

## **Berkeley Conference: June 2005**

**“What We Know About Student Civic Engagement: Best Practices, National Trends, and UC Data.” That’s the topic of our discussion today, and I am TE, your moderator.**

**In writing the book, *Educating Citizens*, my colleagues and I traveled back across the country trying to identify some of the best practices in student civic engagement. We wrote in some depth about 12 campuses and in less detail about 50 or 60 programs and courses in a diversity of settings.**

**We did reach a number of judgments that are relevant to our inquiry today, but let me underscore three of the most important.**

**(1) Those universities that were most successful had a high degree of institutional intentionality. President, provost, faculty, staff.**

**(2) They were marked by numerous overlapping and reinforcing interventions in the curriculum, the co-curriculum, and the campus climate. From first materials sent to students.**

**(3) Those interventions sought intentionally to shape students civic knowledge, their civic skills, and their civic attitudes and motivation. Skills key—and neglected.**

**Main gap in civic engagement was in that sub-set that focuses on political engagement, broadly defined to include policy-making as well as partisan politics. No institution with a campus-wide focus, until civic engagement generally, So current project is examining 21 courses and programs that do focus on political engagement, and we are finding a number of interesting and, we think, useful insights.**

**Most of the most impressive campus efforts we found to promote civic engagement are underway at campuses that are not research universities, and I urge those from the UC system not to fall into the trap of thinking that it can learn only from other research universities. Cal State Monterey Bay and San Francisco State, for example, are two campuses that could teach a lot.**

**Fortunately, there are few experts who have looked in depth at students and their civic engagement, and we are particularly fortunate to have two of the best talking today.**

**First, Lori Vogelgesang, director of the Center for Service Learning Research and Dissemination at the UCLA Higher Education Research Institute, who is directing a multi-year student of service learning.**

**Next, Richard Flacks, a professor of sociology at UC Santa Barbara, one of the principle investigators for the major UC study of the student experience, and author of a number of books about college students.. He is joined by Gregg Thomson, who is Director of the Office of Student Research at Berkeley, and leads the UC student surveys.**

**Now let's hear two responses: from Andy Furco, Director of the Service-Learning Center at Berkeley and from Joe Kiskis, a professor of physics at UC Davis who is who is Chair of the University Committee on Educational Policy.**