

**CREATE
COMMUNITIES CHANGE UNIVERSITIES**

*Power and Possibility of Partnerships
Between Universities and Communities*

February 14, 2013



Fern Tiger

- Professor, Urban Studies, **University of Washington Tacoma**
- Founder, Creative Director **Fern Tiger Associates**
- Oakland, CA-based firm managing comprehensive analysis, creative design, strategic communications, and civic engagement to strengthen communities and organizations

Fern Tiger Associates 2013



Working with Communities

Fern Tiger Associates 2013

The Power of Partnerships

- The Academy and The City: *A Long Tradition of Town and Gown*
- Changing the Tradition: *Universities and Communities at a Crossroad*
- Embracing Opportunities: *Learning from Others to Unleash the Power of University/Community Partnership*




Fern Tiger Associates 2013

*“If you want to go fast, walk alone.
If you want to go far, walk together.”*

– African proverb

Fern Tiger Associates 2013



**The Academy and the City:
A Long Tradition of Town and Gown**

Fern Tiger Associates 2013

The Academy



*Elite, often religiously-based havens
for the creation and study of knowledge.*

Fern Tiger Associates 2013

The City



*Gateways - flourishing political, economic,
and cultural centers.*

Fern Tiger Associates 2013

The Town/The Gown

- 1100s: Universities without campuses; masters rented lecture halls; students rented housing; cities provided "marketplace"
- Students /faculty wore distinctive academic garb; social symbol implying no manual work
- Students /faculty congregated in particular parts of the city
- Centuries of tension



Fern Tiger Associates 2013



Changing the Tradition
Universities and Communities at a Crossroad

Fern Tiger Associates 2013

The Town and The Gown: Why engage?

- Renews the civic mission of the public university
- Engages faculty in knowledge to improve society
- Shares knowledge/resources broadly, as prompted by values of a democratic society
- Connects thought to action, theory to practice
- Creates partnerships with clear expectations of consequences/benefits that can transform both parties
- Increases community understanding (can impact support for university goals)
- Illustrates commitment by university to stakeholders
- Expands/ adds dimension to learning and experiences
- Responds to mutual self interest

Fern Tiger Associates 2013

Inherent Engagement

- **Big employer**; employees live in community
- **Landowner**
- **Resource**
- **Population engine** (in neighborhoods and beyond)
- **University growth** mirrors (and is tied to) economic development of community
- **Urban dynamics** impact student/faculty recruitment
- **Cultural**, entertainment, sports opportunities

Intentional Engagement

- **Teaching** focuses on local issues; gets students into community
- **Research** focused on community-defined problems; faculty rewarded for local research
- **Engagement** in local issues
- Working together to **build capacity**
- Growth of **knowledge economies**

Fern Tiger Associates 2013

Gown and Town Tensions

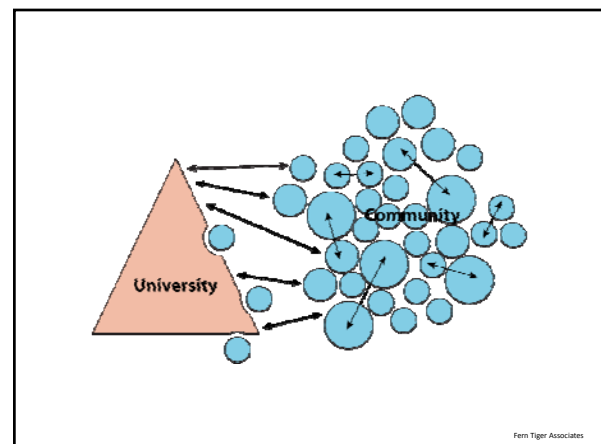
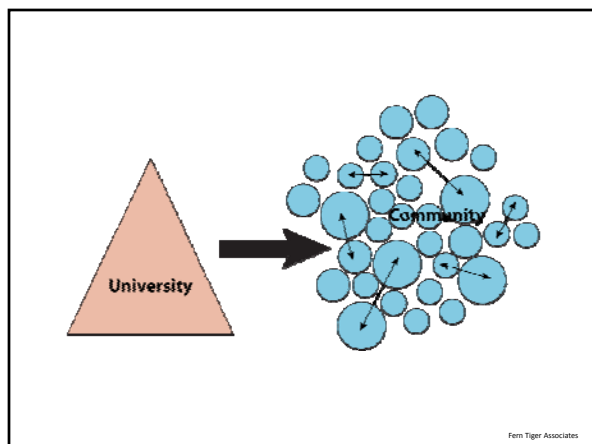
- Ambivalent relationships
- Separate governance
- Faculty/Students residing in particular neighborhoods
- Land use, parking, traffic, voting, police/fire jurisdictions, tax exemption
- Incentives to cooperate: universities need city approvals; city needs payment for services
- Proprietary resources
- Diversity (race and class)

