

Carnegie selects Fresno State for Community Engagement Classification

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Fresno State was one of 240 U.S. colleges and universities to receive The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching's 2015 [Community Engagement Classification](#).

Fresno State was one of the first universities to earn the classification in 2006. The 2015 cycle was the first time the Carnegie Foundation required campuses to apply for reclassification.

"This Community Engagement Classification signifies a national validation of the importance of community engagement in higher education, and of our work to make community engagement a central feature of Fresno State's identity," said Chris Fiorentino, director of the Jan and Bud Richter Center for Community Engagement and Service-Learning at Fresno State.

Colleges and universities with an institutional focus on community engagement were invited to apply for the classification, first offered in 2006 as part of an extensive restructuring of The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. To be selected, institutions had to provide descriptions and examples of institutionalized practices of community engagement that showed alignment among mission, culture, leadership, resources and practices.

Fresno State students, faculty, staff and administrators have contributed more than 5 million hours of service to community benefit organizations and community events in the past five years. In the 2013-14 academic year, 11,253 volunteers contributed 1,160,064 hours of service.

There are now 361 colleges and universities nationwide with this Community Engagement Classification.

"Back in 2006, when we first earned it, there were only 76 colleges and universities with this classification," Fiorentino said. "There are more and more campuses embracing community engagement as an important part of the higher education experience."

This year, 133 institutions submitted first-time applications and 83 were successfully classified as community engaged institutions. For reclassification, 162 institutions submitted and 157 were successfully reclassified.

"The importance of this elective classification is borne out by the response of so many campuses that have demonstrated their deep engagement with local, regional, national and global communities," said John Saltmarsh, director of the New England Resource Center for Higher Education. "These are campuses that are improving teaching and learning, producing research that makes a difference in communities and revitalizing their civic and academic missions."

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