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## The Role and Structure of Mediating Entities in University-Community Partnerships: An Examination of Urban Routes

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THE ROLE AND STRUCTURE OF MEDIATING ENTITIES IN  
UNIVERSITY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:  
AN EXAMINATION OF URBAN ROUTES

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
University of New Orleans  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Public Administration

by

Mathew Spaan

B.A. University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee, 1999

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the use of mediating entities in overcoming barriers found in many university-community partnerships that arise out of unequal power, a lack of mutual understanding, and divergent agendas of the partners. In order to develop a theory or model of the functions and structure of these mediating entities, this thesis analyzes the Urban Routes program of the International Project for Nonprofit Leadership. This study identifies four main functions of mediating entities: integrating, interpreting, equalizing, and sustaining. This case study reveals the importance of structuring these mediating entities in a way that allows for the most effective utilization of the personal relationships these structures rely upon.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Within public, private and nonprofit organizations across the country, there is a growing understanding that the problems faced by urban communities are far too complex for isolated solutions. In order to develop comprehensive solutions to these complex problems, the utilization of all available assets within any given community is needed. Moreover, what is quickly becoming clear is the need to develop an understanding of how these various organizations fit into the wider community development process and the development of methods for these organizations to interact both with one another and, more importantly, with the very communities they are attempting to help revitalize.

One particular type of organization that has begun to realize the need and responsibility for greater participation in the concerns of their communities is public urban universities. Paralleling the century-and-a-half example of land-grant universities' interactions and collaborations with rural communities, metropolitan-based universities are seeking new and meaningful ways to develop and expand their participation. One method universities have used to enable this participation is the development of university-community partnerships. By enabling community access to the university and university access to the community, these partnerships can allow comprehensive solutions to community issues to arise.

However, often marking these partnerships are unanticipated barriers and problems arising out of unequal power, a lack of mutual understanding, and the lack of a shared



commitment. In order to overcome these barriers and problems, many urban universities have realized the need to develop special partnership methodologies or mechanisms that enable partnerships to be more productive for both partners. One such methodology is the use of a mediating entity to enable equal participation in setting the agenda of these partnerships and two-way communications between partners, thus overcoming some of the barriers encountered. Within New Orleans, one such mediating entity is the Urban Routes program of the International Project for Nonprofit Leadership (IPNL). IPNL established Urban Routes to bring the resources of the University of New Orleans (UNO) to bear on the problems and needs, and make use of the assets, of two New Orleans neighborhoods, Central City and Tremé. This case study is an examination of the Urban Routes program as a mediating entity.

### *Context of Study*

#### *IPNL and Urban Routes*

The International Project for Nonprofit Leadership (IPNL) was established in 1999, for the broad purpose of developing “high performance nonprofit organizations locally, nationally, and internationally, by playing a leadership role in education, research and community service” (International Project for Nonprofit Leadership n.d., 1). Through multiple activities, IPNL's purpose is to build the capacity and leadership within the nonprofit sector. The vision guiding these activities is to create “a continuum of learning opportunities” within which “educated citizen leaders” can tackle the difficult challenge of revitalizing the community (International Project for Nonprofit Leadership n.d., 1).

University of New Orleans' Metropolitan College organizationally houses IPNL. Metropolitan College is an administrative unit of the University of New Orleans (UNO),

generally focused on managing all of the university's adult and non-traditional student educational activities. In addition, falling within their scope is the management of several projects, such as IPNL, loosely oriented towards expanding the educational scope of UNO.

Metropolitan College's administrative responsibility to IPNL is to provide human resource and financial management support. IPNL, in turn, must report their activities and expenses to Metropolitan College, although a large amount of independence is allowed. This independence is largely the result of the lack of direct funding from Metropolitan College's budget. IPNL is responsible for developing their own funding support, and because of this, Metropolitan College allows them latitude in developing their own activities and programs.

The earliest activities of IPNL focused around traditional academic strategies. Beginning in the fall semester of 2001, IPNL developed, in collaboration with UNO's College of Urban and Public Affairs (CUPA), a set of nonprofit leadership courses oriented towards developing "well-trained professionals" within the nonprofit sector. IPNL and CUPA designed these courses for CUPA's Master of Public Administration program in order to provide both academic and practical instruction. IPNL continues to help develop these courses within CUPA, providing administrative and marketing support.

Fitting within its vision to develop "citizen leaders," IPNL also offered placements for non-academic community participants within these courses. IPNL sought to expand academic opportunities beyond the typical academic arena, providing access to academic courses to community members unlikely to receive access through traditional means. IPNL and CUPA saw the inclusion of community participants as strengthening the courses by providing the real-world experience often lacking within the typical student population.

With this same guiding principle of providing access to UNO, IPNL developed several other activities, namely the Chancellor's Forum on Leadership and Courage and a series of Executive Short-Courses. The Chancellor's Forum was a public series of speakers focusing on leadership within the nonprofit and public sector. IPNL intended these forums to address and spur a discussion on what they saw as crucial issues facing the nonprofit and public sector. The Executive Short-Courses, targeting existing professionals within the nonprofit sector, focused on several areas IPNL felt were weak within the local sector. By providing continuing educational activities to professionals in the field, the idea was to develop directly the human resource and skill capacity within existing nonprofit organizations.

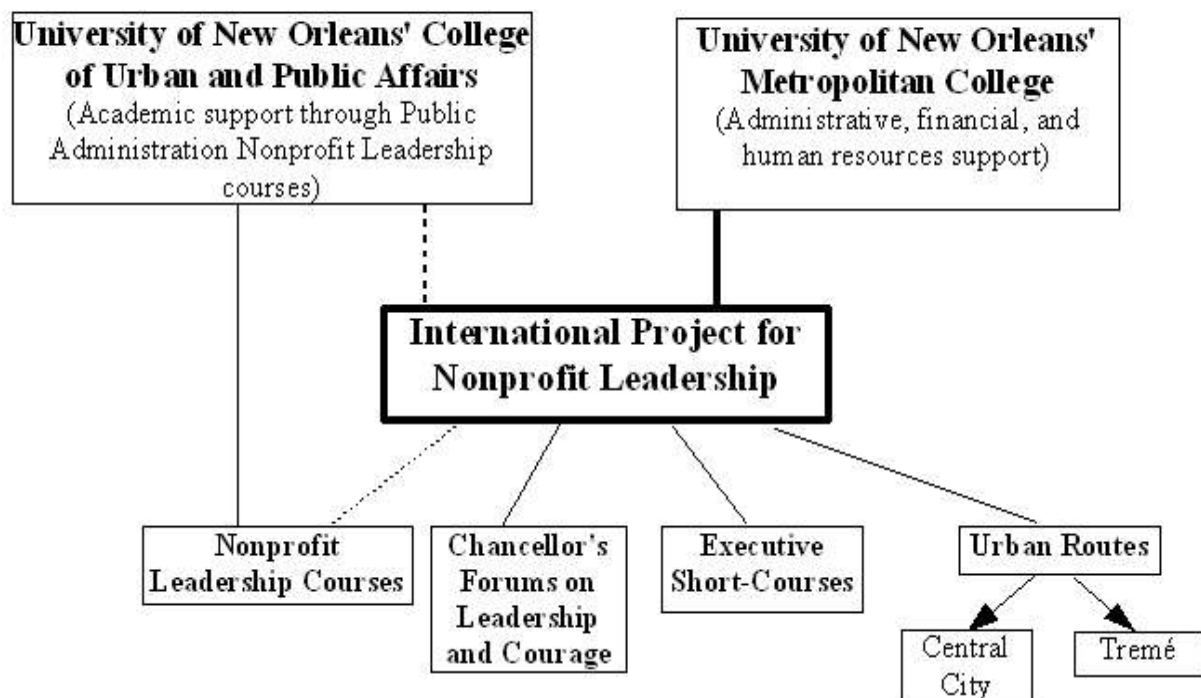
A fourth activity of IPNL, Urban Routes, sought to expand further academic access into the communities of New Orleans. The Urban Routes' idea was to bring the resources of IPNL and the University of New Orleans (UNO) to the communities of New Orleans to enhance the capacity of existing neighborhood-based nonprofit organizations.

Urban Routes' first activities began in January 2001, within the large New Orleans neighborhood of Central City. The early purpose of the Urban Routes program was to provide, through a variety of methods and activities, flexible resources that would address the needs of the community. IPNL's intention was to develop these activities collaboratively with community participants, orienting them towards addressing the current needs of the community-based nonprofit organizations within Central City. IPNL intended Urban Routes to remain a flexible model of providing technical and capacity-building assistance by leaving the focus of activities reliant upon the current needs and assets of the community. IPNL also intended Urban Routes to act as an outreach component for UNO. By being in a position to provide a wide assortment of UNO resources into the communities, and particularly into community-based organizations,

Urban Routes would enable wider engagement between UNO and these communities. In essence, Urban Routes would act as an intermediary or bridge between UNO and the various communities of engagement.

General IPNL-based staff conducted all previous activities of IPNL. However, the creation of Urban Routes in Central City, and its later expansion into Tremé in 2003, required the creation of dedicated Urban Routes staff within the IPNL structure. This dedicated staff was generally uninvolved in the other activities of IPNL. Figure 1 below represents the International Project for Nonprofit Leadership's organizational and programmatic structure.

**Figure 1- Organization of the International Project for Nonprofit Leadership**



The engagement component of Urban Routes fits the mission of IPNL, the University of New Orleans (UNO), and the two university units IPNL most closely relates, Metropolitan

College and CUPA. Obviously, since IPNL intended to extend “a continuum of learning opportunity” from the university to the surrounding community, community engagement seems a natural activity. Additionally, both CUPA and Metropolitan College maintain an outward community-based focus within their various activities, both traditionally academic and otherwise.

The University of New Orleans’ mission is to provide “essential support for the educational, economic, cultural, and social well being of the ... New Orleans metropolitan area” by serving the “needs of the region through its undergraduate and graduate programs and *through mutually beneficial collaborations with private and public bodies* whose missions and goals are consistent with and supportive of UNO’s teaching, scholarly, and community service objectives” (University of New Orleans 2004, italics added). CUPA accomplishes its own mission of “building livable communities through education, research and engagement” through collaborations with public and private organizations and a wide variety of applied research projects. Finally, Metropolitan College's mission of promoting “lifelong learning” through widening access to learning opportunities is fulfilled in part through several community engagement-oriented projects.

Although Urban Routes has maintained a variety of activities throughout its lifetime, including the direct provision of assistance, within this current study the focus is an examination of Urban Routes as an intermediary between UNO and the two communities Urban Routes is involved. The study examines how Urban Routes “does its job” as intermediary, and what structure is in place that allows it to accomplish this role.

The two neighborhoods Urban Routes currently exists within are Central City and Tremé. These neighborhoods provide a logical place for the Urban Routes project, due to their rich cultural pasts, long histories of community organizing, and wide variety of currently active

community organizations. Both neighborhoods also have high levels of poverty relative to the whole of New Orleans.

### *Central City*

New Orleans' Central City neighborhood is located in the heart of the city, has a population of approximately 19,000 residents, and spans approximately three-hundred blocks (Greater New Orleans Community Data Center 2004a). Originally developed in the 1830s, Central City has been home to a wide variety of working class populations; currently, 87% of its residents are African American.

Central City's main commercial corridor, Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard (originally named Dryades Street), has long played a significant economic and social role in New Orleans. As early as the 1830s, this corridor had been home to many successful shops frequented by a large portion of New Orleans' population. For the African American population of New Orleans, this corridor represented one of the few areas they were able to shop free from harassment during the 1960s (Greater New Orleans Community Data Center 2004).

Unfortunately, following the integration of other commercial areas throughout the city, this corridor has declined steadily for the past several decades. This steady decline matches the overall decline within the neighborhood. Currently, Central City's poverty rate hovers near 50%, well above the Orleans Parish-wide rate of 27% (Greater New Orleans Community Data Center 2003). Further, the median income of Central City is approximately \$16,480, compared with \$27,133 for Orleans Parish as a whole (International Project for Nonprofit Leadership 2004).

There are several community-based organizations working against the neighborhood's decline. Two very active umbrella organizations within Central City are Central City Partnership

(CCP) and Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard Merchants and Business Association (OCHMBA), the two main Urban Routes: Central City partners.

### *Tremé*

Tremé is located adjacent to New Orleans' French Quarter, spanning the area from North Rampart Street to North Broad and from Orleans/ Basin Street to Esplanade. The current population of Tremé is approximately 8,800, with a poverty rate of over 50% (Greater New Orleans Community Data Center 2003). This current poverty rate, however, does not reflect the neighborhood's prosperous history.

Considered by many to be the oldest African American neighborhood in America, Tremé has been home to a wide variety of ethnicities and classes throughout its long history. Named after the French hat-maker, Claude Tremé, who owned much of the land that makes up today's Tremé, this neighborhood was first developed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Early residents included prosperous craftsman, artists, doctors and teachers of Haitian, African, and Caucasian descent (Greater New Orleans Community Data Center 2004). From its founding until the 1960s, Tremé was a major economic and cultural center for New Orleans.

Congo Square, located within Tremé, was the one location where the city of New Orleans allowed enslaved Africans and free people of color to congregate for celebrations and religious events (Greater New Orleans Community Data Center 2004). This interaction allowed for the preservation of some African traditions, for new African American traditions to flourish, and likely laid the groundwork for Jazz. Congo Square also acted as a market for the exchange of goods between the enslaved and the free, pointing to a deep-seated culture of entrepreneurship within the neighborhood.

One of the keys to Tremé economic prosperity came from this entrepreneurial tradition through a large amount of neighborhood resident-owned businesses. Two major open markets within Tremé were the Tremé and Rochebleve Markets, both existing at the turn of the twentieth century. Further, North Claiborne was home to many locally-owned businesses, and acted as a major commercial corridor for New Orleans.

Unfortunately, a series of city-led construction projects have led to the rapid destruction of Tremé's economic and social fabric, leading to the current poverty level and economic destitution of the neighborhood. The trend started with the destruction of the Tremé Market in the 1930s to build the Municipal Auditorium, currently located within Armstrong Park. In the early 1960s, the city razed approximately nine blocks of residential housing for construction of Armstrong Park. The most devastating destruction, however, came from the construction of Interstate-10. Interstate-10 cut through the heart of Tremé's economic corridor, North Claiborne Avenue, destroying the once prosperous area.

Throughout this destruction, however, a more recent tradition grew, namely community organizing. Today, Tremé is home to several major community-based organizations, including Tambourine and Fan and the Greater Tremé Consortium. Although not currently located within Tremé's borders, the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, a national anti-racist organization, had its beginnings within the neighborhood and remains active in the community. Tremé is also home to an abundance of Jazz musicians, Brass Bands, and Social Aid and Pleasure Clubs. Social Aid and Pleasure Clubs have been important social safety nets within African American neighborhoods throughout the south, and continue to play a social role within their communities (Greater New Orleans Community Data Center 2004). Within Tremé, there are nearly two dozen active Social Aid and Pleasure Clubs.



As we can see, both Central City and Tremé have played significant social and economic roles within New Orleans throughout their long histories. Both neighborhoods have also recently seen major economic destruction, resulting in much higher poverty rates relative to New Orleans as a whole. It was this combination of rich history and current needs, combined with an active community, which helped lead IPNL to place Urban Routes into the two neighborhoods.

### *Purpose of Study*

This study developed out of the frustrations with barriers encountered during my time spent working on Urban Routes: Tremé as Project Assistant. Barriers seemed to exist within nearly every aspect of what Urban Routes was attempting to accomplish. Many of these barriers were of little surprise, such as community member's hesitance to work directly with UNO, which we represented, and the relatively slow process of developing trust among neighborhood residents. However, unexpected barriers arose, such as the lack of familiarity between the partners that led to wider misunderstandings as to what resources were available.

The less expected barriers seemed to stem from both the community and the university sides of the project, and appeared endemic to the process of Urban Routes as a whole within Tremé. Assumptions from the community side as to the structure of Urban Routes, IPNL, and the university, for example, often led to confrontation between Urban Routes' staff and community residents regarding UNO's current or previous activities within the neighborhood, and misunderstandings as to what resources were available to the community through Urban Routes.

Working within the university also proved difficult. The lengthy process required to work through UNO's financial system, for example, often resulted in months-late payments to

community residents who had provided services to the project, hindering the development of trust and communication that appeared to be of great importance to the functioning of Urban Routes. Other difficulties included the lack of involvement by the community within university processes which affect their neighborhood and the community's frustrations with this lack of involvement, as well as a disconnect between the timing of activities within the university and the timing of needs within the community.

Interestingly, the above barriers existed within the Urban Routes process even though IPNL expected the overt design of program staffing to assuage these types of difficulties and allow for completion of Urban Routes' stated purpose, namely the development of a cultural tourism initiative. For instance, IPNL specifically chose the Urban Routes: Tremé Neighborhood Coordinator because of her background within cultural tourism as well as the fact that she was a long-time resident of Tremé with numerous social and business ties within the community. Other staff members within Urban Routes and IPNL had direct ties to UNO, which presumably would lead to some level of intimate knowledge of the activities and processes of the university bureaucracy. However, despite this, the difficulties constantly arose.

The solutions Urban Routes' staff took to overcome these and other problems seemed to dictate our activities far more than did the development of a cultural tourism initiative. While attempting to engage in planned activities, we found ourselves in need of developing solutions to overcome the problems and barriers as they arose. Further, we realized that we were in the necessary position of attempting to mediate the partnership through interpreting and facilitating interaction between UNO and the neighborhood.

In attempting to better understand the role of Urban Routes, as well as the many difficulties and barriers we encountered which seemed to require this role, I wondered if the

Urban Routes: Tremé experience was unique, or whether it was typical of university-community partnerships. If our experiences within Urban Routes were common, perhaps there were significant structural reasons for the existence of these barriers. More importantly, if these barriers are endemic to university-community partnerships, it may be the role of an Urban Routes-like intermediary to facilitate across the barriers.

### *Organizational Theory and University-Community Partnerships*

The view that university-community partnership problems stem from their structures is derived in part from organizational theory. Within the wide scope of organizational theory, the outputs of an organizational system are not simply a direct result of the inputs into the system (Frederickson and Smith 2003). Instead, the output of an organization is a result of the interaction between the inputs and the system's internal structure. Within this framework, organizations are “bounded social constructs of rules, roles, norms, and the expectations that constrain individual and group choice and behavior” (Frederickson and Smith 2003, 71).

Individual behaviors within organizational systems are bounded by the constraints and opportunities that present themselves within the system. Put simply, the results of an organization cannot be pinned onto a single individual or actor; we must explore the entire system. As James Q. Wilson stated succinctly, “organization matters” (Wilson 1989, 23).

The establishment of standard operating procedures, common modes and methods of communication, decisional frameworks, and shared definitions of problems and solutions effectively limit possible actions towards anticipated results. An organization's actions or choices are the result of an organization's goals and expectations, which in turn, are a function of the organization's structure and “conventional practices” (Allison 1971, 76). By systematizing an

organization's actions and choices, the organization is able to reduce the potential of uncertain outcomes and increase the potential for expected results, overall reducing the effect individual actors play within the system.

This understanding of organizations is useful for several reasons in attempting to understand university-community partnerships. By viewing university-community partnerships through an organizational theory lens we can move away from the typical view that the barriers and the results of the partnership stem from the particular individual partners involved towards the understanding of these barriers as systemic to partnerships as a whole. This is not to say that individuals are not important within the system. In fact, individuals play a strong role within the functioning of any system. Further, the individual, with individual characteristics, takes actions that affect the entire system. However, the organizational system narrows the individual's options, and utilization of the individuals within the system towards the systems intended outcomes is the key. Therefore, the way that the system influences the individual is of fundamental importance to the wider system outcomes.

