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Richard T. LeGates and Gib Robinson



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Cover. Illinois Avenue Playground, East St. Louis, Illinois.

These before-and-after photographs show a playground designed by the children of the Winstanley/Industry Park neighborhood in East St. Louis, Illinois. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign students and faculty members, supported by the Community Outreach Partnership Center program, assisted community members in building the Illinois Avenue Playground.

The cover photographs are by Brian Orland, East St. Louis Action Research Project.

Institutionalizing University-Community Partnerships

Richard T. LeGates and Gib Robinson

ABSTRACT

Sporadic government initiatives and successful individual demonstration university-community partnership projects are of limited value unless they are incorporated into self-maintaining institutional arrangements. This article is based on San Francisco State University's experience with the HUD-funded Bay Area Community Outreach Partnership Center and the academic literature on institutionalization of reforms within public sector bureaucracies. It argues that universities are well suited for certain partnership roles—convener, planner, and capacity builder—and not for others. True partnerships between universities and their communities must be built on mutual respect, equal status, and mutual give and take. Institutionalization of federally funded university-community partnerships must progress simultaneously at the federal and local levels. It must respond to the interests of community, university, and governmental stakeholders. At the local level, change in both the internal structure and the operating procedures of universities and their neighborhood partners is essential.

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The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's five-year demonstration Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC) program, initiated in 1994, is the U.S. federal government's most significant effort to stimulate partnerships between government, universities, and community-based organizations (CBOs) to address urban problems. Under the COPC program, Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has awarded approximately \$20 million to more than 50 institutions of higher learning to allow them to form university-community partnerships. Universities use COPC funds for outreach and research assistance to city agencies and community-based organizations related to housing, economic development, community development, social services, and related issues. However, the long-term viability of the university-community partnerships is uncertain, as it depends on whether the COPC program or related federal university-community partnership programs can be successfully institutionalized.

The Bay Area Community Outreach Partnership Center (BAYCOPC)—a consortium of San Francisco State University (SFSU), University of California-Berkeley, and Stanford University—was awarded a COPC grant in 1994. In working with this COPC, we have been active in Bay Area university-community partnership activities and in national discussions about ways to link government, universities, foundations, and communities.

In this article, we first describe the COPC model and the contribution university-community partnerships, using the COPC model, can make to the solution of urban problems (and the harm other models can sometimes cause). Then we illustrate COPC's potential based on SFSU and BAYCOPC experience and advance a theoretical framework and operational suggestions for institutionalizing university-community partnerships.

■ INSTITUTIONALIZATION THEORY

At the federal level, the COPC model for university-community partnerships represents a novel approach to enlist universities as allies in urban problem solving. At the local level, COPC projects represent a radical departure from the way most universities conduct academic instruction, research, and relations with the surrounding community. A key concern of this article is how this small, promising effort can be institutionalized.

Phillip Selznick's pioneering works (1953, 1957), present a highly useful theoretical framework for understanding the nature of institutionalization in organizations. His *TVA and the Grassroots* deals explicitly with a major, successful attempt to partner grassroots organizations related to farming and power generation, land grant colleges, and a huge regional planning authority—the Tennessee Valley Authority. Guy

Benveniste (1989) offers additional theoretical insight and valuable ideas on how to facilitate institutionalization. In *Mastering the Politics of Planning*, Benveniste discusses strategies to incorporate grassroots urban community movements into large formal institutions (like universities). Both books elevate the discourse concerning institutionalization beyond day-to-day COPC concerns by placing the process in a historical and theoretical context.

Selznick distinguishes between an *institution*, which he defines as the responsive and adaptive natural product of social needs and pressures, and an *organization*, which he defines as a rational formal entity that exists to perform a task and is then expendable. To institutionalize a new approach within an organization, Selznick says, is to infuse the organization with value beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand (Selznick 1957, 17). An organization infused with value becomes satisfying to individuals in the organization; they and the organization then work to advance the new values. Thus, according to Selznick, a new approach becomes self-maintaining. At the early stages in a change process, institutionalization is essential for survival. Presently, COPCs need to be institutionalized into government and university processes if they are to survive.

When Selznick discusses the concept of co-optation of grassroots groups by an organization, he does not use the term pejoratively. Rather, according to Selznick, co-optation can perform positive functions as well as be the source of problems. He notes that co-optation generally results in some degree of shared responsibility, in effect empowering the co-opted partner. Over time, however, co-opted institutions become de facto extensions of the co-opting organization and run the danger of losing their independent *raison d'être* and effectiveness. If COPCs are successfully institutionalized, resistance to the negative effects of co-optation will become important.

Guy Benveniste is also concerned with institutionalizing planned change within organizations (such as universities). He posits a number of distinct types of "grassroots movements which matter" and describes processes of organizational learning that are helpful in understanding the COPC program. Benveniste's most important contribution lies in his detailed description of specific aspects of networking to achieve planned goals, which will be discussed in some detail after the idea of university-community partnerships is introduced and the distinct nature of the COPC model as opposed to other models explored.