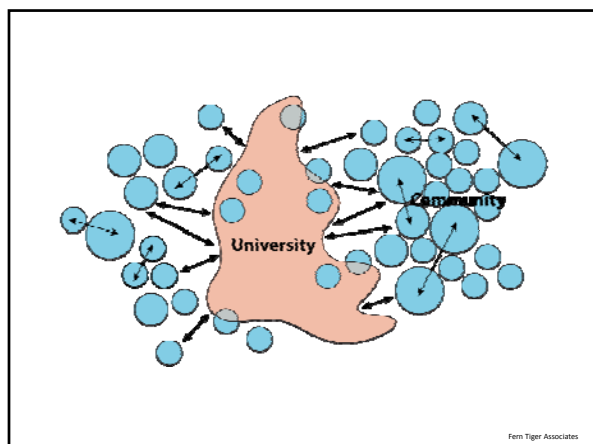


Fern Tiger Associates 2013

Universities Think Communities Are:	Communities Think Universities Are:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to understand • Process driven • Disorganized • Demanding • Unreasonable • Irrational • Taking advantage of them • Greedy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretive • Big employers • Bureaucratic, Corporate • Elite • Monolithic • Non-responsive • Taking advantage of them • Greedy

Fern Tiger Associates 2013





Goals of ASU Project

- Examine history, programs, perceptions, policies, people in ASU and Greater Phoenix to flesh out and give life to concept of “deep community engagement” (social embeddedness)
- Create Plan with broad vision for transformative partnership

Process/Methodology

- 150+ one-on-one stakeholder interviews
- Visits to 15 college campuses; 70+ interviews
- Research; best practices; analysis; meetings

Fern Tiger Associates 2013

“It’s more than a program; it’s an attitude.”

“University people don’t see themselves as part of the community and they don’t have a passion for change.”

- from ASU interviews

Fern Tiger Associates 2013

The University/ Community “Quilt”

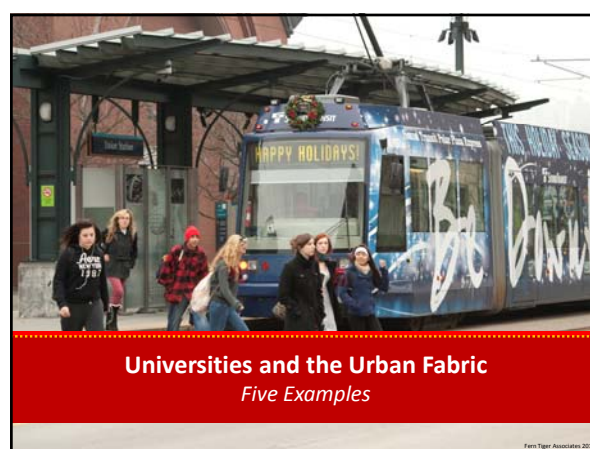
Creating positive change in the Community and also in the teaching, research, and service responsibilities of the University

	Teaching/ Learning	Research/ Discovery	Community Capacity Building	Economic Development /Investment	Social Development
University- wide Culture					
Internal/ External Structures					
Partnerships with Communities					
National Model					

GOALS

STRATEGIES

Fern Tiger Associates 2013



Place-Based Engagement

- Campus is integrated into the surrounding neighborhood
- Community activities occur on campus and vice versa
- Easy-access, on-campus storefronts enhance community life and provide economic development opportunities
- Campus “green spaces” and sports facilities are pedestrian-friendly and open to the public
- Importance of regional signage and local “way-finding” from outside to inside and inside to outside
- Public transit specifically serves campus and surrounding neighborhood (esp bus & light rail)
- Campus presence and its activities attract other community institutions; community institutions attract university participation

