitly incentivizes and rewards faculty who employ community-engaged approaches and methods in their teaching, scholarship, and service work.

4. Awards and Recognition:

USU celebrates community engagement with university-wide Presidential awards for faculty, staff, students, and community partners, as well as community-engaged designations for exemplary departments.



Utah State University Honors students take a dare to engage actively and thoughtfully in their communities.

Going Forward

USU's ongoing community-engagement work does not end with the award of the Carnegie classification. The institution hopes and expects that all USU faculty and staff will implement, develop, and promote these new and ongoing institutional initiatives in their programs, departments, and colleges. The Center for Community Engagement (CCE) and Empowering Teaching Excellence (ETE) will conduct regular community-engagement workshops to discuss the pedagogy of engagement with faculty and to help them design new courses or improve existing community-engaged practices. The CCE will also continue to develop training for students and community partners in best practices, documentation of work, and reflective collaboration, and they will work with various entities on campus to establish and improve mechanisms for measurement and assessment of both community partner and student outcomes of community engaged work.



USU student volunteers and New American community members celebrating new and more culturally responsive training materials for the Driver's License Study Group hosted by CRIC.



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