■ PARTNERSHIPS AS A SOLUTION TO URBAN PROBLEMS

If universities working in partnership with HUD and community institutions can address urban problems better or more cost-effectively than federal agencies acting alone or with more traditional partners such as private industry and faith-based institutions, university-community partnerships are justified and should be institutionalized.

Programs based on models of university-community

relations in which universities merely study their communities are, as one author put it, "not well advised" and do not deserve to be institutionalized (Szanton 1981), particularly when they generate academic research based on faculty interests for publication in scholarly journals, redevelop neighborhoods for their own purposes at the expense of local residents, go through *pro forma* public relations campaigns, or engage in top-down programs to help their communities without involving neighborhood institutions in decision making.

While a systematic answer to whether or not the COPC program has succeeded must await a scheduled national evaluation of the program, there is a growing body of academic literature (Anderson and Smith 1993; Giamatti 1981; Greiner 1994; Rubin 1995; Sauser 1991) describing successful university-community partnerships. Preliminary evidence suggests that COPC-type partnerships can be important additions to other urban problem-solving institutions (Rubin 1995; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development 1995a; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development 1996).

Federal agencies should involve other institutions in the design and implementation of federal programs if and when the institutions have attributes and special competencies that can further the agencies' agendas. Selznick posits that organizations often use what he calls formal co-optation of outside groups in order to establish orderly and reliable mechanisms for reaching a client citizenry and to establish reliable channels for communication and direction (Selznick 1953, 14). Thus, the Tennessee Valley Authority co-opted local chapters of the American Farm Bureau and the agricultural extension services of land grant colleges in the region. According to Selznick, this made TVA more conservative but more realistically attuned to the local levers of power. The federal and local partners and the universities were all transformed through the experience, and the process probably assured TVA's survival.

Well-institutionalized partnerships between HUD and private industry, CBOs, unions, and faith-based institutions may be conceptualized as examples of successful formal co-optation; these partnerships have unquestionably improved HUD operations. Local governments understand local conditions and have a legitimacy with local political constituencies that federal agencies, being geographically remote and not directly accountable to local voters, may not possess. Private industry can often produce housing and manage units more effectively and efficiently than local public housing authorities. Faith-based organizations may be able to deliver housing and social services in ways the federal government never could. Local community-based organizations usually understand and address neighborhood needs and tap local leadership more effectively than federal bureaucrats. Partnering with these institutions produced some of the co-optation effects Selznick discusses—sometimes bending the pure form of policies devised at the national level to make them more realistic in local political climates.

Ultimately these partnerships help advance the programs.

Selznick also discussed what he calls informal co-optation, in which an organization with legitimacy and good relations with the general public faces organized interests that threaten aspects of its formal authority. This would be the case where a federally funded and locally implemented housing program is generally perceived as legitimate, but is under attack from not-in-my-backyard neighborhood groups, a tenant union, environmentalists, or other organized interests. These groups, Selznick notes, are generally interested in the substance of power, rather than its forms, and often prefer to deal informally, rather than through established structures. To the extent that university-community partnerships can facilitate informal decision making, they can make HUD more responsive and can move programs that would otherwise be locked in conflict. Over time, however, universities run the risk of being so fully co-opted that they no longer possess the legitimacy of quasi-independent entities. Universities should be aware of this dynamic and maintain some independence from federal funders.

Universities' capacities are imperfectly understood—by HUD, other partners, and often by the universities themselves. Universities have unique strengths and also limitations. To succeed as they venture into urban affairs, universities must play to their strengths and not undertake activities for which they are less qualified than other local players.

Universities can bring resources and competencies to local housing and community development activities which other actors may not possess. A prime advantage many universities can offer is neutrality—detachment from the local political fray. Other advantages may include technical expertise, student idealism, and a capacity to innovate. Universities may be able to broaden the definition of community development to include cultural supplements such as English language teaching and the arts.

Universities may be particularly well suited for specific roles—convener, planner, and capacity builder. Compared to overworked city or CBO staff, they are uniquely qualified to organize conferences and information exchanges. With their academic emphasis on rational decision-making, they may offer support for planning and policy analysis. Faculty with expertise in administrative or policy areas can help develop the capacity of local institutions through staff development. Stable university partnerships can also provide longevity—outlasting terms of local elected officials or transitions in neighborhood leadership.

While these attributes give universities some distinct advantages as partners in solving problems and delivering services, the creation of university-community partnerships can potentially transform teaching and research and can refocus university activities in ways that can lead to more systemic change. Selznick's definition of institutionalization implies the infusion of values into an organization. This is particularly important for universities because of their unique

role in forming the values of young people. To the extent that values of the COPC model, such as shared agenda setting and applied research and service, are imparted to students, they will have been transformed in ways far more important than merely providing a valuable service to the community. Students who carry these values into their professional lives can truly transform university-community relations and the operation of federal programs.