From Tiger Associates 2013

ASU Downtown Campus – Phoenix, AZ

- Use of some existing downtown buildings +
- Built through City tax dollars
- Public invited to use buildings; First Friday events
- Porous to community
- Student housing; light rail to other ASU campuses
- Efforts to engage
- *Some resistance to relocation; impact on local small biz?*

From Tiger Associates 2013



Georgia Tech, Atlanta

- Specific partnerships with site-based schools (tutoring, leadership development)
- Real estate development incorporating neighborhoods into planning; high level Director of Real Estate Planning with community view
- Director elected Chair of Neighborhood Planning Unit

From Tiger Associates 2013

Trinity College, Hartford CN

- Est. 1872; 120 years later surrounding neighborhood blighted
- Abandon campus for suburbs or engage to improve neighborhood?
- Engaged deeply on multiple fronts
- Office of Community Service and Engagement; Trinity Center for Neighborhoods; Community Learning Initiative
- Biggest effort/longstanding impact: *The Learning Corridor* (\$175MM project on campus): K-5, 6-8, HS, sports center

From Tiger Associates 2013



UC Berkeley (How not to do it)

- 142,000 sq' athletic facility + 900 parking spaces (improve athletic recruiting)
- Would destroy landmark Oak grove (40+ trees)
- Town highly educated, activist
- Ongoing tensions prior to this (lawsuits against other developments)
- Protestors took to trees – 21 months
- \$28M construction delays; \$3M+ legal and security costs
- Damage to already fragile relations

From Tiger Associates 2013

University of Washington Tacoma - History

- Historically working class city; can do attitude; “in shadow of Seattle”
- Community fought for UW campus to be created; active leadership
- Re-purposed, renovated vacant industrial buildings; seamlessly integrated into downtown; created new center of city with UWT as hub
- Within the urban fabric
- 20 years later credited by community as having revitalized city

From Tiger Associates 2013

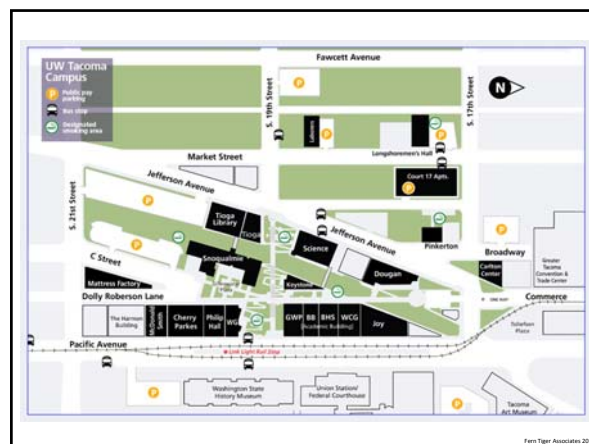




University of Washington Tacoma - 2013

- Positioned as “urban serving university”
- Served as “attractor” creating downtown arts/museum hub
- Attracts students/faculty dedicated to community issues
- Strategic regional, community partnerships
- Pedestrian-, transit-friendly
- Totally open campus as hub of city
- Newly announced decision to partner with YMCA to build facility

Fern Tiger Associates 2013



Fern Tiger Associates 2013



What Does it Take?

Fern Tiger Associates 2013

What Does it Take?

- Strong, working definition of an empowered partnership
- Shared ethos (evidenced by mission) broadly disseminated and understood
- The “will” to be transformed by the process and the solutions
- Intentionality of direction and transparency of decisionmaking
- Support for community “empowerment” (vs. “service” to the community)
- Backing at the highest level for a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach
- Clear expectations of university and community
- Shared responsibility for outcomes

Fern Tiger Associates 2013

Challenges

What gets in the way?

- Lack of consistent, ongoing leadership
- Resistance from faculty and administration
- Competition for funding sources
- Culture of university clings to status quo
- Skepticism within the community

Change is Hard!

Fern Tiger Associates 2013



Opportunities

What are the opportunities at U. of Utah?

- New university leadership
- Enthusiastic faculty
- Little history of tension
- No entrenched stakeholders

Fern Tiger Associates 2013



