Redefining the Academy for the Public Good

Progressing Toward the Public Good:

Current Conceptions, Future Directions, and Potential Challenges

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Abstract: In this concluding chapter, we provide our perspectives on the preceding chapters authored by the participants in the Rising Scholars program and discuss the future of higher education for the public good as a line of inquiry for early career scholars in higher education. First, we provide an analysis of the work presented by the authors, showing how these chapters convey the myriad relationships between higher education and society. Then, we discuss future directions for scholarship on higher education for the public good. Finally, we highlight a few noteworthy challenges in achieving higher education for the public good.

Taking on the Public Good: Research Perspectives of the Rising Scholars

In defining research on higher education for the public good, the authors in this edited volume explored critical issues and topics that have traditionally been core elements of higher education scholarship, in addition to areas that are less frequently examined. This section will both examine how the treatment of more "traditional" topics are imbued with social significance and how scholars examined, head on, the direct relationship between broader systems of higher education and the society of which they are a part. The topics presented below are organized differently from the

three sections that were put forth in this volume so as to provide our perspective on these chapters and their place within research on higher education.

Access and Persistence

Goldrick-Rab examined factors that are related to college attendance patterns and persistence to graduation. She provides separate analyses within working-class and professional-class students, finding numerous differences in predictors between these groups. This recognition of the disparate forces operating at different social class levels merits further attention. Furthermore, she attempts to move toward causal claims for these decision processes: Are students "being pushed" toward certain decisions by their financial and academic situations, or are they "jumping" on their own?

Impact of the College Experience

Hundreds of studies have been conducted on how college impacts students (see Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005). Kerrigan, Dolby, and Lerner each use detailed interviews to focus on students' perceptions of society-related outcomes of particular experiences. For example, Dolby notes that most research on study abroad programs explores students' development of global awareness. However, particularly in the post-9/11 world, she argues that the development of one's own American identity becomes a critical (and salient) component of the study abroad learning experience; thus, students' study abroad experience can constitute a significant event in their identity development. In another chapter, Kerrigan discusses the impact of a capstone service-learning program at Portland State University. She finds that graduates perceived their service-learning experience as contributing to civic outcomes (i.e., leadership skills, community involvement/volunteerism, and appreciation of social diversity) and vocational outcomes (i.e., communication skills and career development). However, many of these graduates did not draw connections between their service projects and broader political issues.

Finally, whereas the first two studies (and most higher education literature) focus on clear outcomes and antecedents, Lerner argues that the relationship between White students' interactions with diverse peers and their conceptions of diversity efforts are reciprocal. Specifically, she shows that White students do not perceive a relationship between diversity efforts and racial inequality, which causes them to seek out and enjoy certain types of interactions with diversity (i.e., those that do not highlight issues of power), which in turn reinforces certain pre-existing notions of diversity. Thus, efforts to alter students' attitudes and behavior must challenge this self-perpetuating cycle.

Civic Engagement

Preparing students to engage in civic life has long been considered a function of higher education (Rudolph, 1962/1990). Flowers' analysis of volunteerism in African American college graduates follows in this tradition. He finds that it is difficult to predict the amount of time spent volunteering; in fact, the amount of time spent volunteering in college is *negatively* related to time spent volunteering four years after graduation. The only other significant relationship in his study seems more intuitive: social science and business majors spend more time volunteering after college than do science, engineering, and other technical majors. In other words, consistent with the goals of liberal arts education (American Association of Colleges and Universities, 2002), the fields of study that tend toward providing liberal arts education succeed in creating more civically engaged individuals.

On a micro-level, Brayboy and Urrieta provide nuanced analyses of how college graduates practice civic engagement through service to particular communities or constituencies. Brayboy explores how, for some American Indian tribes, a bachelor's or professional degree is primarily seen as a tool not for individual gain, but for enhancing the well-being of one's community. College graduates are expected to use their specialized training as doctors and lawyers to assist with remedying the ongoing struggles of their communities. Simultaneously, these highly-educated individuals must navigate the expectations and values of their communities, along with the time-consuming demands of their current occupations.

