

**Center for Urban Research and Learning
Academic Program Review
2006**

1. What role does CURL play--and what role should it play--in the scholarly life of Loyola? Is its mission in alignment with the university's mission and strategic plan?

Overview

The Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) promotes collaborative university-community research by facilitating faculty and student involvement in a broad array of research projects. CURL's distinctive methodological approach formally integrates "community knowledge" and "university-based knowledge." Most projects involve community partners at all levels of research, from conceptualization and methodological design to data collection, data analysis, writing, and dissemination. The resulting research outcomes help to address community needs and provide new perspectives valuable to academic-based researchers.

Particular emphasis is placed on research and outcomes that have the potential of improving the quality of lives and opportunity among individuals, families, and communities who have been excluded from resources in our society. In its initial endowment gift that established CURL, and in its subsequent endowment award, the McCormick Tribune Foundation specifically identified service to Chicago communities and the distinctive collaborative research approach of the Center as central to its initial and continued support.

CURL's mission and activities are very closely aligned with the University's mission and strategic plan. Overall CURL is actively involved in "working to expand knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice and faith." As further detailed below, many facets of CURL's activities directly address facets of both the university's mission and strategic plan.

In the course of its ten-year history, CURL has completed, or continues to be actively engaged in more than 100 collaborative university-community research projects. Research teams have included over 55 Loyola faculty, 100 graduate students, 127 undergraduates, and 100 community partners. Over 120 reports or research outcome documents have been produced. More than 30 faculty publications (not including the project reports themselves) are direct outcomes of CURL-sponsored research. Details of these projects and lists documenting reports and research team involvement are included in the appendices to this report.

Close connection to Jesuit mission

A clear measure of how CURL fits into the mission of Loyola, and more specifically into the Jesuit character of this mission, is how closely our center fits the vision of Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., the Superior General of the Society of Jesus. In a major speech presented at the 2000 Conference on the Commitment to Justice in American Jesuit higher education--a speech that has been used as a guide by Jesuit university leaders since this convocation--Father Kolvenbach outlines his vision of a Jesuit research university:

To make sure that the real concerns of the poor find their place in research, faculty members need an organic collaboration with those in the Church and in society who work among and for the

poor and actively seek justice. They should be involved together in all aspects: presence among the poor, designing the research, gathering the data, thinking through problems, planning and action, doing evaluation and theological reflection. In each Jesuit Province where our universities are found, the faculty's privileged working relationships should be with the projects of the Jesuit social apostolate—on issues such as poverty and exclusion, housing, [and] AIDS...¹

CURL's collaborative research model and focus on low-income and other excluded communities is congruent with Father Kolvenbach's vision. In many respects, CURL works at bridging boundaries to more effectively address pressing needs.

Research teams and bridging boundaries

Through the use of *research teams* consisting of undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, research staff, and community leaders, we create a teaching, research, and learning environment that cuts across many of the traditional boundaries that can hinder more effective service to members of the university community and the outside community. The boundaries bridged include:

Disciplinary boundaries: When community helps define research issues it typically it calls for interdisciplinary involvement by university partners. Most CURL projects involve students and faculty from different departments and/or schools.

Classroom and community boundaries: CURL takes teaching and learning "outside of the box" and links students' knowledge acquired in the classroom to applications in the community.

University and community knowledge boundaries: CURL facilitates sharing of knowledge between community and university partners--networks typically isolated from each other. The creative tensions of these different perspectives and knowledge bases produce a more complete understanding of all the dimensions of problems facing local communities and analytical questions facing discipline-based researchers. This process is consistent with "triangulation" methodologies within disciplines that use multiple perspectives to get a more accurate picture of research issues and data. The creative tension is parallel to the critiques that happen within academic departments or disciplines "around the research table." CURL is just expanding the "chairs around the research table" to include community partners. Collaborative research can mean the direct involvement of faculty in research or the indirect involvement through "translation" of existing disciplinary knowledge to better inform communities unfamiliar with this research.

Teacher and student boundaries: Involvement of students as active members of research teams encourages them to recognize their knowledge, experience, and creativity in contributing to the research project. This breaks down misconceptions that learning is a one-way street and allows students to become more active scholars, something critical in preparing them for their lives after graduation.

