

Assessing Culture Change in PSIs

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Key assumption informing our work:

Canadian community and campus-based CCE practitioners are calling for a means of assessing, classifying, strategically planning, aligning, and thus improving, localized efforts to enable better sharing of experiences and limited resources, while strengthening the legitimacy, recognition, and valuation of CCE for enhanced advocacy locally, nationally, and internationally.

What we've learned so far:

- **Assessing the evolution of culture change** in PSIs is a complex task with **no 'one size fits all' solution** because the very essence of community-first CCE **requires out-of-the-box thinking** about what outcomes are valued, whose perspectives are represented, and how progress is perceived and assessed;
- Campus self-assessment is a useful exercise for **providing a 'snapshot in time'** relative to a continuum of culture change (visualized above); **assessing progress toward engagement goals**; identifying **strengths and opportunities for improvement** related to the engagement mandate; and **locating PSI capacities** within the broader CCE network;
- Many tools exist to help frame the self-assessment process: **Checklists** provide minimal depth; **benchmarks** set performance indicators and judge improvement over time; **matrices** provide a more comprehensive approach to **rubrics**, both of which allow for scaled assessment of identified priority areas; and, **systems analyses** require ample time for quantitative and qualitative data collection and interpretation.

Ongoing dialogue informing this work:

What does Canadian community-first CCE look like?

How do we define the 'community' in Canadian CCE?

Is assessment of culture change in PSIs a useful endeavour?

Who is assessment for, who does the assessing, and to what purpose?

What are the internal & external drivers and incentives for increasing the public accountability & responsiveness of higher education?

Existing models of CCE assessment we're watching:

Levels of Commitment to Engagement Matrix (Barbara Holland; [click here to view](#))

Developed in 1997 via 23 PSI case studies to promote alignment of service learning with campus engagement strategies; a diagnostic tool to facilitate campus planning, decision-making, and evaluation; assesses a PSI's level of commitment to engagement across seven key areas.

Carnegie Foundation Elective Community Engagement Classification ([click here to view](#))

Developed in 2005 as a documentation framework for the systematic classification of CE in American PSIs; requires input of qualitative and quantitative data across *foundational indicators* (mission, planning, communications, policies) and *categories of CE* (projects & partnerships).

EDGE Tool (NCCPE-UK; [click here to view](#))

Developed in 2008 as part of a national initiative to shift culture change in higher education; informed by Holland matrix, Carnegie, and UK experience; features nine key dimensions across three sectors – purpose, process, and people – assessed and located on a continuum of culture change.