Similarly, in his study of Latina/o, Chicana/o faculty, Urrieta delineates the obligation to one's native culture and the dichotomy between community expectations and the academy's expectations. As a result of doing both academic and community work (which these professors attempt to link whenever possible), Latina/o, Chicana/o faculty have a greater workload than their White peers. However, these faculty strongly feel that they must serve as agents who challenge the current norms of academe to effect social change. By providing these detailed cultural analyses, Brayboy and Urrieta convincingly highlight the complex connections between individuals and communities, and how these college graduates use their education to serve specific aspects of the public good.

Community-Campus Partnerships

Whereas some chapters focus on the relationship of individuals to their communities, others describe how higher education institutions have partnered with their surrounding communities. Weerts provides a multi-case study examining the rhetoric and practice of outreach and engagement at three land-grant universities. He finds that community-campus partnerships are most likely

to thrive when the partnership is supported not only by top-level leadership, but also by work within communities. In other words, universities can build initial support by using the appropriate rhetoric, but these efforts cannot succeed without the appropriate follow-through. He notes that two of the three campuses that he analyzed had centralized outreach structures, which seemed to be effective in supporting these relationships.

Two other chapters provided insight into other connections between campuses and communities. O'Bryant described the Camfield Estates-MIT Creating Community Connections (C3) Project, which sponsored in-home use of computers and internet access for two years, along with training sessions on the C3 system website and basic computer skills. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology was involved primarily in the research aspects, with the primary funder, technology contractor and consultant, and the tenants' association working collaboratively to enhance community-building efforts and provide useful internet services and skills. The focus of this research was not the community-campus partnership per se, but the outcomes that resulted from these efforts. Furthermore, in Garbus' chapter, she depicts Vida Scudder's College Extension as being (at most) loosely affiliated with any particular college, with undergraduates teaching some of the Extension courses. According to Garbus, Scudder was not attempting to create a "partnership" per se, but was attempting to bring college "culture" and knowledge to the community. Today, most scholars and community leaders would agree that such an arrangement is one-sided and often does not meet the needs and desires of community members (e.g., Pasque, Smerek, Dwyer, Bowman, & Mallory, 2005). Indeed, Garbus suggests that this dynamic may have caused College Extension's failure.

University-Industry Relationships

The commercialization of today's higher education institutions has recently garnered attention from commentators both inside and outside of the academy (e.g., Bok, 2003; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). While many of these works broadly consider the role of colleges in American society, Powers focuses on how relationships with industry affect research within universities. Specifically, he examines contracts listed with the Securities and Exchange Commission between public companies and universities, and he finds that a fair number of these arrangements pose ethical conflicts that undermine the norms of academic science.

Legal and Public Considerations
in Institutional Policy

Finally, Green and Moses both examine affirmative action in the context of societal pressures. In her analysis, Green argues that the University of Michigan's decision to argue for the positive impact of diversity—as opposed to addressing racial inequality—was based on legal precedent as well as the palatable nature of this argument. Through this strategy, the University managed to garner broad support for its policy and simultaneously curtail arguments about racial preferences. This conclusion fits nicely with Moses' chapter, which suggests that the public generally agrees on the need for "equality" and "justice," but holds vastly different opinions on what these words mean and what policies would be appropriate for facilitating these outcomes. She argues that policy discussions of affirmative action must consider these divergent underlying conceptions of equality and justice. This line of inquiry, along with university-industry and campus-community partnerships, is particularly important for higher education for the public good, since it directly considers the intersection between higher education and society.

Synthesis

In various ways, the majority of these chapters dealt with interconnections of class, gender, culture, and/or race. Some of the chapters examined dynamics within groups (e.g., Flowers), whereas some examined interactions across groups (e.g., Lerner), and others examined policies pertaining to various groups (e.g., Green). A couple of chapters in particular cut across these categories. For example, Brayboy simultaneously highlighted the dynamics within some American Indian communities and how these values and norms influenced community members' pursuit, and subsequent use, of higher education. This emphasis is crucial—a defining piece of higher education for the public good is providing benefits to *all* members of the public.