Organizational theory proves useful in attempting to explain why systemic university-community partnership barriers exist. If both the university and the community are understood to be loosely based, complex organizational systems, then each system can be understood to have uniquely structured opportunities, constraints, and cultures which lead to each system's unique outcomes and actions. The university is unlikely to have the same structure as the community, and vice versa. When combining these two highly complex, individually structured systems within a partnership, then, we can expect an even more complex joint system. If the individual characteristic of each of the joined systems contrasts with the others it is involved with, then it

follows that the joint system would have many inherent difficulties, and lead to barriers to the joint system's actions.

From this line of reasoning, one important question that remained was how university-community partnerships are structured for successful interaction. Assuming the barriers are common to university-community partnerships and can be understood as stemming from systemic barriers, university-community partnerships may require a mediating structure within which to work. The mediating entity would be able, theoretically, to work across both of the partnering systems, and provide a shared language between systems. In other words, the mediating entity would play the role of *interacting* and *interpreting* between the two partnering systems.

Interacting and interpreting are two roles Urban Routes has attempted to play within the current partnerships between the University of New Orleans and two New Orleans' neighborhoods. Therefore, if Urban Routes is the mediating entity, one of its functions is to work across the barriers that exist between the two systems of the university and the neighborhoods. In working across these barriers, Urban Routes would be in a position where it would need to first confront the barriers (or have the barrier confront it) and then figure ways to overcome them to allow for the partnership to continue. In other words, Urban Routes would encumber the costs of the partnership normally encumbered by the partners themselves. Through encumbering these costs, interpreting and interacting between the partners, and generally managing the partnership, Urban Routes would free the partners to engage in the content of the partnership.

This "encumbering costs" model could explain why Urban Routes encountered the difficulties presented, as this is the nature and the role of the mediating entity in university-community partnerships. More importantly, the "solutions" it provided to problems may point to

the unique and important wider purpose of mediating entities and their role within the structure of inter-system interactions. If this is the case, then by examining more closely the Urban Routes model of mediating entity, I may be better able to identify the general qualities and structure of these mediators.

### *Need for Research*

Perhaps the most compelling reason for conducting research centering on the effective structuring of university-community partnerships stems from the potentially strong role universities can play to reverse a trend within America's urban communities. For several decades, we have seen a worsening of the conditions of the urban poor, and a weakening of economic centers within urban inner city neighborhoods. These worsening conditions have led many to realize that only by utilizing all of the assets available within and to a community, can we begin to address community issues in any meaningful way.

Therefore, there is a need to explore and develop various methods of interaction between public, private, and/or nonprofit organizations with variances in power and culture. Our understanding of inter- and intra-organizational communications and relations impact the potential of multi-party partnerships, and as a growing field within public administration warrants quite a bit of research.

One compelling model of community development is the “community-building model,” wherein the “internal social and economic fabric of the neighborhood itself” is strengthened through the collaboration of the neighborhood's assets and institutions (Smock 2004, 18). Building on Kretzmann and McKnight's (1993) asset-based model of community development, the key is to identify all of the inherent capacities, assets and capabilities to be found within the

community itself, and utilize neighborhood assets towards the inward strengthening and development of the community.

Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) identify three basic categories of assets within communities to assess: individuals, associations, and institutions. It is within the third type of asset, institutions, that universities fall. Although we can understand “community assets” to include primarily those individuals, associations, or institutions which currently are active within the community, this view has the potential of ignoring a possible, albeit not obvious, asset, such as a large urban university.

Although the traditional role of academia is usually assumed to be “pure” research and the pursuit of knowledge, the view of the university as a strong resource or asset to the community is not a new idea, dating as early as the mid-nineteenth century within the land-grant traditions. However, land-grant colleges were established specifically for the utilization of university resources and research on rural problems. It is only relatively recently that the full role the urban research university could play within the urban community has been stressed by academics (Glassick 1999; Hackney 1999).

Many authors point to the writings of Ernest Boyer as the beginning of the modern push to utilize the research university fully within the community, although several previous movements within the 20<sup>th</sup> Century predated this push. (Glassick 1999; Lerner 2000; Sandmann 1997). Examples of movements include the student-led movements of the 1960's and the growth in the number of community colleges largely responsible for providing access to education to the wider community.

However, only recently have urban research universities generally taken this push seriously. Whether through service learning, collaborative research, or democratizing data by

providing wider access, urban research universities have attempted to draw upon both their traditional and newly developed roles to bring resources into the community. The main point of these various methods is that the research university, if properly used, can be a potent asset for the community, and should not be ignored.

The key, however, is not simply to identify the university as an asset within the community, but to identify the proper role and method of utilizing this, and all other, assets that are identified. What is necessary is a “consensual working partnership” which allows for the leveraging of a wide variety of resources and support by the wider community (Smock 2004, 18). The development of a “consensual working partnership,” however, is the tough part (Stoecker 2002, Silka 1999; Baum 2000). What is of drastic need is the development of a meaningful structure that allows for the community to most effectively utilize university resources, while maintaining the community’s lead in any development efforts.

The importance of community involvement by universities is of course not simply one sided. As potentially important as university involvement within community development is to the community, it is of equal importance to the university (Lerner 2000). “Engagement” though not often articulated or defined explicitly within a university's mission, often holds a high status among the rhetoric used by the university to describe its priorities (Holland 2000). This seems especially true of public urban universities. As public entities receiving public dollars, some of the public has come to expect, quite reasonably, wider access to and more direct results from its tax revenue. Therefore, regardless of how the university articulates its commitment to the community, community “engagement” remains of high importance to many universities reputations at the city, state and national level.



Beyond its effect on reputation, community involvement presents wide opportunities for the development of new pedagogical approaches (Dewar and Isaac 1998), funding strategies (Vidal et al 2002; Lerner, 2000), and research venues (Lerner, 2000; Stoecker 1999).

Additionally, for many older urban universities, involvement within their surrounding community is not merely an option, but a requirement. With the growing devastation brought on by decades of urban decay affecting the communities directly outside of their doors, many universities view involvement with their surrounding communities as necessary to confront a creeping threat. As one author put it, “the fate of the communities is the fate of higher education” (Maurrasse 2001, 5). For these reasons, and many others that are unique to each, universities are realizing the benefits that come with community involvement.

A final reason for the importance of developing a better understanding of university-community partnerships are the consequences of failure. With each failure to develop a meaningful method of collaboration between universities and communities, not only are communities starved of the resources universities may make available, but also future collaboration becomes more difficult. Building on a history of unequal and failed partnerships, many universities, including UNO, have found a growing hesitance within the community to work with them. At best, the community can view many failures as just another temporary project by the university. At worst, the community can view failed spotty interactions as open exploitation of the community for the sole benefit of the university.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to develop an understanding of the contemporary role mediating entities can play within urban university-community partnerships, we must first gain an understanding of the background from which the idea of the mediating entity and its importance developed. Beginning with a historic examination of community engagement's role within the university, we can move to an examination of the recent reordering of many urban university's priorities for enhanced placement of community engagement. Within the context of enhanced placement within the urban university mission, we can examine the trend of recent research from largely positive studies of engagement's impact on urban universities towards more critical examinations of the difficulties, barriers, and inherently unequal nature of university-community partnerships. It is from the critical discussion of the barriers and problems that often exist within university-community partnerships that we see the rise of the importance of the mediating entity as one potentially potent solution.

#### *History of University-Community Engagement*

Within the United States, the wide-ranging tradition of utilizing the knowledge and technical skills of a university for application to a community's needs dates back at least to the mid-nineteenth century with the creation of so-called "land grant" universities (Small and Bogenschneider 1998). Several decades after the establishment of land grant universities, the

Progressive Era witnessed an increase in community engagement by universities, following the trend for increased popular access to previously inaccessible institutions. However, following World War I, several cultural shifts within the universities and the broader scientific community led to a growing isolation of urban research universities from their communities. With a few exceptions, the trend towards the isolation of research universities continued until the mid-1980s.

The Morrill Act of 1862 established the “land grant” university tradition (Small and Bogenschneider 1998). This Act provided for the proceeds from the sale of federal lands that were donated to each state to be used for the establishment of agricultural universities. These “explicitly anti-elitist and highly democratic” agricultural universities reflected the view that the application of their knowledge and technical skills to the communities' needs would lead to wide economic growth (Small and Bogenschneider 1998, 256; Lee 2002). By providing access to what was previously an elitist institution, land grant universities allowed for the dissemination of scientific knowledge to a wider audience, through direct enrollment as well as applied research.

As a “new model of American higher education,” land-grant universities were intended to be “colleges of the people” (Small and Bogenschneider 1998, 256). By expanding beyond the traditional scholarship of universities, land-grant universities legitimized research into the “people's problems as they occurred in the community, on the farm, and in the home,” improving the life and common good of the average rural American (Small and Bogenschneider 1998, 256; Lee 2002).

Two later Acts expanded the role and capacity of the land-grant university. The Hatch Act of 1887 provided federal funds for “university-sponsored agricultural experiment stations” (Small and Bogenschneider 1998, 257). These stations provided a direct link between the university and the farm, with solutions to agricultural problems the focus of research (Small and

Bogenschneider 1998). The last Act to expand the link between land-grant universities and the agricultural community was the Smith-Lever Act in 1914 (Small and Bogenschneider 1998). The Smith-Lever Act created the “Cooperative Extension Service” in each state, which allowed for the distribution of knowledge created through university research to the citizens. The idea was to complete the system of access by establishing faculty within each county whose role was to be the distribution point for university knowledge (Small and Bogenschneider 1998).

### *From Land-Grant to Urban Universities*

The later establishment of urban universities was modeled on agricultural-based land-grant universities. The urban university was based upon the view that the distribution of knowledge from the universities to the communities, through services, technological applications and applied research, can enhance urban communities (Bringle et al. 1999). Harkavy and Puckett (1991) identify a period of particularly active wider university engagement in urban community activities during the Progressive Era, which lasted roughly from 1890 to 1914. During the early Progressive Era, Harkavy and Puckett note, “academics saw the city as their arena for study and action” (1991, 13). As the locations where theory and practice could be combined, the city provided an important location for academic development across the university structure (Harkavy and Puckett 1991).

The parallel between the earlier established agricultural land-grant universities and Progressive Era urban-focused research universities is rather interesting. Just as land-grant institutions brought the “expertise” of the scholars for mass education and economic development, the urban research university could provide “expertise” based on rigorous research to the city neighborhoods. Both systems assumed that the university was the sole or primary

source of this knowledge, skill, and expertise (Lee 2001). This assumption not only likely led to a less participatory situation than the institutional forces were touting research universities to be, but also may have led to the shift away from applied research toward disengaged scientific research (Harkavy and Puckett 1991; Bringle et al. 1999; Small and Bogenschneider 1998).

The shift within many research universities' scholastic culture began during the First World War (Harkavy and Puckett 1991; Bringle et al. 1999; Small and Bogenschneider 1998). Following the trend established within the larger scholastic community towards rigorously empirical scientific approaches to knowledge generation, many universities moved away from applied community-based research. Harkavy and Puckett note that “the rise of 'value-free', 'objective', scientific social science” also led to “the hardening of disciplinary boundaries” (1991, 14). A growing disciplinary independence combined with an academic research interest that was shifting away from local interests to national and foreign policy issues, driven by the two World Wars (Harkavy and Puckett 1991, 14; Bringle 1999; Lerner and Simon 1998). This combination led to most research universities effectively separating from their surrounding communities, with scientific methods of research largely overshadowing applied research and community engagement.

### *Growth of “Engagement” in the University*

This shift continued throughout the twentieth century (Harkavy and Puckett 1991, 14; Bringle et al. 1999). Student movements during the 1960s led to a growth in involvement of many universities with their communities, and the expansion of community colleges through the last half of the twentieth century increased public access to academic instruction. These two events mark some movement away from the general shift of many urban universities away from

their communities. However, research universities as a whole were slower in countering this shift. Beginning in the early 1980s, following the call of the late Ernest Boyer for a “scholarship of engagement,” “connecting the best resources of the university to our most pressing social, civic, and ethical problems,” we have seen a marked increase in the forms and functions of urban research universities' engagement within their surrounding communities (Bringle et al. 1999, 4). Ernest Boyer, the U.S. Commissioner of Education during the Carter Administration and former president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, emphasized the importance of the community as an arena of engagement for all three aspects of the university's mission, namely education, knowledge generation or research, and professional service (Bringle et al. 1999, 5).

What he witnessed, and wished to counter, was the growing scientific disengagement of the university that he saw as hindering its ability to function fully. By limiting their research to the scientific generation of knowledge, these universities were increasingly unable to provide real-world applications for the knowledge generated. Along with this disengagement, the growing division among the disciplines was leading towards an education system that was ill prepared to deal with the comprehensive real-world problems students, faculty, and professionals faced, by providing only discipline-specific instruction (Bringle et al. 1999). Unless universities could link research to the actual problems and needs, the university would cease to be relevant (Glassick 1999; Hackney 1999; Kreutziger et al. 1999; Keele and Nickman 1999; Stoecker 1999).

### *Federal Programs Join the Push to Relevance*

Following Boyer's call for relevance, urban research universities were attempting several different types of community engagement and collaboration methodologies. Mirroring the land-grant development of growing federal involvement in linking the universities to their communities, the federal government developed several grant programs (Vidal et al. 2002; EPA 1998). Two programs, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Outreach Partnership Center (COPC) program and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Community/University Partnerships (CUP) grant program, provide a good contrast as to the models the federal government used to encourage university involvement within community affairs.

First developed in 1994, HUD's COPC program was established to "foster and support collaborations between institutions of higher education and their communities" through engagement centers (Vidal et al. 2002, 1-1). Seeing a need to bring the expertise of the universities to the needs of the communities, HUD envisioned COPC as a method of encouraging universities already collaborating with their communities to expand their activities. As the main method HUD uses to encourage universities to engage with a variety of community partners towards the goal of community development, COPC is intended to allow for "great flexibility" and encourage partners to "undertake a broad array of activities" (Vidal et al. 2002, 1-4). The engagement centers also have wide latitude in their administrative make-up.

Another example of a federal grant program, which attempted to encourage universities to bring their expertise, knowledge and technical skills to the community, was the EPA's CUP grant program. From 1995 to 1997, EPA provided Community/University Partnership Grants "to help community groups efficiently address local environmental justice issues through active

partnerships with institutions of higher education (EPA 1998, 1). The CUP theory was that universities could provide the technical skills and expertise to communities engaged in environmental justice battles. Further, the idea was that through “meaningful, fully interactive two-way cooperation” and “meaningful partnership” with the university, socio-economically disadvantaged communities would be able to monitor their environmental status more effectively (EPA 1998, 1). The partnerships were intended to increase environmental awareness, expand community outreach, and provide training and education to resolve environmental problems such as exposure to environmental pollutants in “socio-economically disadvantaged communities” (EPA 1998, 1). The EPA ceased funding of the CUP program as of the 1998 fiscal year.

Both of the examples represent a push at the federal level to bring universities into “meaningful partnership” with their communities, similar to the various Acts of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries establishing land-grant universities (Vidal et al. 2002, 1-1). However, each of the programs uses a different method of establishing “meaningful partnerships.” COPC leaves the makeup of the partnership generally undefined (Vidal et al. 2002). Although within the granting process universities are required to establish community involvement and commitment through letters of commitment, that actual makeup of the partnership, formal or informal, is left largely unspecified (Vidal et al. 2002).

Within CUP, the “meaningful partnership” was expected to be established formally through a Memorandum of Agreement between the university and the community partners (EPA 1998). Within both programs, there exists an assumption of expertise within the university lacking within the community, which likely influences any attempts to establish formal or informal equality in determining the agendas and tasks of the partnerships.



A further difference between the two programs points to a wider trend within many university-community partnerships, and explains the difference between their agreement types. Within the COPC program, the partnership is required “to engage in multiple activities and in multiple types of activities” (Vidal et al. 2002, 2-5). Possible activities include trainings, capital improvements, community planning, economic development, service, and technical assistance (Vidal et al. 2002). Along with this wide variety of possible activities, there is the need for flexibility within the partnerships to allow for any needed shifts. On the other hand, although there may have been several different specific types of activities within CUP, the program focused on environmental justice concerns, and locked the partnership into a limited engagement and context (EPA 1998).

The wider trend that the federal programs reflect is not only the development of many different methodologies within the partnerships, but an optimism in the ability of universities and communities to interact in meaningful ways with little more than an agreement between the two. The reality is that university-community partnerships, despite positive intentions, did not always remain so positive.

#### *Recent Actions- Intentions vs. Reality*

Howell Baum (2000), in a case study of the University of Maryland's Urban Community Service Program, a partnership with Southeast Baltimore educational organization, illustrates what he calls “fantasies,” or unrealistic expectations, of what partnerships can accomplish. According to Baum, “advocates may exaggerate partnerships' potential, minimize their requirements, and ignore evidence that development is often disjointed and tenuous” (2000, 234). Typical fantasies include expectations of enhanced resource pools available to both partners,

cross-pollination between partners where each learns from the other and both are left stronger for it, and problems previously unsolvable will suddenly be solved; all by simply working together (Baum 2000).

Several authors of university-community partnership case studies provide examples of Baum's fantasies through positive reports of partnership activities, ranging from university-led visioning exercises and provision of data and information for grassroots organizing, to participatory action research (Channels and Zannoni 1999; Nyden et al. 1997; Weinberg 1999). The studies assume that the barriers to partnerships will be dealt with by whatever methods the case author is advocating. Further, the benefits to both partners were viewed strictly from the institutional view of the university. Largely, these studies are not critical evaluations of partnership activities from the community's view and ignore the danger of unequal power within university-community partnerships.

One striking example comes from the comparison of two studies on the same case. Both Kreutziger et al. (1999) and Shefner and Cobb (2002) examine a large multi-university-community partnership within New Orleans. The Tulane University/ Xavier University Campus Affiliates Program (CAP) was a project that began in 1996 which partnered Tulane University with Xavier University in order to combine their scholastic and academic resources towards the needs of C.J. Peete, a major housing project in New Orleans. Within the earlier Kreutziger et al. (1999) study, the authors deemed the unfinished project a success. With high-level support within both universities and city government, as well as democratic organizing principles, the study indicates that the project was able to overcome several early barriers, such as community mistrust and hostility towards the universities, particularly Tulane University, and variances between the partners' institutional cultures (Kreutziger et al. 1999). Through its organizing

principles, which stressed community self-determination and the application of resources to the needs identified by the housing residents, Kreutziger et al. saw CAP as an effective method of engaging in university-community partnerships.

However, Shefner and Cobb (2002), in viewing the same program a few years later, see a very different reality. They point to the high-level involvement of the institutionalized partners, which the earlier study praised, as the major impediment to the effectiveness of this partnership. Shefner and Cobb point out that an imbalance in power, as evident through the decision-making structure and “control of resources,” can lead to the economic dependence of one partner on the other (2002, 276). The power imbalance also can lead to “conflicts due to goal displacement” (Shefner and Cobb 2002, 276).

Although originally intended to indicate a high-level of commitment by the university to the partnership, the high-level involvement actually resulted in limiting the participation opportunity by residents, encouraged a skewed communication structure between the unequal partners, and led to the increase in priority of the universities’ goals to the detriment of the community’s needs (Shefner and Cobb 2002). Based upon their examination, Shefner and Cobb (2002) suggest the use of an organizing structure able beyond the methods that can counteract the institutional inequalities of power. Through establishing an external structure for the partners to engage within, the authors suggest that the inequalities can be actively balanced, and formal structures of engagement can be developed.

