

## CORE COMMITMENTS:

Educating Students for Personal and Social Responsibility

### Core Commitments Institutional Matrix

#### Overview

This *Institutional Matrix* is designed to help you map your institution's overall commitment to education for personal and social responsibility (PSR).

#### Matrix Elements

The Matrix (pp. 2-8) consists of one chart for each of the five dimensions of personal and social responsibility that are central to the initiative, a summary sheet, and an asset-gap analysis sheet. It is comprised of three elements:

##### **Horizontal Axis: The Five Dimensions of PSR**

See **Appendix 1** (pp. 9-14) for a list of the five dimensions and a description of traits associated with each. As you fill out your matrix, we invite you to expand upon and refine the traits as they are described here.

##### **Vertical Axis: Domains of Campus Culture**

See **Appendix 2** (p. 15) for a list of five domains of campus culture. As with the list of traits, we invite you to refine and expand on this list so it is appropriate for your particular institution. Mapping education for PSR across these domains should help you determine where your institution has assets and gaps.

##### **Rating Box: The Degree of Pervasiveness of Campus Efforts**

See **Appendix 3** (p. 16) for more information on determining the degree of pervasiveness of campus efforts. The matrix asks you to consider two mutually reinforcing aspects of institutionalization—breadth and depth. Significant breadth and depth would be demonstrated by effective, sustainable, and comprehensive institutionalization of programs, policies, and procedures that support education for PSR.

#### Completing the Matrix

Preferably with colleagues, map your institution's commitment to education for personal and social responsibility using this matrix. Use the space in the boxes provided to catalogue the programs, policies, and initiatives that fall into specific **domains of campus culture** (vertical) and **dimensions of personal and social responsibility** (horizontal) (e.g., an annual diversity fair would be listed under the domain of *campus life* and under *Dimension 4: Taking Seriously the Perspectives of Others*).

Use sources of knowledge readily available to you: information in catalogues and on your institution's web site, the experience of your colleagues, etc. As you work together to fill in the matrix, think of yourselves as your institution's cartographers, mapping how your institution visibly reveals its core values related to education for PSR.

The rating boxes on the charts allow you to indicate the degree of pervasiveness for each dimension, across each domain. Use the following scale to fill in these boxes: **Low (L)** = no breadth and no depth (i.e., isolated and superficial attempts at educating students for PSR); **Medium (M)** = some breadth and/or some depth; and **High (H)** = strong breadth and strong depth (i.e., integrated and embedded PSR education).

#### Summary and Asset-Gap Analysis

When your matrix is completed, **fill in the summary sheet located on page 7**. Then examine both the **assets** (patterns of clearly established programs and policies) and the **gaps** (areas where education for PSR is missing). As a group, ask yourselves what made your assets possible? What caused gaps to occur? From there, **fill in the asset-gap analysis sheet located on page 8**.

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	<b><u>Dimension 1</u></b> <b>Striving for excellence:</b> developing a strong work ethic and consciously doing one's very best in all aspects of college	<b>Degree of Pervasiveness (L, M, or H)</b>
<b>Mission and Educational Purpose</b>		
<b>Campus Life</b>		
<b>Curriculum</b>		
<b>Community and Campus Partnerships</b>		
<b>Incentives and Rewards</b>		

	<b><u>Dimension 2</u></b> <b>Cultivating personal and academic integrity:</b> recognizing and acting on a sense of honor ranging from honesty in relationships to principled engagement with formal academic honors codes and expectations	<b>Degree of Pervasiveness (L, M, or H)</b>
<b>Mission and Educational Purpose</b>		
<b>Campus Life</b>		
<b>Curriculum</b>		
<b>Community and Campus Partnerships</b>		
<b>Incentives and Rewards</b>		

	<b><u>Dimension 3</u></b> <b>Contributing to a larger community:</b> recognizing and acting on one's responsibility to the educational community, the local community, and the wider national and global society	<b>Degree of Pervasiveness (L, M, or H)</b>
<b>Mission and Educational Purpose</b>		
<b>Campus Life</b>		
<b>Curriculum</b>		
<b>Community and Campus Partnerships</b>		
<b>Incentives and Rewards</b>		

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Dimension 4</u></b></p> <p><b>Taking seriously the perspectives of others:</b> recognizing and acting on the obligation to inform one’s own judgment; relinquishing a sense of entitlement; engaging diverse and competing perspectives as a resource for learning, work, and responsible citizenship in both local and global communities</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Degree of Pervasiveness (L, M, or H)</b></p>
<b>Mission and Educational Purpose</b>		
<b>Campus Life</b>		
<b>Curriculum</b>		
<b>Community and Campus Partnerships</b>		
<b>Incentives and Rewards</b>		