Local and global boundaries: While research projects typically focus on community-based or grassroots organization-based issues, the comparative methodologies, as well as the strong national and international knowledge-bases added by university-based disciplines, make it possible to link

¹Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., "The Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice in American Jesuit Higher Education," speech presented at the Conference on Commitment to Society Justice in Jesuit Higher Education, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, California, October 2000 (p. 8).

such local research to national or international work. This use of regional, national, and global networks of researchers (combined with the fact that "global" is, in fact, the interaction of complex systems of "local" activity) has produced significant national and international research initiatives for CURL.

Excluded and privileged population boundaries: CURL uses research findings to address needs of communities that do not share in the full resources or protections of our society, e.g. low-income families, children, African-Americans, immigrants, Latinos, victims of domestic violence, and those with AIDS.

Problems and solutions boundaries: CURL does not just do research on "problems," but actively seeks to frame solutions to those problems. This is not advocacy work, but rather research that either distills effective interventions from existing community practices or develops data-informed alternatives to current practices in addressing pressing community needs.

CURL connections to Strategic Plan

In relation to the University's Strategic Plan, CURL addresses many of the current priorities and future challenges noted in the Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan wording is in italics and notations on CURL contributions is in brackets where additional clarification is helpful.):

Undergraduate Education

- *promote awareness of the evolving realities of the 21st century*
- *encourage a students commitment to building a more just and humane society*

Graduate and Professional Studies

- *collaborative learning environment*
[particularly through CURL research teams involving faculty and students from different disciplines as well as community partners]
- *a commitment to using [students'] specialized training to contribute to the betterment of their own communities and the larger society*

Research and Service

Loyola derives its distinctive identity from the Jesuit, Catholic tradition of linking the courageous pursuit of truth for the purposes of advancing knowledge and serving humanity. Research, service and scholarship are valued because of their powerful potential to enrich human lives and respond to the most pressing problems in our society and in the world, and to enhance the teaching in all our programs.

Opportunities for making a genuine difference as an institution of higher education increasingly lie in:

- *Multidisciplinary efforts*
- *Building stronger partnerships with other organizations and institutions*
- *Integrating research into the academic life of the university*

The challenges in the coming years will be:

- *Identifying and fostering research and scholarship where Loyola can have the greatest impact and where the quality of its research will lead to distinctive excellence and national recognition*
[CURL research has regularly had positive impacts on local communities and organizations and has been recognized nationally and internationally]
- *As part of this process, Loyola will strategically develop centers of excellence in such areas of institutional strength as health science education, policy and management, social justice and applied ethics; religious faith and human spirituality; bio-medicine and the health sciences; integrity and leadership; children and family studies; policy and urban studies; the environment; and race, gender and class in America.*
[CURL already has provided the basis for a center of excellence in policy and urban studies. Through its research it regularly addresses issues of race, gender, class inequality, and social justice. Through present and anticipated cooperation with existing and developing centers (for example our active role in assisting establishment of a center on children and families) we have and will continue to enhance the work of other centers.]

Goals and Strategies

In order to prepare students to lead extraordinary lives, Loyola will:

1. *Enrich its rigorous academic programs to better integrate the unique strengths and characteristics of a Jesuit and Catholic education by:*
 - *Highlighting academic rigor, service and leadership*
[undergraduate and graduate student involvement in community-engaged research projects, through CURL Fellowship work and through linked work connected to the Urban Studies Program Seminar, contributes to service and leadership]
 - *Emphasizing awareness and sensitivity to diversity and the global dimension of issues and problems in all Loyola programs*
[As noted much of CURL's research provides a "hands on" focus on these issues.]
3. *Strengthen the international dimensions of its programs and outreach by:*
 - *Enhancing the global dimensions of its academic programs and opportunities for research collaborations.*
[Because of its international prominence in the field of collaborative university-community research, CURL has been actively involved in developing international research relationships and opening up doors for faculty and students to pursue international work. Specific connections have been with the University of Birmingham (UK); University of Liverpool, University of Seville, University of Technology Sydney (Australia), University of Queensland (Australia); and the International Science Shop Network, a European-based university and community research consortium. Funding for work has been received from the U.S. Dept. of Education, the European Union, and the Fulbright Scholar Program]
6. *Promote multidisciplinary collaborations by:*

- *Taking greater advantage of its strength as a comprehensive academic university by encouraging and supporting curricular, scholarly and public-service collaborations across the university, and between and among its programs in the sciences and the humanities.*

[In the average years over 12 different departments and schools have participated in CURL's collaborations with community organizations, government agencies, and other civic groups.]