For many students, involvement on the front line at a formative time in their lives can be a transformative experience, forcing them to confront their own values and the utility of their coursework. Forming the kinds of values and understandings that direct community service provides can reshape future professionals—lawyers, architects, social workers, planners—so that they approach their profession in ways that will benefit their local community over their entire professional lives. Similarly, the sometimes painful intersection between traditional research and community needs often produces a profound change in researchers who must directly confront the utility of their work. And the very act of partnering transforms universities as institutions to make them more responsive.

Universities have many limitations. Much research activity is too academic to be of direct use locally. Universities are not monolithic and their own urban agendas are not always benign from a community perspective. Activities of one part of a university, such as a real estate acquisition arm aggressively acquiring property for campus expansion, can harm communities and complicate relations between communities and the faculty and staff pursuing unrelated community-serving functions. Many COPCs are wrestling with cultural barriers as well-educated, stably employed faculty and upwardly mobile students work with community members who may have limited formal education, less income, and less secure jobs. Where there are racial and ethnic differences between university personnel and the communities they serve, all parties need to learn to work together (Pang 1993). Building partnerships for the long term requires patience, commitment, and engagement with messy processes and uncertain results. It requires a different set of competencies than those instilled through Ph.D. training in academic research and teaching.

Communities are often ambivalent about involvement with universities for a combination of concerns and perceptions, which may be justified. Underfunded and overworked government agencies and CBOs need help and usually welcome additional personnel whenever they can make a contribution. Many communities recognize that professors of disciplines such as city planning, economics, architecture, social work, business, and public administration can contribute expertise the city or community-based organizations may not possess. Communities usually welcome the energy and enthusiasm of idealistic students—particularly students from the community itself—provided the students are sensitive to the communities and that their contributions more than

compensate for the time agencies and CBOs spend supervising their work. Communities resent being merely “studied” or temporarily invaded by culturally different faculty and students with little or no knowledge about or interest in the community beyond a course assignment or academic research project. Communities justifiably feel that they, not the university, have superior understanding of community issues and priorities. Successful partnerships must be built on mutual respect, equal status, and mutual give and take. Academics must divest themselves of their expert status and meet the community on level ground, willing to learn as well as to teach.

■ THE COPC PROGRAM APPROACH

Former U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry Cisneros assumed a leadership role in involving universities in efforts to solve local community problems and has been an eloquent spokesperson for university-community partnerships. In the first in a series of papers, Cisneros (1996) deals with the university and the urban challenge and articulates a vision for much greater engagement of universities in partnerships to address urban issues. Under the leadership of Cisneros and former Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research Michael Stegman, HUD organized an Office of University Partnerships (OUP) where all of the department’s university-related programs, including COPC, are now located.

COPC grants are made to universities or consortia of universities. COPC awards are in the form of two-year grants. By law these grants can be as large as \$750,000, but HUD has awarded smaller amounts (none larger than \$580,000) in order to distribute limited funding as widely as possible. All first-year COPC recipients, except for institutions which received funding under HUD’s joint community development program, have received a third, terminal year “institutionalization” grant of \$100,000.

How COPC recipients form partnerships with institutions in their communities is left largely to the discretion of the university. COPCs, however, must have a local advisory body whose composition is defined by HUD (Teitle 1994).

While funded COPC programs take a great variety of forms, there are core aspects of the COPC model that distinguish it from other university/community partnerships.

- The COPC definition of the community and the nature of activities is flexible. Funded COPCs define community as variously as: (a) a specified number of blocks around a university campus, (b) a string of rural settlements along an unpaved road, and (c) entire multiple political jurisdictions. Eligible activities include housing, community development, economic development, delinquency and crime prevention, the alleviation of poverty and inequality, and other urban issues.

- The COPC model stresses outreach over research. Most COPC funds must be used for outreach activities. This is a fundamental departure from traditional programs funding academic research on communities that produce community studies or ethnographies.
- The COPC model stresses partnership. Agenda setting is to be done with members of the affected community.
- Institutional change within the university is identified as an important outcome of the process. The emphasis is on creating new ways for universities to relate to their communities outside of mere service delivery, regardless of how valuable that might be. This is a departure from university programs to deliver specified services such as a university-run neighborhood health clinic, teacher training school, or internship program.
- Community relations is not enough. Many universities maintain offices to act as liaisons with their communities. COPCs envisage engagement at a more profound level than merely maintaining good public relations.

The embryonic community partnerships HUD has created are far from institutionalized. The COPC program involves a tiny proportion of HUD funding. COPC is located within one thinly staffed office (the Office of University Partnerships) within one HUD office (Policy Development and Research) operating as a five-year demonstration project with no assurance of continued funding. The OUP has stimulated reflection on university-community partnership practice through biannual meetings of the COPC principal investigators, national specialized meetings, a national computer listing, a World Wide Web home page, peer review of grant proposals, academic journal symposia, and other information-sharing activities. However, while the fledgling OUP has made impressive strides in promoting the COPC idea within HUD, to other federal agencies, and elsewhere, little staff time is available for these activities in addition to day-to-day program management.

