



# California Campus Compact 2014-2018 STRATEGIC PLAN

California | Campus Compact  
*Educating Students to Change Our World*

## INTRODUCTION

In 2013, California Campus Compact (CACC) designed and implemented an intentional strategic planning process. Building on their existing strategic plan, CACC chose to continue to focus on their vision, mission and strategic directions which were crafted in 2007; as each clearly articulate relevant and intentional aspirations for the Compact.

A small group of diverse stakeholders including member campuses, students, program participants, campus presidents, community partners and non-member campuses provided extensive feedback; while, a later draft along with a survey was broadly distributed to CACC's constituents by email and online. Deliberations by CACC's staff and Executive Board were informed by the feedback collected and enabled CACC to focus their goals on the civic engagement fields' current issues and needs across California. In total, more than 100 stakeholders provided direct input and feedback as this strategic plan was developed. The CACC Executive Board officially approved the plan on November 14, 2013.

## A BRIEF HISTORY

California is a leader in the movement to advance the public purposes of higher education. President Donald Kennedy of Stanford University co-founded the national Campus Compact in 1985; President Kennedy and Chancellor Charles Young of UCLA co-founded California Campus Compact (CACC) three years later. The Campus Compact network now includes a national office, 34 state organizations, and almost 1,200 college and university presidents and chancellors representing public and private, two-year and four-year campuses and some 6 million students. While the state and national Compacts are formally affiliated and share a fundamental commitment to integrating civic and community engagement into campus and academic life, each organization operates independently, developing programs and priorities in response to its distinctive context.

CACC is one of the first state Compacts formed and since its inception CACC has offered groundbreaking initiatives and publications related to national and community service, diversity, risk management, partnerships, and college access. Dedicated to transformational education, California Campus Compact works to strengthen the capacity of member campuses as they engage students and partners to address critical community issues.

CACC's primary activities include:

- Providing networking and professional development opportunities for college and university staff, faculty, students, administrators, and community partners;
- Communicating with college presidents about the purpose, progress and issues surrounding civic engagement on campus;
- Recognizing outstanding initiatives and strong leaders through awards programs;
- Offering grants to support high-quality and innovative initiatives;
- Providing leadership by advocating for greater investment in community-based learning and engaged scholarship;
- Connecting and collaborating with leaders and organizations across the state and nation;

- Conducting research to advance the civic engagement field; and
- Sharing information and other resources through e-newsletters, publications, one-on-one consulting, and on-site technical assistance.

CACC's support for regional networking among its members, its seed grants encouraging innovation, and its awards recognizing outstanding efforts have developed and demonstrated campuses' capacity to be powerful leaders in advancing civic and community engagement. The history of this organization and this movement in California highlights the change that can come through a deep and persistent commitment to the effective practice and promotion of engagement.

Throughout this document the term civic engagement is used to include civic engagement, community engagement and service learning.

## **ASSESSING THE CURRENT CONTEXT**

California in 2013 is experiencing tremendous challenges and opportunities. As the nation's most populous and diverse state, with the world's eighth largest economy, California wields influence far beyond its own borders. The ways it resolves its struggles with polarization, unemployment, and inequality will serve as a model—or a warning—to others.

Concentration of wealth has only increased with the recent housing crisis and recession. A high joblessness rate, combined with a high cost of living, makes California a hard place to live for too many people. Demographic changes are creating a generation gap that could have dire consequences if the proportionately whiter aging population under-invests in education and other critical supports for youth and families. Rising tuition rates make colleges and universities less accessible, forcing students to juggle often overwhelming academic, work, family, and community responsibilities—and making alternatives to traditional higher education, such as massive open online courses (MOOCs), appealing to many. Significant gaps by race and class already exist in enrollment, achievement, and graduation rates at all levels of education. If not effectively addressed, these gaps may contribute to even more profound economic and social disparities. MOOCs, digital badges, and other new technologies designed for developing skills and knowledge and acquiring credentials may radically alter the educational landscape, however. Traditional colleges and universities must maximize and clearly demonstrate their distinctive value to survive in the years ahead.

Fortunately, the state's diversity offers tremendous cultural richness that contributes to creativity, innovation, and economic growth. Many Californians are eager to address the educational achievement gap and other important public issues, such as climate change and gun violence. Educational institutions with a genuine long-term commitment to the well-being of their communities can help produce the changes needed. Meaningful civic engagement contributes not only to student success but also to social cohesion and economic resilience. More and more students now arrive at colleges and universities with substantial service or service-learning experiences, and younger faculty—many of them women and/or people of color—have displayed great interest in engaged learning and scholarship. Community partners often feel deeply committed to serving as co-educators of the students involved in their organizations, but most face increased need with declining resources, making it as important as ever to develop reciprocal partnerships that truly build their capacity to achieve their mission. Colleges and universities have the opportunity to anchor communities by supporting community and economic development through their operations as well as their educational activities—nurturing social entrepreneurs; partnering to

provide microloans as well as training and networking opportunities for aspiring and existing entrepreneurs; purchasing goods and services from local businesses; and more. At the same time, social media offer new ways to inform and mobilize people, to build communities and act collaboratively beyond a particular place.

The number of local, state, and national organizations explicitly supporting efforts to increase civic engagement has continued to grow in recent years, fueled in part by research on “high-impact educational practices” and pedagogical trends toward “learner-centered” classrooms and interdisciplinary study. Employers have also advocated for colleges and universities to focus more on graduating students with the skills critical for professional as well as civic life, such as communication, problem solving, and teamwork. Civic engagement is thus increasingly seen not only as an end in itself but also as a strategy to be integrated with other strategic initiatives to enhance educational success, workforce development, and other priorities. Given the greater emphasis on accountability evident both within and outside higher education, more longitudinal and large-scale research is needed to demonstrate the results of civic and community engagement.