It is also important to consider, methodologically speaking, how to best examine issues of higher education for the public good. Two of the chapters have used large secondary datasets to explore factors related to African American college graduates' volunteerism (Flowers) and transfer and persistence patterns across social class (Goldrick-Rab). These analyses' strengths are in their use of representative samples, consideration of myriad factors, and generalizability to national populations. However, even with advanced statistical techniques, establishing causality can be difficult. Why is time spent volunteering in college *negatively* related to time spent volunteering after college? Why are students who transfer to another four-year institution more likely to graduate than those who

remain at the same institution? The available data are not sufficient to explain the reasons for these patterns.

The majority of the chapters in this volume have taken qualitative approaches, using interviews, document analyses, field observations, or some combination. These techniques are useful in highlighting the specific context and nuances of a given situation, relationship, or series of events. Interviews may be used to incorporate the perspectives of the actors (e.g., students, administrators, community members) in ways that are often not possible with secondary data analysis. Ideally, whenever possible, it is best to triangulate participants' own perspectives with other forms of data (e.g., document analyses) to strengthen the validity of one's claims, particularly when one's research is openly ideological (Lather, 2003).

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR SCHOLARSHIP ON HIGHER EDUCATION FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD

As political, economic, demographic and technological shifts in societies occur, the relationships between higher education and the publics that sustain and benefit from them follow suit. Higher education structures are often accused of resisting change, or moving at such a slow pace that change is imperceptible to the human eye. However, what changes regularly is how and what scholars in higher education choose (or are guided) to attend to in their work. Much of the change in society can be credited with the shaping of scholars' intellectual work, and the scholarship on higher education's public good roles and responsibilities is no different. As we postulate in the preceding pages, early career scholars in higher education are both challenged and driven by real and perceived inequities in society, socio-historical interpretations of events that offer new perspectives on contemporary social challenges, prophetic insights into the positionality of historically marginalized populations in American culture, and a growing validation of multiple ways of seeking and knowing truths and social phenomena. Scholars that point their lens of inquiry toward socially inspired and socially beneficial ends, often live (and sometimes die) on the razors edge of what Burton Clark (1987) metaphorically called "small worlds, different worlds." "Small worlds" refer to the norms that are developed and sustained by disciplinary peer groups, such as disciplinary guilds, institutional type classification systems (i.e., Carnegie classifications, etc.) or membership (invitational or application) in exclusive educational consortia (such as the AAU). Small worlds could be viewed as those externally positioned norms that impact the internal behaviors of scholars. "Different worlds" are the norms, values and expectations that are specific to particular types of higher education institutions. The balance and type of scholarship, teaching and service are determined locally (in different worlds), though with recognized influence from

external forces (small worlds). Clark's "small worlds, different worlds" conception sets the stage for the tension experienced by some scholars who are committed to researching and teaching about socially inspired and socially beneficial matters, when their institution (different world) may not value such a focus in its reward structure, yet its professional guild or institutional affiliations (small world) may support, at least rhetorically, the need for higher education to use its resources for social improvement. The growing voice of the "public" has entered the equation through its elected and appointed proxies—such as legislators and policy makers—to demand tangible outcomes for its investments in systems and institutions of higher education. The outcomes of higher education must serve some public good!

What then might the future of scholarship on higher education's public good role look like? How then might scholars navigate the sometimes conflicting voices of the small worlds, different worlds, and demanding publics in their choices of intellectual topics of inquiry? Which of the existing normative structures (internal and external) must change, and how? And which of the existing normative structures should remain, and why? What voices should early career scholars who want to build sustained academic careers pay most attention to? Here are a few brief observations about the factors impacting the future of scholarship and scholars attending to higher education's public good role in society.