The ideas of the federal government forming partnerships to further federal goals and funding universities to serve communities are not new. Since the 19th century, federal support to land grant colleges has been instrumental in involving universities in rural communities and in modernizing U.S. agriculture. Federal partnerships to address urban problems have been important since the beginning of the New Deal (Chudakoff 1994, 326-352). Federal and local housing and community development partnerships have existed for more than 60 years—since long before the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development was created (Hays 1995). The 1937 Housing Act institutionalized federal-local partnerships in which the federal government funded local Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) operated by local government under state enabling legislation. In the 1960s federal-local partnerships were extended to involve private business, unions, churches, and nonprofit

organizations, particularly in the construction and management of section 221(d)(3) and section 236 below market interest rate housing. And the emphasis on partnerships involving nonprofits has been further expanded in the 1980s and 1990s (Keyes et al. 1996).

As former HUD Secretary Cisneros points out, urban universities possess a wealth of intellectual and economic resources they can bring to bear on problems in their communities (Cisneros 1996). They are major employers and purchasers of local goods and services, repositories of intellectual talent, and the institution charged with shaping citizens of the future. As long-term, immobile institutions with fixed physical facilities, their self-interest is intimately connected to the well-being of their communities.

■ SFSU COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

San Francisco State University (SFSU) is a large, diversified urban university that defines itself as "the city's university." Together with U.C. Berkeley and Stanford University, SFSU was awarded a COPC grant in 1994. COPC funds augment a range of university-community partnership activities underway at San Francisco State. Broader activities of the entire BAYCOPC partnership are described elsewhere (Rubin 1995; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development 1995b). The following description illustrates how activities at San Francisco State play on the distinct advantages universities have.

San Francisco is a diverse city with intensely conflictual local politics (DeLeon 1992). In this environment, neutral analysis can help provide all actors with factual information from which to debate their respective positions, raising the tone of political discourse. SFSU has a Public Research Institute (PRI) where faculty and students undertake surveys and public policy research. HUD COPC funds have augmented the Public Research Institute's ongoing program, permitting the PRI to prepare analyses of census data, economic studies, electronic maps, and other factual information for the Mayor's Office of Community Development and the Mayor's Office of Housing.

Two examples will help illustrate the value of neutral analysis. SFSU economics chair Michael Potepan and a student team produced a study of the changing San Francisco economy and occupational structure—The San Francisco Economic Roller Coaster—which has been widely used by economic development and job training agencies and CBOs in the city (Potepan and Barbour 1995). This neutral analysis was an important background document for an "economic summit" convened by the mayor, and the director of the SFSU Urban Institute played a lead role in designing the summit. SFSU convened a well-attended regional meeting of city, agency, and CBO personnel, where discussions were led by SFSU's Potepan, the principal analyst of the Association of Bay Area Governments, and the executive director of San Francisco's leading micro-enterprise training CBO.

The technical expertise of faculty, staff, and students is also well illustrated in another widely used study. This study was developed under the direction of SFSU political science chair Richard DeLeon on San Francisco's Changing Demography and Social Needs as part of an assessment of the San Francisco Community Development Block Grant program for the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Community Development (DeLeon et al. 1995). DeLeon, staff, and students prepared statistical analyses and maps useful for community development planning. No office within San Francisco city government has done comparable analysis. The combination of neutrality and sophistication has made this a basic source document used by many organizations as the basis for public policy.

The COPC model stresses outreach, not research. Much of the work of SFSU and its COPC partners has involved communicating with local partners through a regional advisory committee, Internet site, dissemination of written materials, conferences, and one-on-one communication with interested parties. Even more important is direct placement of students to support local planning and service delivery.

University students bring vigor and idealism to their work. SFSU has used COPC funds to provide stipends to students in urban studies, political science, public administration, economics, and social science to work directly with city agencies and CBOs. These students have staffed planning and policy work in the city's Mayor's Office of Community Development, Mayor's Office of Housing, Redevelopment Agency, Enterprise Community Program, and CBO housing, economic development, and job training activities. An example is work with the Visitation Valley Jobs, Education, and Training Center (VVJET). Visitation Valley is a San Francisco neighborhood undergoing renewal as a large foreclosed HUD property (Geneva Towers) is demolished, a large low-rent public housing project (Sunnydale) is renovated, and new assisted housing is built. Despite its share of urban problems, the Visitation Valley neighborhood has an excellent location, an attractive housing stock, a home-ownership rate exceeding 50 percent, a diverse community with many new immigrants, innovative school programs, neighborhood entrepreneurs, and impressive youth activities. SFSU faculty and students have worked closely with neighborhood leaders to create VVJET and staff and support related institutions. Student-faculty teams have helped VVJET develop a plan for creating a community-run catering service to serve construction workers involved in the major building projects planned for the area. They also analyzed data on tenant social-service needs and preferences for the Sunnydale tenant association and completed a feasibility study for creation of a long-term managed care facility for the elderly.

