University-Wide Strategic Planning to Enhance Community Engagement: People, Process, and Tensions

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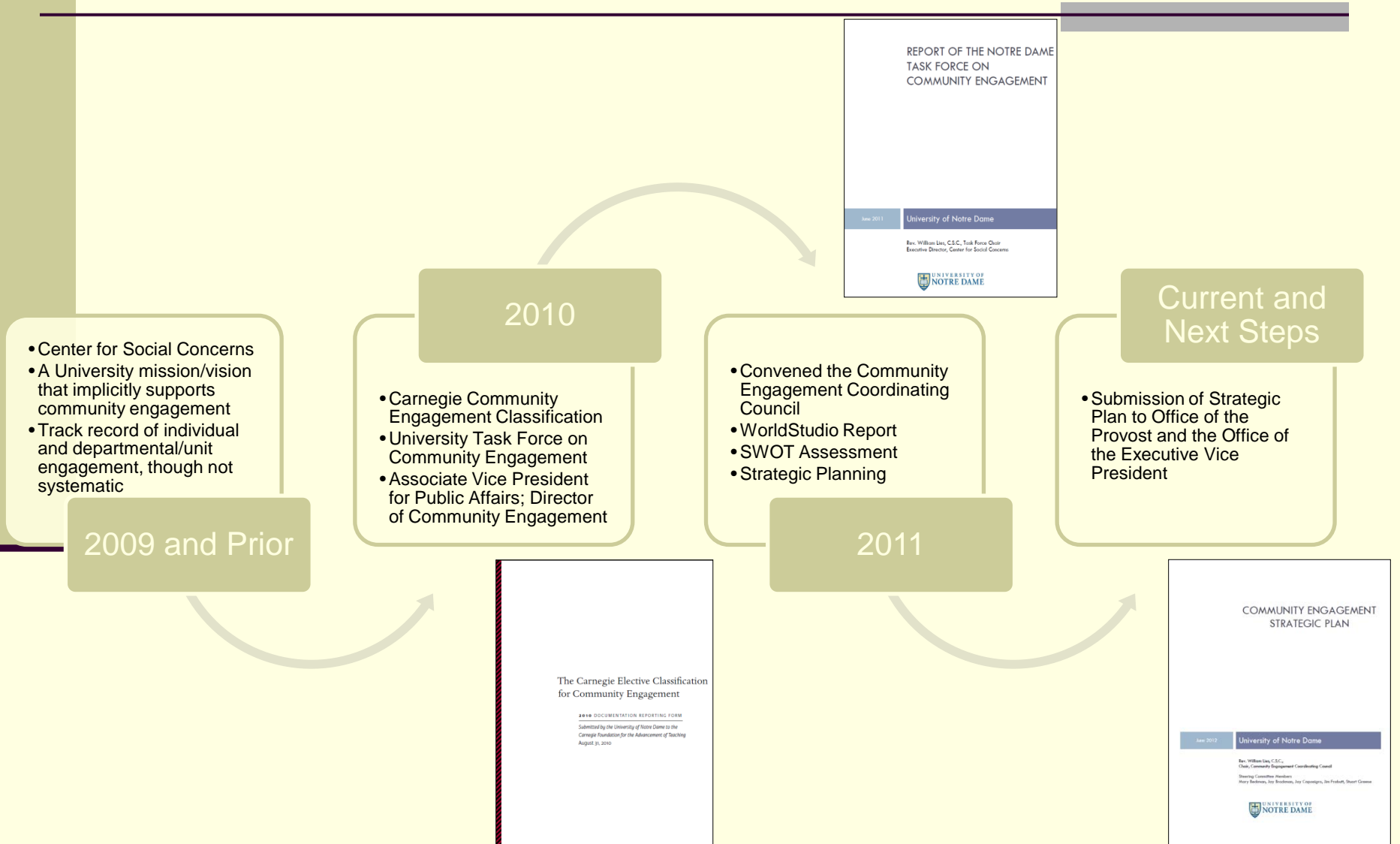University of Notre Dame

13th Annual National Outreach Scholarship Conference, University of Alabama
October 3, 2012

Objective

- Describe the development of university-wide strategic plan for community engagement, focusing on three elements instrumental to progress:
  - people,
  - process,
  - negotiation of tensions.

