

INFORMATION SHEET #4
LEHMAN AS CATALYST FOR ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP AND KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT

QUESTIONS CONSIDERED: How does Lehman serve as a “knowledge asset and resource” to the community (AASCU 2002)? How are teaching, research, and service inter-related and linked to civic responsibility? How do scholarship and creative activity involve partnerships with individuals and organizations beyond the college?

This information sheet addresses community-related research and creative activities. Portraits of the full range of Lehman scholarship are available on Lehman’s website and in the annual index of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Works.

PROMISING STRATEGIES (ongoing):

Integrated research, service, and teaching that involves community members and/or knowledge professionals outside the academy. To illustrate:

- *Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences:* Undergraduate students participate in the research programs of department faculty via labs devoted to studying auditory perception, brain and language, child language development, literacy, neurolinguistics, noise-induced hearing loss, and speech and voice production. Four of these labs provide clinical service while serving as research labs. "Faculty research promotes enriched classroom learning of new developments in the field." Graduate students have presented at local, national, and international professional meetings with their faculty mentors.
- *GISc/Earth Science:* Via government grants, students have worked on research studies focusing on “asthma and air pollution; the relationship between the location of healthy food options and diabetes; risk from natural hazards like flooding in NYC, identifying the socially, economically, and biophysically vulnerable populations; the environmental justice implications of exposure to contamination from noxious land uses and concomitant adverse health effects”; and many more. These research programs involve diverse partners including NYC Environmental Protection; Montefiore Medical Center; NYC Health Dept.; New York Botanical Gardens; the Wildlife Conservation Society; the NYC Parks Dept.; USDA, NOAA, EPA, environmental consulting firms and GISc industrial partners.
- *Literacy Studies:* Two faculty members were involved in a research project with a struggling high school in the Bronx. Their work centered on ways to increase academic success. Both worked closely with the teachers and school administration as well as the students.

Integrated creative activity, service, and teaching that involves/reaches partners and community members. To illustrate:

- *Music* faculty and students perform together, embodying the “spirit of collaboration and mentorship at the foundation of performance-based majors.” Students “hear their own works performed by professionals, and a mentoring model is used... whereby alumni and community

performers act as embedded tutors in all major ensembles.” The department’s free public concerts “attract thousands of community residents. In addition, faculty members perform in libraries, churches, community centers, parks, concert halls and broadcasts on streaming video reaching countless additional community residents.”

- *Multimedia Journalism* students participate alongside faculty and staff in the production of "Inside Lehman," an award-winning half-hour television magazine, by “researching, writing, interviewing, editing text and digital editing, hosting.” This production reaches viewers throughout the Bronx and New York City and often promotes awareness of faculty research related to community issues (e.g., asthma, noise-induced hearing loss).
- The *Digital Media* program is a partner in a three-campus Innovation Lab/New Media Incubator with collaborating industry partners. The Lab will provide opportunities for students to engage in media research and development as well as workforce development.

Integrated research and classroom teaching.

- Faculty in *Sociology* participated in the CUNY Research in the Classroom initiative, where they developed a "research-integrated curriculum," incorporating a project with a researchable aim and assessing the impact of this work on student learning. Faculty noted that this work "contributes both to scholarly topics in sociology and to [addressing] pedagogical concerns" in teaching Lehman students. Similarly, faculty research in quantitative reasoning, conducted reciprocally with faculty development for instructors on incorporating numerical literacy into a range of courses, benefits students in those instructors' classes.

In addition to developing a new teaching model for research, this example includes a strand related to the scholarship of teaching and learning, whereby research methods are applied to understanding the impact of teaching approaches on student outcomes and the results are disseminated.

Centers and Institutes: engaged scholarship that reflects their unique missions.

- *Bronx Institute's* funded programs have provided opportunities for faculty research connected to Bronx schools, resulting in "write ups in peer-reviewed research journals." They have also held "citywide events that have involved the participation of faculty and Lehman leadership on important policy making issues."
- *Institute for Literacy Studies* connects faculty research with teaching and community engagement through funded projects. Its recent NSF project focused on developing teacher leadership among Bronx mathematics teachers grades 6-12 and studying the program's impact on student outcomes. The program was developed collaboratively with Lehman faculty and stakeholders in Bronx schools, who then served on its advisory committee and provided vital feedback on its development. Participatory action research in the ILS's Adult Learning Center focused on developing science literacy for low-income women of color. This collaborative effort involved interns from Public Health who led forums in the project, and access for the women to the Biology lab to learn about cell biology and health.
- *Jaime Lucero Mexican Studies Institute* offers public lectures, workshops, and film series on Mexican topics. The Institute hosts "an annual academic conference on cutting-edge research

topics that is open to the public and to the U.S. and Mexico academic communities at large” and serves as “liaison, resource, and epicenter for the coming together of community-based organizations for the promotion of cultural, educational, and social programming for the larger Mexican community and all of New York City.”

