

Trinity College

## Trinity College Digital Repository

---

Community Learning Research Fellows

Center for Hartford Engagement and Research

---

2017

### Perspectives on The Hartford Consortium for Higher Education

Henry Chavez

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/clrf>

---

#### Recommended Citation

Chavez, Henry, "Perspectives on The Hartford Consortium for Higher Education" (2017). *Community Learning Research Fellows*. 28.

<https://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/clrf/28>

# Perspectives on the Hartford Consortium for Higher Education

Henry Chavez

Faculty Advisor: Isaac Kamola

Community Partner: Hartford Consortium for Higher Education (HCHE)

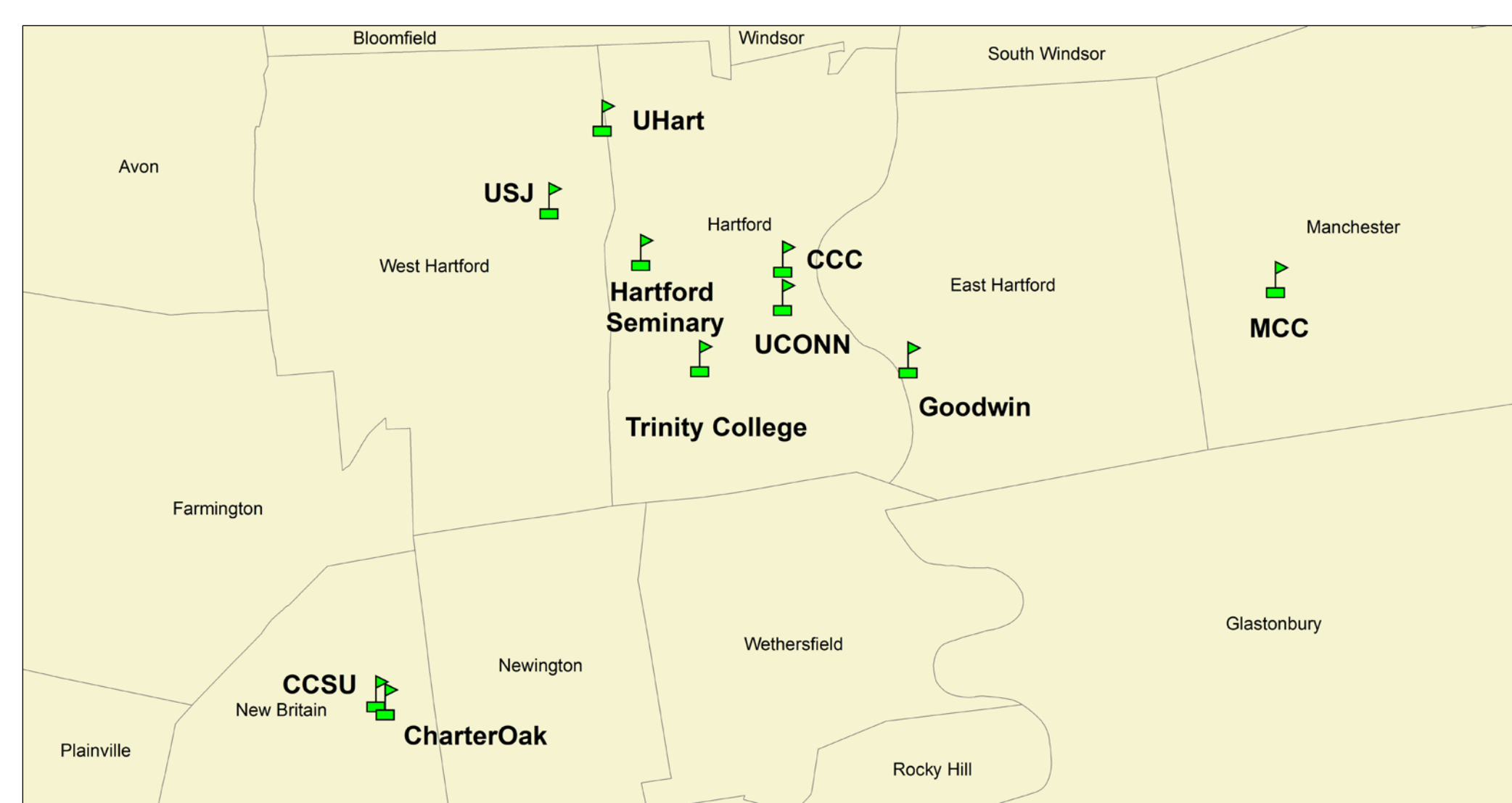


## Abstract

The Hartford Consortium for Higher Education's (HCHE) mission is to create a hub of partnerships between member institutions and with local organizations and businesses in the downtown Hartford area. One of the biggest barriers to achieving this mission lies in not fully understanding the relationships each institution desires to build with the consortium and City of Hartford. Due to different institutional models, locations, student bodies and resources, each member has its own set of goals that may or may not match those of other members. By understanding these differences, the HCHE can create an effective plan to bring members together to do meaningful, collaborative work in the greater Hartford area. We therefore ask the question: **What are the perceived roles of HCHE by its member institutions, and how do those perceptions match the consortium's own mission?** This research explores three specific topics: members' perspectives on the HCHE; communication between faculty and students across campuses; and regional transportation. Interviews with eight consortium members reveal a wide range of opinions on all three topics. While member institutions appreciate connecting faculty and students across campuses, they disagree on what demographic the consortium serves, or should serve. They also articulate different positions on the role of transportation. One common theme is that members cannot communicate how they hope to use HCHE as a resource. These results suggest a starting point for building a stronger consortium.