	<b><u>Dimension 5</u></b> <b>Developing competence in ethical and moral reasoning:</b> developing ethical and moral reasoning in ways that incorporate the other four responsibilities; using such reasoning in learning and in life	<b>Degree of Pervasiveness (L, M, or H)</b>
<b>Mission and Educational Purpose</b>		
<b>Campus Life</b>		
<b>Curriculum</b>		
<b>Community and Campus Partnerships</b>		
<b>Incentives and Rewards</b>		

## Core Commitments Institutional Matrix – Summary Sheet

*Summarize the scope of your institution's efforts to educate for personal and social responsibility*

	Dimension 1	Dimension 2	Dimension 3	Dimension 4	Dimension 5	Degree of Pervasiveness (L, M, or H)**
	Striving for excellence	Cultivating personal and academic integrity	Contributing to a larger community	Taking seriously the perspectives of others	Developing competence in ethical and moral reasoning	
Mission and Educational Purpose						
Campus Life						
Curriculum						
Community and Campus Partnerships						
Incentives and Rewards						

**\*\* For this column, put the score (L, M, H) that you feel most accurately reflects the state of education for PSR in this particular domain of campus culture.**



## Appendix 1. The Five Dimensions of PSR – List and Associated Traits

### Five Dimensions of Personal and Social Responsibility

1. **Striving for excellence:** developing a strong work ethic and consciously doing one's very best in all aspects of college;
2. **Cultivating personal and academic integrity:** recognizing and acting on a sense of honor ranging from honesty in relationships to principled engagement with a formal academic honors code;
3. **Contributing to a larger community:** recognizing and acting on one's responsibility to the educational community (classroom, campus life), the local community, and the wider society, both national and global;
4. **Taking seriously the perspectives of others:** recognizing and acting on the obligation to inform one's own judgment; engaging diverse and competing perspectives as a resource for learning, for citizenship, and for work;
5. **Developing competence in ethical and moral reasoning:** developing ethical and moral reasoning in ways that incorporate the other four responsibilities; using such reasoning in learning and in life.

**Dimension 1: Striving for Excellence**—developing a strong work ethic and consciously doing one’s very best in all aspects of college

*Character traits associated with Dimension 1:*

- Accountability
- Responsibility
- Dependability
- Self-discipline
- Initiative
- Persistence
- Resilience
- Purpose
- Motivation
- Social Intelligence

*How are these traits defined?*

Accountability, Responsibility, Dependability, and Self-discipline

- Having a clear understanding of the expectations and requirements that come with one’s role as a student
- Working hard to fulfill those expectations and requirements
- Recognizing liability for one’s conduct
- Understanding one’s role relative to other students, faculty, staff and administrators
- *Includes:* being able to prioritize tasks and complete them in a timely manner; dealing with competing obligations, and managing multiple roles (within the environment of the college/university as well as between school life, personal life, and social life)

Initiative, Persistence, and Resilience

- Having creativity and the ability to self-start a new project or to recognize the appropriate next step in a project that is ongoing
- Being able to adapt, stay positive, and persevere
- Working toward improvement rather than being satisfied with the status quo
- Being comfortable working independently
- Going above and beyond what is required
- Diligently working on a project, even when it is not going smoothly
- *Includes:* using perception to plan ahead and plan for contingency; making use of available resources; being confident in decision-making; being able to learn from, and then move on from, mistakes

Purpose and Motivation

- Recognizing one’s role (in your family, at your college/institution, etc.) and how this fits into one’s short-term and long-term plans
- Knowing that there is value in one’s efforts
- Pushing oneself to the next level of growth, academically and socially
- *Includes:* goal setting; requesting and taking feedback in a positive manner; reflecting on failure and success, and, when necessary, re-evaluating goals

Social Intelligence

- Demonstrating interpersonal skills, such as cooperation, friendliness, respect, trust, and courtesy
- Being comfortable working as a team member
- *Includes:* being open to the ideas of others; equitably dividing work on shared projects; sharing resources; recognizing another’s job well-done; providing feedback to others when requested

**Dimension 2: Cultivating Personal and Academic Integrity**—recognizing and acting on a sense of honor ranging from honesty in relationships to principled engagement with a formal academic honors code

*Character traits associated with Dimension 2:*

- Honesty
- Truthfulness
- Fairness
- Respect for others
- Honor
- Responsibility
- Trust