With the expansion of the civic engagement field come promising new possibilities for collaboration and change. The public is largely unaware of any role higher education plays in preparing people to collaborate and lead in communities—despite the fact that working together across differences to solve problems is a skill that citizens of all views and backgrounds consider an urgent need. To change public perceptions, the various higher education organizations with civic engagement agendas will need to overcome differences in language, constituency, and programming. Tight budgets have led to an increased reliance on adjunct faculty, heavier teaching loads, and limited support for the infrastructure necessary to develop and sustain high-quality partnerships. Academic reward structures still tend to value traditional forms of scholarship. Interest in expanding online learning offers an opportunity to innovate with non-place-based partnerships, but developing them and the skills for facilitating online learning requires intention and time. Fully realizing the potential of civic engagement will also require changing those aspects of traditional academic cultures and policies that work against collaborative scholarship, equitable partnerships, and developmental pathways for civic learning and engagement over time. Yet this challenging situation provides precisely the kind of opportunity for colleges and universities to involve people in dialogue and action across differences to shape a better common future.

**CALIFORNIA CAMPUS COMPACT’S VISION**

In 2018, California colleges, universities, and communities are contributing to a healthy, just, and democratic society through ongoing dialogue and collaboration, with a strong shared commitment to the development of socially responsible individuals and institutions.

**CALIFORNIA CAMPUS COMPACT’S MISSION**

California Campus Compact builds the collective commitment and capacity of colleges, universities, and communities to advance civic and community engagement for a healthy, just, and democratic society.

**CRITICAL BARRIERS TO THE VISION**

Key barriers to California Campus Compact’s vision include:

1. The dominant U.S. American culture is individualistic and assumes nearly everyone starts life on an even playing field;
2. Differing philosophies guiding civic and community engagement are often unclear and sometimes conflict;
3. Gaps exist between higher education institutions’ stated civic engagement missions, the nature of institutional structures, and their implementation of civic engagement;
4. Effective community-campus partnerships vary widely throughout the state;
5. Community knowledge and the contributions of community partners and students may be undervalued;
6. Public is unaware of the role higher education plays in preparing people to collaborate and lead in communities;
7. Higher education is facing increased fiscal challenges;
8. Advanced technologies promote communication that lacks depth; and
9. Faculty reward systems do not consistently recognize or value engaged teaching and research.

**STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND GOALS**

To address the barriers listed above, CACC will focus on four strategic directions for 2014-2018:

- Making the case that community engaged research, teaching, and learning are integral to the excellence of California higher education;
- Convene diverse stakeholders to shape the future of the civic engagement field
- Serving as a resource to CACC members as they address critical issues facing California; and
- Strengthening the capacity of CACC to contribute to the civic engagement field.

**Strategies for Moving Beyond the Critical Barriers**

Strategic Direction	Critical Barriers Addressed
Making the case that community engaged research, teaching, and learning are integral to the excellence of California higher education	1, 2, 3, 6, 9
Convene diverse stakeholders to shape the future of the civic engagement field	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8
Serving as a resource to CACC members as they address critical issues facing California	4, 5, 7, 9
Strengthening the capacity of CACC to contribute to the field	All. Strengthening the Compacts’ professional bandwidth enables the staff to move beyond each barrier

Under each strategic direction, several five-year goals were identified, which are outlined below. Annual measurable accomplishments and specific action steps, timelines, and assignments will be developed by the CACC staff through ongoing implementation planning.

**Making the Case That Engaged Research, Teaching, and Learning Are Integral to the Excellence of California Higher Education**

Goal a: Build members' capacity to be strategic about their engagement activities and promote results in ways that benefit campuses and communities.

Goal b: Honor and recognize exemplary practices and the contributions of multiple stakeholders through highly visible awards.

Goal c: Promote CACC, the work of its member campuses, and the idea that engagement is integral to the excellence of higher education.

Goal d: Develop and strengthen opportunities for college presidents to take a leadership role on issues involving civic and community engagement.

**Convene Diverse Stakeholders To Shape The Future Of The Civic Engagement Field**

Goal a: Lead dialogues to address critical issues in the field.

Goal b: Create opportunities to network, reflect and share best practices.

**Serving as a Resource to CACC Members as They Address Critical Issues Facing California**

Goal a: Design and lead programs that contribute to the civic engagement field.

Goal b: Promote civic engagement activities that address critical issues.

Goal c: Develop diverse leadership for civic engagement among faculty, staff, students and administrators.

Goal d: Create opportunities for partnerships among campuses to address critical issues.

**Strengthening the Capacity of CACC to Contribute to the Field**

Goal a: Sustain current membership and explore strategies for increasing membership.

Goal b: Gather input from diverse stakeholders to inform CACC's work.

Goal c: Develop a diversified revenue portfolio.

Goal d: Document, analyze and celebrate CACC's impact on the field.

Goal e: Review, reflect and assess CACC's strategic plan with the Board and staff.

**CONCLUSION**

California Campus Compact is dedicated to promoting a transformational higher education experience that inspires student to change our world. CACC will continue to reflect, plan and work in partnership with others committed to a similar vision while investing in our member institutions. As CACC achieves the strategic directions and goals laid out in this plan, we will advance the public purposes of higher education. California Campus Compact recognizes that this is a critical time in higher education and they will lead the charge to shape a better future for our democracy.