Establishing and Maintaining University-Community Partnerships through Engagement Scholarship

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SESSION II

COMPLEX PROBLEMS AND SYSTEMIC APPROACHES TO CHANGE
What is a System?

- "A system is a set of components (subsystems, units) which when coupled together form a functional whole. The study of systems requires:
  - (1) identifying the subunits of the total system,
  - (2) identifying the structural connections of subunits,
  - (3) identifying and assessing the functional connections of subunits,
  and
  - (4) assessing the properties that emerge when this collection of components are coupled over together into a specific dynamic structure and allowed to change over time."

(Levine & Fitzgerald, 1992)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SIMPLE</th>
<th>COMPLICATED</th>
<th>COMPLEX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Following a recipe</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sending a rocket to the moon</strong></td>
<td><strong>Raising a child</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipe is essential</td>
<td>Formulae are critical and necessary</td>
<td>Formulae have only limited application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipes are tested to ensure replicability</td>
<td>One moon landing increases likelihood that subsequent attempts will be successful</td>
<td>Successfully raising one child gives no assurances of success with the next</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No particular expertise is necessary, but some experience is useful</td>
<td>Requires the coordination of high levels of expertise in many areas</td>
<td>Expertise and experience may help, but are not sufficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipe describes the elements and their quantities</td>
<td>Separate parts are made to function together in a complex whole</td>
<td>The parts are inseparable from the whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certainty of results every time</td>
<td>High probability of success</td>
<td>Outcomes are uncertain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Patton, 2012
Complexity

Characterized by high uncertainty and high social conflict (high uncertainty about how to produce a desired result fuels disagreement, and disagreement intensify and expand the parameters of uncertainty.)
Complexity: A BIG MESS

Causal connections are intertwined, entangled, and overlapping.
Complex Situations

Cause-effect relations are unknown and, in principle, \textit{unknowable} before effects have emerged.
MESS: systems of interacting complex problems

Systems are different from the sum of their parts: if they are open systems they are dynamic, if closed, they tend toward chaos and wicked problems, which are BIG MESSES (Ackoff).

So to change community, economic and family life, we must change the systems that surround them: WE NEED TO THINK DIFFERENTLY

Innovation, multi-disciplinary approaches, co-creative solution-focused university-community partnerships BIG TENT ideas and approaches are needed to solve BIG MESSES
A BIG MESS: The long-standing health care system

- Adverse selection problem in health care
- Less care for more $$
- Denial of coverage due to pre-existing conditions
- Narrow cost-cutting efforts
- Powerful lobbies
- Inability of government to borrow money
- Lack of preventive care
- Fragmented health care purchases undermining savings
- Rising medical costs
- Long standing AMA resistance to universal health care
- Unwillingness of politicians to confront insurance companies and lobbies
- Sick care system
- Severe rise of premiums
- Increasing inefficiency of the health care system
- Insurance companies’ high administrative costs
- Overemphasis on high tech
- Strong incentives to deny coverage
- Doctor’s fee for service
- Increasing federal deficit budgets
- Mistaken assumption that insured people consume more health care
- Increasing inefficiency of health care system
- The federal government’s solvency problem
- Inability of people to make wise decisions about their health
- Decreasing popularity of employer-based health insurance
- The drop in the dollar’s purchasing power
- Increasing use and cost of new medical technologies
- Lack of true competition
- Alpsalan & Mitrop, Swans, Swine, and Swindlers: Coping with the Growing threat of Mega-Crises and Mega-messes, 2011, pg44
The failed hope of parsimony

Reductionist solutions to complex systems messes:

Fix schools $\iff$ Train better teachers.
Fix schools $\iff$ Train better parents.
Fix schools $\iff$ Train better legislators
Fix schools $\iff$ Hire more police
Fix schools $\iff$ Clean up the neighborhoods
Fix schools $\iff$ Eliminate racial & social inequities
The Hope of Systems Change

- Parents
- Schools
- Teachers
- Police
- Neighborhoods
- Racial & Social Inequities
- Legislators

Interconnected diagram showing relationships between various groups and systems.
Second Order Change: Search for Something New

• Deciding to do something *fundamentally different* from what has been done before

• Shifting gears

• Irreversible

• Often begins through the informal system

• Transformation is something quite different

• Requires new learning

• New story is told
An Engaged Approach to Second Order Change

- **Becoming Embedded in Communities:** working in long-standing partnerships that are embedded in communities to identify the needs of families, businesses, neighborhoods and community organizations.

- **Stressing Asset-Based Solutions:** focusing on asset-based solutions that build on the strengths and advantages of community partners.

- **Building Community Capacity:** building capacity within families, businesses and communities to address the challenges and build on the opportunities they face.