7. *Expand its investment in research and scholarship in order to take full advantage of its academic strengths by:*

- *Developing strategic centers of excellence (noted above under "Research and Service" challenges)*
- *Increasing its externally funded research activity in ways that are consistent with its mission and strategic goals.*

[CURL's success was central in obtaining additional endowment funds which are now over \$8 million. Over the past ten years CURL has received over \$14 million in grants from over 45 foundations, government, and community funders. Funding details are listed in Appendix 11.]

8. *Strengthen its relationship with the City of Chicago and the neighborhoods of the Water Tower, Lake Shore and Medical Center Campuses by:*

- *Strengthening its connection to key cultural, educational, social, economic, religious and civic institutions.*

[Our research partners have included over 100 such organizations, many of which have been in the communities surrounding all of our campuses.]

- *Supporting student internships, service opportunities, research and other collaborations through specific outreach initiatives and joint projects involving faculty and students.*

Other ways in which CURL contributes to scholarly life at Loyola

CURL plays facilitating role connecting students, faculty (and the institution) to developing needs in communities in the Chicago region. In some cases this involves organizing discussions among faculty and university partners to develop new collaborative projects. For example in 1996, CURL organized community breakfasts in Rogers Park, Edgewater, and Uptown to identify developing community needs. This led to a three-year, HUD-funded, \$400,000 research initiative involving faculty from business, sociology, and education working with seven community organizations on early childhood education, affordable housing, and business development. In other cases we facilitate projects that ultimately are taken over by schools or departments. For example we helped to coordinate and partially fund (through support for graduate research fellows) the development of a health clinic at Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Chicago's predominantly Latino Pilsen community in 1997-98. In still other cases, our working relationships with funding agencies, local government, and citywide agencies has been critical in developing projects that no single Loyola unit could coordinate. For example, in 2003, we worked with the Human Relations Foundation in researching and writing the report, *Minding the Gap: An Assessment of Racial Disparity in Chicago*. Involving students from Law, History, and Sociology, this report has played a high-profile role in citywide and regional discussions on continued racial and ethnic inequality.

CURL regularly works with units within Loyola contributing its familiarity with Chicago communities and collaborative research in facilitating resource development within the University and more effective connections with outside organizations and communities. Through faculty fellowship awards we have supported over 30 faculty in 15 departments and schools. In many cases this research has stimulated subsequent research, grant funding, and community impact independent of CURL. In our weekly activities we routinely work with most departments and schools within the university. CURL has regular meetings with the Office of Research Services, Media Relations, and Corporate and Foundation Relations. CURL research outcomes are routinely covered in the local and national media, providing significant recognition for our university. Through its contacts and credibility in the foundation community CURL has brought new funding opportunities to the university. At least one possible new significant endowment opportunity for a unit other than CURL was identified through Center contacts and activities. Within any given year we also typically meet or are in communication with Government and Community Relations, University Ministry and the deans of all Loyola schools. As noted below, we are integral to the Urban Studies undergraduate minor program.

We have been working with the Office of Research Services to facilitate the development of a new Child and Family Center with the expectation that such an additional center of excellence will enhance both CURL's community-based work in this area as well as additional faculty research in this field. Most recently we have been working with the School of Social Work in establishing two separate research initiatives: one using participatory research approaches to design of new service models to assist in the development of a new mixed-income housing development on Chicago's Southside and another creating a working relationship with Catholic Charities, effectively becoming a research arm to their child and youth services unit. These initiatives may also ultimately involve the Communication Department, Sociology Department, the Law School, the School of Education, and the School of Business.

The center integrates both traditional and emerging research methodologies. In addition to use of traditional research methods, e.g. survey data, interviews, focus groups, demographic analysis, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), CURL has actively used community-based participatory research, participatory evaluation research, and participatory action research approaches. While these later methodologies have been available for many decades, new federal funding priorities, as well as private funder initiatives, are recognizing the importance of these approaches. CURL's use of these methods in much of its research has allowed Loyola to move into the forefront of universities linking traditional research capacities to these community-engaged approaches. This work has resulted in national and international prominence for Loyola University and the work of CURL.