Impact of the Knowledge Economy on Public Good Scholarship

Positioning higher education as a vital contributor to economic development is not new. What appears to be emerging across several domestic and international fronts is the shifting context of higher educations economic role within the so-called "knowledge economy." Higher education is increasingly being viewed as a major player in the economic system where knowledge is heavily commodified, where market demands for certain skilled and knowledgeable higher education graduates escalates, and knowledge production—or in some cases higher education graduation rates as a "knowledge proxy"—is directly linked to regional and national economic growth (Jones, McCarney, & Skolnik, 2005). This shift in the relationship between higher education and economic forces has important implications for scholars who focus their scholarship on higher education for the public good. As demonstrated by the scholars writing in this book, what constitutes research, how it is done, and what ties it has to economic and social improvement is constantly evolving. As Jones (2006) reminds us, the changes within this evolution are complex and multifaceted: "they include an increasing emphasis on interdisciplinarity, applied problem-based initiatives, and programs

of research that involve direct (contractual) collaborations with industry" (p. 319). While these "collaborations" have been lauded as appropriate and sometimes desired ways of acquiring needed (and otherwise unavailable) resources to conduct research, concerns exist regarding the retailing of academic freedom from scholars to industry in these arrangements. This transfer of faculties' defining professional quality (academic freedom) essentially redefines faculty scholars as "knowledge labor," positioning them dangerously close to employees of the commercial market. Again, Jones (2006) cautions us that "the critical role of faculty in terms of knowledge creation and dissemination related to social (public good), and not just economic, development must be more clearly understood" (p. 319).

Academic Freedom, Social Obligation, and Tenure

For early career scholars who focus their scholarship and teaching on higher education's public roles and responsibilities, do the concepts of academic freedom, social obligation, and tenure acquisition pose an uneasy triumvirate (at best), or a mutually exclusive values set (at worse)? What are the values and behaviors that govern faculty life and guides successful scholarly careers? In some institutions, does socially focused (public good) scholarship and teaching (as a reflection of one's academic freedom) inhibit or support one's path to tenure? Early career scholars and doctoral students, who aspire to be academic scholars, express deep concerns about the resistance from the academy to their commitment to combine quality scholarship and active public engagement that address serious social problems. Paul Sabin's article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 8, 2002) summarized the condition of many emerging scholar-citizens in American higher education:

> Assistant Professors have to keep quiet and seek tenure before they safely take on a significant public role…academe as well as society lose out by forcing young scholars to avoid public affairs while they pursue tenure….The studied silence and subtle disapproval regarding public service, advocacy, and community work leave many young scholars discouraged….Systemically undermining the relationship between scholars and the broader public audiences stifles badly needed dialogue on problems facing society as a whole (p. B24).

Academic freedom, as articulated in the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure issued jointly by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the Association of American Colleges (now the American Association of Colleges and Universities [AAC&U]), positions this value as strictly a procedural value, with little ties to the actual issuance of tenure or

faculty continuation at an institution. According to the 1940 document, academic freedom means that:

1. Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.
2. Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject. Limitations of academic freedom because of religious or other aims of the institution should be clearly stated in writing at the time of the appointment.
3. College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution (pp. 3–4).

The institution of tenure has stimulated contentious debate within and outside of higher education for decades. The arguments have centered on the purposes, effects and institutional legitimacy of tenure in its current form. Since the official codification of tenure under the auspices of the American Association of University Professors in 1940, academic tenure in higher education was intended to "protect academic freedom—the freedom to teach and write without fear of retribution for expressing heterodox ideas" (*Grimes v. Eastern*, 1983, as cited in Copeland & Murry, 1996, n52).

Over the years, some have questioned its value, arguing that the issuance of tenure encourages faculty mediocrity on one hand, and, on the other hand, is the ultimate protector of academic freedom and unfettered intellectual exploration. Some institutions have opted out of the issuance of tenure all together. Others have replaced the traditional tenure process with "tenure-like" or "tenure-light" processes that tie faculty longevity (and to some degree, academic freedom) to regular performance evaluations.

Early career scholars specifically, and all scholars generally, who commit themselves to the exploration of socially inspired and relevant issues and knowledge,

would do well to attend to the alignment between institutional and personal notions of academic freedom and social obligations. Ultimately, scholars are encouraged to consistently assess the degree to which a reasonable balance exists between these tensions (i.e., institutional and personal notions of academic freedom and social obligations) in order to facilitate the acquisition of tenure and longevity.