Universities' capacity to innovate in urban affairs is well illustrated in the area of information technology. San Francisco city government lags far behind private industry, universities, and many other cities in its use of information

technology. SFSU computer science department chair Gerry Eisman has dedicated a server (called THECITY) for public use and organized students with technical expertise to work with city agencies and CBOs to set up computer systems and train staff to use them. This university program is called SFSUNET. Under a foundation grant, SFSUNET trained the staff of the region's homeless organizations and established an electronic communications link for them. COPC is also assisting with the Bay Area Neighborhood Networks program—a HUD initiative to bring computers to assisted housing projects.

SFSU has defined outreach activities in support of community development broadly, with a cultural component that city agencies and CBOs may not be able to provide. In the Visitation Valley neighborhood, for example, university faculty members teach English and direct a hip-hop choir—activities that improve the quality of life of the neighborhood and build the skills and interpersonal confidence young people need to succeed.

■ INSTITUTIONALIZING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Selznick and Beneveniste's theories about institutionalization (Benveniste 1989; Selznick 1953, 1957) are useful in understanding COPC institutionalization. Current theories on the reinvention of government and the "blueprint" to reinvent the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development developed by ex-Secretary Cisneros are also helpful (Osborne and Gaebler 1992; National Performance Review 1993; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development 1995a).

Applying Selznick's theory of institutionalization to COPC would require the successful infusion of COPC model values into both HUD and other federal agencies as funders and a large number of U.S. educational institutions and their community partners as program operators. This would make possible the continuation of successful COPC-style programs with access to secure and reliable funding well beyond the current level and new local organizational cultures committed to a radically different way of addressing urban problems. True institutionalization would see the COPC model replicated in other federal agencies and the emergence of interagency government-university-community partnerships. It implies inclusion of the total university in COPC-type activities. It also implies maturation—the development of a shared national consensus on core aspects of successful partnership design and operational definitions of best practices.

Networking and COPC Institutionalization

Benveniste emphasizes the importance of networking to the successful implementation of plans. His description of the nature of networks in organizations (Benveniste 1989, 159-162) and networking tasks essential to successfully implementing planned innovations (Benveniste 1989, 162-169) offer helpful theoretical insight and specific operational direction for institutionalizing the COPC model.

Informal networks are devices for achieving change. Often developing over time among individuals with shared interests, networks exist because they are useful channels for action and sources of real power. They depend on exchanges and incentives—participants must derive real value from them if they are to continue to participate.

There is some communication between the loose association of the more than 50 educational institutions operating COPCs, HUD, and other institutions such as federal agencies, foundations, national associations, university associations. Biannual meetings of recipients occur, with HUD OUP staff and other stakeholders in attendance. There are national COPC listings and Internet sites. Establishment of a more developed COPC network is in the discussion stage. But to date, there has been no systematic effort at network building approaching the sophistication that Benveniste proposes.

Benveniste outlines specific networking tasks that are highly relevant to institutionalizing COPCs. The first two steps are: (a) to map the terrain, gather information, and identify actors and (b) to identify leverage points. The Office of University Partnership has taken some first steps to do these things, but staffing shortages and turnover of directors has limited its efforts to date. This article provides an initial reconnaissance of actors and identification of leverage points important to COPC institutionalization.

Beneveniste's third step is to select tentative coalitions. In this instance, not only are federal government agencies, universities, and community-based organizations potential coalition members, but so are other national- and local-level institutions. If the COPC model is to be institutionalized, more systematic coalition building needs to occur at every level. This article argues in favor of a dispersed, networked approach to coalition building rather than a top-down process directed exclusively by the Office of University Partnerships.

Beneveniste suggests that a network float an initial image for their planned change at an appropriate time and adapt the technical argument to a political configuration as opposition surfaces and debate ensues. If the COPC model is to be maintained and expanded, an "image" of what COPC's future should be like—a clear formulation of the COPC model refined from experience, a description of which agencies to involve, what funding amounts and sources to seek, target numbers and types of educational institutions to involve—must be advanced and subjected to debate.

One of Benveniste's most important contributions to theoretical understanding of networking and planned change is the concept of the multiplier. He defines the multiplier as "that moment in time when an idea catches on, when support for a new course of action multiplies, when indecisions evaporate and individuals or groups decide to move ahead in a given direction" (130).

The COPC model has not yet caught on broadly enough for the multiplier to be triggered. As the initial five-year demonstration moves toward completion and a national

evaluation takes place, the time is approaching for “triggering the multiplier.” Here Benveniste offers some additional insight. He notes that triggering the multiplier requires a technical argument, a symbolic stance, and a visible coalition of supporters (1989, 176). The visibility of the coalition, the credibility of the technical argument, and the symbolic stance of the planner provide the basis for the trigger. The COPC program could use high-level strategic advice on these critical issues: what technical argument is politically possible, how to build and make visible a coalition that will give the program credibility, and when to float an image of COPC’s future. Timing is critical, especially the timing of the float.