CURL has been an incubator of new programs and research initiatives. CURL provided partial funding and supervision enabling the university to hire its first full-time service learning coordinator in 2000-01. This staff person was involved in the development of the University's Magis Program. The Philanthropy and Non-Profit certificate program was developed in cooperation with the Graduate School. Headed by Louis Delgado, a CURL staff member and former program officer of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the academic portion of this program has since been moved to the School of Social Work where it has been used to strengthen that school's new leadership and policy curriculum. Also in cooperation with the Graduate School, CURL developed the Chicago Studies Masters Program which is now evolving into a urban studies MA degree, under the guidance of the Graduate School and the School for Professional Studies. Finally, CURL worked closely with the College of Arts and Sciences in developing an Urban Studies Certificate program. The program, which has further developed into a minor, continues to use the six-credit hour urban studies seminar as a

distinctive element involving students on CURL research teams, providing them with hands-on research experience.

Roles that CURL should play in scholarly life at Loyola

The success of CURL in linking discipline-based knowledge to community-based knowledge represents a major contribution to Loyola faculty and students. Continuing this work and strengthening faculty connections to community-engaged research continues to be a top priority. As discussed further below, under question number three, more faculty involvement in “translational research”—connecting discipline-based knowledge to community knowledge and practices—represents an ongoing goal. This involves continued support for faculty in community-engaged work, but also identification of more “traditional” faculty research that is of direct value to a range of community partners in the region.

The national and international connections of CURL also represent an underutilized resource for Loyola and its faculty. As one of the larger such collaborative research centers in the nation and in the world, CURL has established a positive reputation for its research methodologies and community impact. As noted below, these have created connections to centers and initiatives in other parts of the U.S. and the globe. Further work on integration of these resources into existing or emerging national and international comparative research and education initiatives at Loyola represents an avenue that is likely to be productive. CURL is anticipating hosting national and international visitors over the next year in an effort to develop broader connections with faculty and students.

2. Does CURL have a national or international reputation as a center of excellence in research and learning? What are the appropriate benchmarks to activities of similar centers at Loyola or at other institutions and how does CURL compare to other centers?

National and international reputation

Over the past ten years, CURL has attained a significant national and international reputation. Although it may seem counterintuitive, CURL’s community-based methodology has attracted considerable national and international attention. CURL has completed comparative national research projects that link community-based data and perspectives. These have included: a youth civic engagement project funded by Pew Charitable Trust; a national policy priority project funded by the National Neighborhood Coalition; and a national study of stable diverse communities using collaborative research teams in nine cities funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Local and national media coverage of CURL has also brought positive attention to the Center and the University. References to CURL research have appeared in papers such as the *New York Times*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*. In addition to local television and radio coverage, CURL research and CURL itself have been the subject of broadcast stories by Telemundo, Australia Broadcasting Company, and the Norwegian Broadcasting Company. Articles in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and American Association of Higher Education’s *Change* magazine have reported on CURL’s research model.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of University Partnerships has routinely used our center as a national example of a comprehensive collaborative university-community research center. The most recent indication of this was CURL's selection, from among all Chicago

universities, as the site for over 300 annual conference attendees to visit during a reception in March 2005. Members of CURL staff have routinely been asked to speak at universities and speak or participate in conferences because of CURL's positive national reputation in putting a collaborative research model into practice. In other cases university and organizational representatives have come to CURL for site visits. A partial list of visits to or visit from other universities or organizations includes:

- Auckland University (New Zealand)
- Australia Catholic University
- Australian University Community Engagement Alliance
- Brown University
- Catholic University
- Columbia College
- Columbia University
- Community Research Network (hosted national conference in 2002)
- DePaul University
- House of Commons Select Committee (UK)
- Illinois Wesleyan University
- Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis
- LaTrobe University (Australia)
- Miami University (Ohio)
- National University of El Salvador
- Nigerian national government (workforce development)
- Pew Partnerships, University of Virginia
- St. Louis University
- Seton Hall
- Stavanger University (Norway)
- Temple University
- Tufts University
- U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (Rockville, MD)
- Universidad Centroamericana (El Salvador)
- University of Chicago
- University of Birmingham (UK)
- University of Illinois Chicago
- University of Liverpool (UK)
- University of Michigan
- University of Minnesota
- University of Notre Dame
- University of Paris
- University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez
- University of Queensland, Ipswich (Australia)
- University of Seville (Spain)
- University of Technology Sydney (Australia)
- University of Venice (Italy)
- University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Utrecht University (Netherlands)
- Vanderbilt University
- Wayne State University
- Wingspread Conferences (Johnson Foundation sponsored)

