Background information:

The University is currently seeking Carnegie Foundation classification as a community engaged university. The Center for Engaged Learning, under the direction of interim center director Dr. Sarah Edwards, hosted the inaugural meeting of the MSUM Advisory Board on December 3rd 2019 to further this goal. Approximately 25 representatives from community organizations and the university attended this meeting and brainstormed ways to further increase meaningful university-community collaboration. Results are documented in this report.

The Classification

The Carnegie Foundation's Classification for Community Engagement is an elective classification, meaning that it is based on voluntary participation by institutions. The elective classification involves data collection and documentation of important aspects of institutional mission, identity and commitments and requires substantial effort invested by participating institutions. It is an institutional classification; it is not for systems of multiple campuses or for part of an individual campus.
The classification is not an award. It is an evidence-based documentation of institutional practice to be used in a process of self-assessment and quality improvement. In this way, it is similar to an accreditation process of self-study. The documentation is reviewed by a National Review Panel to determine whether the institution qualifies for recognition as a community engaged institution.

**Brown & Carnegie**

In January 2017, in an effort to further its mission set forth in the strategic plan “Community Engaged Scholarship and Action: A New Plan for the Swearer Center for Public Service,” the Brown University Swearer Center for Public Service launched a National Field-Building Initiative which has evolved into the College and University Engagement Initiative. At that time, the Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement moved from NERCHE to the Swearer Center. There are currently 361 campuses with the elective Community Engagement Classification, which opens for application on a five-year cycle. The most recent cycle concluded in 2015. See the announcement for the 2020 cycle, which opened in January 2018, below.

**Defining 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.

The Community Engagement Classification takes place on a five-year cycle. The next opportunity for institutions to apply for classification will be during the 2020 cycle (which will open in 2018).

**Inaugural community advisory board meeting**

Community Partners from a variety of businesses and non-profit organizations attended. Groups of community partners along with university faculty and staff met in focus groups to discuss ways in which the university could meet its goal of increased community collaboration and developed ideas for strategic priorities for community engagement. Groups were facilitated by Dr. Brenda Amenson-Hill, VP of Enrollment Management, and Dr. Sarah Edwards, Interim Director of the Center for Engaged Learning.
Themes that emerged from community partners and faculty meetings

In what ways are we currently collaborating?

- Practical experiences/internships for students
- Liaisons inside school buildings for education
- Clinical Placements: nursing, SLP, counseling, SW
- Volunteer opportunities
- Ongoing support of Education/awareness raising
- Science Center
- Daycare
- Fireworks
- Straw Hat Players
- Planetarium

Needs of community partners the university could provide to increase and deepen collaborations

- Continuing education opportunities for employees
  - Education partnerships
  - Certificate Programs
  - Specific skills training
  - => the need for flexible course offerings/scheduling and offering shorter, more applicable options for existing employees was mentioned several times
- Significantly improving how campus gets the word out about what’s happening on campus
  - Providing simple ways of requesting and accessing resources based on the needs businesses have => supports establishing a centralized data base of classes that have service learning components and research on campus, what they could provide to community partners
  - Wanting to have a central place for employers, students, faculty and staff to post opportunities or find interested students (some are aware and pleased with the CDC and Dragon Jobs/Handshake, but others are not aware)
- Building partnerships and promoting connections between classrooms and non-profits rather than assigning students a specific number of hours of service learning
- Project based/skill based learning
  - Time limited projects with specific outcomes that have learning goals for students and tangible benefits for community partners, such as technology projects, systems/software training, problem solving/brainstorming for ideas or budget ideas, etc.
- Brainstorm on how to sell the community to get more people to come to Fargo-Moorhead and stay (great progress being made on many fronts, great to see the university involvement)
• Focus on workforce development-promote professional groups and opportunities for people to connect and feel part of the community
• Partnerships with High Schools regarding potential career paths-example Paralegal
• Work with High Schools and MSUM to schedule in a way that allows meaningful internships and practicums during the day-schedule coordination
• Work with Global Education and community to provide more opportunities for international students
• Partnerships between classrooms and community projects-find the win-win
• Some interesting efforts going on with Patrick Mineer (Golden Path Solutions) to work with businesses to invest in students early, pay for their education and then have the student commit to working for the company after graduation

What are the soft skills students need to be successful in their internship/first job at the community partner organizations?

• Leadership
  o How do communicate assertively, be able to communicate with peers, coworkers of a variety of ages and personalities, how to say no
  o How to provide directions and coach other team members
  o An attitude of servant leadership
• Basics of how to function within a business
  o Being aware of and following professional expectations (e.g. regarding using cell phone)
  o Developing a professional disposition
• Having a greater awareness of mental health
  o Personal insight into strengths/weaknesses
  o Being able to self-assess mental state/readiness