### *Framework for Examination*

One reason why many early authors either ignored or down-played the problems within university-community partnerships is because the vast majority of all partnership studies

examining the purpose and methods of these partnerships have been from the university's perspective. Further, although there are several articles that describe what an engaged university looks like, there is little research on what an “engaged” community looks like or what the community expects from these partnerships. First, however, a useful framework for fully analyzing the partnerships is needed.

In order to examine the entire partnership dynamic more fully a framework that allows for an examination of each of the sub-components of the partnership must be developed. Cox (2000) and Silka (1999) provide similar and complimentary three-part partnership frameworks, which I can adapt to my present purposes. Cox (2000), with the intention of exploring the dynamics between the partners involved, breaks partnerships into three main components for examination: tasks, stakeholders and their relevant positions within the partnership, and the various goals, objectives, and expectations of each of the partners. By examining each component, Cox argues, we can begin to understand the individual interests that exist, as well as weigh the varying impact each partner's interests play within the actual activities of the partnership (Cox 2000).

Silka (1999), in examining the underlying “paradoxes,” or internal contradictions, within the partnerships, also breaks the partnerships into three components: process, dynamics, and outcomes. Silka's framework provides a more nuanced view of the partners’ often contradictory interactions. Combining the frameworks, we can create a powerful lens that allows for a complete examination of the partnerships challenges.

Obviously, the first determination needed within any partnership is to identify the stakeholders involved in the partnership. By looking at who is involved, and how they are involved (the dynamics of the relationships present), we can begin to develop an understanding

of how the partnership functions. Second, we can examine the specific tasks taken on by the partnership within the context of the process used to not only accomplish the tasks, but also used to settle on certain tasks over others. How do the individual partners gain from the tasks taken on? Lastly, the outcomes must be compared with the individual goals and expectations of the individual partners. Were both partners satisfied with the outcome? What compromises did the partners make? Utilizing the combined three-part framework of Cox and Silka allows for the development of a systematic scorecard to unearth any underlying power dynamics involved in the partnership.

### *Stakeholders' Dynamics and Expectations in Partnership*

Within the literature, one stakeholder has received the majority of attention. This skew of attention toward the university's expectations, goals, and purposes for engaging in partnerships, seems to exhibit itself within the actual partnerships themselves. Shefner and Cobb's (2002) study of the CAP program examined above provides a good example. Other examples can be seen in the numerous examinations of what the university has to gain from collaborations and what the “engaged” university looks like.

Forrent and Silka (1999) discuss the role community engagement can play to develop cross-disciplinary collaboration within the university, enhancing the pedagogical experience for students and opening up new opportunities for research for faculty. Community engagement strengthens the university by providing the incentive to tackle community problems that require multi-disciplinary problem solving. Further, engagement presents the university with the possibility of placing students within real-life community situations. Many other authors mirror this argument for community engagement (Edwards and Marvillo 1999; Kreutziger et al 1999;

Keele and Nickman 1999; Lerner 2000; Lerner and Simon 1998). Left largely unanswered within by most authors, however, is the reason why communities would want students and faculty infiltrating their neighborhoods, seeking opportunities to “solve” their problems.

A few later authors have begun to explore university-community partnerships from the view of the community, such as Stoecker (2002) who argues that universities gain much from partnerships, but should move beyond service provision towards social change, from institutionalization of partnerships within university toward independence for the community, and from specialization in activities to diversification. His point is that universities, as the dominant institution within the partnership, have a responsibility to advocate for systemic change, utilizing their political and economic power to not only make real change within these communities, but also do it in a way the community wants. If universities do not move in this direction, he warns, they will be missing a major opportunity, and university-community partnerships will likely fail.

Shefner and Cobb (2002), as indicated above, examine the Tulane/Xavier CAP program and concluded that the inherently unequal balance of power within the partnership led to its failure. From the community's perspective, high-level involvement, although positive for the university, led to a weakening of their own position within the partnership.

Ferman and Hill (2004) is the first large-scale attempt at examining partnerships from the community's side. Through interviews with community partners, they identify three types of conflicts and issues primarily raised by the community: variance between partners' incentive structures and agendas (i.e. expectations and purposes for engagement), uneven capacity to engage in partnerships by both partners, and the institutional context of partnership's mediation.

Partners enter into the partnership with different expectations of outcomes and purposes, which could potentially lead to a conflict. Ferman and Hill (2004, 245) identified four main reasons that communities enter these partnerships: “obtaining project related resources, leveraging further resources, gaining access to networks, and increasing legitimacy.” Considering the university likely enters into the partnership for the purpose of educational enhancement and views their research, knowledge and expertise as their main resources, the community may be disappointed with the type of resources made available to them through the university. With higher expectations by the community as to what the university can offer, the community’s expectations can lead to a further disappointment by the community in the capacity of the university to partner. Providing students without specific technical skills sought by the community, the inability to react timely to the community's requests, a lack of direct funding available through the university, and frustration with attempts to navigate the “sheer complexity of universities” can add to the disappointment (Ferman and Hill 204, 249).

Perhaps the most important finding by Ferman and Hill (2004) surrounds the conflict between and within the institutional contexts of the two partners. There exists “multiple and often competing agendas” within institutions of higher education (Ferman and Hill 2004, 249). These multiple agendas can play out within the partnership communities, leading to further complications and misunderstandings within the community as to the university's intent. The activities within the community by one unit of a university can affect the relationship another unit may have with the community.

Communities themselves are highly complex and conflicting arenas, a fact that may lead to partnership conflicts. “Ferman and Hill state that “communities are often noted for their contested agendas, competing factions and organizations, and varying political allegiances to

internal as well as external political leaders” (2004, 250). Within this context, university representatives can easily find themselves pitted in a neighborhood political battle between factions. Finally, within many communities, a history of conflict with the university can lead to intense conflicts. Ferman and Hill note, “suffering from long-histories of bitter land struggles, neglect, lack of access to university resources, and the experience of being used as a laboratory,” distrust within the community seems only natural, and must be dealt with by the university partner (2004, 250).

For the most part, the conflicts point to a mutual misunderstanding that exists between partners. Further encouraging this mutual misunderstanding, however, is the lack of community-side research, which is indicative of the larger skew within the partnerships towards the university's interests.

### *Tasks and Process*

University partners have used several activity or content types within university-community partnerships. A study of twenty-five COPC sites conducted by Vidal et al. (2002) provides the most comprehensive categorization of activity types. The study identifies three basic categories of activities from the sites studied, consistent with the rest of the literature: teaching and research-related activities; entrepreneurial activities, such as consultation or service provision by the university; and institutional initiatives, such as capital improvements (Channels and Zannoni 1999; Mirabella and Renz 2001; Nyden et al. 1997; Stoecker 2002; Vidal et al. 2002; Weinberg 1999; Wiewel 2000).

Perhaps the best example of teaching and research activities comes from the literature on Participatory Action Research (PAR). Participatory Action Research is a model of collaborative



research wherein the community drives the agenda (Nyden et al. 1997). Nyden et al. claims that “PAR aims at empowering the community by giving it the tools to do its own research and not be beholden to universities or university professors to complete the work” (1997, 17). Many within the university-community partnership field view PAR as the main solution to overcome the many typical power inequalities within these partnerships. Stoecker (1999) argues that PAR allows the university a method of interacting with the community as a collaborator, but at a level of involvement decided upon by the community itself, not the university. However, as promising as this method seems to be, there have been few attempts to evaluate critically the efficacy of PAR, leaving us unsure as to whether it is fulfilling its expectations.

One example of entrepreneurial activities of universities within these partnerships is the Nonprofit Management Center (Mirabella and Renz 2001). Through the centers, universities provide direct services to community non-profit organizations, such as “noncredit educational courses and workshops, short courses and workshops, short courses, skills training, consulting, and technical assistance” (Mirabella and Renz 2001, 15-16). Lastly, two examples of larger institutional initiatives are the University of Illinois-Chicago's neighborhood housing initiative and Colgate University's “community visioning” process for broad-based neighborhood planning (Wiewel 2000; Weinberg 1999).

All of these partnership activities are “part of a broader effort toward increasing the community engagement of universities” (Rubin 2000, 225). The wide range in activities indicates that universities have managed to include a wide array of disciplines and professions within their community engagement efforts (Rubin 2000). However, there remains “a powerful need to determine the extent to which [partnerships] are productive vehicles for community capacity building and development” within the communities (Rubin 2000, 228).

### *Problems and Barriers of Engagement*

Even with the limited amount of community-focused research on university-community partnerships, the research that does exist largely agrees with the overall theory of why the problems and barriers exist within university-community partnerships. Generally, barriers arise from the variance in each partner's expectations of the other, and the unequal power and capacities between the partners aggravates this variance. This reality then creates a situation where one partner, the university, holds the decisional power, which leads to the skewing of the outcomes and activities of the partnership to fulfill the goals of the university. Finally, the lack of a shared culture or language between the partners hinders nearly every attempt to overcome the skewed situation.

Baum (2000) discusses how many partnership problems arise out of the fantasies, or unrealistic expectations, as to what the partnership can accomplish without an understanding of their costs. With such unrealism in place, partners often expect the individual characteristics of the players to pull the partnership through their difficulties, needing only the will to cooperate to make collaboration possible (Baum 2000, 235). It is actually the unrealistic expectations between the partners that lead to the problems; for example, one partner may expect the other to be able to provide much more in resources than possible. Ferman and Hill (2004, 254) goes a step further in diagnosis, pointing to “the lack of familiarity across institutional structures [which] complicates the partnership immeasurably, confusing expectations, understanding, communications, and obligations.”

In a similar idea, Dewar and Isaac (1998) discuss the “culture clash” that exists within partnerships between many universities and their community partners. They identify three major areas wherein the partners are likely to “clash”: mode of work; commitment to social justice; and

power relations (Dewar and Issac 1998). In order to assuage these clashes, they advocate for a “community-driven” approach, as opposed to the more common “consultant-driven” approach. Within the “consultant-driven” approach, the university is viewed as the expert, while the community is the client, suffering from a lack of knowledge. The “community-driven” approach, however, is similar to the Participatory Action Research discussed above, wherein the community controls the process and the agenda.

Harkavy and Puckett (1991) points to the domination of partnership goals by the university partner and a lack of involvement by community participants as a common main barrier, resulting largely from an unequal power relationship and the lack of an integrating structure that allows for community involvement. Kreutziger et al. (1999) identifies as the main barrier common community mistrust and hostility from previous experiences with universities, as well as the organizational constraints of most universities. There often exists a disconnect between a university's institutional requirements and a community's needs, and, unfortunately, this most often leads to ignoring the community's actual needs. Shefner and Cobb (2002) points nearly exclusively to variance in power as the cause of the barrier leading to other problems, such as communication failures, limited community participation, and the prioritization of the university's goals over a community's needs. The above examples point to the same problem, namely the variance of each partner's goals and an inequality in institutional power.

Wiewel et al. (2000) points out that the variance in expected outcomes or goals of each partner, although common and important, is not necessarily the main problem. He suggests that both partners must be aware of and clear on each other's goals, roles, and expectations, but points to other problems. The problems he discusses are the inflexibility of the university, the misguided community view of the university as “resource rich,” and the existence of factions

within the community competing for resources. These problems indicate a more serious issue, namely the lack of familiarity between the partners that hinders most attempts at accommodating the partnership inequalities, and lack of common or complementary agendas.

Underscoring this point is a study of Ohio State University's COPC experience (Jackson and Myers 2000). Ohio State, anticipating the need for integrative structures that could manage the partnership, developed joint leadership committees that included community and university representatives sustained mutual funding of both partners, intra-university committees to facilitate multidisciplinary cooperation, and a permanent university-based center to manage the partnership. These integrative structural components would seemingly lead to a smooth and equalized partnership. Unfortunately, both partners declared the COPC-based partnership a failure, concluding that these structural components are “necessary but not sufficient” (Jackson and Myers 2000, 125). What was remaining was the “culture clash.” Namely, the policies, size, culture, and processes of the two partners did not work well together since there was no cultivation of shared meaning developed between the two systems. This case points to the need for a center that not only manages the partnership, but also actively seeks the development of shared meaning between the partners. It is not enough to administer partnerships, but must actively engage both partners.

### *Solutions Suggested*

The use of a center to manage the partnership is one of several solutions suggested within the literature. Vidal et al. (2002) points to three types of strategies used within COPC, which serves as a convenient typology:

- 1) Administrative solutions, such as centralized, sustained, and integrated outreach activity across the university system;
- 2) Academic solutions, such as integrating outreach within the curriculum, development of training programs, and engagement in applied research activities; and
- 3) Organizational solutions, such as developing bridging structures that coordinate and support community outreach.

Focusing on administrative solutions, Baum (2000) suggests that to overcome the “fantasies” of partnerships, partners must think and agree explicitly, clearly, and specifically about the ends and the means of partnership activities. At the same time, however, the partners must remain flexible administratively, able to change the means or resources that can be made available to the partnership. Also focusing on an administrative solution, Ferman and Hill (2004) suggests creating explicitness through formal agreements. As a proposed academic solution, advocates of Participatory Action Research see it as a way of limiting the scope of each partner’s power and equalizing the partnership agenda (Nyden et al. 1997; Stoecker 2002).

An organizational focus, however, seems to present the most comprehensive solution. In fact, both administrative and academic solutions can be encompassed through the development of an organizational solution, namely the creation of a mediating entity. By providing a centralized management structure within a shared arena of interaction, which enables translation between the two partners and insulation from the institutionalizing force of the university, the mediating entity can provide the key to overcoming the partnership's problems (Harkavy and Puckett 1991; Keating and Sjoquist 2000; Mirabella and Renz 2001; Ostrander 2004; Parzen 2002).

### *The Mediating Entity*

Although advocated by several authors as a preferred solution to the many difficulties found within university-community partnerships, little research has been done as to how to design mediating entities or how they function. Indicating that mediating entities need to fulfill the role of integrating, interpreting and equalizing the partnership, all but a few articles leave the details of how to fulfill this role unanswered (Mirabella and Renz 2001; Ostrander 2004; Parzen 2002). Two articles, however, provide a good starting point to the needed examination.

Harkavy and Puckett (1991, 23) suggest that the solution to university-community barriers is the development of a “mediating structures” which could channel the academic resources to the community. In order to “sustain and institutionalize” the university's involvement within the community “institutional structures are required” (Harkavy and Puckett 1991, 23). Harkavy and Puckett (1991) use a case from the University of Pennsylvania to explore this institutional structure. In this case, the University of Pennsylvania provided its resources through a community-centered public high school in West Philadelphia. Utilizing the already present social relationships and community access of the public high school, the University of Pennsylvania was able to develop effectively partnerships with community organizations for the purpose of neighborhood revitalization. By “simultaneously [bringing] the university into a wider partnership and free[ing] the university from operational and managerial roles,” the structure enabled a sustained involvement by the university (Harkavy and Puckett 1991, 20).

Keating and Sjoquist (2000) revisit the mediating entity. In this case, the mediating entity is an existing organization that is external to both partners. The case study examines the shared COPC experience of two universities, Georgia Tech and Georgia State University, collectively

known as the Atlanta COPC. Within the Atlanta COPC, the universities utilized the Community Design Center of Atlanta (CDCA) as the mediator between themselves and their partnering communities. The mediating entity “provide[d] a structural solution to the inherent power of the various stakeholders and poorer communities” (Keating and Sjoquist 2000, 143). With representation within the mediator's governing structure by all partners, the entity was organizationally external but functionally linked to each partner. This, in theory, led to the entity's ability to equalize and sustain the partnerships.

Both mediating entities within these two cases functioned in similar ways, which provides me with a start in examining the intermediary structure. The structures were able to manage, integrate, and sustain the partnership by acting as the communication, problem solving, organizing, equalizing, and administrative mechanism within the partnership (Harkavy and Puckett 1991; Keating and Sjoquist 2000). Further, the structures acted in the capacity of negotiator between partners and allowed for the sustained interaction necessary to build trust within the community. Most importantly, remaining separate from the institutionalized partners (i.e. the universities) the intermediaries were able to insulate the skewing that occurred within the majority of these partnerships, further enabling its ability to interpret between the partners (Harkavy and Puckett 1991; Keating and Sjoquist 2000).

The importance of placement outside of the university that both authors stress, however, leads to several questions. Although Harkavy and Puckett (1991) and Keating and Sjoquist (2000) give examples of *external* mediating entities, the majority of the other examples of potential mediating structures are explicitly found *within* the university (Maurrasse 2001; Mirabella 2001; Nyden et al. 1997; Ostrander 2004; Parzen 2002; Vidal 2002). It seems that even assuming that the “best” placement of the mediating entity is separate from the university

the reality is that these entities will likely be at least partially within the university's organizational structure.

Further, even Keating and Sjoquist (2000) admit that there are problems with locating the mediator outside of the university. First, without any direct funding from the university, sustaining the structure is difficult. This problem is less compelling when we realize that location within a university's organizational structure is no guarantee of sustained funding, and alternative sustained funding schemes can be created for an external mediating entity.

The second problem, however, is more compelling. Without placement within the university, the structures are limited in their ability to compel systemic change which could result in waning participation by the university, and, more importantly, would leave the systemic barriers found within the university untouched. It is this systemic change that many argue is part of the larger purpose of university-community partnerships (Ostrander 2004; Stoecker 2002). Further, outside placement may lessen the ability of the mediating entity to navigate effectively the university's organizational hierarchy, which limits its ability to integrate the community participants into the university structure, one of its apparent roles.

However, placement within the university structure runs into dangers as well. As Ostrander (2002) and Jackson and Myers (2000) point out, an administrative intermediary appears to be necessary but insufficient. Although not overtly stated, the insufficiency of the intermediary administrative entity in fulfilling the cross-communication and equalization needs poses the question as to whether these functions can be placed within an existing university academic unit. Considering the complexity of the mediator's assumed role (i.e. more than simple administration of partnership, but actual cross-communication and equalization), it seems reasonable that the role is beyond the capability of any single existing unit's capacity. Further, if



the intermediary function is left within an existing unit of the university the unequal status of the partnership will likely continue unaddressed. Put plainly, some level of separation from the university structure is likely necessary; however, the extent of this separation is still open to debate. What is clear is that placement of the mediating entity is important and more research is needed on this topic.

Before we can address that issue adequately, however, we need a more developed understanding of the form, function, and organization of the mediating entity. Although Harkavy and Puckett (1991) and Keating and Sjoquist (2000) provide a good start, there is still a lack of research on this preliminary topic.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH DESIGN

My research takes the form of a case study of the International Project for Nonprofit Leadership's Urban Routes program. The case study approach allows me to move from the specific case at hand to a generalizable model or theory (Creswell 2003, 132). Through an in-depth examination of Urban Routes as a university-community partnership intermediary, the intent is to develop a deeper understanding of the function, structure, and role of these intermediaries, which will allow for the development of a model of the function, structure, and role of mediating entities within university-community partnerships.

Yin (1989, 19) states, “‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are likely to favor the use of case studies, experiments, or histories.” As university-community partnership intermediaries' functions and structures depend in large part upon the context within and connections to the systems in which they exist, any examination that does not take into consideration the wider context will likely lead to an incomplete theory and be unable to explain how the structure functions in its systems-bridging role. Furthermore, with little research focused upon identifying the variables or characteristics found specifically within the mediating entity, examined through a systems theory lens, we are left to an exploratory framework within which to work. In other words, we are left asking 'how' and 'why' questions about the intermediary's functions and structure. Lastly, the study relies in large part upon direct observation of activities largely out of the researcher's control. Therefore, the study is best crafted within the case study methodology.