CURL has been actively involved in international projects and research working relationships. Since 2003 CURL has been the only U.S. university involved in the European Commission-funded International Science Shop Network (ISSNET). ISSNET has been engaged in strengthening connections among more than 13 science shops in ten countries.² Growing out of this relationship has been the European Commission and U.S. Department of Education-funded "International Equitable Urban Curriculum" project completed in cooperation with the University of Liverpool, University of Seville, and Georgetown University. CURL has been the lead partner on this project.

Substantial ongoing relationships have been established with the University of Birmingham (UK), the University of Technology Sydney, and the University of Liverpool (already noted above). After being approached by the British Consul General's Office in Chicago, CURL organized or hosted six exchange visits in Chicago and Birmingham involving Loyola faculty (political science, sociology, and business), community fellows, and graduate students. CURL hosted a visiting University of Birmingham faculty fellow in 1998. A sociology graduate student is currently completing a dissertation comparing settlement houses in Chicago and Birmingham; this was an outgrowth of CURL-sponsored research. CURL ultimately assisted Loyola in establishing a student exchange relationship with the University of Birmingham (UK).

Since 1999, CURL has been working with the University of Technology Sydney (UTS) Shopfront (Australia) in sharing information and approaches to collaborative university-community methodologies. Some of the activities have been funded by a Fulbright grant and other support provided by UTS, the University of Queensland, Ipswich, the University of Western Sydney, and LaTrobe University, Bendigo. On four different occasions CURL has hosted Australian researchers in Chicago. Both research and student exchanges are potential future outcomes of these relationships. In 2003, given the visibility of CURL research on factors producing stable racially and economically diverse communities, we were asked by the British Parliament to host a visit by Members of Parliament to discuss our research and visit communities in Chicago involved in this national HUD-funded study.

Comparison to similar centers at Loyola or elsewhere

CURL's collaborative university-community methodology distinguishes it from most traditional university-based research centers. There is no other center at Loyola focusing specifically on university-community research partnerships. As noted there have been cases where CURL has been instrumental in developing research projects and partnerships that are then taken over by other units within particular Loyola schools or departments.

There are few research centers in the U.S. that focus explicitly on collaborative research. In some cases there are *national* networks that promote community-university research partnerships. The Community-Campus Partnership for Health, based at the University of Washington, is one such example. Much of the community-engagement work in higher education has focused on service learning, which typically does not focus directly on research and policy questions. State universities, through extension services and other land-grant related initiatives, have programs connecting them to community-based research or service learning activities. In Chicago, the Great Cities Program at University of Illinois

²Science shops are research centers, similar to CURL, that promote community-engaged research and the exchange of knowledge between scientists and the broader community.

Chicago, the Egan Center at DePaul, and the Neighborhood Assistance Center at Chicago State, do support community-engaged research projects.

CURL's emphasis on collaborative research teams and close involvement with community partners in the conceptualization and design of research remains a distinctive characteristic when comparing our work to these other centers locally and nationally. Further distinguishing CURL is its financial stability and longstanding track record in attracting research grants. With an over \$8 million endowment and an annual average budget of \$1.5 million, CURL is one of the larger, if not the largest, university-based collaborative research center in the U.S.

In addition to using funding (and the related support for faculty, staff, students, and community partners), other benchmarks are the outcomes of CURL projects. Certainly the production of research reports, evaluations, and needs assessments valuable to local communities, local government, and other non-profits is one measure of success. (The list of projects in Appendix 3 provides a list of these outcomes.) Another measure of success has been our ability to parley community-based research activity into national visibility. Part of this is a result of interest in the community-based methodologies, another part of this is the substantive impact in the policy area of the particular project. Given the local nature of our day-to-day work, CURL's bridging and translation role in connecting local research to citywide, regional, and national policy networks is a critical contribution to policy and research development in various academic fields (See for example the list of related faculty research provided in Appendix 7). CURL has played a regional and national leadership role in collaborative research, which is emerging as a significant field of interest in higher education. Given the emerging nature of the field, other than the CURL accomplishments provided above, there are no clear national standards or national organizational benchmarks that can be used to measure success in this still emerging field.³

3. What should be the appropriate balance between basic research and applied/advocacy research at CURL? What has been the record of each?

