

Society for College and University Planning 2018-19 SCUP Fellow Research Proposal

SCUP Fellow:

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Project Title

Collaborative Planning as a Means toward Collaborative Innovation on a Co-Located Campus

Project Description

In May 2016, Ohio's General Assembly passed Substitute House Bill 391, which created the Task Force for Creating Opportunities for Shared Governance on Co-Located Campuses. As its title suggests, this task force was charged with creating a model of shared governance for Ohio's seven co-located campuses, ones in which a community college and a regional branch of a four-year university are located on the same or adjoining campuses:

- Belmont College and Ohio University-East
- Central Ohio Technical College and OSU-Newark
- North Central State College and OSU-Mansfield
- Marion Technical College and OSU-Marion
- Rhodes State College and OSU-Lima
- Stark State College and Kent State-Stark
- Zane State College and Ohio University-Zanesville

The task force ultimately called for co-located institutions to explore "shared administration, student services, maintenance, facility usage, and other shared governance to better serve the students" while preserving the individual academic missions of the community college and the university's regional branch (Recommendations of the Task Force for Creating Opportunities for Shared Governance on Co-Located Campuses, p. 5).

When I became campus dean of Ohio University's Zanesville (OUZ) campus in June 2017, I assumed responsibility for enacting this task force's recommendations at my campus in collaboration with the President of Zane State College (ZSC), Dr. Chad Brown. OUZ and ZSC previously adopted a memorandum of understanding concerning a range of shared services and cost sharing, including a bookstore, our library, maintenance, facilities, utilities, security, and counseling services. We have a strong culture of cooperation and coexistence, and Dr. Brown and I have quickly proven the accuracy of the report's assertion that "Collaboration, effectiveness and efficiency is deeply influenced by the relationships with presidents and deans who lead co-located institutions" (8).

Yet, in my relative brief time as campus dean I already see that fully realizing the task force's recommendations for shared services, campus master planning, and extensive collaboration is made more complex by the fact that, although our institutions' missions differ, they nevertheless also potentially compete especially as state resources, graduating high school students, and adult learners interested in returning to college decline. President Brown, his provost, and I have begun a conversation about potentially extending our collaborations to the academic side of our institutions through academic programs and perhaps even faculty, which has raised the question of how to achieve collaboration when the stakeholders affected by our decisions might have much more divergent, and perhaps even hostile, views of such an expansion.

My project therefore focuses on whether co-located institutions specifically, and competing institutions of higher education more generally, could use "collaborative planning," a conceptual framework from urban planning that emphasizes "Partnership, stakeholder involvement, collaboration and consensus-oriented decision-making" as core principles of planning (Vandenbussche, Edelenbos, and Eshuis, "Pathways of Stakeholders' Relations and Frames in Collaborative Planning Processes," *Planning Theory* 16 (3): 234), as an effective tool for transcending competition, negotiating disagreements, and achieving increased institutional collaboration and innovation.

Project Goal

1. Draw upon SCUP resources and the knowledge of SCUP members to develop an understanding of collaborative planning as both a theoretical and practical concept.
2. Answer the question of whether collaborative planning as a conceptual framework provides an adequate model for transcending competition among co-located or near-located higher education institutions, negotiating disagreements among stakeholders, and achieving increased institutional collaboration and innovation.
3. Produce a literature review on collaborative planning in higher education, a SCUP conference presentation on my project, and an article for publication detailing the results of my research.

Project Methodology & Rationale:

I have no formal training in planning theory; consequently, I hope to draw upon SCUP resources and the knowledge of SCUP members to develop an understanding of planning theory and how it may be applied to co-located campuses as well as of appropriate research methods for completing my project. I will begin by compiling a literature review on collaborative planning, its definitions, practice, and central concepts. I will then visit as many of Ohio's seven co-located campuses as I can to conduct semi-structured interviews with their leadership focusing on the processes by which their campuses are working to achieve the task force's recommendations concerning collaboration and shared services and their opinions on the efficacy of those processes. I will use my literature review to develop the interview questions. Finally, I will use what I learn during the year to help facilitate my institution's collaboration with colleagues at Zane State College.

To complete the project, I will likely need assistance from my university's leadership to help me successfully solicit interviews with presidents and deans at other co-located campuses.

Project Deliverables

In addition to the presentation at SCUP's annual international conference and a two-page project summary, I plan to compose a publishable scholarly article on the results of my research. While my project will focus on co-located campuses in the state of Ohio, I believe my results will have helpful information for any institutional competitors that are entering more collaborative relationships because of the challenges colleges and universities are currently facing. My hope is that the finished article will find a home in SCUP's journal, *Planning for Higher Education*, or in *Access: The Journal of the National Association of Branch Campus Administrators*.

Implementation Plan and Preliminary Schedule

Quarter 1: July–September 2018—Complete literature review of current research on collaborative planning. (I will begin the review before July 2018.)

Quarter 2: October–December 2018—Develop interview instrument for co-located campus leaders, contact those leaders, and arrange to visit their campuses and interview their leadership.

Quarter 3: January–March 2019—Visit the six other co-located campuses in Ohio and interview their leadership concerning planning methods for joint projects.

Quarter 4: April–June 2019—Complete SCUP presentation and draft an article detailing the results of my research. Present my project at the SCUP Annual Conference in Seattle, WA, July 13-16, 2019.

What I Hope To Learn

Most importantly, I hope to learn effective planning strategies for collaborative projects with my co-located institution, Zane State College. I am especially interested in developing expertise that will lead to innovative solutions for surmounting the obstacles that inhibit collaboration and shared governance. Can collaborative planning processes lead not only to greater shared governance and budgetary efficiencies but also to an improved student experience and academic programming?

Additionally, I hope to learn and develop research methodologies that were not part of my previous academic training. As a campus leader, I have little time for the intellectual work of scholarship in my academic discipline. I hope working on this project will both benefit my campus and fulfill my desire for scholarly activity.