### *Unit of Analysis*

The focus or unit of analysis in this case study is the Urban Routes structure, including its institutional placement within the university infrastructure, funding methods, its interactive methodology within both the university and the community, and its overall goals or purpose.

The present case study explores how university-community partnership intermediaries:

- 1) Work across the multiple systems involved;
- 2) Are able to develop flexible, but explicit, methods of addressing the inherent barriers within university-community partnerships; and
- 3) Develop methods of collaborative action and decision-making between the partnering systems or organizations.

The study also explores the role structure plays in the ability of intermediaries to function effectively.

The sheer complexity and continually shifting nature of Urban Routes added considerably to the difficulty of the study. In order to overcome some of these complexities, and ease the difficulty of “hitting a moving target,” I limited the scope of the study to Urban Routes strictly as a mediating entity between the University of New Orleans and two New Orleans neighborhoods, from August 2003 through October 2004. It should be noted, however, that this shifting nature is potentially a normal aspect of university-community partnerships, and is reflected within a constantly changing mediating structure that attempts to adapt to each of these normal shifts. Lastly, several of the documents used within this study were created prior to this study's time period, but were useful within this study to inform this examination of the function, structure, and activities of Urban Routes during the study's time frame.

### *Role of Researcher*

As an Urban Routes Project Assistant during the entire duration of this study, my natural role as researcher within this study was that of participant-observer. According to Yin (1989, 92-3), participant-observation allows the investigator an opportunity to “gain access to events or groups that are otherwise inaccessible,” “the ability to perceive reality from the viewpoint of someone 'inside' the case study rather than external to it,” and an “ability to manipulate events or situations” which may allow for a deeper understanding of the case being examined.

As Project Assistant, I was responsible for maintaining communication between IPNL, Urban Routes staff and the Tremé community participants through phone calls, personal contacts, and e-mail. I also was responsible for co-facilitating neighborhood meetings along with the Neighborhood Coordinator. Finally, I assisted in completion and follow-up of any and all tasks accomplished within Urban Routes: Tremé.

Within this role, I had the opportunity to examine Urban Routes from a very intimate viewpoint, able to investigate various aspects of the program an outsider would find difficult or impossible to access, as well as move beyond the external rhetoric used by Urban Routes to describe program behavior and activities towards a deeper examination of what actually occurs. As a participant-observer, I was able to take advantage of what is likely the most significant source of information about Urban Routes, namely the informal source of data. Whereas formal interviews and formal documents lead to the “official” explanation of organization activities, immersion within the informal “reality” of Urban Routes and IPNL that allows me access to informal conversations and documentation, I was able to directly observe the “actual” activities of the organization and program.

Unfortunately, several major problems exist within my role that merit examination. Although participant-observer status did enable me access to potentially hidden aspects of Urban Routes, it produced a bias within my analysis. These biases potentially include the focusing of my examination to those aspects of Urban Routes that conform to my “staff view” of the program. In addition, as part of a limited staff directly involved within Urban Routes activities, my interactions, both formal and informal, with informants and program participants were likely skewed towards particular views or understandings of the program. In other words, although I was privy to “insider information” by virtue of my role, I was also largely limited to receive only “insider-information.” Lastly, although Yin (1989) describes the ability to manipulate the situation as a potential positive of the participant-observer role, this ability in itself posed a large threat to the study. As one of a limited number of staff, my activities within the program likely had a major impact upon the very phenomena I am attempting to investigate.

With these dangers in mind, I have taken several measures to strengthen the validity, or internal consistency, of my findings. First, although participant-observation was the primary method used within the study, all observations were checked against multiple sources of data, including formal interviews, internal program-related documents, and meeting notes, for consistency (Creswell 2003). Second, clarification and explicitness of the limitations and biases potentially found within the research methods utilized, and mindfulness of this reality during the analysis of data, further strengthens the validity of this study (Creswell 2003). In essence, I was able to check my results against my expectations based upon this bias, helping to indicate whether the results caused by the bias or actually came out of the data.

### *Research Questions*

With the growing reliance upon university-community partnerships for the inclusion of the university in applying solutions to urban issues and meeting community needs, the methods of maintaining these partnerships in an effective manner is in need of further examination. One such method is the use of a mediating entity between the university and the community.

The central research questions of this case study, therefore, are: What is the role of mediating entities within university-community partnerships? How do mediating entities fulfill this role? How are these mediating entities structured to implement this role? To answer these questions, I will examine Urban Routes as an example of a mediating entity.

### *Sources of Evidence*

In order to explore the research questions, I gathered evidence from several source categories (Yin 1989). The primary method of data collection used was participant-observation over a fifteen-month period (August 2003 to October 2004). As previously stated, this immersion allowed me to explore deeply both the explicit and the implicit aspects of Urban Routes while maintaining a dual role as researcher and program staff.

The second source used was formal and informal interviewing of key informants. Formal interviews entailed open-ended interviews with the IPNL Director, the Vice-Chancellor of Governmental and Community Affairs, The Dean of Metropolitan College, the Assistant Dean of CUPA, three previous or current Urban Routes Program Coordinators, and two community participants within Urban Routes. Informally, everyday conversations with IPNL staff directly and indirectly involved in Urban Routes, IPNL and Urban Routes leadership, and community participants provided a rich source of information.

The third and final source was documentary evidence. Within this category fall two different types of documents providing a variety of evidence. The first type of documents used within this case study was the myriad of program and organizational documents for Urban Routes and IPNL. These included an annual Urban Routes budget; three work plans for the 2003-2004 Urban Routes project period; several monthly project reports from both neighborhood projects; one COPC funding proposal; several organizational charts; and a myriad of planning documents. The second type was of a less formal nature. These included notes from IPNL staff meetings collected from September 2003 to September 2004; notes from several community meetings collected from November 2003 to May 2004; notes from Urban Routes: Tremé Advisory Board meetings collected from September 2003 to May 2004; several intra-organizational memorandums and e-mails; and my personal notes from ad-hoc planning discussions.

### *Analysis of Evidence*

Analysis of gathered data will follow typical procedures used within the case study methodology. Through a highly iterative process, which began during collection, data was placed into evolving categories or “themes” (Creswell 2003). Through these themes, I was able to develop a broad understanding and description of the structure and function of Urban Routes and its activities. I further explored the identified themes utilizing the combined three-part partnership frameworks of Cox (2000) and Silka (1999), with activities broken into each part of the framework. Interpretation of the findings proceeded using a pattern-matching mode of analysis; the empirically based findings of Urban Routes were compared with the predicted

functions of mediating entities, namely integration, interpretation, and equalization, as developed within the existing literature and research and my own reflections (Yin 1989).

### *Scope, Delimiters, and Limitations of the Study*

As stated above, this study focused on Urban Routes as one model of a mediating entity within university-community partnerships, and proceeded within a case study methodology. As such, this examination is limited in several ways. First, considering the shifting and ephemeral nature of Urban Routes as a project, all conclusions are limited to an examination of the project from August 2003 to October 2004.

Second, as a case study based on the examination of only a single phenomenon this study is purposely limited to the generation of theory, generalizable only through this developed theory. Future studies will be necessary to continue the development of this theory as well as its testing across a wider range of phenomena. However, the experiences of Urban Routes might have been unique and widely divergent from other intermediaries. Furthermore, the study is limited to the examination of an urban university's engagement with urban communities. For this reason, the theories generated through this study may only be generalizable to other urban settings, and should be applied only carefully to rural community engagements, as this may prove to have dynamics not considered presently.

Finally, the present study is not an evaluation of Urban Routes' content methods, management styles, or overall efficacy. Considering that Urban Routes are relatively new, an evaluation of this sort would seem premature.



## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

To explore fully the role, structure, and impact of Urban Routes, I will first need to examine closely the two neighborhood partnerships the program was involved in by utilizing the combined three-part frameworks of Cox (2000) and Silka (1999). With a fuller picture of the stakeholders, tasks, and outcomes of these partnerships and an understanding of their overall dynamics, I will then be able to identify and explore both the intended and actual role Urban Routes played. Lastly, I will explore the structure within which Urban Routes exists and this structure's impact on the identified functions of Urban Routes.

#### *Partnership Stakeholders*

To state that the partnerships involved either “the university” or “the community” would be misleading, as only a limited number of entities and individuals within either arena were actively involved in the basic activities of the partnerships. Within “the university,” for instance, active participation within the partnership was limited to a small number of staff and faculty from several University of New Orleans academic units. Within “the community,” direct participation was limited to interested parties and organizations, largely identified for involvement by Urban Routes staff based on specific criteria.

For the purposes of this study, “primary stakeholder” is defined as those participants with direct and continuous involvement in the partnerships’ activities over the entire research period. “Secondary stakeholder” is defined as those participants that had some direct involvement, but

only for short, well-defined periods. The majority of UNO's administrative and academic units and many of the residents of the two neighborhoods were likely affected by the partnerships' activities, but were neither primary nor secondary stakeholders. Due to this wider impact, they, too, could be considered stakeholders; however, only those stakeholders with more direct involvement are likely to have affected the nature and activities of the partnership. Therefore, this current study will focus on primary and secondary stakeholders only, as indicated in Table 1.

**Table 1- Partnership Stakeholders**

<i>University-based Stakeholders</i>		<i>Community-based Stakeholders</i>	
Secondary	Primary	Primary	Secondary
Metropolitan College  College of Urban and Public Affairs (CUPA)  School of Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism (HRT) Administration  Graduate Program in Arts Administration  Louisiana Folklore Program  College of Business  Vice-Chancellor of Governmental and Community Affairs.	International Project for Nonprofit Leadership  (Urban Routes)	Oretha Castle Haley Blvd. Merchants and Business Association  and  Central City Partnership (Urban Routes: Central City)   Historic Tremé Cultural Association (Urban Routes: Tremé)	~100 residents participating in two Central City clinics  and  an unknown number of residents involved with the two primary Central City stakeholders   ~90 Tremé residents participating in series of neighborhood meetings

#### *University-based stakeholders*

The primary university-based stakeholder involved within both the Central City and Tremé-based partnerships was the International Project for Nonprofit Leadership (IPNL). IPNL is an obvious and direct participant within all of Urban Routes' activities since the organization

houses the project. Urban Routes and IPNL staff worked most directly within the partnerships providing administrative support for partnership activities, facilitating partnership meetings, and maintaining communication between all of the other partners.

Urban Routes, through IPNL, has involved several secondary stakeholders from the University of New Orleans (UNO). For the most part, these “partners” have been involved on an ad hoc basis, involved primarily in specific projects or tasks needed to fulfill Urban Routes' purposes, provide trainings or facilitations to community partners, or within an advisory capacity.

Secondary university-based partners in Urban Routes throughout the research period included:

- Metropolitan College- The most directly related secondary stakeholder, Metropolitan College provided administrative support for all IPNL activities, including Urban Routes; and provided IPNL with short-term funding support, allowing IPNL to continue Urban Routes activities across grant periods.
- College of Urban and Public Affairs (CUPA)- Provided assistance in the form of GIS mapping for the neighborhoods; provided access to courses; several faculty sat on an advisory committee for Urban Routes: Tremé.
- School of Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Administration- A faculty member sat on an advisory committee for Urban Routes: Tremé; same faculty member also provided legal advice in creating organizational documents.
- Graduate Program in Arts Administration- The director of this program sat on advisory committee for Urban Routes: Tremé; provided assistance in designing content of neighborhood directory in Tremé.

- Louisiana Folklife Program- Provided advice and assistance on content of Tremé brochure; faculty sat on advisory committee for Urban Routes: Tremé.
- College of Business- Faculty members were involved in the design and implementation of one Urban Routes: Central City clinic; faculty involved in providing student projects within Tremé.
- Vice-Chancellor of Governmental and Community Affairs- Provided access to public officials; assisted in the design of Memorandum of Agreement within Urban Routes: Tremé.

Involvement of secondary university stakeholders was generally based upon the personal and organizational ties of IPNL with each of the partners involved, the convenience of involving them within the project, and for the specific resources they could bring to the partnerships, as decided by IPNL and Urban Routes staff. For example, involvement of all members on the Urban Routes: Tremé advisory committee, such as faculty from CUPA, HRT, the Graduate Program for Arts Administration, and the Louisiana Folklife program were specifically chosen at the beginning of the project's initial phase by IPNL and Urban Routes staff. These choices were based on a combination between the specific faculty member's interests and personal ties with IPNL staff or director. Use of a faculty member within the College of Business to implement one of the clinics within Central City was because this faculty had been involved in one of the nonprofit leadership courses IPNL collaboratively designs.

One noted exception to the IPNL and Urban Routes derived inclusion of secondary university-based stakeholders was the involvement of a professor within the College of Business who had worked within Tremé previously, and whose involvement a community participant

specifically requested. The community partner indicated that she had maintained a professional relationship with the professor over several years, and would like to see his involvement within the partnership activities. Based upon this request, Urban Routes, the professor, and the community partners collaboratively developed a student research project within Tremé.

### *Community-based stakeholders*

Within both neighborhoods, primary stakeholders, or “partners”, were purposely limited to those organizations or individuals interested in participating within Urban Routes' initially funded purpose within the neighborhoods, namely the development of cultural tourism. Evidence of this is the methods used by Urban Routes staff to seek partners within the communities.

In Tremé, IPNL sent initial announcements regarding the Urban Routes project and invitations to take part to specific nonprofit organizations, businesses, and individuals assumed to have an interest in cultural tourism. Also, during the initial neighborhood meeting in November 2003, Urban Routes and IPNL staff maintained a cultural tourism focused agenda, although residents indicated that their community was in need of projects and programs wider than cultural tourism, such as youth oriented programs, business development projects, neighborhood clean-up of trash and crime, and a project oriented towards eliminating blighted housing. The follow-up cluster group meetings with specific stakeholder groups, including cultural and community leaders, homeowners, and community activists, was also framed by Urban Routes specifically within cultural tourism context. Given this framing, only those Tremé stakeholders interested in cultural tourism would likely take part in the Urban Routes project.

The primary community-based stakeholders in Urban Routes were three neighborhood organizations. Secondary community-based stakeholders in Tremé included approximately ninety residents who took part in the several meetings held over the project's time period. In Central City, secondary stakeholders would include approximately forty residents involved in the two neighborhood clinics, and an unknown number of residents involved with the two neighborhood organizations that are the primary Central City partners. The history, development, and level of involvement by the three primary community-based stakeholders within the partnerships are divergent.

In Central City, the partnership included the Central City Partnership (CCP) and the Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard Merchants and Business Association (OCHMBA). CCP is a collaborative of nonprofit, faith-based, religious, educational, business, and service-provision organizations and residents from Central City. CCP was first established in 1994, and its purpose is the comprehensive revitalization of Central City. During its history, CCP has established itself as an important organization, representing a wide variety of interests, and maintaining many personal and political connections within Central City (International Project for Nonprofit Leadership 2004).

The original Urban Routes Neighborhood Coordinator indicated that the wide-ranging potential for participation and access to residents that spurred Urban Routes' involvement with CCP. Between August 2003 and January 2004, Urban Routes' participation with CCP was limited to attendance at monthly CCP meetings for informational and relationship-building purposes, and ad hoc involvement with CCP members by the Urban Routes: Central City Neighborhood Coordinator. Direct involvement in CCP activities by Urban Routes: Central City did grow after January 2004. In January 2004, a new Urban Routes: Central City Neighborhood

Coordinator placed priority on developing direct relationship with CCP and enlarging the role of Urban Routes in CCP-related activities through almost daily interactions with CCP leadership.

Oretha Castle Haley Merchants and Business Association (OCHMBA) is a nonprofit organization, developed out of CCP, and composed of approximately twenty-five nonprofit and business organizations interested in the economic revitalization of the Oretha Castle Boulevard commercial corridor found within the heart of Central City (Broom 2001). Participation within the organization was intentionally limited to those organizations and businesses located on or near Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard. IPNL and OCHMBA formalized their relationship through a Memorandum of Agreement at the beginning of 2003. Within the agreement, Urban Routes: Central City was to “assume the coordination and facilitation of [OCHMBA's] weekly meetings; preparing agendas; recording, archiving and distributing meeting minutes; and keeping a roster, as well as an updated membership database” (International Project for Nonprofit Leadership 2003).

Within Urban Routes: Tremé, the primary partner was the Historic Tremé Cultural Alliance (HTCA). As opposed to both primary partner organizations involved in Urban Routes: Central City, HTCA did not exist prior to Urban Routes' involvement. HTCA was actively developed and organized by Urban Routes: Tremé staff, with Urban Routes taking on the task of creating its own partner within the neighborhood. Formal organization of HTCA began in May 2004 and continued throughout the research period.

Through a strategic planning process facilitated by Urban Routes, HTCA developed a mission statement, goals, strategies, and action plans. The strategic planning process for HTCA took place over four separate meetings, with attendance ranging from seven to eighteen residents of various backgrounds and involvement in Tremé. After completion of these meetings,

however, Urban Routes: Tremé's participation with HTCA was generally limited to interaction with an interim board of three members. Lastly, the partnership with HTCA was formalized through a Memorandum of Agreement developed in August 2004.

The Urban Routes staff and advisory committee had begun to explore what they perceived of as a need for a central, unified organization that could advocate on behalf of the Tremé residents and oversee any cultural tourism initiatives within the neighborhood, as early as September 2003. While organizing HTCA, Urban Routes took steps to identify a wide variety of participants within the organization from the many at-times divergent factions found within the neighborhood. For example, the Urban Routes: Tremé Neighborhood Coordinator surveyed several churches, community groups, and organizations for their interests in being part of HTCA.

The “partner” prior to creation of HTCA within the community was a loose network of residents and organizations. Formal involvement with the community “partners” took place within two large neighborhood forums, where Urban Routes and IPNL staff introduced themselves and the cultural tourism project, and a series of four “cluster” groups composed of three to five neighborhood stakeholders representing area businesses, cultural groups, or homeowners. Approximately ninety Tremé stakeholders were involved within these formal methods. Informally, the Urban Routes: Tremé Neighborhood Coordinator, herself a resident of Tremé, and a Program Assistant discussed with a wider group of residents their interest in involvement with Urban Routes, the cultural tourism initiative, and HTCA, as well as the additional needs in the community.

Several conclusions can be made in light of the discussion of the stakeholders involved in Urban Routes over the research period. In large part, IPNL, as the main institutional partner, controlled the process and identification of stakeholder involvement. Within Central City, the



partnership with both CCP and OCHMBA during the research period was predicated upon Urban Routes' previous two years of involvement, which in turn was initially based on a specific cultural tourism focus, as evidenced by the original funding proposal. The proposal states that the primary purposes of Urban Routes were to “facilitate neighborhood-based cultural tourism designed to benefit minority and low-income neighborhood residents and nonprofit organizations in discovering, enhancing and marketing the cultural neighborhood attractions” (Broom 2001, 1). By limiting the focus of Urban Routes initially to cultural tourism, involvement was limited only to those sharing this agenda. CCP and OCHMBA did maintain wider general agendas that included cultural tourism. Although Urban Routes later shifted its focus within Central City to a general capacity building and technical assistance focus, its involvement remained with these original partners.