Institutionalizing COPCs: The National Level

The policy innovation literature stresses the importance of involving multiple stakeholders in decision-making about innovation (Benveniste 1989). Many possible national-level stakeholders have long-term interests in resolution of the kinds of urban problems COPC is addressing. Among these are the Washington level of HUD and other federal agencies and national associations representing local government, universities, foundations, and communities.

Assuring continued funding for the program is an essential prerequisite to further development of COPC and related university-community partnership activities. Essential issues are the source, level, and form of federal funding for these activities in the future.

The current reinvention of federal domestic programs (National Performance Review 1993; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development 1995a) poses both opportunities and dangers to any small, new federal government activity. The budgets of HUD and other federal domestic agencies are uncertain. Decision-making about how to spend federal funds is devolving to state and local governments as block grants replace categorical grants. Why not, it might be asked, fold university-community partnership activities into community development block grants? This and other public funding opportunities could occur if—and only if—the universities successfully compete against other contenders for scarce federal, state, and local funding.

One answer is similar to the “infant industry” argument advanced by economists as a justification for subsidies and tariffs to protect emerging domestic industries until they become strong enough to compete in the world economy. Already-intense competition for federal funds from city agencies and community-based organizations is becoming more intense as the impact of domestic federal budget cuts and welfare reform ripples through the economy. Well-established local competitors for block grant funding are analogous to mature industries in the global economy. Their built-up capacity and political relationships give them an immediate but short-term advantage over university-community partnerships. Politically, it is very difficult for local decision makers to reallocate funds from previously funded groups to new

university-community partnership activities. If university-community partnership activities were folded into block grants and did successfully compete at the local level, there would be pressure to provide small amounts of funding—for a single year, for individual projects. This could undermine comprehensive and stable partnership arrangements.

There is another reason why COPC and related funding should remain separate from block grants. Universities trying to form partnerships with community organizations would face a dilemma if they were required to simultaneously compete with these very partners for a scarce pool of funding the communities desperately need. Even the most public-spirited leaders of community-based organizations cannot argue to their constituents that they should forego funding so that it can pass through another institution—a university—rather than community-based organizations, no matter how valuable they perceive the university partnership to be.

In summary, expanded federal funding reserved explicitly for university-community partnership activities is essential to the institutionalization of COPC and other university-community partnerships. Elimination of this funding would have a catastrophic effect. Folding funding into a block grant or otherwise placing universities in competition with communities for funding at the local level would undermine the very partnering activities the program is intended to achieve.

The overwhelming majority of federal domestic spending to address urban issues will continue to flow from a variety of agencies—not just HUD—to governmental and nongovernmental entities that implement the programs. Presently COPC activities support a variety of these activities. But COPCs are too new and too small to shape the disposition of the much larger amounts of funding available for local programs. In the future, federal agencies both within and outside of HUD could provide expanded and stable funding for university contributions to their programmatic efforts, making COPC activities integral to public housing modernization, funding for new construction, community development programs, economic development and job training, and other activities. COPCs could move from valued supplements to true shapers of urban policy at the local level. University neutrality, expertise, and longevity make universities particularly appropriate local level players to develop into such policy-guiding institutions.

At present there are many barriers to partnerships involving universities and more than one federal agency. Collaboration and coordination among agencies is not the norm; agencies are just beginning to coordinate programs and policies with each other. Most agencies are not aware of the value universities can bring to their own programs, let alone the potential they have to foster coordination and strategic local deployment of federal resources.

HUD, through the Office of University Partnerships and COPC, is playing a lead role in stimulating university-community partnerships to solve urban problems. But it is not

the only federal agency promoting university-community partnerships. The U.S. Departments of Education and Justice, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment have had or currently operate programs intended to connect universities and communities in some way. Other domestic federal agencies that collaborate with cities could also develop such programs. Critical to the furtherance of COPC and a broader university-community partnership agenda is joint action between agencies funding universities.

The current Administration's program to reinvent government, of which the HUD Reinvention is a part, stresses coordinated activity across agencies. Vice President Gore chairs an interagency task force intended to achieve greater coordination among agencies. Other federal-level mechanisms are intended to coordinate federal activity around specific issues or in specific geographical areas. The Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community program emphasizes interagency collaboration at all levels of government, including the federal level in designated areas. The U.S. Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) has a mandate to coordinate the activities of 23 agencies around base closure and defense conversion issues. These efforts emphasize interagency coordination at the regional level, and local governments are encouraged to create strategic plans integrating funding from different agencies into comprehensive, interrelated programs that address specified problems.

Over the course of the last 100 years, many national organizations representing or assisting local governments, universities, foundations, and community organizations have evolved leadership structures that reflect their constituents' views of who should speak for the institution and what issues are important to it. Many of these organizations have Washington offices and staff whose function is, in part, to impact national policy. Working with these institutions is important to the institutionalization of COPC and other university-community partnership activities.