## What is HCHE?

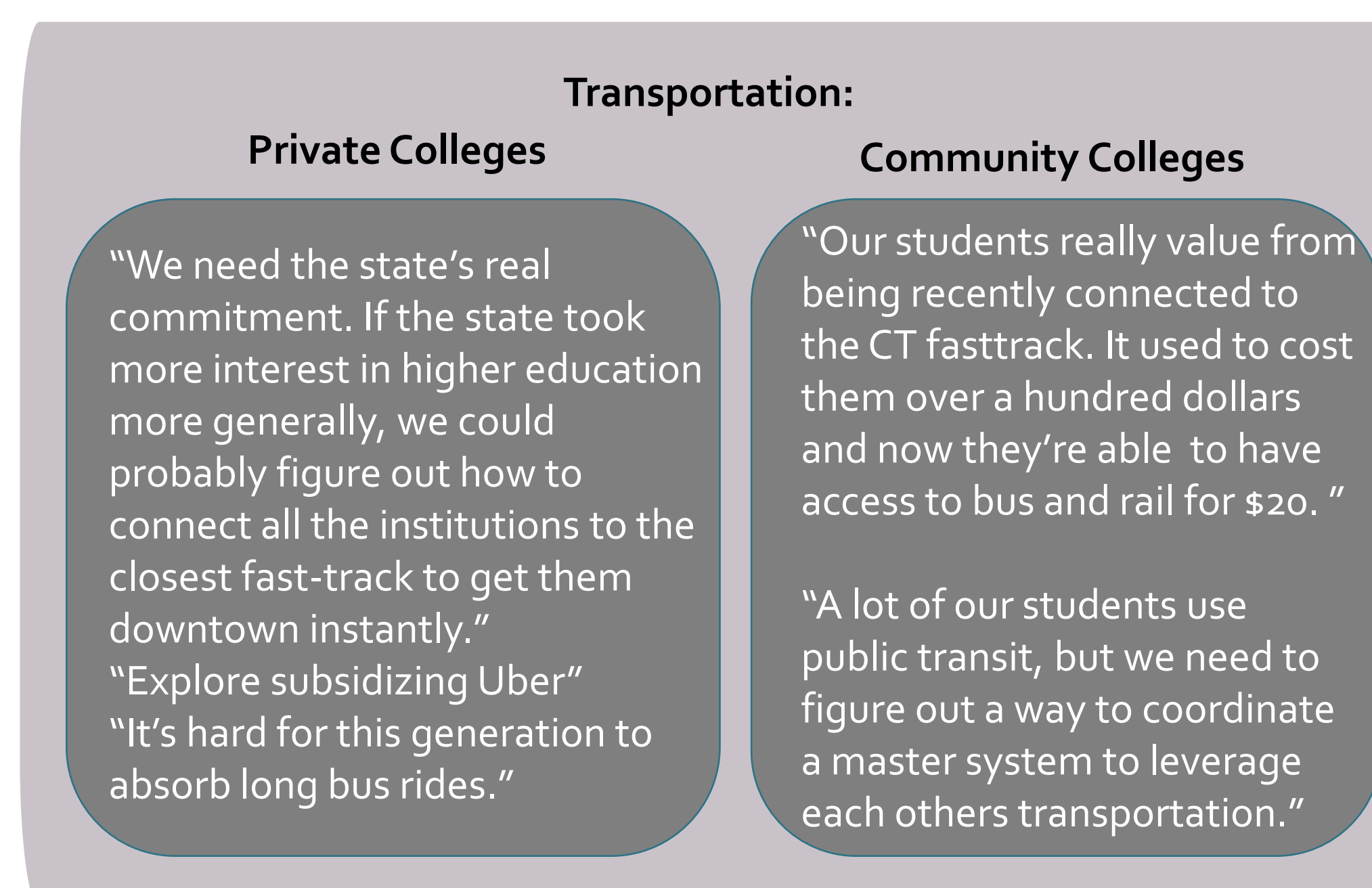
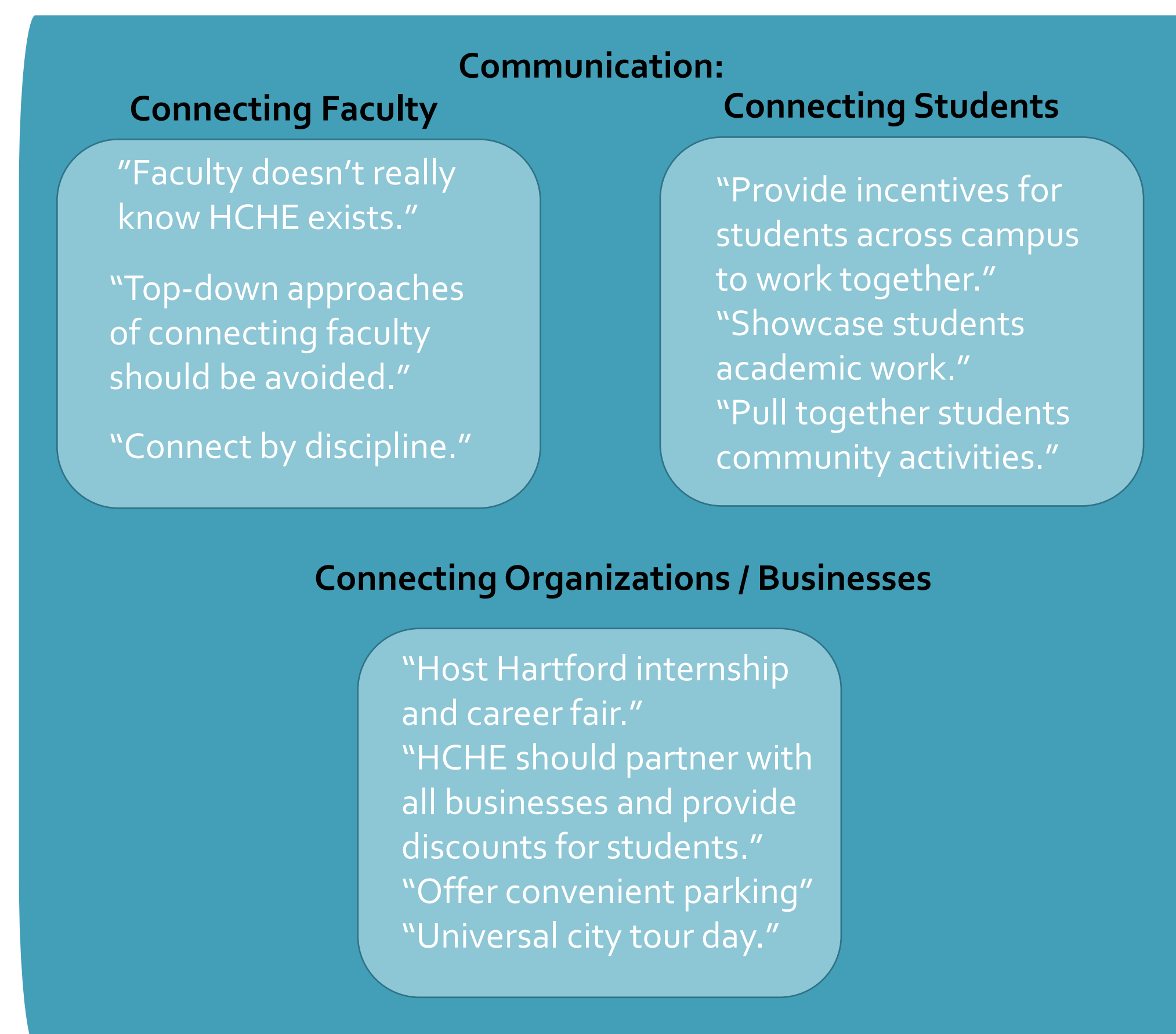
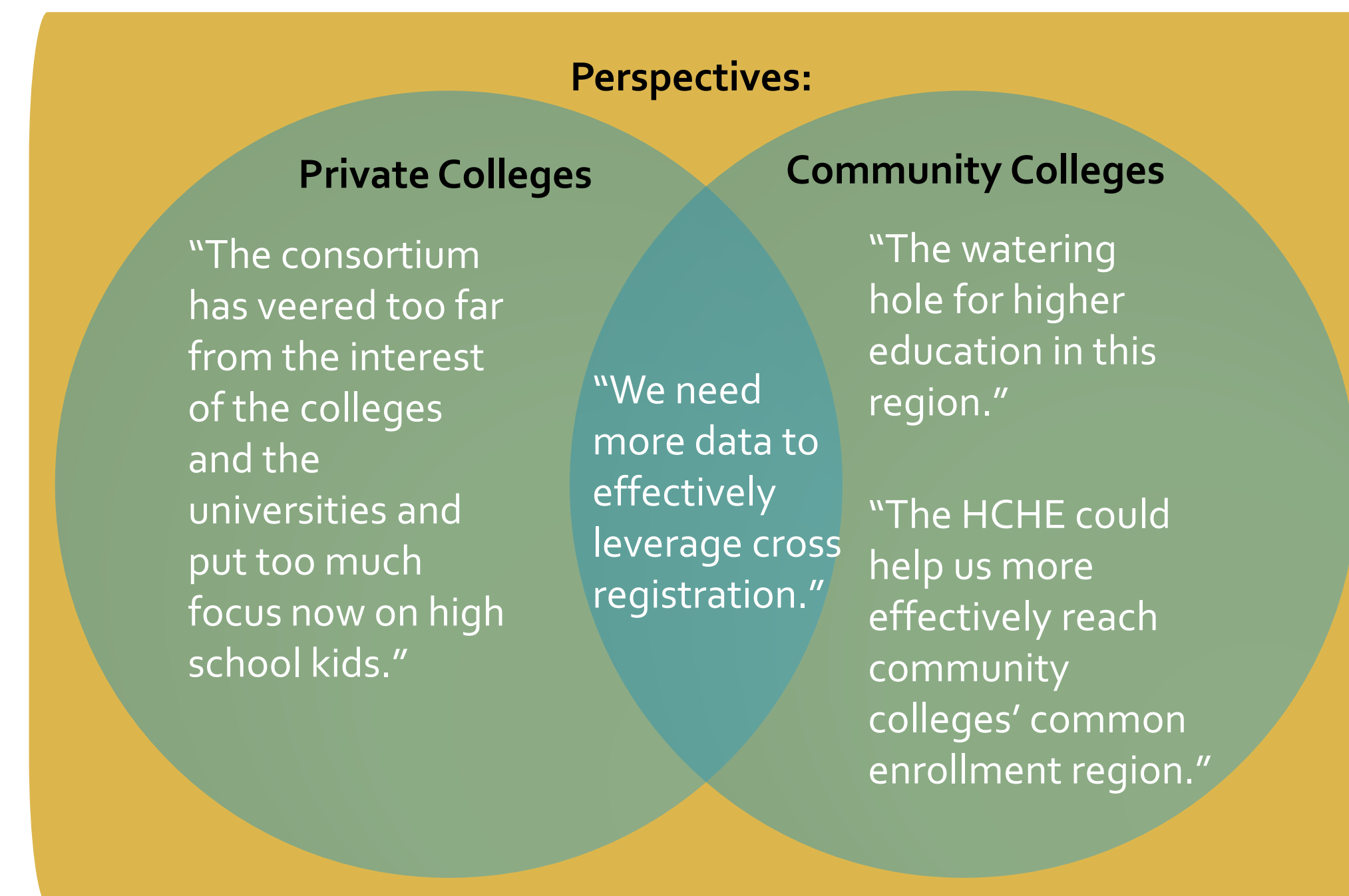
- HCHE oversees two high school programs and offers the opportunity to register in more than 4,000 courses at member institutions.
- 40,000 full- and part-time college students in Hartford are enrolled in 11 HCHE member institutions:



