



Promoting Your Two-Year Academic Program

ENGAGING CRITICAL INFLUENCERS

Developing and promoting a two-year academic program in emergency management is an exciting challenge. There's often a chance to innovate, to help define how institutions imagine your discipline. But budgets are often tight and resources scarce, as you try to build the best for your students. Engaging critical influencers—elements of your community that can lend hands or voices—is a powerful way to address those challenges.

WHO?

Your critical influencers are already in your school and community ecosystems. You may already know some, but you probably have more than you think! Here are just a few options, to get you started:

- Veterans Groups
- General Education Personnel
- Safety & Security Staff
- Academic Advisors
- Career Counselors
- Multicultural Advisors
- Parents
- Part-Time Students
- Undeclared Majors
- Non-traditional Students
- Deans & Provosts
- Former Students
- MIA/Unretained Students

Internal

- Local, State, Federal Safety Agencies
- Workforce/Economic Development Offices
- Chambers of Commerce
- Top 10 Local Employers
- Career & Tech Centers
- State Education Depts.
- Volunteer Organizations
- Academic Advisory Groups
- Nearby Military Installations
- State Labor, Licensing Depts.
- Community Groups & Elected Officials
- Other Local Colleges & Universities
- Private Schools
- ListSers

External

Influencers can gain:

- ▼ A sense of shared purpose, working toward a worthy cause
- ▼ Enhanced industry, community, job pipeline awareness
- ▼ Opportunities to train, educate, increase retention from their entry-level employees
- ▼ Efficient knowledge transfer (among their peers, as well as to/from your program)
- ▼ Development of their workforce's education and quality levels, over time
- ▼ Positive press, community relations, and visible community involvement
- ▼ Increased motivation and access to innovative initiatives at the earliest stages

Programs can gain:

- ▼ New partnerships, cooperative agreements, and resources
- ▼ Input on and access to the latest industry trends and topics
- ▼ Diversified networks to build program resilience and sustainability
- ▼ Performance-based opportunities for students, staff, and faculty
- ▼ News on current skill demands & job requirements for student advising
- ▼ Potential connections for student internships and job placement
- ▼ Sources of instructors, mentors, guest speakers, learning opportunities
- ▼ Increased program visibility, positive press, and community influence
- ▼ **Program Growth**

WHY?

Before getting started, it's always good to have an idea of what you and your influencers might want to gain out of your potential cooperation. Remember, in a good partnership, what goes well for one side often helps boost the other, too! So think along these lines, but also across them, and don't be afraid to get creative.



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- macemaffcc.wordpress.com
- @MACEMatFCC
- macem.org



Where to Start?

Make a commitment to outreach. It will take effort, but that effort is being invested in future partners. You can't get what you don't ask for!

Get to know your partners. Recognize what each brings (and doesn't bring) to the table, and what you can offer. Customize your messaging and outreach accordingly, so everyone is speaking the same language from the start.

Determine key success factors you'll need to address or accomplish if the effort is to work. Some will take time, others can be basic, but be sure there's a plan to achieve them.





Facilitate networking, brainstorming, and discussions. Bringing people together and ensuring all sides can easily communicate is often all you need to spark up the next idea.

Be flexible. Consider a broad and diverse range of options for partnering, and remember that something doesn't need to be what you expected to still be a gain for your program.

Identify low-hanging fruit, and pursue those easy successes just as thoroughly—a win is a win! Acknowledge those who champion your cause, and recognize those essential to making your effort work.



How Can They Help?

-  **Ensuring Information Sharing**
-  **Enriching & Validating Your Content**
-  **Providing an Industry Presence**
-  **Opening Up Outreach Opportunities**

-  **Advocating for Your Program**
-  **Providing Learning Opportunities**
-  **Helping Leverage & Maximize Resources**



Keeping Up Momentum

- ★ Maintain and focus on a long-term vision of what you hope to build
- ★ Set realistic expectations, and celebrate successes as you meet them
- ★ Establish mechanisms to ensure timely information sharing between all partners
- ★ Develop mutually reinforcing activities and projects, and stay on the lookout for more
- ★ Make sure all partnerships remain engaged and active; stay on each other's radar
- ★ Develop learning opportunities, for students and for each other
- ★ Regularly assess status, progress, capabilities, and interests
- ★ Remain open to opportunities for change and improvement. Needs will change, but that doesn't have to be a bad thing!