Globalization of Social Issues, Professional Mobility, and Geographic Fidelity

For early career scholars, it has become clear that the issues they choose to explore have implications far beyond the contexts in which they are studied. Issues of social justice in the United States, for example, have broad implications for victims of social injustice abroad. Likewise, issues of injustice toward women impacts the lives of those victimized because of race, religion, or sexual orientation, both domestically and internationally. Another emerging dynamic is the growing recognition of interconnectivity among problems explored by scholars. These public problems are not those of a single social domain, nor are there singular solutions to the vast cluster of problems embedded in each identified problem (Chambers, 2005). Networks of all types of people and institutions need to confront the problems with the same complex, systemic and interconnected frame that inspired and prolonged the problems. According to Vartan Gregorian, President of the Carnegie Corporation in New York:

> As a society, we tend to pay lip service to the complexity of problems and then continue to gamble on simplistic solutions, such as building prisons to solve the crime and drug problems. But as Bela H. Banathy, a systems theorist, writes: "A technical problem of transportation, such as the building of a freeway, becomes a land use problem, linked with economics, environmental, conservation, ethical, and political issues. Can we really draw a boundary? When we ask to improve a situation, particularly if it is a public one, we find ourselves facing not a problem, but a cluster of problems...and none of these problems can be tackled using linear or sequential methods" (2004, p. B12).

Early career scholars are faced with the challenge of considering the multiple dimensions and connections of issues they choose to explore and the related impacts these various dimensions have on their methodological choices, selection of research participants, types of analyses, interpretations of findings, and perspectives on what their work means in terms of its potential applications.

With this added complexity in the process of scholarship, the locality work plays a less significant role in terms of where one does the research, or, in some cases, the teaching. Early career scholars, and indeed, higher education scholars generally, are presented the options and challenges of professional mobility. That is, because of technological options and the demand for knowledge and data in real time, anywhere, scholars can "do what they do" anywhere, generally situating themselves in any kind of environment, educational or otherwise. This dynamic raises all kinds of questions about the real and perceived purposes of higher education institutions as physical places/spaces. While much of the debate about the physicality of higher education institutions has centered around the impact on students, we would argue that the debate should clearly position itself around the impact on teaching and scholarship. Finally, with the expansion of the notion of academic mobility, the concern about geographic and institutional fidelity seems appropriate and potentially acute. Will scholars commit to a place, community, region as a contributing member, or will the options for mobility dilute (or transform) the ethos of commitment to place? As the 1960s song lyrics suggest, will scholars, in their relation to institutions, embrace the notion that "if you can't be with the one you love, love the one you're with"? Additionally, the potential dilution of geographic and institutional fidelity raises concerns about what it means to be in a community of scholars; what constitutes one's academic home; who one's "colleagues" and "students" are; and what this transformation has to do with the process of tenure, which has traditionally been seen as an "institutional" decision.

These observations are more complex than simply negative or positive forces that impede or advance scholarship on higher education for the public good. They are reflections of the larger social shifts that, depending on the alignment or misalignment of institutional (different world), professional (small world), and social values and pressures, can present opportunities and/or challenges to scholars who focus their work on particular social outcomes. Scholars generally—and early career scholars, in particular—would do well to pay attention to these emerging dynamics.

Challenges and Issues for Higher Education for the Public Good

There are significant barriers to enacting the vision of an expanded focus of scholarship on higher education for the public good in today's higher education institutions. As noted earlier, many observations regarding future changes in higher education, and society, will impact the work of early career scholars. Although a long list of challenges or potential obstacles could be presented here, we've chosen to focus on three areas of immediate concern: non-tenure-track (NTT)

faculty, interdisciplinarity, and internationalization. It is worth noting some of the issues that may impede inquiry overlap with those that would provide fruitful directions for future inquiry (e.g., those pertaining to tenure and globalization/internationalization).