Local government interests are represented through the U.S. League of Cities and U.S. Conference of Mayors. Consortia of universities interested in urban affairs serve as forums for university presidents to work out common agendas. Academic faculty and research staff concerned with urban issues meet through the Urban Affairs Association (UAA) and the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP). More than 300 colleges and universities with urban affairs programs are identified by the UAA (UAA 1995). The Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) has accredited almost 100 graduate city and regional planning programs and has identified many undergraduate programs related to city and regional planning (ACSP 1994a, 1994b). There are coordinating bodies of private foundations concerned with urban issues. Large national private foundations like Ford, Rockefeller, Mott, and Kellogg are already directly engaged with many communities and may be potential sources of funding for university-

community partnerships. People involved in COPC and related university-community partnerships have yet to make a convincing case for foundations to support university-community partnerships or identify the value that universities can offer. Key foundations are not yet sufficiently familiar with COPC and other successful university-community partnerships, but dialogue between OUP and foundations and participation of foundations with federal agencies, universities, and community organizations at a series of conferences supported by the Johnson Foundation (referred to as the Wingspread conferences after the site of the first of these conferences) are currently engaging foundations in the dialogue. If foundations are convinced of the value of the COPC approach and coordinate support with other federal and local sources, they can be potent contributors to "triggering the multiplier" that may project COPCs from their current status of a demonstration program to national prominence.

Universities are good candidates to stimulate dialogue between federal agencies and private foundations along these lines. National organizations representing communities or working closely with them include the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), the Center for Community Change, the Planners Network, the Poverty and Race Research Action Council (PRRAC) and others.

All of these institutions—federal agencies concerned with urban issues, the national associations that represent local government, associations of universities with an interest in urban affairs, associations of foundations, and national organizations of or representing communities—are all stakeholders in the resolution of urban issues of the kind HUD is attempting to address through COPC. They are all potential allies in national politics to extend university participation in addressing urban problems if they are convinced of the value of university-community partnerships. Collectively these stakeholder institutions have expertise and priorities—often priorities developed through extensive internal deliberation that can contribute to the longevity and stability of university-community partnership agendas.

Stakeholder priorities may not always be the same as HUD priorities, and full involvement of these stakeholders in shared decision making will inevitably produce some conflict. Students of urban politics have found that most effective local-level political regimes are ones in which precisely this kind of vigorous internal debate has taken place and long-term political accommodations have been worked out (Stone 1989; Mollenkopf 1992). In Selznick's terms, co-optation requires accommodation from the co-opter.

There is another reason to bring multiple stakeholders into the COPC process at the national level. HUD's priorities and strategies to achieve them change constantly, and many past HUD programs are now discredited. Examples are bulldozer urban renewal projects like San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center, which displaced low-income and minority communi-

ties (Hartman, 1984); construction of St. Louis' Pruitt-Igoe, Chicago's Cabrini Green, and other concentrated high-rise low-rent public housing projects which turned into physical and social disasters (Rainwater 1970); and the poorly conceived and implemented Sec. 235 home-ownership program, which led to fraud and foreclosures in Detroit and elsewhere (Boyer 1973). In each of these situations, HUD would have been well served by broader involvement of stakeholders who might have alerted the department to developing problems—even if that message was unwelcome at the time. Developing a multi-stakeholder COPC process at the federal level can inform HUD policy and may provide for better policy outcomes.

The theoretical literature on organizational development offers valuable insight concerning a second stage in federal-university-community relations, which must occur if the COPC model is successfully institutionalized. The value of university participation in solving urban problems lies in part in their independence. Institutionalization, as Selznick reminds us, implies some level of co-optation. Co-optation in turn compromises the basis for the reform. If the multiplier is triggered and universities are incorporated into the resolution of urban problems in a large-scale, ongoing way, university COPC staff will need to draw clear boundaries in which they facilitate positive federal-community programs without becoming merely passive arms of government or captives of community interests.

Institutionalizing COPCs: The Local Level

Ultimately, university-community partnerships will succeed or fail at the local level. The national level institutionalization described above can provide a supportive environment and funding within which local partnership can flourish. But it is at the local level that the new partnerships must prove their value.

The most striking aspect of the COPC partnerships is how different they are from each other—a product of the universities' ability to define the geographical and issue-area communities they are to serve, the structure of their advisory committees, and the program components. The decision to allow universities this flexibility is based on a recognition that each university-community partnership arrangement should be determined by the specific circumstances and character of both the university and its community. Large research institutions may be in a position to deliver research and analytic services that a much smaller teaching college cannot. Colleges that draw many of their own students from the communities they serve are often in a different position than institutions with student bodies less representative of their communities.

The most successful COPC projects view university-community partnership interactions as a two-way street. Properly deployed, university personnel can bring needed expertise, neutrality, energy, and stability to community projects. Communities can educate university faculty and

students as well. Architecture faculty members need to understand the needs of communities which they are training architects to design. Social work faculty members need to understand the needs of people for whom they are educating students to deliver social services. Urban economists need to test their models and theories against the reality of local economies and labor markets. Students can learn from internships and other contacts with communities with which they could be professionally involved in the future.

A meaningful advisory committee involved in the definition of the partnership agenda, not after-the-fact implementation details, is essential. Shared decision making will both help the partnership select the most relevant projects and increase community stakeholders' ownership of the partnership, which is critical to long-term success.