Chronology and Context

REPORT OF THE NOTRE DAME
TASK FORCE ON
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

June 2011   University of Notre Dame

Rev. William Lies, C.S.C., Task Force Chair
Executive Director, Center for Social Concerns

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2010

Current and Next Steps

2009 and Prior

- Center for Social Concerns
- A University mission/vision that implicitly supports community engagement
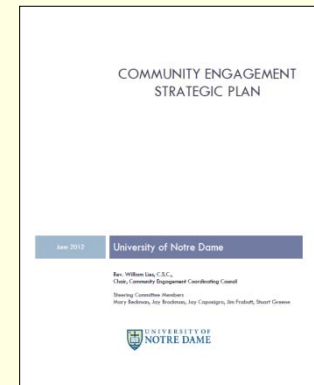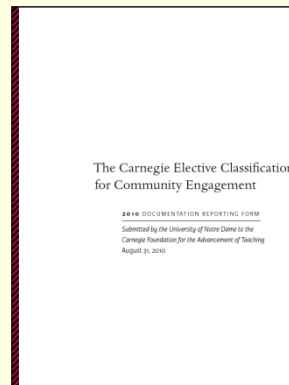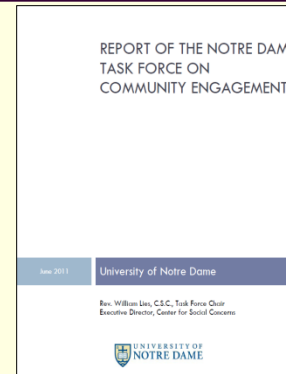- Track record of individual and departmental/unit engagement, though not systematic

- Carnegie Community Engagement Classification
- University Task Force on Community Engagement
- Associate Vice President for Public Affairs; Director of Community Engagement

- Convened the Community Engagement Coordinating Council
- WorldStudio Report
- SWOT Assessment
- Strategic Planning

2011

- Submission of Strategic Plan to Office of the Provost and the Office of the Executive Vice President

The Carnegie Elective Classification
for Community Engagement

2010 DOCUMENTATION REPORTING FORM

Submitted by the University of Notre Dame to the
Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
August 31, 2010

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
STRATEGIC PLAN

June 2012   University of Notre Dame

Rev. William Lies, C.S.C.,
Chair, Community Engagement Coordinating Council

Steering Committee Members
Mary Beckman, Jay Caponigro, Jim Frabutt, Stuart Greene

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People

■ Movement from hosting isolated pockets of community engagement to truly claiming the mantel of an engaged institution means involving the right individuals (i.e., expertise, experience, position, status)

■ Operative vehicles for this change process
  ■ University Relations
  ■ Office of the Provost
  ■ Steering committee of faculty, staff, and administrators
  ■ Provost-appointed Task Force
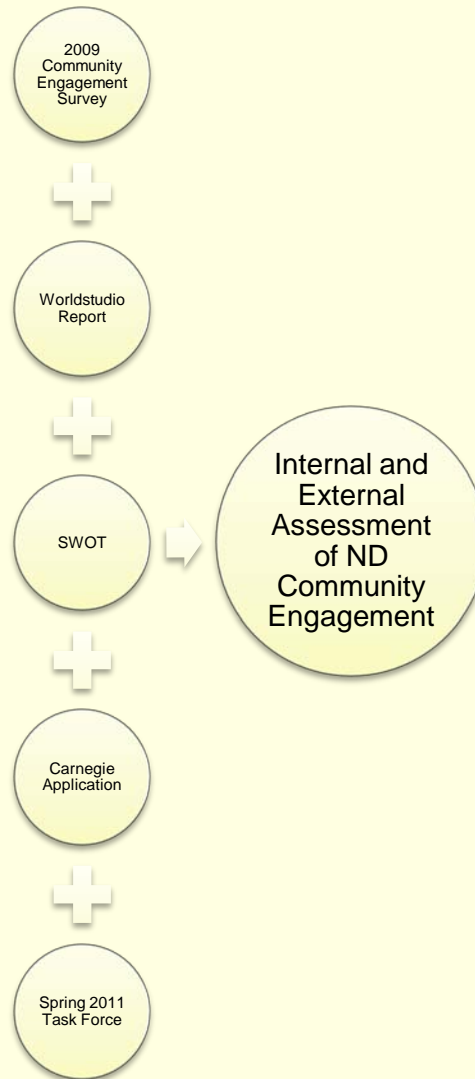 ■ Broadly representative Community Engagement Coordinating Council