*How are these traits defined?*

Honesty and Truthfulness

- Acting in a manner that is straightforward and sincere
- Acting respectfully when hearing the truth from someone else, even when it is not what you want to hear
- Understanding that, in situations of wrongdoing, honesty and truth may come with warranted consequences
- Accepting responsibility for one's actions
- Admitting to mistakes/wrongdoing
- Acting without guilt to protect the values of the campus community
- *Includes:* reflecting on one's actions and thoughts, both positively and critically; taking pride in one's work; knowing one's limits; being diligent about accurately citing sources and using only one's own work in assignments; understanding why cheating on an exam amounts to cheating oneself

Fairness, and Respect for Others

- Treating others how one wants to be treated
- Accepting personal differences
- Considering how one's actions impact the feelings, values, and efforts of others
- Recognizing the value of multiple points of view
- Understanding that some opinions are more valuable than others
- Making courtesy and politeness second-nature in daily interactions
- Making sound judgments
- *Includes:* attending class on time and prepared; acknowledging the good work of peers; sharing credit when work is shared; understanding that how one treats others and how one goes about one's daily work is as important as what is accomplished

Honor, Responsibility, and Trust

- Displaying loyalty to, and abiding by the goals and values of the institution
- Respecting the opportunity to participate in a scholarly community
- Considering how one's actions represent and reflect the mission of the institution
- Understanding one's role as a student relative to faculty, staff, administrators, and other students on a college campus
- *Includes:* signing, and putting into deliberate practice, the institution's honor code; recognizing the importance of the honor code for each course—on syllabi, on exams, and in class discussions; applying this code both inside and outside the classroom; seeing oneself as a representative of a scholarly community; not participating in any type of academic dishonesty (including permitting others to use one's work); appropriately reporting instances when the honor code is broken; thinking before one acts

**Dimension 3: Contributing to a Larger Community**—recognizing and acting on one’s responsibility to the educational community (classroom, campus life), the local community, and the wider society, both national and global

*Character traits associated with Dimension 3:*

- Positive sense of self
- Purposefulness
- Self-reflection
- Social awareness
- Knowledge of context
- Humanitarian
- Non-judgmental
- Collaborative
- Thinking “big picture”

*How are these traits defined?*

Positive Sense of Self and Purposefulness

- Understanding how strengths and weaknesses contribute to growth
- Having clear goals and actively working to achieve them
- Knowing what is important both in daily living and in the long run
- Seeking to be well-rounded intellectually, socially and culturally
- Confidently pursuing dreams while “keeping two feet on the ground”
- *Includes:* participating in activities that bring satisfaction; staying on-track amidst distraction; motivating others through one’s own actions; connecting with mentors; identifying what is necessary for success; using one’s knowledge for societal improvement

Self-reflection, Social Awareness, and Knowledge of Context

- Seeing one’s self, as well as society, as an ever-changing entity
- Developing an understanding of where one fits into a broader scheme
- Believing that one person can make a difference
- Making an effort to take in everything that is around you, even if beyond the range of the five senses
- Being conscious of connections between race, class, and privilege
- *Includes:* keeping up on local and world news, but not automatically accepting everything one sees, hears, or reads; seeking opinions from various constituent groups; acting on something one believes in; using past experiences to inform present decisions; being mindful that contexts vary and one may not always be able to fully relate

Humanitarian, Non-judgmental, and Collaborative

- “Doing good for the sake of doing good,” without any expectation of compensation or reward
- Giving of oneself even in the absence of gratification
- Discerning need
- Recognizing the oneness of the human race
- *Includes:* putting the needs of others before one’s own; working to correct social and economic inequities; treating others how one would hope to be treated if the situation of need were reversed; proactively searching for ways to contribute, encouraging others to contribute, and identifying where contributions will go the farthest

Thinking “Big Picture”

- Being aware of details but not allowing them to impede progress
- Being able to look beyond what is immediate to what lies ahead
- Considering all of the individuals impacted by a given situation
- *Includes:* having a flexible but reasonable long-term plan; considering one’s participation in the lives of others; learning how to translate one’s values and priorities into actions; connecting with other individuals and groups in the community

**Dimension 4: Taking Seriously the Perspectives of Others**—recognizing and acting on the obligation to inform one’s own judgment; engaging diverse and competing perspectives as a resource for learning, for citizenship, and for work

*Character traits associated with Dimension 4:*

- Attentiveness
- Thinking before responding
- Open-mindedness
- Social/Cultural awareness
- Empathy
- Respect for self and others
- Self-confidence
- Self-efficacy
- Inquisitiveness
- Truth-seeking
- Exercising good judgment