Institutionalization at the local level involves more than achieving a stable, long-term university-community partnership or even successful creation of a university-community decision-making structure in which community stakeholders share power in defining the partnership agenda. It also involves integrating local partnership arrangements with other local-level players. University-community partnerships need to develop working relationships with the local counterparts of the national stakeholder groups described above: local government, foundations, and CBOs as well as churches, labor unions, and other local institutions important to housing, community development, and economic development. This involvement can be selective and needs to be fluid.

Relations with regional HUD staff, who are involved with specific programs in the communities in which universities work, are also important. There are established relationships between HUD regional staff personnel and local actors. The perception of local HUD programs at the federal level is strongly affected by what regional staff members report to Washington. For example, if the HUD Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development in Washington hears from field staff in Detroit, New York City, and San Francisco that universities have made a real contribution to programs such as Empowerment Zone and Enterprise Community programs, community development initiatives, or the McKinney Act Homeless programs, he will likely be supportive of the national-level institutionalization of the program. Understanding regional office functions and staff is important in building partnerships that will be perceived by HUD as truly effective.

Foundations have a particularly important role to play in institutionalization of university-community partnerships at the local level. The great majority of HUD funding will continue to flow to government and CBO program operations. Universities may help the day-to-day work of these programs through studies, evaluations, capacity building, and direct technical assistance—but actually implementing them is not where their particular competence lies. Foundations play a particularly important role in stimulating innovation,

supporting demonstrations, and helping to move the activities of major players in progressive directions. Universities that develop the capacity to further these foundation objectives locally are natural allies.

Intra-University Institutionalization

Many universities' activities are advanced by national-level interaction with counterparts in other universities. Many academic programs are accredited by national accreditation bodies. There are national professional associations for university presidents, faculty, university librarians, career counselors, academic computing personnel, and others. Inter-university organizations share information, create and disseminate national models, organize training sessions, facilitate personnel decisions both formally and informally, develop standards, and otherwise advance the state of the art in their particular domain. These national-level activities operate largely through voluntary contributions of time from interested members of the academic community and university support for their own members to participate in conferences. Development of parallel activities for participants in university-community partnerships with modest support would help institutionalize them. This activity would represent an important, but not exclusive, aspect of the kind of networking Benveniste posits as essential to implement planned change.

There are also centers of excellence within the COPC group—some universities perform a particular activity better than others. A process of identifying these centers of excellence and setting up a system of interuniversity technical assistance would further institutionalization. Under a peer-managed system drawing upon COPC personnel, universities could identify a type of technical assistance they desire and select an appropriate technical assistance provider.

■ SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

HUD's Community Outreach Partnership Center program represents an innovative approach to involving universities in the solution of urban problems. The COPC model emphasizes diverse university-community arrangements responsive to local conditions, true partnership rather than top-down university definition of activities, outreach rather than academic research, and transformation of institutions as well as delivery of services. Whether the COPC demonstration will become a much larger and more stable program, with values of the COPC model infused into participating organizations, or merely wither away, depends significantly on proactive efforts to institutionalize the model.

Networking among stakeholders to refine the COPC model and a vision of institutionalization is essential. Table 1 summarizes institutions that could be involved in networking to institutionalize the COPC program at different levels. Preserving and expanding COPC activities involves concerted grassroots effort of COPC personnel to build excellent programs and, together with local and national allies, to make the case to continue and expand the program and related programs in other federal agencies.

Theory from the sociology of organizations, organizational development, and planning literature can help guide the institutionalization of COPCs. Universities are organizations within Selznick's meaning of the term—adaptive and responsive products of social needs and pressures. Their viability is linked to their ability to adapt to the needs of the communities in which they are located.

A principal goal of institutionalization should be to infuse universities with a different set of values about university-community relations. Universities should build formal structures to facilitate communications with HUD and informal structures to respond to interest group pressures.

NATIONAL LEVEL	LOCAL LEVEL	UNIVERSITY LEVEL
Congress	Community advisory board	Faculty
HUD national office	HUD regional office	Staff
Other federal agencies	Local government agencies	Students
National associations representing local govt.	Local foundations	Library personnel
National associations representing universities	Local interest groups	Service learning offices
National associations representing communities	Faith based institutions	Computing support staff
National foundations and associations of foundations	Unions	Research offices and institutions

Table 1. Institutionalization at different levels.

They should participate to a degree in what Selznick terms formal and informal co-optation—changing both their internal operating culture and the behavior of their funding sources and community partners. But they should be aware of the long-term dangers of co-optation and maintain a level of independence from both federal funders and the community.

Mapping the terrain, identifying leverage points, selecting coalition partners and self-consciously following Guy Benveniste's networking tasks will advance COPC's future. It is important to develop the technical argument in favor of COPCs, establish a visible coalition of supporters and an appropriate symbolic stance to "trigger the multiplier" that can move the COPC model from a tiny and fragile demonstration program to a new model of federal-university-community relations.

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