Non-Tenure-Track Faculty

Oftentimes, when people talk about "faculty," they are referring (implicitly or explicitly) to professors in tenure-track positions. Discussions of the need for research productivity, along with the concomitant tension between "traditional research" and research for the public good (Ward, 2005), primarily applies to this group of faculty. However, in recent years, the number of full-time non-tenure-track (FTNTT) faculty has quickly increased (Benjamin, 1997; Kirshstein, Matheson, & Jing, 1997), even surpassing the number of untenured tenure-track faculty (Benjamin, 1997). There are a variety of reasons for this trend, including cost savings, long-term staffing flexibility, providing specialized faculty resources, or as a viable—and, for some faculty, a preferable—alternative to traditional tenure-track positions (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001).

Although there are some general differences between FTNTT and tenure-track faculty (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001; Gansneder, Harper, & Baldwin, 2001), it makes sense to think about the diverse amalgamation of FTNTT faculty in terms of their primary role on campus. Gansneder et al. (2001) describe four types of faculty members: teachers (64% of FTNTT faculty), researchers (10%), administrators (11%), and other academic professionals (15%). Faculty members in the teachers group have far fewer publications and more in-class teaching time per week than do tenured or tenure-track professors. Despite their lighter teaching loads, faculty in the administrators group also have extensive responsibilities that leave little time for research; their level of research productivity is also quite low, when compared to tenured or tenure-track faculty. Taken together, faculty whose primary role is teaching or administration comprises three-quarters of all full-time non-tenure-track faculty members. This percentage is probably even higher for part-time faculty who are not on a tenure track.

Since FTNTT faculty teach such a large number of students (especially at large universities), there must be creative ways of involving non-tenure-track faculty in higher education for the public good. Currently, these faculty are often occupied with large general education courses instead of specialized, advanced coursework or service-learning experiences (Baldwin & Chronister, 2001). In this position, though, they have a unique ability to convey the importance of and opportunities for public service to undergraduate students.

Interdisciplinary Work

The expectations for faculty—tenure-track and otherwise—can be quite ambiguous (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). But what about for those faculty who conduct interdisciplinary research and/or have joint appointments in multiple departments? Given the rigid departmental structures and disciplinary socialization at most colleges and universities, it is extremely difficult for faculty to work across disciplinary boundaries, with promotion and tenure proving to be a particularly vexing problem (Damrosch, 1995). Who can provide an unbiased judgment about the intellectual worth of an interdisciplinary scholar's work? Who *should* be enlisted to do so? Since graduate students and early-career faculty perceive interdisciplinary research as being devalued or discounted in the academic community, what can be done to provide incentives for such research? Fortunately, some institutions are beginning to reassess their reward structures for working across disciplinary boundaries (O'Meara, 2005).

Despite a seeming lack of appreciation for interdisciplinarity in the promotion and tenure process, such approaches are vital for effectively exploring higher education for the public good. Since higher education is a field of study, not a discipline (Hearn, 1997), it must draw upon various disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches whenever appropriate. This need for flexible approaches becomes even more pressing when the scope of higher education research is expanded from colleges and their students to include societal forces, such as communities, businesses, legislation, and public pressures. The recent proliferation of K–16 research and policy perspectives (e.g., Kirst & Venezia, 2004) suggests a willingness to expand our view of what is important to higher education, but a similar disciplinary expansion must also follow.

Internationalization

According to Schoorman (2000), internationalization is defined as "an educational process that acknowledges and reflects an international context of knowledge and practice where societies are viewed as subsystems of a larger, inclusive world" (p. 4). Despite the growing impact of globalization on the United States and its colleges and universities (Tierney, 2004), internationalization remains a relatively peripheral part of most college curricula (Goodwin & Nacht, 1991; Hayward, 2000). For example, fewer than half of undergraduate students (44%) take any foreign language courses during their academic careers (Lambert, 1989), and only 3% participate in study abroad programs (Hayward, 2000). College presidents strongly endorse the need to prepare students to function effectively in the context of an internationalized environment, but they are unable to articulate clearly what this education would entail (Lambert, 1989).

In reviewing the existing literature for the American Council on Education (ACE), Hayward (2000) concluded that students' participation in international education had not improved since the last ACE assessment in 1986–1987. However, these findings about the lack of progress in the United States' international education do not imply a lack of international representation; in fact, over 475,000 undergraduate and graduate international students attended American colleges and universities in 2001 (Sen, Partelow, & Miller, 2005).