Given the collaborative and bridging nature of CURL's research, our work is less a matter of "balance" between different modes of research and more a matter of linking basic research knowledge (or discipline-based knowledge) with community knowledge and needs. This is a two-way street. On the one hand, we are *translating* existing disciplinary knowledge into practical applications or policy alternatives.⁴ On the other hand, we are bringing community knowledge into the disciplinary-based research process.

Translational research

"Translational research" represents a major new emphasis in the natural and social sciences. In the past three years, the National Institutes of Health and all of the related major U.S. health agencies have

³CURL has been invited to participate in what may prove to be a major conference of foundations, national higher education associations, and universities to better define and establish a national federation to support engaged research and learning. This is being held at the Johnson Foundation Wingspread conference center in late February.

⁴CURL does not do "advocacy research" insofar as that might connote completing research to support a pre-established point of view. Rather using the same rigorous research standards of any discipline, we complete policy research to guide organizational, community-level, or governmental decision making.

established new guidelines and organizational structures to move a significant portion of health research funding into initiatives that link basic scientific knowledge to effective clinical or community practice. Recognizing that knowledge can take as long as 15-20 years to move from “bench” to practice, these top health agencies determined that continued focus on just basic research, rather than basic *and* translational research had effectively created a research crisis in the U.S. In 2004, the National Institute of Mental Health dismantled its Basic Behavioral and Social Science branch and instead created new "translational" divisions with the intent of addressing this pressing need.⁵ A related increase in the proportion of research dollars earmarked for community-based participatory research projects has also taken place among the federal health agencies. CURL was involved in an initial 2002 conference at the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality to shape these now-instituted guidelines. Private foundations such as the Ford Foundation, Kellogg Foundation, and John D. and Catherine T. Foundation have supported such research priorities for an even longer time. In parallel efforts, increased intention to "public social science"--the connection between the disciplines and public need--is also taking place in fields such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, and history.

In this context, CURL is serving a critical function in promoting research approaches that more effectively put existing discipline-based knowledge into the hands of policy makers and community leaders. Moreover, by working with community and government leaders in shaping new research projects, we have continued to insure that our university is responsive to developing needs in communities surrounding our campus. For example, CURL's work on affordable housing and the impact of gentrification on Uptown, Edgewater, and Rogers Park grew out of interests by both advocacy organizations and traditional social service providers. This work has culminated in one project, funded by the State of Illinois, to work with a broad range of organizations (from developers to affordable housing advocates) in assessing the changing shape of our local communities. This past December 2005, we completed another research report for the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations studying the impact of gentrification and displacement on communities of color in the city.

Because a key role of CURL is to strengthen research connections between the university and the broader society around us, we have produced a variety of outcomes ranging from books, peer-reviewed journal articles, policy reports, program evaluation reports, and community or organizational needs assessments. Some of these are listed in the research outcomes sections of Appendix 3. As illustrated in Appendix 7 in addition to this, CURL Affiliated Faculty have written peer-reviewed articles based on CURL research, strengthening the reach of collaborative research into our discipline-based knowledge. As shown in the same appendix these faculty have also written additional articles and books that has been actively used to address community-based issues in CURL's work

Addressing the gap between university and community knowledge

In effectively addressing the gap between university-generated knowledge and community access to that knowledge, CURL is creating what Father Kolvenbach calls an "organic collaboration" with the communities outside the university--particularly communities that have not historically shared in all of the resources and privileges of our society. Without such collaboration, we would only perpetuate the inequalities in access to knowledge; CURL is working to reduce these inequities.