- **Creating Collaborative Networks:** building networks among communities and organizations that lead to regional collaborations and innovations that are sustainable.
**Certainty-Agreement Matrix**

- **Far from Agreement**
  - **Socially Complicated**: Build relationships, create common ground
  - **Technically Complicated**: Experiment, coordinate expertise

- **Close to Agreement**
  - **Simple**: Plan, control

- **Close to Certainty**
  - **Zone of Complexity**

- **Far from Certainty**
  - **Chaos**: Survival is all that matters

*(Patton, 2011; Zimmerman et al., 1998)*
Components of Systems Change

Civil Society

Education

State and Regional Government

Business Community

EDUCATION ANCHORED

INNOVATION FOCUSED

KNOWLEDGE DRIVEN

RISK WORTHY

EVIDENCE-BASED

SUSTAINABLE

ENTREPRENEURIAL
Systems Change Initiatives: What are they?

- Individual community experts
- Individual faculty experts
- Individual & Multifaceted Projects

Collective Impact/Systems Change

Community Based Participatory Approach

Transdisciplinary Approach
Systems Change Initiatives: Approaches

Collective Impact/Systems Change

Transdisciplinary Approach

Individual & Multifaceted Projects

Individual faculty experts

Individual community experts

Community Based Participatory Approach
Systems Change Initiatives: Approaches

- Community Based Participatory Approach
- Transdisciplinary Approach

Collective Impact/Systems Change

- Individual community experts
- Individual faculty experts
- Individual & Multifaceted Projects
Systems Change Initiatives: Tools

Collective Impact/Systems Change

- Individual community experts
- Individual faculty experts
- Individual & Multifaceted Projects

Strategic Doing

ABLe Change Framework
ABLe Change Framework:
Above and Below the Line components of systems change
ABOVE THE LINE FOCUS
Initial Theory of Change Infused with a Systemic Lens
System Norms, Components, Connections, Regulations, Power Operations, Interdependencies

Simple Rules  Systemic Action Learning Teams  Small Wins

BELOW THE LINE FOCUS
Building a Climate for Effective Implementation
Readiness, Capacity, Diffusion, Sustainability
Analyze Conditions

Assess Results

Design and Take Action

Systemic Action Learning Teams

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TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE for COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Risk  Resilience

human capital — skills, knowledge and abilities

social capital — networks of trust and reciprocity

financial capital — available monetary resources — investment capital

Enrich Community, Economic and Family Life

cultural capital — worldview and attributes or assets associated with the community

political capital — access to financial and other resources through the political process

built capital — housing stock, industrial stock, transportation, water and wastewater infrastructure,

natural capital — natural assets, ranging from air quality to biodiversity and open space
SYSTEMS, CHANGE, PARTNERSHIPS, KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER, SUSTAINABILITY, EVIDENCE BASED (SCHOLARLY) USING THE INTERPLAY OF TACIT AND EXPLICIT KNOWLEDGE, AND CO-CREATING SOLUTIONS

STRA战EGIC DOING

TRANS_DISCIPLINARY APPROACHES: TRANSFORMATIONAL SYSTEMS CHANGE

COMMUNITY BASED INITIATIVE

INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

COLLECTIVE IMPACT/ SYSTEMS CHANGE

INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

COMMUNITY BASED PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES: SUSTAINABILITY through KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

ABLe Change Framework
The Five Conditions of Collective Impact

**Common Agenda:** Shared vision for change; common view of the problem; joint approach to actions.

**Shared Measurement:** Collecting data and measuring results consistently for accountability

**Mutually Reinforcing Activities:** Activities must be varied but coordinated through a plan of actions:

**Continuous Communication:** Consistent and open communication to build trust, assure mutual objectives and create common motivation

**Backbone Support:** requires an organization(s) & skilled staff to coordinate effort

BUILDING CASE EXAMPLE: FLINT
Chaos
Vacancies then and now

Two city census tracts were more than 25 percent vacant in 2000. A decade later, 14 census tracts are more than a quarter vacant.

- Blue: 0% to 5% vacant
- Green: 5.1% to 15% vacant
- Orange: 15.1% to 25% vacant
- Red: 25.1% and greater

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
DAN JACALONE | THE FLINT JOURNAL
 Flint Property Crime Index

Crime Index corresponds to incidents per 100,000 inhabitants

Point the Finger
Outcomes
- Healthy ecosystems
- Vibrant regional economies
- Social equity and empowerment

Natural Capital
- Air, soils, water (quality and quantity), landscape, biodiversity with multiple uses

Cultural Capital
- Cosmovision, language, rituals, traditional crops, dress

Human Capital
- Self-esteem, education, skills, health

Social Capital
- Leadership, groups, bridging networks, bonding networks, trust, reciprocity

Financial Capital
- Income, wealth, security, credit, investment

Built Capital
- Water systems, sewers, utilities, health systems

Political Capital
- Inclusion, voice, power
BUILDING A COMMON AGENDA: Co-Creating & Facilitating Community Networks

Neighborhoods Without Borders: UOE and Flint community members established this network as a grassroots and community effort to significantly improve the over-all quality of life in Flint neighborhoods.