*How are these traits defined?*

Attentiveness and Thinking before Responding

- Being able to focus, concentrate on, and comprehend what another person is communicating—verbally or in writing, physically or affectively
- Focusing what is being communicated prior to responding
- Considering how one’s response will be interpreted by others
- *Includes:* paying full attention when another person is speaking—noticing tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language; making an effort to capture the “meaning behind the words” in written communications; responding to others with controlled emotion and well-founded thoughts, ideas, and opinions

Open-mindedness, Cultural/Social Awareness, Empathy

- Having flexibility in one’s opinions and beliefs, recognizing that they might evolve/change as a consequence of learning from other individuals, personal experience, and intellectual growth
- Understanding that the inherent and background differences of others contribute to their ways of thinking
- Making an effort to accurately understand the perspective of another individual and the affective state that accompanies that perspective, and having the capability to respond appropriately to that individual
- *Includes:* considering how “who one is” influences how one thinks, acts, and reacts; making one’s own decisions about what to believe, while also permitting oneself to change one’s mind and others to change their minds; seeking the opinions of other individuals with backgrounds different from one’s own; providing support to other individuals whose perspectives one can and cannot relate to

Respect for Self and for Others, Self-confidence, and Self-efficacy

- Trusting in one’s own knowledge and abilities
- Believing in oneself and one’s capabilities
- Recognizing the value that one adds to a situation or experience
- Being able to justify, express, and act upon one’s beliefs without feelings of guilt or wrongdoing
- *Includes:* being able to convey one’s opinion or perspective, even if it is in the minority; being able to explain and provide a basis for one’s beliefs; displaying one’s strengths with assertion but without arrogance

Inquisitiveness, Truth-seeking, and Exercising Good Judgment

- Having a perpetual interest in learning more
- Searching for knowledge through questioning and probing
- Seeking the opinions of experts and having the ability to distinguish the value associated with those opinions
- Being able to make a judgment without being judgmental
- *Includes:* asking questions to delve beyond what is on the surface; questioning information when one is skeptical about its merit; recognizing that even a “reliable” source of information may not always be reliable; examining competing and contradictory evidence; understanding that while everyone has the right to an opinion, not all opinions are equally worthwhile

**Dimension 5: Developing Competence in Ethical and Moral Reasoning**—developing one's own personal and social values and being able to express and act upon those values responsibly; developing a mature sense of moral sensitivity and personal character; being able to identify and evaluate moral dilemmas and act appropriately

*Character traits associated with Dimension 5:*

- Honesty
- Truth-seeking
- Integrity
- Responsibility
- Respect
- Courage
- Self-efficacy
- Compassion
- Empathy
- Social Intelligence

*How are these traits defined?*

Honesty and Truth-seeking

- Being truthful with oneself and with others and establishing an expectation that others be truthful in return
- Actively pursuing the truth in order to communicate only accurate information to others
- Understanding that honesty is not always easy—to give or to take—and that it may come with consequences if a wrongdoing has occurred
- *Includes:* doing one's own work without cheating or plagiarizing, and encouraging others to do the same; accurately portraying who one is, no matter whose company one is in; questioning a statement or action that seems wrong; looking for missing pieces when a story seems incomplete; and seeking deeper understanding of context

Integrity, Responsibility, and Respect

- Staying true to oneself, one's commitments, and one's goals
- Keeping one's word
- Owning up to one's actions
- Understanding that actions reflect who a person is and where one comes from
- Treating others the way one wishes to be treated
- Honoring the good work of others
- Recognizing one's impact on others and the impact others have in return
- *Includes:* expressing the right to one's own well-founded opinion and allowing others to do so as well; demonstrating follow-through with obligations; being loyal to individuals and institutions that have contributed to one's development; upholding the value of a promise

Courage and Self-Efficacy

- Taking a chance in the name of a positive outcome
- Knowing one will be able to deal with whatever outcome one might face
- Facing one's fears and tackling self-doubt
- Believing in one's capabilities
- Recognizing when a situation requires action and being able to determine the next appropriate step
- *Includes:* taking a stand with a minority opinion; respectfully questioning the actions of someone with power; being able to evaluate the relative risk and reward of a situation; challenging oneself in academic and social situations

Compassion, Empathy, and Social Intelligence

- Showing understanding of others' emotions
- Knowing how to reach out to someone in need
- Taking the time to learn what is appropriate in dealing with a particular circumstance
- Knowing when and when not to relate one's own experiences to a situation
- Respecting the idea that different cultures have various ways of dealing with personal and social issues
- *Includes:* listening to the perspectives of others; asking what someone needs and how one can be helpful rather than imposing one's own ideals; knowing when to elicit the help of someone with more first-hand experience; engaging in interactions and experiences that will enhance one's abilities to relate to others

## Appendix 2. Vertical Axis – Domains of Campus Culture

Below are five areas of a campus environment that are especially significant for the Core Commitments Initiative. These are adapted from a set of 10 originally developed by Lee Knepelkamp and Lauren Ruff in 2006, which were in turn influenced by Donna Talbot's article, "Stages of Multicultural Organizational Development in Higher Education."