Within Tremé, the same phenomenon that occurred in the initial year of Central City was repeated, namely the inclusion only of those community participants interested in the cultural tourism focus. However, without an existing community-wide organization whose focus was cultural tourism, Urban Routes: Tremé was placed in a position of first identifying residents and organizations that were interested in cultural tourism, growing interest within the community, and, then, beginning to organize these interests into a cohesive organizational structure. These activities were accomplished through formal and informal interactions, as discussed above. Although once established, HTCA began developing their own agenda, goals, and strategies, the initial organizing was predicated on the focus of Urban Routes: Tremé.

Control over stakeholder involvement begun shifting away from IPNL towards a more balanced control by both the university and community partners as the partnerships continued. As the partnership continued, the community-based organizations began to request more specific

involvement, such as involvement in planning the partnership activities and goals, and direct involvement in planning meetings with public officials. Further, inclusion of participants from UNO or outside of the partnership, such as local and state government, is made only after discussion between the primary partners. Whether this is the result of the formalization of the partnership, growth of the partnerships' and Urban Routes' overall scope, or a natural result of growing comfort with each other through the developing relationship between the partners over time is difficult to determine. What is clear is that the late push towards wider inclusion stemmed at least partially from the sustained interaction between Urban Routes and the community partners.

### *Tasks*

The general tasks of Urban Routes within both neighborhoods involved the development of organizational capacities through formal clinics, meeting facilitation, and limited technical assistance, and informal advice and council. Within each neighborhood, however, the specific tasks differed significantly, particularly during the first year of the research period, which saw the initial establishment of Urban Routes in Tremé. The specific tasks of each neighborhood partnership at least initially arose out of grant contracts developed without prior community input and limited in response to an indicated community need. However, the lack of community input was present within Tremé more than Central City, during the research period, likely due to the variance in relative ages of the two neighborhood partnerships. Table 2, below, provides a timeline of Urban Routes activities in both neighborhoods.

**Table 2- Timeline of IPNL and Urban Routes Activities**

<i>Time Frame</i>		<i>IPNL General Activities</i>	<i>Urban Routes: Central City Activities</i>	<i>Urban Routes: Tremé Activities</i>
<b>~1999</b>		IPNL First Created		
<b>2001</b>	<b>January</b>		Urban Routes: Central City begins	
	<b>May</b>		Initial Neighborhood Meeting	
	<b>August</b>	Nonprofit Leadership Courses (continue presently)		
	<b>December</b>	Leadership Forums Series begins (continued through Spring semester 2003)	Clinic #1- "Collaboration in Central City: Overcoming Conflict"	
<b>2002</b>	<b>April</b>		Clinic #2- "Let's Talk Cultural Tourism"	
	<b>September</b>		"Clinic #3- "Working with the Media, Part 1"	
	<b>October</b>		Clinic #4- "Working with the Media, Part 2"	
	<b>December</b>		Clinic #5- "Creating a Sustainable Neighborhood Through Community-University Partnerships, Part 1"	
<b>2003</b>	<b>January</b>		Memorandum of Agreement created between OCHMBA and IPNL	
			Clinic # 6- "Creating a Sustainable Neighborhood Through Community-University Partnerships, Part 2"	
			Facilitated meetings, Maintained an e-communications system for OCHMBA (continued presently)	
	<b>July</b>			Urban Routes: Tremé begins
	<b>August</b>			Began asset mapping data collection
	<b>November</b>			First Neighborhood Meeting
				Series of 5 "Cluster Group Meetings" (continued through January 2004)

**Table 2 continued**

<b>2004</b>	<b>February</b>		Clinic #7- "Putting a Face on City Government"	
	<b>March</b>			Second Neighborhood Meeting
	<b>April</b>		Clinic # 8- "Promoting the Entrepreneurial Spirit in Central City"	
	<b>May</b>		Established office in Central City	Series of 4 Clinics focused on organizing the Historic Tremé Cultural Alliance (continued through June 2004)
			Expanded work with CCP	
	<b>July</b>			Finalized production of Tremé Brochure, Neighborhood directory, and Cultural Tourism Toolkit
				Facilitation, e-communication, and technical assistance provided to HTCA (continued presently)
	<b>September</b>		Neighborhood Coordinator sits on CCP marketing subcommittee	

*Urban Routes: Tremé*

Within Tremé, the primary tasks of the first year of the partnership defined by a grant contract with the project's initial funder, the State of Louisiana Department of Economic Development. The initial task required by this grant was the mapping of the cultural and commercial assets of the neighborhood, which largely involved cataloging the businesses, nonprofit, and cultural organizations within the neighborhood. In effect, this activity began the relationship development of Urban Routes within the neighborhood and a dialog with cultural stakeholders that resulted in the formation of HTCA.

The second task of this first phase of activity was the hosting of a series of neighborhood forums or meetings, the purpose of which was to introduce Urban Routes to the neighborhood and inform the residents of the progress of the project. These meetings, however, evolved into a wider discussion of whether the neighborhood wanted the project at all, in what capacity Urban Routes was welcome in the neighborhood, and the need for open communication between IPNL, Urban Routes staff, and the residents of Tremé.

One resident suggested within the first meeting held in November 2003, that there was a need for eliminating blighted housing, and providing more economic opportunity for residents. Another resident within the same meeting stated that he would like Urban Routes to “dance slowly” with the neighborhood, giving them an opportunity to reflect on and take advantage of the opportunity. He indicated that the neighborhood had been taken advantage of before and was wary. One resident also suggested that there was not a wide enough resident audience present at that November 2003 meeting to make any community-wide decisions, suggesting that each of the approximately sixty residents in attendance inform those who were not invited or could not attend, and invite them to a community only meeting where the project could be discussed by the residents. These suggestions led to the Urban Routes: Tremé Neighborhood Coordinator setting up a series of cluster group meeting held from November to December 2003.

The neighborhood meetings also allowed for input by the community as to what tasks would be accomplished within the first year of the project and led to the direction the project has taken within Tremé since completion of the first year. Cultural tourism related suggestions presented at the initial November 2003 meeting and within the follow-up cluster group meetings included walking tours, family documentaries and oral histories, business opportunities for residents, youth-oriented cultural projects, and the development of an entity that could house and

preserve the culture of Tremé. Also suggested by the residents was the need to promote positively the neighborhood to counter-act what was largely a negative reputation in both the neighborhood itself and the wider New Orleans area.

One example of the impact of the meetings on the tasks was the creation of a neighborhood brochure and directory. Initially, the asset mapping process was for project planning purposes only. However, after residents suggested within the series of meetings the need for positive promotion of the neighborhood and its culture, it became clear that the information gathered could serve this purpose if it was distributed throughout the neighborhood and New Orleans area. Distribution would also serve the purpose of Urban Routes to develop a cultural tourism initiative. From these ideas, Urban Routes developed a “tour” brochure highlighting the neighborhood and a directory of businesses, organizations, groups, and individuals culturally involved within the neighborhood.

Another task that was outside of the scope of the state grant contract was the development of the Historic Tremé Cultural Alliance (HTCA). Originally, Urban Routes was contracted by the state grant to conduct two “cultural tourism trainings” within the neighborhood. However, only two residents showed any interest in the trainings. Instead, several residents suggested to the Neighborhood Coordinator that they should use one of the “clinics” to begin organizing a cultural alliance. Sixteen residents in attendance at the second major neighborhood meeting in March 2004 signed up for this “clinic,” with several others showing an interest in attending. This interest resulted in both “clinics” being altered to fit the organizational development of HTCA. The shifting of tasks toward activities more responsive to the wishes of the community participants are indicative of the shift from an Urban Routes dominated agenda towards a more equalized power in setting the agenda.

After completion of the initial year-long contract process, a collaboratively developed and agreed upon agenda was set when Urban Routes: Tremé activities became focused on the further development of HTCA's organizational capacity, development of funds for implementing HTCA's strategic plans, and providing access to networks of information and public officials. HTCA's organizational capacity development was addressed within weekly interim board meetings and the creation of organizational documents, such as by-laws, rules of operation, and articles of incorporation. IPNL staff and Director pursued funding for both HTCA and Urban Routes. Utilizing her wide network of contacts within the nonprofit and public sector, IPNL's Director, in collaboration with UNO's Vice-Chancellor for Governmental and Community Affairs, coordinated meetings between potential funding sources, such as former State Senator Paulette Irons, and HTCA.

By setting up meetings with business leaders and public officials for possible funding, Urban Routes and IPNL provided access to networks previously inaccessible to HTCA. Urban Routes acted as a networking agent, not only in seeking opportunities for HTCA and in pointing HTCA in the direction of particular individuals or agencies, but also by directing interested outside parties to HTCA.

Finally, Urban Routes was able to place several students within Tremé-based projects. One student designed a plan for establishing signage within the neighborhood, while simultaneously examining the capacity of the Historic Tremé Cultural Alliance (HTCA). Another set of students developed a business plan for Tremé-based walking tours to be conducted by HTCA. These placements point to the role of Urban Routes in opening up Tremé to academic research and projects, while providing academic resources to the community (or at least HTCA).

However, the practicality of these projects to HTCA or other Tremé stakeholders remains to be determined. HTCA board members indicated some dissatisfaction with the purpose and results of the projects conducted to date. One community participant stated that he expected the student projects to be more directly related to HTCA activities, but they ended up, in his opinion, to only be indirectly related. Further, he indicated that the projects were not developed as the HTCA board members had requested. As an example, he sighted the signage project, stating that he expected it to be a plan to provide signage within Tremé, but instead the project was an evaluation of HTCA's organizational capacity.

This may indicate a lack of adequate coordination or methodologies of bringing student projects into the community that needs further examination. Furthermore, the student projects were determined by the course work and IPNL, with suggestions by HTCA. This suggests that the coordination of student projects must be accomplished through a shared process including both community and university partners.

#### *Urban Routes: Central City*

Within Central City, Urban Routes continued the facilitation and coordination of OCHMBA's meetings and communications that it had begun in 2001. In addition, Urban Routes helped OCHMBA begin its application process for 501(c)3 status and the initiation of a membership recruitment process. Urban Routes worked along with CCP to develop marketing plans and outreach strategies in order to broaden its membership and support within Central City.

Working with both partners, Urban Routes developed and facilitated two clinics or forums within the neighborhood, titled “Putting a Face on City Government” and “Promoting Entrepreneurial Spirit in Central City.” The first clinic brought representatives of five City of



New Orleans Departments and two City Council-members into the neighborhood in order to discuss Central City stakeholders' concerns or problems, and the availability of city resources for application to their concerns. This clinic allowed for some amount of networking between city government officials and Central City stakeholders. The second clinic focused on the development of potential small business opportunities within Central City. This clinic involved faculty from UNO's College of Business and adjunct faculty from CUPA. Both clinics were developed through Urban Routes, but based on requests made by participants within both OCHMBA and CCP to Urban Routes staff during meetings. Approximately one hundred participants were present at these clinics.

Within Central City, Urban Routes developed relationships with the two organizations by maintaining personal contact through a sustained presence within the neighborhood. With OCHMBA, attendance and facilitation of weekly meetings, along with periodic updates throughout the week, enabled Urban Routes staff to build on an existing relationship that was potentially threatened by a change in Urban Routes: Central City staff at the beginning of 2004. Through a weekly presence and active participation within OCHMBA meetings, Urban Routes was in the position to coordinate better its activities to meet the stated needs of the organization. According to the current Urban Routes: Central City Neighborhood Coordinator, it was within these regular meetings that he was able to develop an agreement on the tasks to be accomplished, and directly involve OCHMBA in developing these task plans. As an example, he suggested that the content of the two clinics was based upon direct requests by the organization. However, this presence was hindered by a lack of agreement within IPNL and the Urban Routes program as to the role of Urban Routes' within the partnership with OCHMBA.

The IPNL Director saw attendance by both the Urban Routes: Central City coordinator and the Program Assistant at each weekly meeting as redundant and an inefficient use of the limited resources available to the program. Further, the Director questioned whether the weekly notation, record keeping, communications and facilitation of meetings fit the purpose of Urban Routes over all. Consequently, both Urban Routes: Central City staff members only periodically attended OCHMBA weekly meetings.

Record keeping, facilitation, and communications continued to be a part of the tasks of Urban Routes: Central City's partnership with OCHMBA, however, an end date to these activities of December 2004 was set. OCHMBA and Urban Routes staff members both agreed that consistent attendance at the meetings was necessary, but that staffing tasks for the meetings could best be placed within the organization itself. Urban Routes, however, agreed that it would provide technical assistance in maintaining and performing the tasks as needed (such as setting up databases of contact information on membership).

The current Urban Routes: Central City Neighborhood Coordinator and the IPNL Director both indicated that more direct involvement with CCP was needed than had previously occurred. Attendance at monthly CCP meetings was not seen as an adequate level of interaction to develop the relationships needed for the partnership. Urban Routes: Central City staff indicated that relationship development was hindered by the lack of a constant presence within the neighborhood and the location of IPNL/Urban Routes office in Metairie, a suburb of New Orleans located several miles away from Central City. As a remedy, during the summer of 2004, an Urban Routes office was set up in the neighborhood. Located within a building housing several social service organizations serving Central City, the office provided direct access to several board members within CCP.

According to the Urban Routes: Central City Neighborhood Coordinator, presence within the office was intermittent, hindered by the staffing structure of Urban Routes: Central City. The need for Urban Routes staff presence in the IPNL/Urban Routes office in Metairie was to enable direct communication and meetings with the IPNL Director. Combined with the part-time status of the Neighborhood Coordinator and project assistant positions, the need to be in Metairie apparently led to several claims on the limited time resources available, limiting the Urban Routes staff's ability to keep a constant presence in Central City. According to one project status report, the Central City office was staffed approximately six to eight hours a week, which the Neighborhood Coordinator indicated to be inadequate.

This increase in contact seems to have led to several results. First, at the beginning of 2004, the partnership with CCP was not well established, with monthly meeting attendance proving to be the only major tasks involving CCP in Urban Routes. However, with an increase in the program's contact with CCP, there has been an increase in CCP involvement and input into Urban Routes activities, as well as an increase in communication and information exchange between Urban Routes and CCP. For example, Urban Routes staff has been actively involved in the development of several CCP sub-committees and the development of CCP strategic plans. The Neighborhood Coordinator has joined CCP as a member, and is part of its marketing and recruitment sub-committee. This interaction increase has allowed for a shift in Urban Routes activities to meet the assistance requests of CCP.

Participation by UNO outside of IPNL was limited to the use of a College of Business faculty member in the second clinic, the use of an adjunct CUPA faculty in the development of OCHMBA by-laws, and the planned use of another adjunct CUPA faculty to facilitate board development meetings for OCHMBA. Interestingly, the majority of these faculty members have

been involved in teaching at least one of IPNL's CUPA-based nonprofit leadership concentration courses. What this seems to indicate is that participation by UNO within Urban Routes overall, and particularly within Central City, has been based upon previous personal or programmatic ties.

The partnerships, when examined based on actual tasks, seem to be limited largely between IPNL and the community participants, not UNO as a whole, and the wider community. This lack of wider UNO involvement has been acknowledged as a weakness of Urban Routes by the IPNL Director, as well as all of Urban Routes' present and former staff members. Within Tremé, participation by UNO faculty was limited to either an advisory capacity or limited to specific activities, as indicated above. It is possible, however, that in the current phase of Urban Routes: Tremé, this is the limit to wider involvement by UNO without the cultivation of deeper university ties, and there will be an increase in UNO input as the partnerships develop.

### *Outcomes*

Examining the shift in the projected and intended outcomes of Urban Routes over the course of the study period indicates the movement of the partnerships towards more equal involvement of all primary stakeholders in the partnerships' processes and communications, and illustrates a possible cause of the early lack of equal involvement.

The stated purpose or agenda of Urban Routes is to “extend the resources of the University of New Orleans to local neighborhoods; identify urgent issues and challenges being addressed by nonprofits and neighborhood residents; and inventory neighborhood assets... that would contribute to the revitalization efforts in the neighborhood” (International Project for Nonprofit Leadership 2004). In essence, the stated agenda of Urban Routes has been, since its

initial development in 2001, to bring in UNO resources to address the needs of communities. According to the IPNL Director, Urban Routes was intended to provide a venue for communities to “have a voice” in the decisions made within their communities, and take part in the revitalization of their own communities. The stated purpose of Urban Routes has not remained consistent with the short-term outcomes throughout its activities during the research period. This appears to be due at least partially to the divergence between the community partners' agendas and IPNL's agenda.

Urban Routes originally established a presence within both Central City and Tremé based on developing cultural tourism within each neighborhood. Within both neighborhoods, the cultural tourism focus followed primarily from an opportunity for IPNL to receive funding through State economic development funds available only to a cultural tourism-based project. Also within both neighborhoods, the funding was limited to a single year. This funding need on the part of IPNL led to the shifting of the agenda and outcomes of Urban Routes, at least during its initial phases within both neighborhoods, to specifically deal with cultural tourism related activities. The intended outcome and agenda of the Urban Routes partnerships were determined before the community partners were even involved.

Both neighborhoods held an interest in cultural tourism within. Within Central City, one of the stated interests of both CCP and OCHMBA was to develop some amount of cultural-based tourism within the neighborhood and along the corridor. However, this was not their most pressing concern. According to the Urban Routes: Central City Neighborhood Coordinator, he received many more requests for assistance by organizations oriented towards creating affordable housing, preventing crime, and enhancing the economics of the area through business development than those organizations involved in cultural tourism. This is also reflected by the

recent plan to create several CCP sub-committees oriented towards economic development, neighborhood housing, education, crime and violence prevention, and community health.

Similarly, an interest in cultural tourism existed within Tremé. In a study conducted by CUPA in 1998, two out of its twelve recommendations involved developing cultural preservation or tourism related activities in the Tremé neighborhood (College of Urban and Public Affairs 1998). Recommendations were based on information gathered using focus groups of Tremé residents. However, within the several Urban Routes neighborhood forums and subsequent personal contacts with stakeholders within Tremé, there was quite a bit of dismay with the CUPA study, and a general feeling that participation within the study was limited in its involvement of Tremé residents.

One primary community participant indicated that although she is personally interested in cultural tourism as an economic engine within the neighborhood, she sees it as only the first step of the partnership. She stated that she would like see more access to UNO in order to confront the major problems of the neighborhood, namely a lack of employment and opportunity for the residents. According to her, the crime in the neighborhood is directly related to the lack of employment and opportunity, and until these issues are confronted, the neighborhood is unlikely to change. She further stated that the funding provided within the first year of Urban Routes: Tremé could have been better used within the community, and that cultural tourism is only a secondary concern of hers. What is clear is that although cultural tourism is one interest identified within the neighborhoods, it was not the primary or most pressing issue being faced within either neighborhood.

Within Central City, since the partnerships were entering their third full year during the research period, and the focus on cultural tourism was no longer funded, the Urban Routes'

agenda was shifting towards general capacity building and provision of technical assistance to the partnering organizations. This better matches IPNL's mission and Urban Routes' stated purpose as well as the requests of the community-based stakeholders. Responsiveness to the interests of the community-based stakeholders seemed to follow the growing interaction and overall equality in the partnership that developed throughout the research period.

Within Tremé, the first full year of the partnership was dominated by the agenda of IPNL to develop cultural tourism and fulfill the deliverables of the state grant. However, as Urban Routes developed neighborhood relationships and a growing presence, the agenda expanded to better reflect input from community participants in fulfilling the established agenda, as indicated by the shift in tasks. Further, after the grant period ended, the Urban Routes agenda grew to include the interests and agenda of HTCA, its formal partner in the neighborhood.