Pertaining to higher education for the public good, this trend begs the question: Who is "the public"? Is it residents of the United States? The world? In this volume, Dolby addresses how study abroad can lead students not only to understand and appreciate "other cultures," but also to form one's own identity as an American. However, the degree to which the analyses of the various issues addressed in this volume—college access and persistence, college outcomes, civic engagement, campus partnerships with communities and industry, and public conceptions of admissions policies—apply to other countries and systems of higher education is an open question. Future research should explore not only issues of higher education internationally, but also the complex relationships between higher education and societies in various countries.

Conclusion

Working with and learning from this collection of early career scholars has been very rewarding and hopeful. From their scholarly commitments, it is easy to internalize a sense of optimism about higher education's role in the improvement of society on many levels. This chapter, as well as the entire book, is an attempt to express current conceptions, questions and thought surrounding higher education's many ways of exploring its role relative to society's needs. Further, the book explored both future directions for scholars to engage in inquiry regarding the pubic roles and responsibilities of higher education, and the various challenges on the horizon for these scholars to do their important work.

Where do we go from here? In order for early career scholars (and scholars generally) to successfully navigate the tensions between personal, institutional and disciplinary notions of socially and professionally viable research, several conditions must prevail. In addition to attending to the need for professional validation of "public good" scholarship, institutions, higher education systems, and communities need to undertake activities that can advance a higher level of understanding about the social and educational benefits of strengthened relations between higher education and society. Included among these activities are:

- **Further Examination and Dissemination** of current policy, practices, and driving issues within and between higher education

and society. Exploratory efforts should be transparent and accessible to a wide range of stakeholders. Possible exploratory approaches could include joint (community and institutional) impact analyses of specific efforts, institutional and/or community self-assessments, collaborative research and assessment between social and institutional entities, and presentations and participation of representatives from higher education and social entities at each other's key meetings and gatherings to exchange mutually important insights and concerns.

- **Dialogue** needs to be cross-sectorial; thematic; outcomes-based; "sustained" over regular and adequate time periods; representative of stakeholder populations; respectful of cultural values and ways of being; and "elastic" enough to contain multiple perspectives, yet bounded by the rules of respectful, focused discourse.

- **Institutional Engagement** that involves various forms of interaction within and between levels of leadership in higher education institutions and systems, including students, faculty, staff, governing boards and alumni. Engagement within institutions should be targeted for specific change and understanding. Aligning the aims of institutional engagement and scholarship with the aims of public needs is critical in order to optimize broad learning and social impact.

- **Public Engagement** that entails multiple forms of exchange between higher education communities and various publics about the larger purposes of higher education and the assets and needs of communities, assessment of public thought and opinions regarding higher education, and collective identification and strategic planning regarding challenges and mutually beneficial outcomes for higher education and society.

- **Forming Strategic Alliances** between higher education institutions and community entities, which should seek and nurture broader relationships, including those outside of their traditional ones. Building alliance clusters requires strategic thought and action on the part of all those in the relationship and demands clarity of purpose and specific responsibilities among those in the alliance.

- **Developing Public Policy** that translates a collective community and institutional understanding about the origins, impact, and potential

solutions to social challenges into codified procedures and practices. Institutions and social entities should work together to shape and shepherd meaningful public policy that reflects collective values and reinforces mutually beneficial outcomes.

- ✦ **A Consciousness and Culture Shift** must occur within and outside of the academy. Perhaps the most difficult of all necessary actions is a transformation in the ways higher education and parts of society view themselves and act on those views. Additionally, the ways in which institutional and community values are reflected in behaviors, practices, policies, traditions, and relationships will need to be examined to assure alignment between cultural and environmental realities, institutional and community rhetoric, commitments of scarce resources, and conclusions made about the impact of collective efforts.

At the end of the day, it is our hope and desire that this edited book will contribute to scholarly discourse and practice in order to better understand the role of higher education in a changing society.

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