Where do we go from here?

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Outline

• Introduction
• Research Partnerships
  – General / Specific
• Foster Relevant Research
  – ‘Vision’
• Closing
1) General Partnership Issues

Framing the topic:
• Building Relationships
• Working in Relationships

Research Partnerships

Benefits
• Bring together diverse (complementary) skills/expertise
• Creates a foundation of trust for effective & efficient research work
• Unexpected synergies
Building Relationships

• Listening, understanding
• Deciding on comfort zones
  – Team
  – Partners
  – Collaborators
• Takes time, experience to build
  – Search for a good fit:
    • Background
    • Working / writing style
• Issues to resolve
  – Goals
  – Responsibilities
  – Differential capacity / contributions

Barriers to Building Research Relationships

1. Competing commitments
   • teaching, service, research
   • practice, administration
2. Design of programs and research institutes
3. Policy challenges
4. Financial challenges
5. Human resources challenges / t
   • students
   • research assistants, managers
The Engaged Campus

Faculty Constraints

- Lack of time
- Teaching loads
- Tenure pressures
  - Publish or perish
  - Lack measures for community support work / risks
- Tension between ‘products’ and training students
- Incomplete adaptation by funding agencies
Working in Research Relationships

- Takes time
  - Needs support
  - Watch for burnout
  - Struggle with funding cycles
- Give up elements of control
- Governance / conflict resolution
- Cumulative capacity / knowledge development
- Time to realize research outcomes
  - Can frustrate partners

2) Specific Partnership Issues

- With communities
  - Communities & care research must cross whole communities
- With UNBC / NHA
  - Tools for supporting research
Community Relationships

The Challenge
• Communities face many changes / challenges
• Seek information to make decisions
  – Timely, relevant, and useful
• Can have unrealistic expectations about research outcomes
• Academics enter research task seeking to improve questions

Community Relationships
• Mismatch of expectations
  – Communities want answers
  – Academics want questions
Community Receptor Capacity

• Small offices – few staff
  – Experience
  – Turnover and institutional memory
  – Limited technical support and resources

• Relationship demands
  – Difficult on time / staff
  – Often need financial commitment

Community Receptor Capacity

• Bottom-up ‘may not be equipped’ to mobilize knowledge
  – Not ‘single voice’

• Need support for building relationships / capacity
  – Poorly understood by funding programs
  – Research institutions talk the ‘engaged’ language; but not equipped to follow through with infrastructure / support
Lessons for Community-University Relationships

1. Creating / maintaining a relationship
2. Link community partnerships with appropriate university resources
3. Develop bottom-up research ideas
4. Involve community partners in all aspects of research design & execution
5. Guided knowledge mobilization

Guiding Principles

1. Respect
2. Flexibility
3. Patience
4. Sincerity
Fostering Research Partnerships: UNBC - NHA

Getting the Most out of Your Experience

Set Goals:
• Academic goals
• Policy goals
• Career goals
• General capacity / development goals
Fostering Research Partnerships: UNBC - NHA

- Support a communications loop
  - Meetings / workshops / conferences
  - Social events
  - E-mail lists
  - Project student learning websites / blogs
- Identify mentoring supports
  - Faculty, students, recommended contacts
- Common work spaces
- Routine communication is key

Support Building Research Skills

**Writing**
- Writing - general
- Developing conceptual materials
- Writing summaries / synopses
- Literature review
- Writing journal articles
- Report writing
- Bibliographical materials
- ProCite bibliography
- Annotated bibliography
- Library research
- Media writing
- Writing flyers
- Preparing posters
- Editing
- Peer review papers
- Reviewing field instruments
- Formatting and printing public documents

**Communication**
- Preparing presentations (Power Point)
- Presenting papers
- Preparing / producing conference materials
- Liaison with research sites
- Liaison with government
- Visiting rural communities
- Attend site festivals
- Chair meetings
- Lead seminars
- Working with First Nations

**Research Design and Data Collection**
- Research ethics protocols
- Survey design
- Data collection
- Interviewing
- Internet surveying
- Working with Census data
- Data entry
- Checking data quality

**Analysis**
- Quantitative analysis
- Qualitative analysis
- Longitudinal analysis
- Analysis of municipal websites

**Organizational Skills**
- Organize meetings / workshops / conferences
- Organize site events
- Organizing on-line chat sessions
- Assisting with radio broadcast exercise
- Cataloguing newspaper articles
- Coordinating field work
- Coordinate Internet user survey
- Assist with coordinating student activities
- Organizing theoretical discussion groups

**Management and Administration**
- Management skills
- Assist with management and administration
- Gathering data collected from across Canada
- Budgeting / financial management
- Identifying / anticipating problems
- Maintain student contracts
- Maintain time sheets
- Manage receipts / finances for workshops and conferences
- Secretarial duties

**Human Resource Development**
- Mentoring / training other students
- Team building exercises / special occasion
Finding Opportunities

Through:
- Class projects
- Directed studies
- Volunteering
- Internship
- Advance studies
  - Projects
  - Theses

Lessons Learned

- Operational challenges
  - Focus on smaller projects
  - Involve fewer researchers
  - Improve time management
  - More administrative supports needed
- Don’t start unless serious to carry through (time / money)
Foster Relevant Research

- Status quo
- Future program

Current Approach

- Ad hoc
  - Investigator driven
  - Funding opportunity driven
- Good track record
  - Success on number of scales
- But…
  - Has limits
  - Not cumulative
  - Mired in “future research questions”
Foster Relevant Research

A strategic way forward:

- Identify emergent large issues for northern communities and care support in the next 20-30 years
  - Foster environment of dialogue & relationship building to address pieces of that future community / care problem

A broad ‘future’ framework:

- Allows individuals to move their creative work into a bigger picture
  - Mutual benefits
- Allows opportunities for research groups to come together on larger issues
  - Buy in / cumulative skills
- Each part can contribute to better understanding of ‘whole’
Issues in next 20-30 years:

- Demographic
  - Health care for aging at home
  - Health care for institutional aging
- Services
  - Role to technology / smart services
  - Get away from 19th century models of delivery / duties
- Full community development & care integration
  - Individual / family / community
  - Education / mental health / social development
  - Wellness not medical intervention

Community Development Institute

Rural community change & future (20-30 years)

- Economic development / restructuring
- Community development / change
- Demographics / seniors & youth
- Voluntary sector
- Smart / innovative services
- Poverty
- Gender
- Health care
- Worker commuting
- Communications / technology infrastructure
Mechanisms:

• Invited speakers / conferences on ‘next generation’ topics
  – Lead, not follow

• Targeted research grants
  – Stipends, post-docs, etc.

• Plan time release to support research teams

• Research support administration
  – Steering / advisory committees
  – Staff support
  – Research & policy entrepreneurs
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