Creating Cohesive Paths to Civic Engagement is a three-year project that reconceptualized the organization and integration of programming for civic engagement and social responsibility (CESR) on 26 Periclean campuses. With support from the Eugene M. Lang Foundation and The Teagle Foundation, member colleges and universities inventoried, mapped, strengthened, and developed more cohesive and integrated civic engagement programs to enable students in all disciplines to incorporate civic engagement into their courses of study.

Creating Cohesive Paths gave us the opportunity to document the depth, breadth, and innovative nature of work on our campuses and share best practices.

Key goals of the project included:

- Using the knowledge gained from mapping to:
  - Further enhance existing programming incorporating civic engagement and social responsibility
  - Develop new courses and opportunities that address current gaps
  - Ensure that sequences of courses have clear learning outcomes that build upon and support one another

- Creating clear pathways for students to integrate civic engagement and social responsibility into their courses of study, including to develop certificate programs, formal minors, introductory seminars, concluding capstone seminars, and programs of study for all majors

- Increasing and promoting awareness of and participation in civic engagement opportunities through these newly articulated pathways among students in a wide range of disciplines; and increasing awareness among advisors and professors of these opportunities

Worked commenced in 2013 when Project Pericles staff along with 26 Program Directors and Dr. Barbara Holland developed unique survey materials designed to capture the curricular and co-curricular CESR opportunities on our campuses. Teams (faculty, administrators, and students) on each of the participating campuses then collected comprehensive data on all CESR related programs. The teams greeted the mapping process with a great deal of enthusiasm and many used it as a catalyst for deeper discussions about the organization and integration of civic engagement on their campuses. Our initiative enabled each member institution to capture a portrait of activity that informed reflection on sequences, connections, developmental pathways and/or gaps in programming. We then analyzed all 26 submissions to identify important trends, gaps, and strengths across institutions.
Our review of 26 campus inventories of all curricular and co-curricular activities with a civic engagement component revealed five general approaches to structuring civic engagement. Campuses often incorporate more than one approach.

**Civic Engagement Requirement** - One common approach is to create a civic engagement requirement. This was implemented in a variety of ways ranging from a single distribution requirement, to first year seminars for all students, or specific programs with sequential course requirements spanning multiple years.

**Pathways Approach** - A second model, and one that appears to be garnering interest on additional campuses, is the pathways approach. The pathways are thematically organized around topics like education/access, food/sustainability, and health, or around specific learning outcomes. Usually, staff from the civic engagement center – often in collaboration with faculty and community partners – pull together lists of courses, co-curricular opportunities, and service projects creating a path for students interested in specific themes.

**Civic Scholars Programs** - The third approach used on two campuses is to create a specialized and distinct program for a cohort of students as civic engagement scholars. These programs offer three or four year experiences in which the students take a series of courses and seminars together and also participate in structured community-based learning or service projects.

**Certificate Programs** – Some of our campuses have created, or are in the process of creating, certificate programs during the course of this project. These programs are designed to attract students to civic engagement opportunities and to recognize work the students may already be doing while adding more intentional/reflective elements.

**Open Choice** - Finally, the fifth approach is an open choice model. On these campuses, approaches vary widely. On some, individual faculty members have developed civic engagement courses largely on their own. These entrepreneurial faculty members work independently of their colleagues. In some instances, they receive support from a civic engagement center, but generally these dedicated faculty design discrete opportunities in particular classes. These classes are largely independent of one another and not part of a program or campus-wide civic engagement strategy. On some of these campuses there is a concerted strategy to encourage the development of civic engagement courses and activities and there is often a very active civic engagement center that provides extensive support for faculty interested in developing civic engagement courses.

In July 2014, we held a convening at The Pocantico Center of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund to discuss findings from the survey of approaches to civic engagement among our colleges and universities. Periclean institutions sent delegates (Provost, Periclean Faculty Leader, or Program Director) and they were joined by Loni Bordoloi of The Teagle Foundation, Barbara Holland, Lauren McGrail of the Eugene M. Lang Foundation, and our Board Chair, Neil Grabois.

Prior to the convening, institutions were paired with a Periclean peer to review and compare survey material and discuss findings. At the convening, representatives from diverse institutions gathered for discussions about organizing, integrating, and strengthening CESR on their campuses. Working in small groups, they provided each other with practical recommendations.
for the implementation of programs. Delegates shared advice, best practices, and innovative new approaches, including pathway models and specialized civic scholars programs. After discussing findings from their own campuses, participants spent considerable time working on concrete action plans to improve civic engagement programming on each campus.