The shift can be explained by looking at two changes during the research period. First, Urban Routes: Tremé had no formal partner before entering the neighborhood and therefore only had IPNL's interests to guide its agenda and activities. With HTCA, there was a formal partner to whom Urban Routes needed to be responsive in its agenda setting. This suggests the need for some formalized partner external to Urban Routes that can represent the community's interests.

Second, over the research period the sustained presence of Urban Routes within the neighborhood led to a growth in trust and communication between IPNL, Urban Routes: Tremé staff and Tremé community stakeholders. An indicator of this trust was the growing level of discussions between Urban Routes staff and the community partners. In order to develop this trust and communication, it was necessary for Urban Routes: Tremé to be responsive to the requests, concerns, and interests of the community stakeholders. These two changes, combined

with the completion of the grant contract period, appear to have driven Urban Routes: Tremé to include the wider community agenda within their own.

What is suggested by the discussion of the initial agenda dominance by IPNL and the growing inclusion of the communities' interests and agendas within the partnerships is the role that Urban Routes had in driving the change. Within both neighborhoods, entrance of Urban Routes activities was marked by skewed agendas towards IPNL; however, over time and continued interaction between Urban Routes and the communities, this skew slowly shifted. The original skew of the agenda by the institutional partner is not surprising, as it appears to be a common phenomenon among university-community partnerships.

What is a bit surprising is the consistent shift in both neighborhoods over time, following the development of formalized relationships and increased comfort between Urban Routes and the community. This suggests that the initial dominance by the more powerful and institutionalized partner is likely when there is no system in place to bring the less powerful partner's interests to light, but fades when communication and interaction is routinized within the partnership system. This comfort or routine allows the less institutionalized partner's input to be included more naturally, though still with some inequality. The potentially natural shift may indicate that partnerships develop through stages, with each stage requiring different management methods, as well as different roles for the mediating entity to play.



## CHAPTER 5

### ANALYSIS

#### *The Role of Urban Routes in Partnership*

The overtly expressed roles of Urban Routes, according to the International Project for Nonprofit Leadership's (IPNL) Director, are to allow the University of New Orleans and the communities of New Orleans to “work as equal partners to revitalize the urban community,” to give the community an “equal voice” with UNO, and to allow the community to be “engaged in decision-making.” All of Urban Routes’ staff reflected these roles, however with differing emphasis on how they were to be accomplished. As expressed within a recent untitled paper produced by IPNL, the purpose of Urban Routes is to connect the university to the community by “providing assistance and support aimed at capacity building of nonprofits working on critical issues, preparing new community leaders and developing collaborative efforts” (International Project for Nonprofit Leadership n.d., 3). IPNL accomplishes this by “identifying immediate community needs and brokering resources to meet those needs” (International Project for Nonprofit Leadership n.d., 3).

Previous literature discussing the role of mediating entities within university-community partnerships suggests that these entities should provide several basic functions within the partnership: providing a “place” for the *integration* of interests and agendas of the two partners; *interpretation* between the partners which facilitates their abilities to interact; and an

*equalization* of the partnership between partners of varied power and institutional structures.

Urban Routes appears to reflect these mediating entity functions.

However, in exploring the actual functioning of Urban Routes, beyond the overt rhetoric, we can see that the reality is a little less straightforward. Although present within Urban Routes, each function's expression and fulfillment requires a deeper exploration. Furthermore, by analyzing the functions, it becomes clear that a fourth function exists which enables the others: maintaining a *sustained presence* in the community. Table 2 represents the four functions, along with examples of activities.

**Table 3- Mediating Entity Functions**

<p>1) <b>Integrate</b> various partners into cohesive partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. manages activities.</li> <li>b. maintains linkages within both partnering systems.</li> <li>c. “Center of interaction”-- a physical place where community can gain access to university resources; a conceptual “place” for university access.</li> <li>d. Inter- and Intra-organizational interactions .</li> </ul>	<p>2) <b>Interpret</b> between the various partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Manage the community navigation of university system; manage university navigation of community system.</li> <li>b. Advocate for each partner within the partnership.</li> <li>c. Facilitate negotiations between partners.</li> </ul>
<p>3) <b>Equalize</b> power, decision-making, communication, agenda setting, and fund development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. “Balances” interests of university and community in setting agenda.</li> <li>b. Develop a formal agreement between partners.</li> <li>c. Provides communication system for both partners to utilize; informs on each other's activities.</li> </ul>	
<p>4) <b>Sustain</b> all other functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Works across the time-tables of partners.</li> <li>b. Provides a consistent “face” over time for interactions.</li> <li>c. Develops the needed trust and knowledge of partners that comes with time.</li> <li>d. Seeks funding for the extension of partnership activities.</li> <li>e. Allows for building upon previous activities; overcomes intermittent nature of semester projects.</li> </ul>	

### *Integrate*

In theory, the integration function allows both partners to apply their resources to the issues or problems facing them as a whole (Harkavy and Puckett 1991). The mediator would manage the activities of the partnership, maintain the link between the partners through an integrated communications structure, and provide a “center” for interactions between the partners (Keating and Sjoquist 2000). Also within this function would be the intra-organizational interactions, such as communications between university units or community organizations. By providing these functions, the mediator would allow the partners to work seamlessly with one another. The actual provision of the integration function within Urban Routes is somewhat divergent from this theory.

Urban Routes managed the activities of the partnership, maintained the communications structure, and provided a “center” for interaction, both physically and conceptually; however, the limitation of university-based involvement to IPNL diminishes the importance of these specific provisions of the function. Considering that the Urban Routes' project staff encompasses almost the entire IPNL organization, the theoretical presentation of the integration function seems almost tautological. The main “integration” through Urban Routes was between the Director of IPNL and the community partners. The limited involvement of UNO outside of IPNL indicates an inability for Urban Routes to integrate partnership activities across the university structure.

Within the two communities, Urban Routes was able to act in some ways as a networking agent, helping community participants to gain access to public officials, business leaders, and other organizations. For example, within Tremé, one New Orleans business leader intended to develop a visitor center just outside of Tremé's borders. Through Urban Routes, HTCA and the business leader were able to make contact and begin the development of a mutually beneficial

partnership, wherein HTCA will receive a venue for marketing Tremé and the business leader will receive input and information regarding tourism opportunities within Tremé. Within Central City, the first clinic, “Putting a Face on City Government,” presented the opportunity for organizations and residents to gain direct access to five city agencies and two City Council members.

Although the integration function was not exactly present to the extent suggested by the literature, an equally important function of Urban Routes falls within this category, namely the potential for community partners to gain access to “the university,” as represented by IPNL. Although deeper integration within the university structure did not occur, several community participants saw interaction with a UNO unit or project, namely IPNL, and the potential to receive greater access to the university, as the main purpose of Urban Routes. The original Urban Routes: Central City Neighborhood Coordinator indicated that access to UNO was the driving force of Urban Routes within Central City. She stated that she was able to gain acceptance of her own presence at least partially because she could bring this UNO access to neighborhood residents. Further, within Tremé, both community participants interviewed indicated that they saw the current activities as mainly providing the foundation for future expanded access to UNO. One of the participants suggested that UNO should build on the experiences of Urban Routes and collaborate with a local elementary or high school to provide coursework within the neighborhood. As a first step, the very presence of Urban Routes, generically viewed as UNO, was encouraging to community participants, particularly as time passed and Urban Routes remained within the neighborhood.

Similarly, although not very well developed over the research period, the ability of Urban Routes to provide some level of *access* for UNO to the community suggests this as a wider

function of the mediating entity. One of the interests in community engagement for the university expressed by all three of the university administrators interviewed was that it allowed access to the community for faculty and student projects, as well as the chance for students to apply the theoretical knowledge gained through coursework to a real situation. By providing access to both Central City and Tremé, while managing the interactions between students and the community participants, Urban Routes may be in a position to fulfill the university engagement interest. However, this research should proceed with cautiously, as research with a community can quickly become research on a community, which would threaten the growing relationship between Urban Routes and the community participants. With any growing opportunities for this research, it is likely that Urban Routes will need to more fully manage any research, possibly placing restrictions, guidelines, and protocols in place.

It is important to note, however, that much of the integration and access was provided through personal contacts between Urban Routes and either UNO or the two communities, and not necessarily by overt design. Within Tremé, despite the established agenda of Urban Routes' first year, the presence of staff in the community enabled the beginning steps of university-community interactions. During this period, staff was actively developing the personal contacts and relationships within the community. It appears that through its presence within both the communities and the university, Urban Routes allows for the interaction of partners, even when this presence is predicated upon an agenda unrelated to the wider interactions. By facilitating these interactions and helping to create mutual access to the communities and UNO, Urban Routes appears to be fulfilling this integrative function.

### *Interpret*

Tied to integration is the interpretation function. Integration and access can quickly become meaningless if the various partners do not have insight into the culture, communication structures, and methods of doing business of the other partner. By providing a link between the community and the university, the mediating entity can potentially provide mutual insight to both partners. Also, as suggested by Harkavy and Puckett (1991) and Keating and Sjoquist (2000), the mediating entity can act as the negotiator between partners, remaining neutral to either party.

While Urban Routes was in the position to “explain” the university structure to any community participants interested, the interpretation function more often was expressed through the management of the community partners' navigations of the UNO system, and advocacy of each partner's interests to the others. Although some misunderstanding of the university's processes and structure existed within the community, the need for explanation was generally neither necessary nor requested. For example, several community members, when payment for activities they had performed for Urban Routes was held up by administrative problems within the UNO's financial system, wrote the problems off as simply typical and expected problems when working with a large bureaucracy. Urban Routes was in the position, however, of managing these problems within the university structure as they arose, limiting the need for community partners to attempt to navigate the complex university structure.

More often, however, this interpretive function exhibited itself through advocacy. Urban Routes staff was in the position of advocating for the university's agenda within the community, explaining why certain actions were necessary, while other actions were not possible within the university setting. This was rare, however, necessary only while negotiating formal agreements

or the setting of the partnerships' agendas; more common was Urban Routes staff's advocating on behalf of the community to IPNL or within the university.

Having begun to develop a relationship with the community and gaining access to the needs and interests of community participants, Urban Routes was in a position to maintain some level of two-way communication and ensure that the community's interests were better reflected within IPNL or university decisions, and within negotiations of agenda and agreements between the partners. This played out with Urban Routes staff bringing concerns and questions regarding the partnership back and forth between partners.

The interpretation function's exhibition through management and advocacy is tied to the previous function of integration, as only through the access Urban Routes received within UNO and the two communities could the interpretations take place. Within Urban Routes, only through the development of relationships and trust within the community and the university does interpretation seem possible. At the early stages of Urban Routes in both neighborhoods, Urban Routes staff members were less able to advocate for the community's interests, since their interests were not completely known. Understanding the needs, agendas, and natures of both partners is required before any real interpretation can occur. Had wider involvement of UNO occurred within the partnerships, we may have seen a stronger need for interpretation and advocacy on behalf of the university within the community; however, given that this did not occur, the majority of interpretation or advocacy occurred on behalf of the community within IPNL or the university.

### *Equalize*

Throughout advocacy, some amount of “equalization” follows. By allowing the community participants' interests to be viewed within the IPNL decision-making process, partnership activities began to reflect the concerns and needs of the participants. However, a more comprehensive “equalization” of the partnership is expected through the mediating entity. By providing a "structural solution" to the inherent power differences among partners, the mediating entity is expected to be in a position to balance the interests and agendas of both partners (Keating and Puckett 2000, 143). Further, this mediating entity negotiates between the partners, possibly developing a formal agreement for the partnership, and provides a shared communication structure that allows for equalizing the flow of partnership specific information to both partners.

Urban Routes has developed formal agreements within Central City and Tremé between UNO and these communities and has made attempts at providing open access to partnership-related information. However, the first year of Urban Routes activities within both neighborhoods was marked by overwhelming focus on fulfilling an IPNL derived agenda and thus the partnerships opened with unequal involvement in agenda setting.

There have been attempts at equalizing the partnership by Urban Routes beyond the formalized partnership agreements. Growing out of a deeper understanding of and relationship with the community partners, Urban Routes has been able to engage in more open communication with the community which has allowed for more effective advocacy on their behalf. Communication takes place through almost daily interactions between Urban Routes staff and the community participants in each neighborhood. Further, by virtue of the developing relationship and comfort with each other, Urban Routes has enabled greater levels of



participation by the community partners in setting the partnership agenda. Several community participants have indicated comfort with the access available to Urban Routes staff, and the general level of involvement in deciding partnership activities.

Equalization occurred in part due to the growing understanding by Urban Routes and IPNL staff that without some equalization of input, the community partners were unwilling to maintain the partnerships. Community participants have consistently indicated to Urban Routes staff that equal input was the key to continuation of the partnerships' activities. Pointing out that the partnerships began with an IPNL derived agenda, namely cultural tourism, community participants have maintained that only through the development of mutual trust and a “real partnership” could the relationship continue.

Hindering its ability to equalize agenda setting is also the reality that Urban Routes exists within IPNL, which relies on grants for funding. The lack of sustained funding available to IPNL has led to the adoption of a funder's agenda over any other agendas present within the partnership. This conclusion is evidenced by the unequal agendas present within the early stages of Urban Routes within each neighborhood, when funding was clearly tied to the funder's interest in cultural tourism. Interestingly, after this funding period ended Urban Routes began incorporating the community partners' interests and needs into the partnerships' agendas. This suggests that the reliance upon outside funding leaves IPNL in need of adopting its activities to meet the interests of potential funders.

### *Sustain*

In order to integrate, interpret and equalize the partnerships, it appears that Urban Routes first needed to establish a sustained presence within each community. As the “face” of IPNL and

UNO, Urban Routes staff members were able to develop a level of trust with community partners that enabled access to informal neighborhood communication structures and venues, and allowed for more community participation in planning the partnership activities. This sustained presence appears to have been the key in the development of equality between partners by allowing for a movement beyond short-term agenda setting and the inclusion of specific community partners in the planning process.

The first key to successful sustained presence in the community was the introduction, through Urban Routes, of a consistent “agent” or “face” for the community partners to interact. As the consistent “agent” or “face” of IPNL, and thus UNO, within the neighborhoods, Urban Routes was able to progressively build trust with and access to the community partners, overcoming initial barriers as evidenced by the open and regular communication between Urban Routes staff and the community partners.

One common problem with university interactions within communities suggested by the Associate Dean of CUPA is the lack of a personal relationship between the agents of the university and the community partners. Without this personal relationship, the often contentious and negative history of the university within many communities is the only basis for any current “relationship.” Further, as the lack of a personal relationship is partially the result of intermittent and university-led previous interactions, such as community-based research or student projects, it is only reasonable for community participants to assume that any current relationships will follow this established pattern. The lack of a consistent “face” of the university in the community, therefore, unsurprisingly leads to suspicion of any new university “face” entering the community, and the inability for any meaningful partnership to exist.

Urban Routes: Tremé encountered some hesitancy on the part of the community to work with UNO early on. During the initial neighborhood meeting in November 2003, Tremé residents indicated that they needed to meet separate from Urban Routes staff, and decide together if they could allow UNO into Tremé. Only after several follow-up “cluster group meetings” attended by the Urban Routes: Tremé Neighborhood Coordinator, herself a Tremé resident, did any of the residents accept the project.

In the beginning, Urban Routes was assumed to be committed only to the short-term fulfillment of the IPNL derived agenda, namely the yearlong cultural tourism initiative. This led, on occasions, to open hostility towards Urban Routes staff. Only after a consistent presence of the same face, literally, within the neighborhood was Urban Routes able to begin developing the relationships necessary. The development of these relationships was accelerated within both Central City and Tremé using Neighborhood Coordinators with previous or current ties to the community. Without this existing tie, the tasks relationships would likely have taken quite a bit longer to establish.

Backing up the importance of a consistent “face” within the community is the experience of CUPA faculty within certain communities, as expressed by the Associate Dean of CUPA. Faculty within CUPA have been able to develop relationships with specific communities of place or interest, through consistent interaction over time. Over years of projects and interactions, faculty have been able to be the “face” of the university within these communities, which in turn has allowed for growing ease in gaining access. In comparison, it appears that establishing new relations within communities with a new “face” can be contentious and time-consuming. There appears to be some need for either up-front legwork to establish these relationships, or an already existing relationship in place.

Placing the role of being the “face” in the faculty likely leads to intermittent interactions, and limits the overall effect of this relationship building tool. Making Urban Routes staff the “face” of the university has led to several benefits, such as wider access and growing equality in agenda setting. These additional benefits point to the necessity for placement of these partnerships within a separate and dedicated center or entity.

Through a consistent “face,” Urban Routes has been able to engage in the time-intensive process of trust building and relationship development across and beyond intermittent interactions. By continuous personal interaction across specific tasks and projects, several effects were possible within Urban Routes. According to all three current or past Urban Routes Neighborhood Coordinators, a consistent presence within each community opened up access to informal community communications structures and venues not likely available through less consistent presence. In essence, the majority of the most meaningful communication and information arose within informal conversations and interactions between Urban Routes' staff and community partners. While formal communication between partners within meetings, forums, or clinics was tied to specific agendas, informal conversations allowed for a “natural” agenda-less progression. It was through these informal conversations that the majority of concerns, interests, and needs of the community arose. This, in turn, allowed for more meaningful advocacy for community interest by Urban Routes.

A further effect of this sustained presence was the ability to balance each partner's involvement in setting the partnerships' agendas. Previous sustained interaction and access to “agenda-less” communication, seems to have allowed Urban Routes to gain insight into the needs and interests of the community partners. In addition, once this relationship was

established, it was possible for inclusion of the community partners within formal planning processes of the partnerships' tasks.

The sustaining function also allows for interaction more in line with the community's time frame, not easily accommodated by a university's or funder's timetables. By working across any conflicting timetables, Urban Routes was able to sustain its presence beyond the spotty interaction of university or grant-based projects within the community. For example, within Tremé, the development of HTCA continued past the initial grant period and despite the lack of funding available. This allowed for a more consistent relationship, and helped eliminate some of the hesitancy confronted early within the project.

A final and important effect of this function was the ability to build on previous activities accomplished through the partnership. Each activity could lead to a new and more complex activity within the partnership. For example, within Central City, future clinics could be planned according to feedback received on previous clinics. The ability to build on previous experiences could also lead to the lingering presence of an initially unequal agenda. However, if properly managed, by building on previous experiences, activities and accomplishments, a more meaningful partnership is possible.

It is clear that although the integration, interpretation, and equalization functions of Urban Routes are more directly evident, they are results of the underlying, but key, function of maintaining a sustained presence. Only through a sustained and active presence within the community and the university, are the other functions given the potential for impact. Therefore, it would appear that the most important and significant purpose of the mediating entity is to allow for a university presence within the community.

It is possible that with an increasing presence, the importance of the three more directly evident functions would diminish in importance. Through a growing and sustained presence, these other functions may simply occur more naturally. Any activities, agendas, or outcomes within these partnerships affect the ability of the mediating entity to maintain a sustained presence, and therefore should be planned with this in mind.

### *Structure of Urban Routes*

The ability to fulfill the key function of sustaining the partnership is affected directly by the organizational structure within which the mediating entity exists. This structure involves Urban Routes' placement within the partnership, linkages to each partner, its staffing pattern, and the funding scheme in place to sustain its existence. Within Urban Routes, the nature of several of these structural components indicate why specific problems may have arisen, hindering the fulfillment of several of its identified functions.

### *Placement*

The most significant factor affecting the effectiveness of Urban Routes is the organizational makeup of its host organization, IPNL. As an independent project of Metropolitan College, IPNL is allowed quite a bit of flexibility and freedom in its activities. However, freedom and flexibility comes at a cost, namely the lack of sustained funding. It is this lack of sustained funding that provides the most difficult barriers to the full development of Urban Routes' functions.