In recent years disciplines themselves--particularly in the social sciences-- have been questioning

⁵Sadie F. Dingfelder, "Transitioning to 'translational' times." *American Psychological Association Online Monitor on Psychology*. 36:3 (March 2005).

the separation of discipline-based (or "basic research") and research shaped to explicitly address emerging society needs. Craig Calhoun, President of the Social Science Research Council, points out that the "pure" research versus "public" or "applied" research dichotomy is a red-herring. It diverts our attention from what are effective ways of strengthening scientific fields and of increasing our impact on all sectors of the life of citizens. Making the case for stronger "public social science," Calhoun states that we need to take a more holistic view of our fields and move away from the false dichotomy because:

It distracts attention from the fundamental issues of quality and originality and misguides as to how both usefulness and scientific advances are achieved. Sometimes work undertaken mainly out of intellectual curiosity or to solve a theoretical problem may prove practically useful. At least as often, research taking up a practical problem or public issue tests the adequacy of scientific knowledge, challenges commonplace generalizations, and pushes forward the creation of new, fundamental knowledge.⁶

In the development and endowment of CURL (through our initial and subsequent meetings with the McCormick Tribune Foundation), the center was set up specifically to build this university-community linkage and not directly to produce peer-reviewed publications. However in the course of our work, we not only have produced reports and databases effectively used by community partners in addressing pressing problems, but have produced data that has, and can continue to be, used by faculty and graduate students in writing more traditional peer-reviewed articles and other academic publications.

4. What levels and kinds of support, over the next three to five would be required to achieve a strong and solid future for CURL

CURL does have strong financial support in the form of its permanent endowment. This continues to support student (graduate and undergraduate), faculty, and community fellowships. We would like to strengthen research relationships with faculty. One possible way of achieving this would be to develop initial CURL appointments for newly hired faculty (e.g. faculty could be 25% time in CURL for the first three years while at Loyola with possible renewal after this period). This could be supported with matching funding from CURL and the University. The intent would be to involve faculty in CURL research development and ongoing projects as a way of getting them connected with research initiatives of mutual interest to faculty, home department, and CURL. We would assume that after three years, with the guidance of CURL, it is likely that they will be able to sustain support for research efforts through new grant dollars.

CURL is in the process of submitting a new CURL visiting scholar endowment proposal (through the Office of Research Services) for consideration in the current University capital campaign. This would support national or international visiting scholars at CURL. Not only would this bring new knowledge and perspectives to CURL and Loyola, but would also serve to further increase the visibility of our community-based research.

⁶Craig Calhoun, "Word from the President: Toward a More Public Social Science," *Social Science Research Council Items and Issues*, vol. 5, no. 1-2 (Spring/Summer 2004), 12 (12-14).

Finally, we would like to see the university restore tuition scholarships that initially were provided as a match to CURL McCormick Tribune Foundation endowment-supported Graduate Fellowships in the initial years of CURL. As noted in Appendix 8, CURL has provided over \$1,300,000 in stipend support to more than 100 graduate students in more than 17 departments or schools. The matching tuition scholarships allowed us to expand the reach of CURL to a larger number of students and departments than is now currently available. Much of the work of these students was connected to research activity of faculty outside of CURL, so this support was also supporting general faculty research activity.

5. Given CURL's distinctive role in completing collaborative research with community organization partners, what impact has CURL had on these organizations and Chicago communities over its ten years of activity?

The impact of CURL's research has multiple dimensions. CURL's research has had broad policy impacts at the community, city, state, national, and international levels. CURL research has also influenced organizational practices, helping organizations understand community needs and improve delivery of services. The Center's participatory research approach has also brought new community voices into the research process, providing perspectives and knowledge that were not previously considered. Appendix 3 provides a detail list of CURL project participants and outcomes. However, it is useful to highlight some of the impacts that CURL has had in public policy arenas, and in improvement of organizational practices.

- In 1996-97 research on the impact of welfare reform on the diverse Rogers Park, Edgewater, and Uptown communities (in collaboration with the Organization of the NorthEast and the Howard Area Community Center) led to a reinstatement of \$10 million of state support for 35,000 elderly legal immigrants in Illinois (7,500 of whom lived in these community areas). While CURL was not involved in lobbying efforts, a CURL report and data and media coverage of the research were instrumental in influencing state government.
- Work with United Power for Action and Justice to evaluate and document effective models of supportive services to the homeless led to more effective homeless service provision, particularly in the suburbs.
- Completion of an *Uptown Housing and Land Use* study helped to guide future development discussion regarding housing and development trends among all sectors of this diverse, but gentrifying, community. This research was funded by the State of Illinois and coordinated by an advisory committee representing a range of organizations from affordable housing advocacy groups to local developers. The document that came out of this research has been used to guide local implementation of housing policy in this community.
- Data collection and analysis of child care needs and current services was used by the Early Childhood Network, a service provider partnership established by an Illinois State Senator, to address local and statewide childcare policy.
- A national survey of community-based organization policy priorities was presented at a national summit in Washington, D.C. and used by the National Neighborhood Coalition in setting its priorities in coming years and in more effectively linking national organizations to emerging community needs.
- At the request of the Woods Fund of Chicago, a CURL study was undertaken to examine