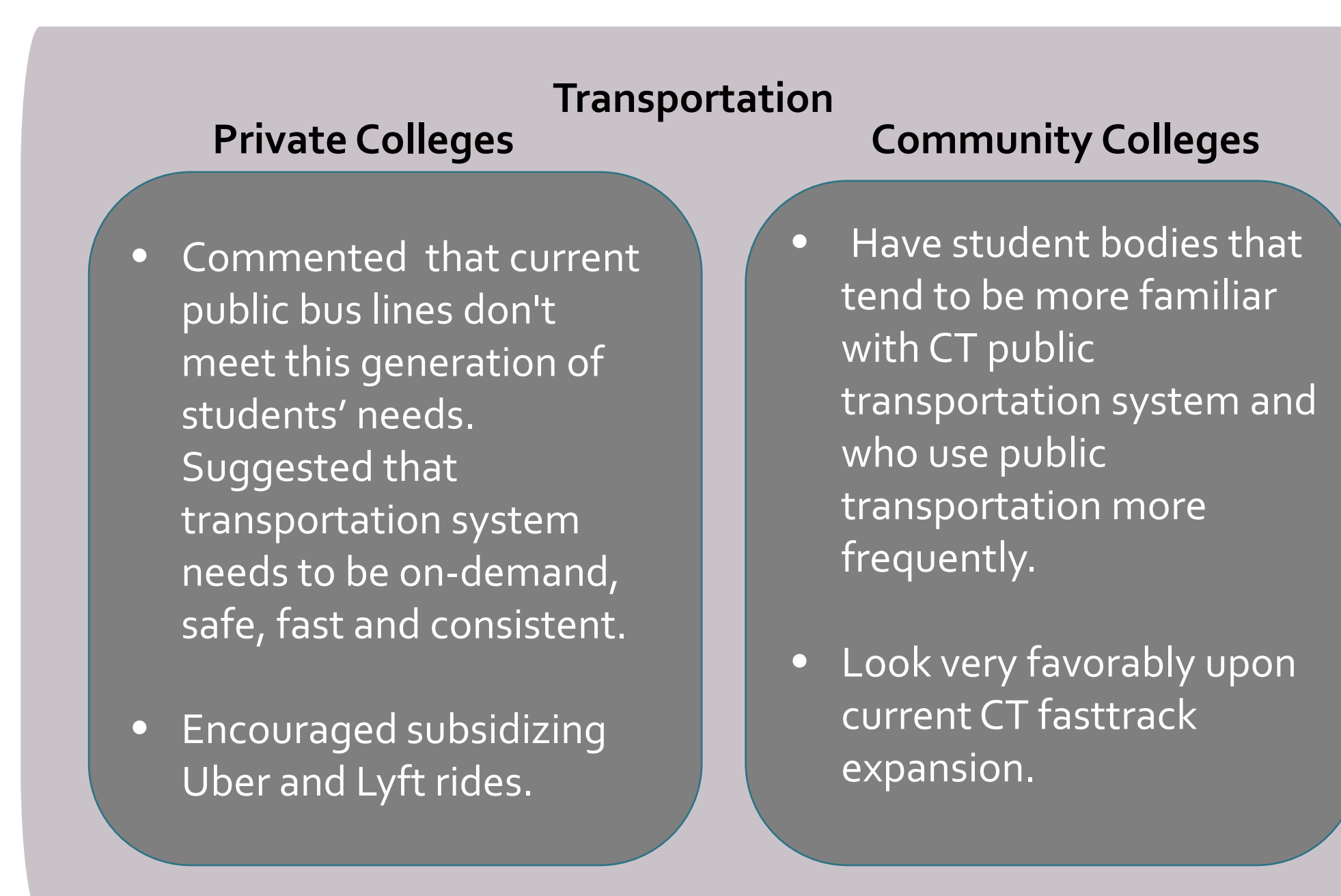
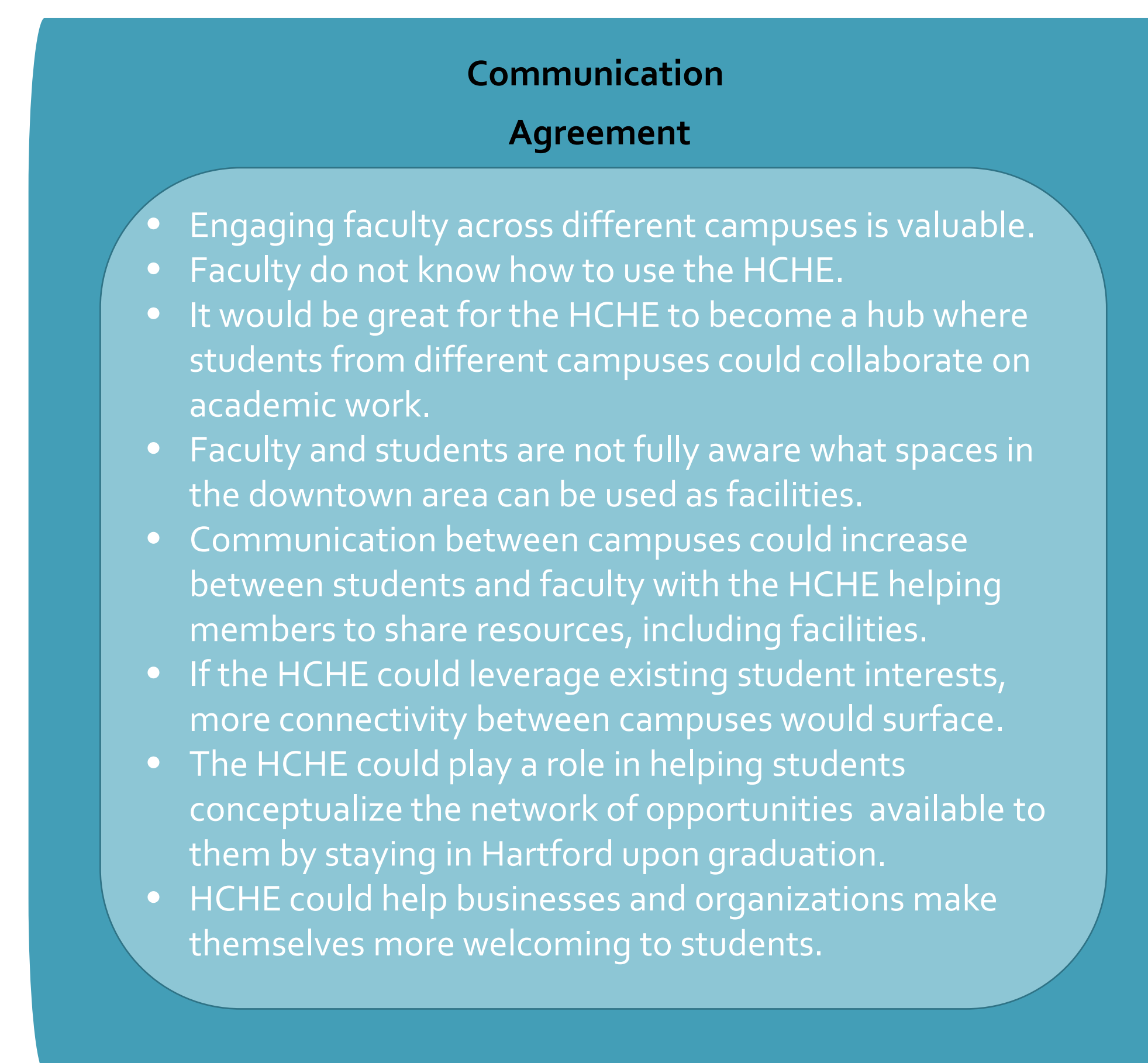