IPNL exists administratively within Metropolitan College; however, it also has developed collaborative academic link to CUPA. IPNL has been active in collaboratively developing,

marketing, and evaluating CUPA's nonprofit leadership courses. Further, several faculty of CUPA sit on the board and committees of IPNL. This partnership has provided placements of community partners within these courses and access to a wide variety, though not a large quantity, of faculty and students. IPNL has no direct reporting responsibility to CUPA, therefore leaving CUPA with little direct input into Urban Routes activities.

Connection to CUPA through IPNL offers several opportunities to Urban Routes. Direct access to faculty, courses, and students is perhaps the most significant. Although access to faculty was not utilized widely throughout Urban Routes during the research period, some use was present. For example, through CUPA's planning department and GIS lab, Urban Routes was able to request customized maps for both Central City and Tremé. In addition, several of CUPA's faculty sat on the advisory committee for Urban Routes: Tremé, providing guidance and expertise in the fulfillment of several Urban Routes activities. Access to courses and students has also proved useful, with several student projects tied to Urban Routes activities.

In return, Urban Routes has provided CUPA with several opportunities. By including community partners within the nonprofit leadership courses, these courses have been able to bridge, at least in part, the gap between theory and practice through the experiences the community partners bring into the classroom. In addition, this bridge between theory and practice is further developed by the possibility of direct application that access to communities provides. Urban Routes enabled this access.

Far more significant in its impact on Urban Routes is IPNL's administrative placement within Metropolitan College. Metropolitan College, as the continuing education and community outreach unit of UNO, houses several other projects along the same organizational lines as IPNL. Although responsible for providing Metropolitan College with regular reports on activities, their

projects, IPNL included, are allowed the flexibility to maintain their own agendas and activities, provided they find the majority of funds necessary to sustain itself.

As suggested by the Dean of Metropolitan College, his unit is allowed a large amount of autonomy not provided to most other units within UNO. Metropolitan College's autonomy stems from its lack of any direct line functions, as a strictly administrative unit of UNO. This factor insulates Metropolitan College from the scrutiny and responsibility found with UNO's academic units, allowing Metropolitan College to house projects that are more “experimental.” These projects are allowed the flexibility and freedom to adapt to shifting circumstances and environments. This placement, therefore, has allowed Urban Routes to maintain the necessary responsiveness to community needs that has allowed for any of its successes to date. Further, free from the level of scrutiny normally attendant to university projects, IPNL has been able to continually redevelop Urban Routes without prior UNO approval, further enabling its flexibility. In exchange, however, little sustained funding is available to Metropolitan College-based projects, and these projects, IPNL included, largely need to raise their own funds for long-term survival.

Placement within Metropolitan College has also allowed IPNL a funding cushion not available to most nonprofit organizations, such as periods between grants. The "cushion" Metropolitan College provides places IPNL in a more secure position than their community partners are in. However, with a lack of sustained funding available, IPNL is still heavily reliant upon external funders. This heavy reliance has led to several problems.

First, although the purpose of IPNL is to develop the capacity of the nonprofit sector locally, nationally, and internationally, its own capacity is left questionable by the lack of



sustained funding available. Presently, IPNL is heavily reliant on grants for funding any of its projects. This reliance can lead to the placement of a funder's agenda over IPNL's agenda.

Second, as seen within the initial periods of both Urban Routes' projects, the placement of the funder-derived agenda over the community-based agenda significantly affects the potential of Urban Routes to develop the necessary relationships. Although tied to the necessity for survival of IPNL, the opportunistic tenure of fundraising typical of nonprofit organizations was a threat to the ability of Urban Routes to sustain an open and reactive presence within the community. Of course, without funding, Urban Routes cannot maintain any presence.

Interestingly, even without a significant level of sustained funding available to IPNL through UNO, IPNL's, and therefore Urban Routes', agendas are still subject to some level of subjugation to UNO's established annual priorities, as reflected within the institutional effectiveness planning process the university requires of all of its units. To date, however, it does not appear that the planning process has significantly impacted IPNL's priorities to the same effect as that seen with external funders, as UNO and Metropolitan College have allowed for significant freedom for IPNL.

### *Linkages with partners*

The impact of Urban Routes' structure on its functioning includes its links to both UNO and the community partners. As stated above, the links between IPNL and UNO were effectively through two university units, CUPA and Metropolitan College. Although these linkages are important, as explored above, the most effective linkage with the university structure appears not to be organizational, but fundamentally personal.

Without any formal mechanisms compelling faculty or course involvement in Urban Routes, most involvement is based upon personal ties and interests with the associated activities of the partnerships. Even IPNL's relationship with CUPA, its closest academic relationship, is based almost solely on personal ties. Outside of the co-development of the nonprofit leadership courses, IPNL and CUPA maintain few mutual responsibilities, however, due to its tight relationship, quite a bit of interaction occurs on a regular basis. There is some evidence that the reliance upon personal ties is at least part of the original idea guiding Urban Routes' development.

According to one former Urban Routes Neighborhood Coordinator involved in the early development of the project, IPNL's connection with CUPA potentially allowed for a wide variety of faculty members' involvement. Considering the involvement in CUPA courses and activities by faculty from several of UNO's other academic units, including the College of Business, College of Liberal Arts, and the Graduate Program in Arts Administration, it seemed natural that there significant personal ties between faculty and staff across the university structure would exist that enable wider involvement. In essence, involvement by CUPA and other UNO faculty was assumed as an attribute of personal interaction, and not a formal mechanism or structure. Unfortunately, the lack of formality, coupled with the inability of Urban Routes to establish a university-based presence, may have led to Urban Routes' inability to involve the wider university in its activities.

Of course, the lack of formal mechanisms of involvement across the university structure is not distinctive of Urban Routes. According to the Vice-Chancellor of Governmental and Community Affairs, UNO does not have any formal mechanism in place to encourage cross-disciplinary interaction, whether for engagement purposes or not. Furthermore, although there

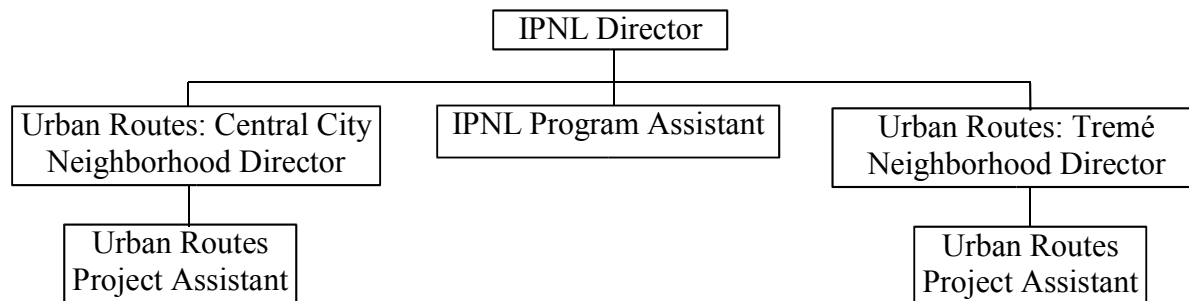
does exist some formal mechanisms within the individual colleges or schools of UNO to encourage outreach and community engagement, such as inclusion of outreach in faculty evaluations, they are not consistent across UNO's structure. As we can see, without any formalized, university-wide policies in place to encourage community engagement or cross-disciplinary partnerships, involvement of UNO participants is necessarily based upon personal ties and interests.

Although some organizational components of Urban Routes are in place to ensure a community presence, personal ties reign supreme within the neighborhood interactions also. Only through active, time-intensive presence within the communities Urban Routes is involved in were any of the partnerships possible. According to the first Urban Routes: Central City Neighborhood Coordinator, she needed to spend the entire first year of Urban Routes presence in Central City simply developing personal ties, without which she felt she would not have been able to function.

### *Staff structure*

The organizational mechanism in place to ensure a community presence is seen in IPNL's staff structure. The current staff structure involves the use of Neighborhood Coordinators and Project Assistants within each neighborhood. The Project Assistant is guided by, and responsible to, the Neighborhood Coordinator. The Neighborhood Coordinator, in turn, reports to the IPNL director. IPNL's Program Assistant acts as support staff for all of IPNL's activities, including Urban Routes. Table 4 below visually represents IPNL's staff structure.

**Table 4- Staff Structure of the International Project for Nonprofit Leadership**



The Urban Routes Neighborhood Coordinators provided a formal linkage to the community partners. Their role was to manage the day-to-day activities of the neighborhood projects, fulfill the deliverables of whichever grant was presently funding the projects, plan and facilitate community meetings, and provide any direct technical assistance needed by community partners. Perhaps most importantly, the Neighborhood Coordinator would also maintain the communication linkages between IPNL and the community partners. Because of this direct involvement with the community partners, IPNL intended Neighborhood Coordinators to have social ties within the communities or be able to rapidly establish them.

During Urban Routes: Central City's initial establishment, the first Neighborhood Coordinator was a previous resident of the neighborhood. At least partially, the establishment of Urban Routes within Central City was based upon the previous relationship with the neighborhood. However, even with this previous relationship, the Neighborhood Coordinator needed time for the development of personal ties for Urban Routes.

Within Tremé, the initial Urban Routes Neighborhood Coordinator was purposely chosen since she was a neighborhood resident with the existing social ties Urban Routes required, as well as her previous experience within cultural tourism. However, even with these existing ties, similarly to the experience within Central City, an initial period of approximately six months was needed to establish Urban Routes' presence in Tremé and utilize the existing social ties brought to the project through the Neighborhood Coordinator. Obviously, even with the organizational link established through its staffing pattern, Urban Routes is reliant upon personal ties and the growth of a relationship over time.

Further, the use of contracted consultants and graduate assistants as Urban Routes staff may threaten these personal relationships. Considering that the relationships are reliant upon consistent and active presence over time, and appear to derive from the presence of the same “face” of Urban Routes in the community, the temporary nature of consultants and graduate assistants will likely hinder the consistency needed. Approximately six months into the research period, an entirely new Urban Routes: Central City staff was necessary. The previous “face” of Urban Routes: Central City, the Neighborhood Coordinator, had been involved since the beginning of the project, approximately two-and-a-half years. Through this transition, consistency came from involvement by the IPNL Director, who had previously only had intermittent interaction with the community participants. Although transition to the new staff appears to have been relatively smooth, it was still necessary for new relationships to be developed between the new staff and the community participants over several months, limiting any activities during this period. Without a consistent Urban Routes staff to ensure a sustained presence, this important function may be limited in its application.

Throughout the majority of the research period, there was little involvement of Urban Routes staff from one neighborhood to the other. The separation, largely a result of the time limitations imposed on an all part-time staff and the variance in project agendas between the two neighborhoods, led to a disconnect and inconsistency between the various Urban Routes projects. Although IPNL staff meetings provided an opportunity for Urban Routes staff to communicate, the variance between the activities did not allow for much inter-project learning. Staff from each project consistently raised concerns that they were unaware of the activities of the other neighborhood. During the research period, the lack of involvement and inter-project learning did not lead to any apparent problems; however, with growing similarity of the projects' agendas this may pose a problem in the future. At the very least, this lack of program-wide interaction limits the ability to establish efficiency across neighborhoods and consistency between partnerships.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS

This study began with the theory that mediating entities can be utilized to both manage the activities of university-community partnerships and overcome many of the difficulties of the partnerships stemming from a lack of mutual understanding and the unequal status of the partners. Through the examination of Urban Routes as a mediating entity between the University of New Orleans and two New Orleans communities, several conclusions can be made.

First, Urban Routes was in the position of managing not only the day-to-day activities of the partnership, but was largely the sole location of partnership activities. All “partnering” went through Urban Routes. Within this position, Urban Routes acted as “the university” within “the community,” and helped bring the community partners' voices into the university-side decision-making that affected them. Through Urban Routes, the partners, although limited in scope primarily to IPNL and the three community organizations, were able to begin overcoming several of the difficulties or barriers found within these particular partnerships. By encumbering the responsibility and costs of working between the partners and attempting to equalize the partnership, Urban Routes was able to maintain the partnerships beyond the completion of their individual tasks.

With direct involvement as “the university,” there is some doubt whether Urban Routes was a “true” mediating entity. A mediating entity would likely need to be neutral to both partners in order to play fully the mediation role. However, Urban Routes structural placement within

UNO likely leaves it without this neutrality. Interestingly, even without this neutrality, Urban Routes was able to fulfill the four mediating functions identified in this study. This suggests that there may be various types of mediating entities based upon their structural placement relative to the partners.

The second important conclusion surrounds the methods or functions that enabled Urban Routes to play the mediation role. Managing and encumbering the costs of the partnership entailed acting within four broad categories of interrelated functions: 1) Integrating; 2) Interpreting; 3) Equalizing; and, most importantly, 4) Sustaining. Through integration of and interpreting between the various partners, Urban Routes enabled movement towards equalization of the partnership. Equalization in this case would mean that the community partners were able to take an equal part in agenda setting of the entire partnership. However, only through a sustained presence within the partnering systems was Urban Routes able to perform as necessary. This indicates the importance of the fourth function.

An interesting observation not fully explored through this case study was the possibility that the relative reliance upon any of the four identified functions changes as the partnership develops. Considering that as partnerships within this case study developed, as they were sustained, there was less emphasis on the overtly fulfilling the first three functions. As the partners grew more comfortable with one another, interpretation and integration may become less a function of the mediating entity, and more of a natural part of the partnerships. Further, equalization occurred more naturally as the partnership develops. This suggests that university-community partnerships develop through stages, possibly growing towards more equalization and shared control. The possibility of partnership developmental stages is in need of further



research, but, if true, may again point to the importance of a sustained presence within university-community partnerships.

This reliance upon a sustained presence is perhaps not surprising once we realize the importance of personal relationships and ties in the success of Urban Routes. It was only through personal interactions that Urban Routes functioned; and it was these personal relationships and the access they provided to all partners, which required the sustained presence to develop properly.

This reliance upon personal relationships, however, should not lead one away from examining the organizational structure of Urban Routes or the larger partnerships. The way that Urban Routes was structured affected its ability to utilize these personal relationships most effectively. The initial structure of Urban Routes actually restricted the full use of these personal ties, and only gradually began shifting as the research period progressed towards more effective use. Therefore, we can conclude that mediating entities need to be structured to fully utilize and develop the personal relationships the partnerships rely upon. With this in mind, the need for some redevelopment of the structure of Urban Routes is clear.

### *Policy Recommendations*

In order for Urban Routes to best utilize the personal relationships upon which the partnerships are reliant, I recommend two categories of policy changes. First, although the development of formal partnership agreements appears to be necessary, they are not sufficient. More importantly, the ability to provide a sustained presence within both the partnership communities and the university is needed. This can be accomplished through a change in Urban

Routes staffing pattern, the eventual establishment of Urban Routes community-based offices, and a change in the funding mechanism for IPNL and Urban Routes.

Second, there is the need to improve the system of equalization within university-community partnerships. This can be done through several mechanisms, such as the use of an advisory or steering committee involving shared participation by all partners and the use of some form of a community engagement protocol to guide all interactions between partners. These established guidelines would ensure that all university participants were adequately trained for working within diverse and potentially divisive communities, and that any work or research they were doing was acceptable to both partners.

Several changes within the staffing pattern of Urban Routes could allow for more direct interaction within both the neighborhoods and the university. The main change is the establishment of a full-time Urban Routes Director. The Urban Routes Director would be responsible for administrative and reporting responsibilities, as well as general oversight of the neighborhood-specific Urban Routes projects, enabling greater cross-neighborhood coordination. Building on the existing role of the Neighborhood Coordinator as the linkage with the community partners, by removing some of the reporting and communication burden currently placed on the position, the Coordinator, along with the Project Assistant, would be able to maintain almost daily interactions with community partners, widen community participation, and act as the “face” of the university. The Coordinator would still be in the position to advocate for the communities needs, but this function would largely fall to the Urban Routes Director who would maintain regular communication with the Coordinator.

The Neighborhood Coordinator would likely need to either be someone from the community or be able to develop rapidly the needed social ties. This position would require the

ability to organize community participants, as well as maintain a neutral standing within the community. As the “face” of the university, this position would need to be a part-time employee of UNO able to remain in place over time, and not a temporary contract worker or consultant. The Urban Routes Director will need to be able develop some level of interaction with the community participants, although major involvement within the community will fall to the Neighborhood Coordinator. More importantly, however, the Urban Routes Director will be able to develop and grow relationships within UNO, enabling wider involvement with university stakeholders.

Building upon the existing personal relationships, the dedication of a portion of the Urban Routes Director's time towards developing wider relationships and communication throughout UNO would enable greater inter-disciplinary participation. Beginning with direct involvement within CUPA courses and faculty and student research, eventually involvement would be able to grow beyond CUPA to include other UNO units. Further, through personal contacts and interactions, the Director would be in the position to develop an understanding of faculty interests, ongoing projects, and course content. This information could be gathered within a database and organized for greater application of university resources to the stated needs of the community.

A further step in establishing Urban Routes’ presence within the communities has already begun, namely the establishment of neighborhood-based Urban Routes offices. Within Central City, a physical office has been established; however, greater utilization of this office as a meeting place and a source of access to the “university” are needed. This office space allows for a more consistent presence of the Neighborhood Coordinator within the neighborhood. The eventual establishment of an office within Tremé is also necessary. Considering the lack of

funding and the cost of establishing and maintaining a neighborhood-based office this will likely remain a long-term goal. In the meantime, it may be necessary to utilize existing opportunities within the neighborhood for sustained interaction, such as community meetings and events. Regular attendance by the Neighborhood Coordinator at neighborhood events is essential to the further development of Urban Routes, and the Coordinator's time should be accommodated for this attendance.

One long-term goal for IPNL and Urban Routes is the development of sustained funding for their activities. Only by eliminating or greatly limiting the reliance upon short-term grants will full agenda setting equality be possible within the partnerships. One potential solution is for IPNL to seek only funding oriented towards IPNL's established mission and matching the agendas of IPNL, Urban Routes, and the community partners. However, this solution only limits the effects of funders' interests on the agenda, and leaves the problem of unstable funding unaddressed.

Another method for establishing the sustained funding needed would be inclusion of IPNL's operating costs as a line item in the UNO budget. Although this may be unlikely, and potentially would limit Urban Routes' freedom and flexibility through greater institutionalization, it provides the most effective means of sustaining the project and insulating IPNL and Urban Routes from the agenda drift encountered currently.

To overcome the lack of equality found within university-community partnerships, the establishment of a joint university-community advisory committee to steer Urban Routes' activities is needed. With equal representation by the university and the community participants, this committee would allow for more direct equalization of the partnerships' activities and agenda setting.

In order to ensure that the university, as the more powerful partner, does not maintain control over the partnerships' agendas within the committee, several formal governance mechanisms are needed. The mechanisms could include anonymous evaluations of the partnerships by each partner or the placement of a community member and a university member in co-chair positions within the committee. The formal agreements would need to include measures ensuring that decisions made within the committee are followed within Urban Routes' activities.

Established guidelines or protocols within the university and any mediating entities regarding community engagement or research are also needed. An established protocol would allow universities to formally overcome the two main factors leading to problems within university-community partnerships, namely the variance in power and the “culture clash” between partners. These guidelines would likely need to include protocols for all research and engagement activities, similar to the Institutional Review Board process required for any research involving human or animal subjects. All protocols would need to be approved by a joint advisory board involving both community and university participants. The guidelines would also need to include training requirements for all faculty, staff, and students interested in community engagement.