People Example

■ From the top and from the bottom

■ Grassroots Pressure
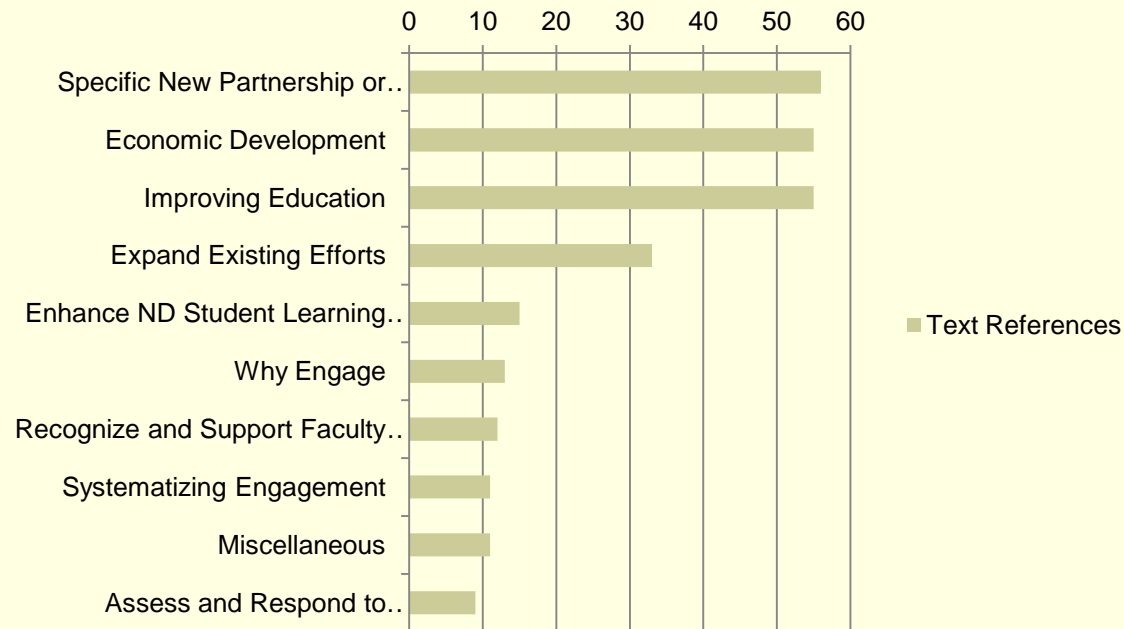■ College of Engineering Concerns

Process

- Receiving an official charge to commence this work
- Maintaining viable work and meeting structures
- Involvement of the Office of Strategic Planning
- Frequently sharing work products and garnering feedback
- Using data to guide decision making

Process Example:
Comprehensive and Wide Ranging Input

2009 Community Engagement Survey

+

Worldstudio Report

+

SWOT → Internal and External Assessment of ND Community Engagement

+

Carnegie Application

+

Spring 2011 Task Force

Process Example:
Data Informed Decision Making

169 respondents responded to the item, "In regard to community engagement, please outline what you see as the current opportunities of the University." These responses were coded into 301 individual text references.

Negotiation of Tensions

- Group change processes inherently surface points of tension
  - Definitions of community engagement: inclusive
  - Leadership: shared and collaborative
  - Community input and voice: late in the process

  - Academic incentive and reward structures: ?
  - Accountability for strategic goals: ?

Tension:

- Waiting for action: a question of priority

Where We Hope to Go: Our Strategic Goals

- Develop and sustain an effective internal infrastructure to support and coordinate academic community engagement among faculty and staff.

- Harness the university's resources to improve K-12 education systems and economic development in our local community.

- Enhance student development as engaged learners, researchers, and citizens by fostering community-based opportunities that deepen students' sense of human solidarity and concern for the common good.

- Improve our ability to share information and more efficiently coordinate ND's activities in the community both internally and externally.

Summary

- Engaging the right people
- embracing an iterative, participatory, and data-based process
- and the ongoing negotiation of tensions
- —are three foundational pillars of this work.