### 1. Mission and Educational Purpose

- a. clarity concerning the dimensions as an important aspect of the institution's comprehensive educational mission
- b. college catalog
- c. policy statements/handbooks (such as honor codes)
- d. educational programming/orientation concerning the dimensions for students, faculty, and staff
- e. public communications (web sites, public letters, press releases, official publications)

### 2. Campus Life

- a. civic engagement as a regular aspect of campus life
- b. diversity and equity in training and membership in organizations
- c. expectation of civil behavior
- d. emphasis on active learning, reflection, and feedback
- e. diverse opportunities for leadership and growth

### 3. Curriculum and Pedagogy

- a. teaching and learning related to the five dimensions
- a. diversity in ways of teaching and learning (pedagogies of engagement and integration)
- b. clear expectations and requirements for excellence and integrative work
- c. wide range of intellectual opportunities in courses, programs, majors
- d. systematic feedback about progress in intellectual and ethical development
- e. expectations of personal and academic integrity

### 4. Community and Campus Partnerships

- a. work toward shared goals that incorporate the five dimensions
- b. consistent institutional support
- c. reciprocal and meaningful for each party involved
- d. attention to building relationships, to mission and educational purpose, and to sustainability
- e. willingness to evolve as needs change
- f. represent diversity of individuals and groups on- and off-campus

### 5. Incentives and Rewards

- a. reward systems consistent and clear across campus units
- b. equity within the system
- c. systems of consistent feedback and opportunity for improvement
- d. recognition of individual differences and contributions to the larger community

## Appendix 3. Determining Pervasiveness of Efforts – Depth and Breadth

The matrix is designed to help you and your colleagues answer a central question to the Core Commitments initiative: *How pervasive are our institution's attempts to educate students for personal and social responsibility?*

### **Breadth**

Breadth describes the degree to which efforts are connected throughout the institution.

#### ***Isolated Initiatives***

Initiatives are in place within individual units of the institution and function in isolation from one another. For example, both the sociology department and the student affairs office may have initiatives focusing on social responsibility, but they occur without an overarching plan to connect them or to link them with other campus initiatives to make education for PSR pervasive.

#### ***Integrated Initiatives***

Integrated initiatives form a campus-wide effort that systematically and appropriately connects different units and attends to how effectively these units function together to ensure high levels of learning across all five dimensions of PSR.

#### ***Guiding question:***

To what extent is education for all five dimensions of PSR systematically integrated across all academic affairs, student affairs, and administrative operations (e.g. financial affairs, academic programs, human resources, curriculum, co-curricular programs, admissions)?

### **Depth**

Depth captures the degree to which the efforts are embedded vs. superficial.

#### ***Superficial***

Superficial initiatives are cosmetic actions that are ineffective in moving education for PSR from the margins to the core values of the institution (e.g., instituting an honor code without programmatic reinforcement or instruction on how the code will be enforced). Such initiatives represent isolated opportunities to address PSR that ignore student development over time.

#### ***Embedded***

Education for PSR has become systematically embedded throughout institutional structures, so that it is reflected as a core value in all aspects of daily operations and campus culture. Considerations of student development and the need for assessing student learning in this area define and centrally shape various units' functions at every level within the university's structure. Education for PSR is an essential concern underlying institutional decision-making and resource allocation.

#### ***Guiding question:***

Is education for PSR embedded so that student development over time is taken into account and assessment of these outcomes is allotted the necessary resources?

Significant breadth and depth is demonstrated through effective, sustainable, and comprehensive institutionalization of programs, policies, and procedures that support education for PSR.

#### **Additional questions to ask about pervasiveness**

1. How well-connected are programs, activities, and courses? What integrative structures exist?
2. How do individuals' efforts build on the work of colleagues?
3. How are efforts "scaffolded" so that students become more sophisticated in these areas over time?
4. At what level are efforts taking place? (personal, departmental, institutional)
5. Is there an expectation of students' integration and development along all five dimensions, and of institutional integration across academic and student affairs?
6. Is there congruence between reward systems and students' development along the five dimensions?
7. How many students, faculty, or administrators (percentage of overall) are affected by efforts?
8. How will individuals know that efforts are making an appreciable difference to campus culture and student learning and development?