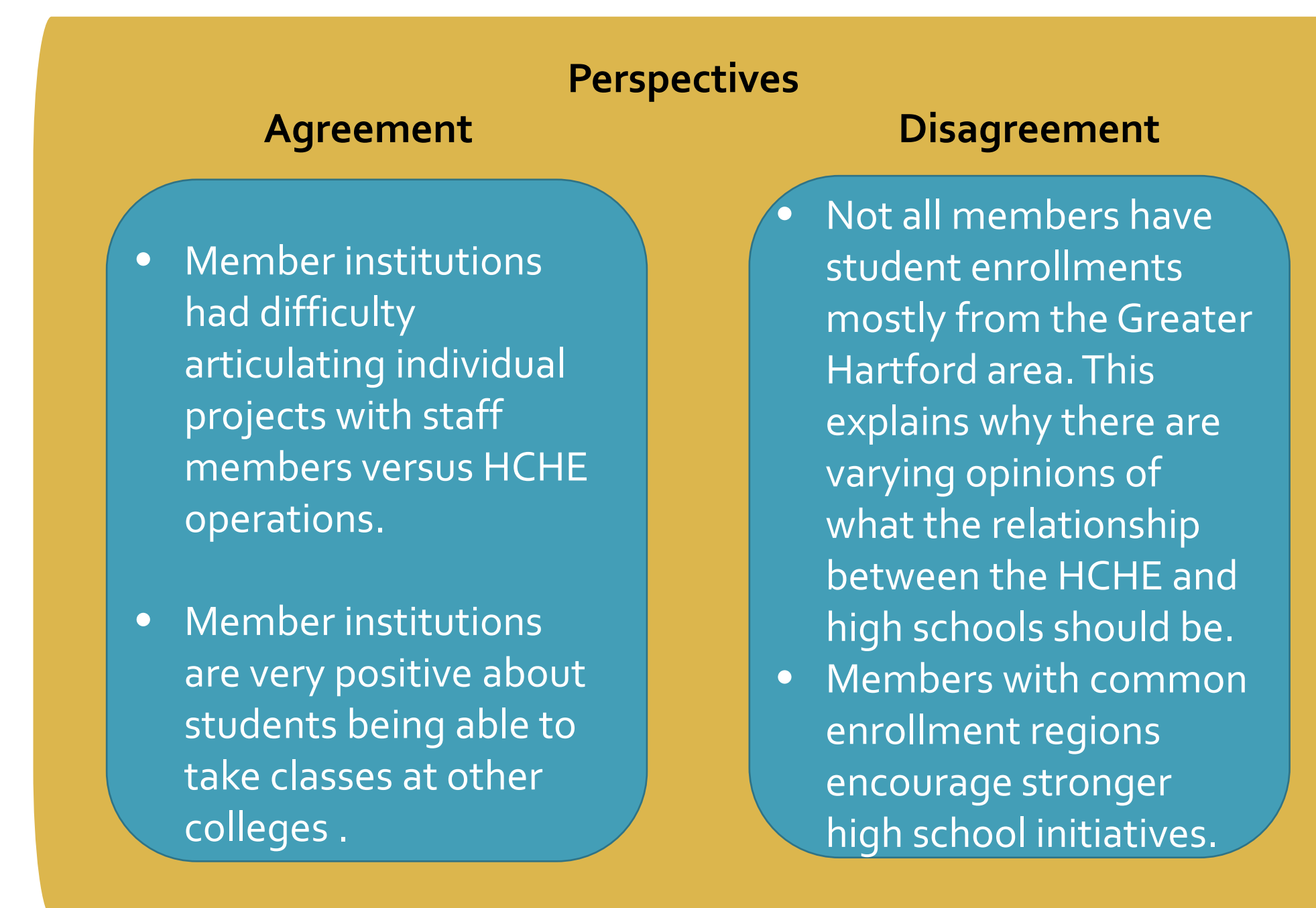
## Methodology