The Community Action Council of Tulane University Students (CACTUS) provides an example of basic guidelines for community engagement by students (Community Action Council of Tulane University Students n.d.). Cactus is a student service organization for Tulane University in New Orleans that oversees several community service projects. As the central location managing university student’s community service activities, CACTUS maintains a set of general guidelines to students while they are in the community and provides training sessions to

prepare students for community engagement. By expanding community engagement guidelines to include all participants, not simply students, universities can better prepare students, staff, and faculty for community interaction.

An example of training requirements that may be adapted for community engagement comes from Loyola University of New Orleans's Community Action Program (LUCAP). This program is a student community service and volunteer program oriented towards promoting social justice. According to one Loyola faculty member involved within LUCAP, students are required to take inter-faith and anti-racism trainings before they are accepted within LUCAP. By requiring these formal trainings, LUCAP is able to provide the students with some of the basic skills needed to work within diverse communities.

Another aspect which must be examined more fully is where the responsibility lays to provide these trainings and guidelines. Although any mediating entity is likely going to need the same guidelines, it seems that this responsibility is best placed within the university itself. If formalized within the university structure, these guidelines would not only be in position to guide all university community engagement, but would also be able to be placed within existing courses. By augmenting existing courses, such as research methods, the university would be able to even further ensure proper preparation for community interactions.

The specifics of these guidelines and trainings still require additional examination. Any specific community may require additional or varied guidelines and trainings, and the exact structure of these guidelines and trainings is also necessary. However, through the mix of formal and informal mechanisms, an equal partnership is possible, though not guaranteed.

### *Recommended Future Research*

Although the present research was able to begin unraveling the role of mediating entities within university-community partnerships, more research surrounding the role of urban universities within the community is needed. The most important and largest need is further study and examination of the usefulness of university-community partnerships, particularly from the community's perspective. It is assumed throughout all of the studies of university-community partnerships, present study included, that the university's involvement in some form or another has the potential to positively impact urban communities. However, this assumption has not been thoroughly examined. A more thorough examination of the general efficacy university-community partnerships through a longitudinal study is needed. A longitudinal study would also enable the examination of the various stages of development partnerships potentially go through.

Second, in order to establish more fully the role and functions of mediating entities, and explore the theory presented within this study, further case studies are needed. Furthermore, a cross-sectional analysis of mediating entities is required to establish more fully a general theory of the mediating entity within university-community partnerships.

Third, the examination of the various placements of the mediating entity in relation to the partnering systems is needed. The placement of the entities impacts its effectiveness. Further, it appears that a true mediating entity would likely need to be completely neutral to the partners, but the reality generally seems to place them closer to one partner or the other. With this in mind, the development of typologies of mediating entities based upon system placement will enable a more comprehensive examination of their larger role and any variances between these general types. Within this examination, it would also be necessary and useful to examine the impact of various levels of institutionalization within the university on the mediation entity.

Fourth, an evaluative comparison of the various methods and activities utilized within these partnerships is also necessary, and can be accomplished through a cross-sectional analysis of university-community partnerships. Of particular interest to Urban Routes, is the examination of the reliance upon building the capacity of community-based nonprofit organizations to meet the needs of communities. Urban Routes is based upon the theory that community development can be accomplished through building the capacity of nonprofit organizations. Several questions need to be examined. Are nonprofit organizations effectively meeting the needs of the communities they serve, and what role do they play within the revitalization of impoverished, marginalized urban communities? Does capacity building effectively build enable these nonprofit organizations to fulfill this role?

Finally, further examination of the role personal relationships play within formal structures is needed. Within Urban Routes, the key to success was found in its ability to develop and utilize the personal relationships between its staff and the community members. Within a highly bureaucratic and formalized structure such as the University of New Orleans, the reliance upon these personal relationships is difficult to systematize. How do we fit these relationships within structures specifically designed to limit the impact individuals play within their system?



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APPENDIX A  
SAMPLE MEMORANDUM  
OF AGREEMENT

## **UNIVERSITY X**

### **MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT**

## **ORGANIZATION Y**

UNIVERSITY X (X) hereby expresses its support of the organization known as the "ORGANIZATION Y" (Y) and agrees to collaborate with Y to build their capacity and to jointly develop projects and initiatives within the Tremé community. The aforementioned party endorses and supports Y and its mission of .... X agrees to lend its assistance and resources, as appropriate and available, to the development of Y.

X understands Y was organized to .... The first set of objectives for this partnership are to .... The second set of objectives are to ...

As a part of this Memorandum of Agreement with ORGANIZATION Y, UNIVERSITY X agrees to provide the following resources:

1. X will provide technical assistance, capacity building, and administrative support to Y for two (2) years, and will serve as fiduciary agent for one (1) year in support of its mission, contingent upon the continuation of X funding.
2. X will provide access to university resources, which includes, but is not limited to, the following:
  - Student interns and student projects under the advisement of university professors.
3. X will provide fundraising support, including grant development and solicitation of funds on behalf Y, with Y board approval and clearance by the University's Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement.
4. X agrees that all staff and administrative support including student interns provided to Y under item one (1) above will provide support under the supervision of Y, but at all times under the direct supervision of the Executive Director.
5. An X representative will serve on the Y board in an advisory capacity.

As a part of this Memorandum of Agreement with UNIVERSITY X, ORGANIZATION Y agrees to provide the following resources:

1. Y will serve as fiduciary agent after X's term of one (1) year as the fiduciary agent has expired, unless an extension of fiduciary status is requested by Y and accepted by both partners.
2. Y will manage the day-to-day affairs, operations, and business of their organization.
3. Y will develop and implement a strategic plan to carry out its mission, goals, and objectives.
4. Y will represent "the neighborhood" and its residents to X.
5. Y will act as a liaison within "the neighborhood" to facilitate access by X.

6. Y will act as a “clearinghouse” for X projects, identifying appropriate uses of student projects within "the neighborhood".
7. Y will support and facilitate the recruitment of residents for X activities within "the neighborhood".

As a part of this Memorandum of Agreement between UNIVERSITY X and ORGANIZATION Y, there are mutual responsibilities to be shared. The mutual responsibilities are as follows:

1. Development of partnership-related project budgets, plans, and program must be made collaboratively
2. Use of products (intellectual or otherwise) developed within or related to the partnership must be decided upon by both partners and agreed to in writing.
3. Representatives of the Y board and X must be involved in all proposal developments involving the partnership, "the neighborhood", or Y from the earliest stages.
4. All joint proposals, budgets and plans should be developed around the existing strategic plans, missions, and goals of Y.

Although both partners are required to work collaboratively on all partnership activities, actions unrelated to the partnership taken by either side that does not involve the other partner directly are free from the above collaborative requirement.

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Chairman  
ORGANIZATION Y

---

Date

---

Chancellor  
UNIVERSITY X

---

Date



APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR

KEY URBAN ROUTES

INFORMANTS

## **Interview Questions for Key Urban Routes Informants:**

### **Director, IPNL**

Inform: Urban Routes vision and purpose; the structure of IPNL and Urban Routes; history of the project; future directions

1. What do you see as the overall purpose of Urban Routes?
2. Could you tell me how Urban Routes was first conceived of, originated? What was its original purpose, and has this changed over time (how)?
3. How does Urban Routes fulfill this purpose? How is it structured or planned to fulfill this function (the way that it is staffed, its linkages to the university and the community)?
4. What are some examples of actions or activities that exemplifies this purpose of Urban Routes? What do you see as the most significant accomplishments of Urban Routes since its beginning?
5. How does Urban Routes fit with the overall mission, goals, of IPNL? How do you see it as fitting with UNO (CUPA and Metro)?
6. How is IPNL/Urban Routes structurally linked to UNO (including reporting, funding)? How has this linkage impacted IPNL/Urban Routes as it functions, if at all?
7. What are some of the barriers or problems that Urban Routes has encountered in attempting to fulfill its purpose? From the community side? From the university? In what ways has Urban Routes overcome these barriers or problems?
8. What do you think these barriers stem from?
9. Where and how should conflicts be addressed? If the resolution of a conflict necessitates a change in a university or community situated procedure/process, who decides on the change and who does the changing?

### **Program Development Assistant, IPNL**

Inform: Urban routes vision and history; the original purpose of Urban Routes, how it was envisioned to be structured.

In addition to the above questions:

1. In your position, you interact (administratively), with both the university and the community. What problems have you experienced within this role? How have these problems been dealt with? What do you see as the main cause of these problems?

**Urban Routes Coordinator, IPNL**

Informs: Urban routes vision and history; the original purpose of Urban Routes, how it was envisioned to be structured

Could you tell me how Urban Routes was first conceived of, originated? What was its original purpose, and has this changed over time (how)?

How did you conceive of Urban Routes functioning, fulfilling this purpose?

What prompted you to place Urban Routes within IPNL? How does this placement impact its functioning?

How did you expect Urban Routes to interact with the community? With the university?

Would Urban Routes be possible outside of the context of IPNL and UNO? Could it have been placed within a community organization or structure, or was it conceived as specifically existing within IPNL/UNO?

How did you expect Urban Routes to be linked to the university (which units or internal academic structures)? To the community (community organizations, general or specific; community residents)? How did this expectation bear out in reality?

What are the most significant barriers you encountered in establishing Urban Routes? Throughout your time in Urban Routes? From the university side? From the community side?

What do you think these barriers stem from? How did Urban Routes manage these barriers or problems? (Did they manage them?)

**Vice-Chancellor of Governmental and Community Affairs, UNO**

Informs: UNO's outreach/ engagement commitment; placement of Urban Routes within this vision/ commitment; His understanding of the needs from a university perspective, of an Urban Routes structure.

1. Considering that UNO's mission includes community engagement, what is meant by this, and in what ways does UNO fulfill this role?
2. What is the benefit to the university in community engagement? What does the university have to offer the community?
3. How does UNO encourage its academic units to include community engagement in their activities?
4. Does the UNO administration encourage collaboration between units in community engagement? How?

5. Do you believe that there is a need for an administrative structure managing university-community collaborations? How would this structure be integrated with the university?
6. What role does IPNL's Urban Routes program play within UNO's larger engagement purpose? Do you see this role expanding, changing?
7. Where and how should conflicts be addressed? If the resolution of a conflict necessitates a change in a university or community situated procedure/process, who decides on the change and who does the changing?

**Dean, Metropolitan College, UNO**

Inform: UNO's outreach/ engagement commitment; placement of Urban Routes within this vision/ commitment; Urban Routes role from Metro college's perspective; Structural placement of Urban Routes in Metro.

1. What is the connection between Metro College and IPNL? How does IPNL and Urban Routes fit with Metro College's mission and goals?
2. Do you believe that there is a need for an administrative structure managing university-community collaborations? How would this structure be integrated with the university?
3. Has Urban Routes enabled any activities that you would otherwise be unable, but desiring, to engage in?
4. Where and how should conflicts be addressed? If the resolution of a conflict necessitates a change in a university or community situated procedure/process, who decides on the change and who does the changing?

**Ass. Dean, CUPA, UNO**

Inform: CUPA's commitment to outreach, engagement; Role of Urban Routes within this role; Structural placement of IPNL/ Urban Routes within CUPA

1. CUPA's mission reflects a dedication to community engagement and applied research. What do you mean by "community engagement"? What are some examples of this engagement? In what ways does this engagement add to CUPA's purpose?
2. How does IPNL and Urban Routes fit within CUPA's organizational structure? How do they fit within CUPA's mission? What is Urban Routes' role within CUPA?
3. Has Urban Routes enabled any activities that you would otherwise be unable, but desiring, to engage in?

4. Considering that CUPA is engaged in several community-oriented projects, what does Urban Routes add to the engagement efforts in Tremé and Central City? Would it be reasonable to assume that CUPA would be able to manage these projects directly? Why?
5. Where and how should conflicts within the partnership be addressed? If the resolution of a conflict necessitates a change in a university or community situated procedure/process, who decides on the change and who does the changing?

**Community residents:**

Inform: Community side view of Urban Routes; Function from their perspective of Urban Routes, fulfillment of this function; Barriers encountered in University interactions.

1. What do you see as the role of Urban Routes in Tremé? IPNL? The university?
2. What resources has Urban Routes brought to your community activities? What use have these resources been to your activities?
3. Have you encountered any problems in your interactions with Urban Routes, IPNL, and the university? Have these problems been addressed? How?
4. Typically, how often do you interact with staff of Urban Routes, IPNL, the university?
5. How does Urban Routes impact your interactions with and navigations of the university? Any examples?

APPENDIX C  
HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE  
CONSENT FORM



UNIVERSITY of  
NEW ORLEANS

## CONSENT FORM

### 1. Title of Research Study

THE ROLE AND STRUCTURE OF MEDIATING ENTITIES IN UNIVERSITY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: AN EXAMINATION OF URBAN ROUTES

### 2. Project Director

Mathew Nicholas Spaan

(504) 280-6277

(504) 849-8152

Dr. Denise Strong, Faculty Supervisor

(504) 280-7103

### 3. Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research study is to identify and examine the function and structure of university-community partnership management centers.

### 4. Procedures for this Research

This research will entail an open-ended interview of the participant. The participants were selected purposely based on their level of interaction with Urban Routes or the University of New Orleans' administrative structure, and their professional or community position.

Participants within this study will be composed of ten (10) individuals holding leadership positions within the several arenas Urban Routes interacts: The University of New Orleans' Vice-Chancellor of Governmental and Community Affairs; Dean of the University of New Orleans' Metropolitan College; Assistant Dean of the University of New Orleans' College of Urban and Public Affairs; Director of International Project for Nonprofit Leadership; an International Project for Nonprofit Leadership Project Assistant; one (1) current Urban Routes Neighborhood Coordinator; two (2) previous Urban Routes Neighborhood Coordinators; and two (2) community organization board members.

Due to the selection criteria for participation within this study identification by professional title is a strong possibility. Participants who wish to remain unidentified within the study can make this request during or after the interview is conducted. Participants are free to leave any and all questions asked during the interview unanswered. In these cases, all identifying characteristics of the participants will be withheld from the study. All notes and transcriptions from the interviews will be kept in a locked file cabinet.

Information gathered through these interviews will be used in the analysis the Urban Routes project of the International Project for Nonprofit Leadership. Moreover, this analysis will entail an examination Urban Routes' placement within the University of New Orleans' organizational structure, its role in the fulfillment of the University of New Orleans' urban outreach mission, and the methods Urban Routes utilizes to achieve this role. This analysis is intended to facilitate

the development of theory regarding the role of mediating structures within University-Community partnerships.

Information gathered through these interviews will be presented within the thesis or research report through the use of direct quotes or paraphrases connected to particular participants when appropriate. Names will not be used of any participants; however, the use of professional titles, within a relatively small organization such as the University of New Orleans, entails the possibility of participants being identified. Community organization board members will not be identified by name or title; they will be identified only as “community participants” within Urban Routes.

Participants will be asked to take part in one interview, with the possibility of follow-up questions at a later time. Each interview is expected to take no more than one (1) hour, with an average time of thirty (30) minutes. Interviews are to be conducted between Dec. 1st, 2004 and Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

### **5. Potential Risks or Discomforts**

There are no expected risks to participants for participation within this study. Further, there are no expected consequences for either answering or not answering a particular question. If the participant wishes to leave any question unanswered, this will be construed to indicate a lack of consent for that particular question and thus not used in any way within the research. Although providing an answer to any question, when coupled with formal consent as indicated through this consent form, will be assumed to indicate consent to a particular question, the participant is free to withdraw consent to the interview, either in part or in whole, at any time.

**If you wish to discuss these or any other discomforts you may experience, you may call the Project Director listed in #2 of this form.**

### **6. Potential Benefits to You or Others**

Participants will receive no direct benefit from participation within this study. However, the broader potential benefit of this study is the development of more effective management strategies for university-community partnership efforts, as well as an advancement in the methods of engaging in university-community collaboration, outreach, and engagement.

### **7. Alternative Procedures**

There are no alternative procedures, except for non-participation, within this study. **Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw consent and terminate participation at any time without consequence.**

### **8. Protection of Confidentiality**

As stated above, due to the selection criteria for participation within this study identification by professional title is a strong possibility. Participants who wish to remain unidentified within the study can make this request during or after the interview is conducted. In these cases, all identifying characteristics of the participants will be withheld from the study. All notes and transcriptions from the interviews will be kept in a locked file cabinet.



## 9. Signatures

**I have been fully informed of the above-described procedure with its possible benefits and risks and I have given permission of participation in this study.**

Any additional questions I may have can be directed to the director of this study indicated in #2 of this form.

---

**Signature of Participant**

---

**Name of Participant (Print)**

---

**Date**

---

**Signature of Person  
Obtaining Consent**

---

**Name of Person Obtaining  
Consent (Print)**

---

**Date**

APPENDIX D

HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE

APPROVAL FORM

***University Committee for the Protection  
of Human Subjects in Research***

University of New Orleans

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*Campus Correspondence*

Matthew Spaan  
Denise Strong  
CUPA

12/10/2004

RE: The role and structure of mediating entities in university—community  
partnerships: An examination of urban routes.

IRB#: 06NOV04

The IRB has deemed that the proposed research project is now in compliance with  
current University of New Orleans and Federal regulations.

Be advised that approval is only valid for one year from the approval date. Any changes  
to the procedures or protocols must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to  
implementation. Use the IRB# listed on the first page of this letter in all future  
correspondence regarding this proposal.

If an adverse, unforeseen event occurs (e.g., physical, social, or emotional harm), you  
are required to inform the IRB as soon as possible after the event.

Best of luck with your project!  
Sincerely,

Laura Scaramella, Ph.D.  
Chair, University Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research

*University Committee for the Protection  
of Human Subjects in Research  
University of New Orleans*

Form Number: 06NOV04

*(please refer to this number in all future correspondence concerning this protocol)*

Principal Investigator: Mathew Spaan Title: Graduate Student

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Denise Strong *(if PI is a student)*

Department: Public Administration College: Urban and Public Affairs

Project Title: The Role and Structure of Mediating Entities in University-Community Partnerships

Date Reviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Proposed Project Period From 10/19/2004 to 11/07/2004

*\*approval is for one year from approval date only and may be renewed yearly.*

Note: Consent forms and related materials are to be kept by the PI for a period of three years following the completion of the study.

Approval Status

Date

☒ Full Committee Approval

☐ Expedited Approval

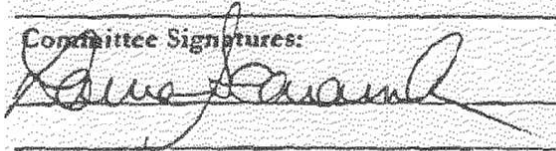
☐ Continuation

☐ Rejected

☐ The protocol will be approved following receipt of satisfactory response(s) to the following question(s) within 15 days:

12-6-04

Committee Signatures:



Laura Scaramella, Ph.D. (Chair)

Pamela Jenkins, Ph.D.

Anthony Kontos, Ph.D.

Betty Lo, M.D.

Richard B. Speaker, Ph.D.

Gary Talarchek, Ph.D.

L. Allen Witt, Ph.D.

## VITA

Mathew Nicholas Spaan was born in Shreveport, LA on February 8, 1977. Growing up in Milwaukee, WI, Mr. Spaan graduated from Riverside University High School in 1995. He received a B.A. in Philosophy and Comparative Studies of Religion from the University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee in 1999. Mr. Spaan has been variously employed as a bookseller, barista, and boat captain. After Mr. Spaan receives his graduate degree, he plans on moving back to Wisconsin and working within either the nonprofit or public sector.