Building Neighborhood Capacity Program: UOE is a partner in this effort to help low-income neighborhoods build the capacity and resources needed to ensure residents experience better results around education, employment, safety, housing and other key areas.
Identifying Network Issues & Concerns/Understanding Network Knowledge Needs

Neighborhoods Without Borders

Area (one of nine): Community Safety, Gangs, & Ex-Offenders

Focus: How can we use our existing resources and assets to support a comprehensive approach towards community safety, gangs and ex-offenders?

Knowledge Needs: How do we overcome the historical mistrust of police and codes of neighborhood silence when it comes to crime and violence? How do we help youth gain a sense of a positive future?
BUILDING A COMMON AGENDA: Informing Deans of Community–University Systemic Partnerships: Understanding College Engagement Issues & Concerns

Themes from Recent Meetings with Research Deans

• The importance of working in Flint

• Transportation costs for working in Flint and Detroit (especially students)

• Space for place-based efforts in Flint and Detroit

• Creating high school to MSU pipelines for minority students and underserved communities

• College level engagement continues to grow

• Facilitation needed for inter-college collaboration
BUILDING A COMMON AGENDA: 60 faculty, administrators, staff, community partners

- Faculty and staff from 11 colleges
- MSU Global
- UOE
- MSU-Extension
- Flint Government, Health Systems Partners

Searching for Multi-disciplinary and university-community BIG TENT ideas to move programs and activities to COLLECTIVE IMPACT
BUILDING A COMMON AGENDA

Establish knowledge about cross-university initiatives

Create collaboration opportunities among MSU researchers

Identify where MSU initiatives align with identified goals, activities, and partnerships of local Flint groups

Understand where there are synergies among research initiatives and gaps that may constitute opportunities for new initiatives

Increase the intentionality of establishing meaningful partnerships with the residents of Flint and their organizations
CASE EXAMPLE:
GREATER LANSING
POWER OF WE
CONSORTIUM
Systemic Community-Engaged Partnerships to Prepare Children to Compete in the Global Knowledge Economy
Implementing Systems Change: The i2i Vision

By 2020 all children, youth, and young adults in the Capital area will grow up with the skills and abilities to actively participate in the global knowledge economy
The Power of We Consortium and its 12 Coalitions

Improved Capacity → Strengthened Social Services → Enhanced Community Well Being (measured by 33 indicators)

Ingham County Health Department and Capital Area United Way (staff support)
Driven by Conceptual Frameworks: Infancy to Innovation (i2i): Building Collective Impacts over the Life Course

Transitional Influences
- Partner Selection
- Workplace
- Career education
- Advanced education
- Societal institutions

Transitional Influences
- Early Childhood Transition Period (0-5)
- Early Adolescence Transition Period (10-14)
- Late Adolescence Transition Period (18-25)
- Success in Early Childhood
- Success in Elementary School
- Success in High School
- Success in Adulthood

Ongoing Life Course Risk Influences (Racial and Social Inequalities)
- Quality prenatal care
- Maternal support services
- Quality child care/development
- Father involvement
- Healthy nutrition
- Positive environments

Ongoing Life Course Resilience Influences
- Higher education
- Internship programs
- Work force
- IT opportunities
- Innovation centers
- Creative enterprises
- Quality afterschool programs
- Effective mentoring programs
- Safe environments
- Parent monitoring
- Youth entrepreneurial programs
- IT Opportunities
- Internship opportunities

The Power of We Consortium Focus Areas for Assessing Community Change

1. Intellectual & Social Development
2. Physical & Mental Health
3. Environmental Resources
4. Dynamic, Diverse, Vibrant Economy
5. Community Safety
6. Sense of Community Cohesion
Organizational Culture

- Hierarchical: Control
- Market: Competitive
- Clan: Cooperative, relationships
- Adhocracy: innovation, dynamic

The PWC Network: Focus Area 1

Intellectual & Social Development
The PWC Network: Focus Area 2
Physical & Mental Health
The PWC Network: Focus Area 4

Economy
The PWC Network: Focus Area 5
Community Safety
The PWC Network: Focus Area 6
Community Cohesion
The PWC Network Cultural Components

Organizational Culture & Centrality
BUILDING A COMMON AGENDA: Systemic Perspectives on Infancy to Innovation Developmental Pathway

Power of We structure and community framework, MSU engagement structure, iterative dialogue processes, and cross-discipline understandings
Ingredients for Success

- Produce early successes
- Reconcile differences in community and university cultures
- Co-create a foundational principle
- Work toward reciprocal, long term commitments
- Produce a coherent, common community-building agenda
- Use candor and respect confidentiality
- Use effective co-management and coordination practices
- Clarify mutual expectations and benefits
- Create solutions to other challenges
- Reward, incentivize, and support both staff and faculty
- Generate shared responsibility for long-term funding
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