- *Institute for Irish American Studies* offers a program of “public lectures and events, as well as symposia on specific topics, Irish language conversation circles, and celebrations of the arts” that are open to the public and to the academic community in New York City.

PROMISING NEW STRATEGIES:

Programs aspire to developing new collaborations for engaged or applied research:

- **With other Lehman or university programs:**
 - *Earth Science*: “develop a strong integrated collaborative research program in the field of environmental science with other CUNY colleges, and other national and international institutions.”
 - *Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences*: “increase clinical services for the underserved health care community, along with collaborative research in nursing, social work, human services, and other biomedical disciplines. This will provide undergraduates with additional learning opportunities.”
 - *Social Work*: plans to work with Morgan State University in Baltimore to co-edit a journal on urban social work. Lehman, a Hispanic-serving institution, and Morgan State, a historically Black college, would thus edit this journal.
 - *Institute for Irish American Studies*: seeks collaborations with Women's Studies, African and African American Studies, and Mexican-American Studies in developing “events that cross over disciplinary and cultural borders [and will be] beneficial to Lehman students.”
- **Between faculty and students, or benefiting students:**
 - *Computer Science* has an R&D goal of involving faculty in entrepreneurial ventures with students. Courses are already offered in smartphone/tablet programming: “a skilled team of programmers can easily produce and market [new] products to a large audience.”
 - *Chemistry* aims to “leverage the Lehman Center for Theoretical and Computational Science to provide a community of researchers (undergraduate, graduate, postdoctoral, and faculty, possibly even high school). This type of vertical integration has been shown to excite and attract students into STEM fields.”
- **With nonprofits, industry, informal science and cultural organizations:**
 - *Computer Science*: “Collaborative research opportunities with industry ...need to be explored....” The program recognizes that such research collaborations are also a pathway for student internships and job opportunities.
 - *History* will pursue working collaborations with the New York Public Library and NYC history museums (this is both a research and a teaching/learning goal).
- **With Bronx families and communities:**
 - *Nursing*: create a research space “to conduct community participatory research and

offer ongoing programs through a nurse-managed center.”

- *Literacy Studies and other SOE programs*: establish a Child Study Center “to serve the needs of children and youth of the community including assessment, literacy development, counseling and direct consultation services to families and schools.”
- *Health Education & Promotion*: conduct research that addresses disparate health needs in the Bronx and provides opportunities for student involvement in both the faculty research and manuscript development for scholarly journals.

More work in the scholarship of teaching and learning and/or discipline-based education research.

- The BA and BS programs in *Chemistry* will create a study in order to correlate measures of student success with learning outcomes. “New teaching strategies that emphasize active learning in the lecture hall will be implemented in the department beginning in the Spring 2015. These strategies will be subjected to considerable qualitative and quantitative assessment.” This effort is related to the department’s goal “to develop outstanding strategies that will meet the needs of most students.”

DILEMMAS:

Embracing “engaged scholarship” as a signature practice at Lehman. “Engaged scholarship,” a concept that originated in Ernest Boyer’s (1996) essay, “The Scholarship of Engagement,” connects the “resources of the university with the community to work toward a common goal” (Avila-Linn, Rice, & Aiken 2012). The prioritization reports sampled for this review demonstrate that engaged-scholarship courses with academic service learning (via field placements, internships, and volunteer activities) are a transformative component of a Lehman education (See Information Sheets #2 and #3). And the reports suggest that across the College there is considerable research focused on issues affecting Bronx communities, often in partnership with community and nonprofit groups. This focus is in keeping with Lehman’s social justice mission and its responsibility as an Anchor Institution. Additionally, programs have proposed new centers or spaces as hubs of research conducted in a reciprocal relationship with community beneficiaries (See also Information Sheet #1). What mechanism might be developed to connect these diverse research programs under a conceptual umbrella of “engaged scholarship”? What is gained (or perhaps compromised) if Lehman sharpens its message about engaged scholarship across its schools and departments?

Scholarship that sets its sights on student outcomes. Given continuing concerns about students’ academic preparation and success (See Information Sheet #2), Lehman might benefit from more research by faculty on effective methods for teaching Lehman students such as the work proposed in the Chemistry report, or the CUNY Research in the Classroom Initiative. Individual Lehman faculty have been involved in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) in the past. What are some strategies for making such studies generalizable beyond an individual classroom? How can SoTL reflect the methods of the disciplines in which it is conducted and thus (perhaps) satisfy academic criteria for tenure and promotion? How (and when) can faculty look at scholarship in new ways?