As part of The Teagle grant, in October 2014, Project Pericles awarded 15 mini-grants to 16 Periclean Colleges and Universities, including a joint project between Carleton College and Goucher College. The projects focused on strengthening the integration, organization, and assessment of curricular and co-curricular programming for civic engagement and social responsibility.

Several campuses, including Occidental College and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), created certificate programs for civic engagement as a way of highlighting opportunities on and off campus and recognizing the commitment and work of students. Occidental designed a "Civic and Community Engagement" certificate program. RPI's certificate features a capstone project with final presentations with community partners and the RPI community. Wagner College examined ways to enhance the appeal of its existing civic engagement certificate and reach students in a broad range of disciplines.

Chatham University, Drew University, and Goucher College developed pathways models. Pathways are a means of organizing civic engagement opportunities around particular issues or themes that are of interest to student, faculty, and staff. Pathways are then used to highlight courses and co-curricular opportunities, internships, and service programs that relate to a given topic. Topics might include education, health, peacemaking and community conflict, and sustainable agriculture and food. Pathways also serve to advance collaboration between community partners, faculty, staff, and students all working on similar issues.

In addition, many campuses, including Allegheny College, Bates College, Hampshire College, Hendrix College, Pitzer College, Ursinus College, and Widener University offered faculty development panels, seminars, or workshops for faculty interested in integrating civic engagement and social responsibility into their courses. Most of the seminars and workshops focused on how to successfully incorporate a community based experience into a course and offer assistance in identifying and working with community partners.

As part of the joint Carleton and Goucher project, Goucher developed an on-line interface to allow students to build individualized pathways using key word searches for particular themes. Carleton designed online and other assessment tools for tracking students engaged in pathways. They examined a host of questions including how and to what extent students are making use of the pathways and whether they come to pathways intentionally or by chance. The data was used to refine Carleton's approach to pathways. During the course of the project, faculty and staff at Carleton and Goucher were in regular communication and visited each other’s campuses. Occidental College also participated in the joint project.

Swarthmore College, which has developed several pathways, conducted research into what draws students to particular pathways and what courses and skills students make use of while engaged in these pathways. One of their goals was to highlight the diverse range of courses and skills students tap into when undertaking civic engagement projects.
Elon University and Hampshire College focused on the importance of student reflection while undertaking civic engagement and community-based learning projects. Elon published a book of student reflections on the ethical implication of their work as part of an alternative spring break. The book will be used for discussion by Elon students participating in future alternative spring break projects and will be available for use at other colleges. A faculty and staff working group at Hampshire College developed a series of exercises focused on documentation and reflection that was piloted with a group of 30 students. Hampshire also piloted an orientation for students prior to undertaking community-based work.

In November 2015, The Teagle Foundation awarded us an additional grant to host a second convening to disseminate the findings of Creating Cohesive Paths to Civic Engagement. The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) graciously offered to host the convening, which took place on January 20, 2016 in Washington, DC.

In addition to delegates from Periclean campuses, Bill Sullivan of The Teagle Foundation; Jane Lang of the Eugene M. Lang Foundation; our Board Chair, Neil Grabois; and Richard Ekman, president of the Council of Independent Colleges and Project Pericles Board Vice-Chair; were in attendance. We invited our 30 member colleges and universities to come together to reflect on the program and the five general approaches to organizing civic engagement curricula we identified: Requirements; Pathways Approaches (theme based, i.e. education, food, health, etc.); Civic Engagement Scholars Programs (intensive, multi-year, cohort programs); Certificate Programs; and Open Choice Models. We shared lessons learned from the mapping, action plans and mini-grants, and brainstorm about how to further this important work. We also focused on innovative technological strategies for presenting opportunities to students and for tracking students' participation. Our goal was to collectively pinpoint approaches that strengthen the breadth and depth of civic engagement on Periclean campuses.

Project Pericles will publish a White Paper focused on best practices for organizing and integrating civic engagement programming for dissemination to colleges and universities nationally.

Periclean Colleges and Universities
Allegheny College • Bates College • Berea College • Bethune-Cookman University • Carleton College • Chatham University • Dillard University • Drew University • Elon University • The Evergreen State College • Goucher College • Hampshire College • Hendrix College • Macalester College • Morehouse College • New England College • The New School • Occidental College • Pace University • Pitzer College • Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute • Rhodes College • St. Mary’s College of Maryland • Skidmore College • Spelman College • Swarthmore College • Ursinus College • Wagner College • Widener University • The College of Wooster

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