- Designed interview guide based on HCHE's mission and topics of interest.
- Reviewed literature on history and structure of consortia in higher education in the U.S.
- Interviewed the HCHE's representative at eight member institutions.

## Findings



## Analysis



## Discussion

Certain members view the HCHE in terms of potentially helping lower institutional costs via sharing resources. Others principally see the consortium as a means for student life enrichment.

All member institutions would like to see the HCHE help them expand location-based academic programs.

All members would like the consortium to help them share more resources across institutions.

All representatives who were interviewed stressed the value of connecting with each other through the consortium, but felt they were not the best point of contact for getting tasks done.

Private schools feel the State needs to support them in connecting students directly to the downtown area.

## Conclusions

- The consortium needs to help member institutions understand how to use the HCHE as a resource. This will then help members articulate how they add value to the City of Hartford's social and economic capital.
- There may be value in connecting faculty across institutions, but members agree that the priority should be connecting students first.
- It is important for the HCHE to factor in the diversity of student bodies across campuses and the implications this has for student programming, faculty enhancement, and transportation.

## Future Research

Next semester, I will continue my research. With the HCHE, I will identify a small group of higher-education consortia with the goal of:

- Examining their respective operations and governance structures; and
- Interviewing representatives from each consortium to collect information on the themes that have emerged from this study.



Trinity College  
HARTFORD CONNECTICUT

Community Learning Initiative Research Fellows Fall 2017