the voice that community-based organizations have in the regional, state, and national policy-making process. The report is being used to strengthen the use of neighborhood-level information and perspectives in government and non-governmental policy making at regional levels and above.

- A report on Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Family Center Services has been used by the State in improving service delivery.
- Research focusing on the impact of domestic violence in the South Asian immigrant community (in cooperation with Apna Ghar in Chicago) is being used by a national organization in building a curriculum to train judges on culturally distinctive domestic violence issues.
- A National Institute of Justice-funded study of the City of Chicago's Domestic Violence Help Line, the first such large city study in the nation, is being used by the Mayor's Office to strengthen these services and circulate this model to other municipalities interested in effective DV intervention.
- A comprehensive study of the state of racial and ethnic equality in Chicago (the Gap Report) has been used by the Human Relations Foundation, Jane Addams Hull House, and the City of Chicago Commission on Human Relations to facilitate regional discussions among government, corporate, non-profit, and foundation leaders to address continuing needs for policy interventions.
- In partnership with School of Nursing, CURL assisted in the establishment of a school-based health center in Maywood, Illinois and at Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Chicago's Pilsen community.
- CURL-supported research on Latino Voter Registration Project and completed by Loyola Political Science and Social Work faculty, is included as a report in the Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy;.
- A study of Native American health needs has been used by social service agencies in improving health care services to Native Americans.
- An analysis of the changing role of Native Americans in philanthropy ("Native Gathering: A Meeting with Native American Elders, Activists, Select Funders and Scholars") is used by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and other philanthropy organizations in assessing the changing funding environment for Native American communities.
- In cooperation with the Howard Area Community Center, CURL facilitated a community planning process that incorporated youth feedback in planning of a public park in Rogers Park. The park was completed in 2001.
- At the request of community leaders concerned about housing foreclosures and questionable lending practices in a blue-collar community on Chicago's Southwest Side, CURL produced a profile book providing demographic and housing data for census tracts within the communities. This has been used by community leaders, local bank staff, and local government officials in addressing this problem.
- Multiple participatory evaluation research projects have assessed how services are delivered, the quality of services, the impact on target populations, and how effectively resources are used. A partial list of organizations assisted includes: Bethel New Life; Access Living; West Humboldt Park Development Council; Apna Ghar/Enterprising Kitchen; DevCorp North; Deborah's Place; Howard Area Community Center; Family Matters; Rogers Park Development Corporation; People's Reinvestment and Development Effort; Good News Partners; Abraham Lincoln Center; YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago; Christian Community Health Center; Catholic Charities; Spanish Coalition for Jobs; Youth Services, Inc.; the Center for Neighborhood Technology; the Chicago Christian Industrial League;

Alternatives, Inc.; Westside Health Authority; Northside Homelessness Continuum of Care; Loa American Community Service; the Peace Museum; Provident St. Mel High School; and Bethany Brethren Community Center.

6. What aspects of Urban Studies do not receive much attention by CURL, given its particular focus?

CURL's work has been defined by its working relationships with community-based organizations, citywide and regional organizations, as well as local and state government. Our collaborative research approach has been a distinctive element in our development of research projects. Research projects have involved broad substantive areas ranging from early childhood education and youth civic engagement to community development and affordable housing preservation. CURL's ability to develop projects in any substantive area is defined by the strengths and skills of Loyola faculty and the institution. At this point two areas that are sometimes related to urban studies in which we have not been heavily involved have been public administration and urban planning, particularly the physical design of neighborhoods. Our work has addressed issues of inequality and policy alternatives related to the improvement of social and economic opportunities of excluded populations. This research certainly has connections to most areas of urban studies, but typically has focused on how local-level populations, organizations, and agencies have functioned or could function to improve the quality of life of all residents.

File:CURLAPRReportrev011706d