Common Good & Common Ground: Principles of Academic Community Engagement

*Kaneb Center Workshop, “Engaging Students with Community-Based Learning”*

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• 8 years teaching Writing and Rhetoric and directing the University Writing Center

• 8 years at the Center for Social Concerns
  • Director, Community-Based Learning
  • Co-Director, Poverty Studies Interdisciplinary Minor
    • Teach Required “Poverty Studies Capstone” for Seniors
    • Teach Elective “Rhetorics of Gender and Poverty” crosslisted (Gender Studies, English, Africana Studies, Poverty Studies)

• Author, Poverty/Privilege: A Reader for Writers, Oxford University Press: 2015. Composition textbook with readings and introductory material focused on poverty and privilege.

“The University seeks to cultivate in its students not only an appreciation for the great achievements of human beings, but also a disciplined sensibility to the poverty, injustice, and oppression that burden the lives of so many. The aim is to create a sense of human solidarity and concern for the common good that will bear fruit as learning becomes service to justice.”
The Center for Social Concerns of the University of Notre Dame facilitates community-based learning, research and service informed by Catholic Social Tradition. Through the Center, learning becomes service to justice.
Workshop Objectives

• Deepen the culture of academic community engagement through the exchange of ideas and deepening of relationships

• Review key terms and concepts to expand knowledge of the field

• Identify key stakeholders and their goals

• Describe and analyze specific models of CBL

• Identify human and material resources for further support
This term often incorporates community based-learning and service-learning. The Carnegie Foundation defines community engagement as “the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.”

CSC/ZCSC Courses

Application for CSC Subject Level Crosslist

1. Academic Integrity
2. Catholic Social Tradition
3. Community Engagement (Experiential Learning [EL]/Community-Based Learning [CBL] /Community-Based Research [CBR])
4. Funding

*Distinct from ZCSC attribute, which we attach to all courses that have some required community engagement per the Carnegie classification.
Community Engagement for What?

For social change.
For a more just and peaceful world.
“Curricular engagement includes institutions where teaching, learning and scholarship engage faculty, students, and community in mutually beneficial and respectful collaboration. Their interactions address community-identified needs, deepen students’ civic and academic learning, enhance community well-being [world], and enrich the scholarship of the institution.”

http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/
Five Key Stakeholders: Goals of Community Engagement

1. Faculty Members
   • Professional advancement & personal fulfillment; engage in high impact practice

2. Community Partners
   • Mission advancement: functional (capacity) & educational

3. Students
   • Learning outcomes: knowledge, skills, and dispositions that advance their academic & emotional well-being

4. Institution
   • Community development: economic & social concerns

5. World
   • People and places that flourish, connectedness
Common Terms

- Community Service
- Campus Community Partnerships
- Service Learning
- Community-Based Learning
- Reflection
- Experiential Learning
- Volunteerism
- Community-Based Research
- Reciprocity
- Service Engagement
- Civic Engagement
- Engaged Learning
- Engaged Research
- Academic Community Engagement
- Participatory Action Research
- Immersion
- Scholarship of Engagement
- Common Good
- Mutuality
- Community-Based Teaching
• Subset of engaged and applied scholarship
• Variations called action research, community based participatory research, participatory action research, translational research....
• Research is understood broadly; any research method can be used

Key characteristics:
1. Community question
2. Community collaboration in research
3. Community makes use of research results
The CSC uses the term CBL to distinguish its work from early modes of SL that focused primarily on direct service, student community involvement and student learning goals. To the Center, CBL speaks of student involvement in community organizing, research, and advocacy as forms of service, and emphasizes, along with student learning and development goals, impact in the communities where students work.
Core Elements of Community-Based Learning

- Meaningful Learning Objectives Formed with Community Partners
- Mutually Beneficial Partnerships
- Intentional Reflection and Assessment
TIME: Frequency and Length of Engagement

1. Weekly bursts (e.g., 2 hours, twice a week all semester long)

2. Project-based chunks (e.g., facilitating a special event such as a fundraiser or outing with guests)

3. Immersion (e.g., leave town and spend a week living on site with community partners with specific activities and tasks to accomplish)
1. **Site visit** to organization to learn directly from experts (EL)

2. Staff **existing volunteer positions** (e.g., front desk at the Center for the Homeless, “non-doing” [ministry of presence]) (CBL)

3. Perform **special project** designed with community partner (e.g., oral histories for St. Margaret’s House, “Fashioning Our Lives”) (CBL or CBR)

4. Conduct **community-based research** to address questions posed by the community partner (e.g., United Way Policy Subcommittee) (CBR)

5. **Combination** of above (i.e., students fill volunteer positions all semester to contextualize an oral history they conduct at the end of the semester) (EL/CBL/CBR)
1. **Communicate** early and often with all stakeholders (e.g., share your syllabus and learning objectives with partners, create a formal or informal contract); be clear about responsibilities (i.e., students should tell you and the community partner if they will absent)

2. Full disclosure to students: clear advertising, **don’t force engagement**

3. **Integrate** engagement into coursework: the modes and methods and partnership advance the learning objectives of the course. Assignments—written and oral—directly acknowledge community work.

4. Recognize **partners as co-teachers**—honor various types of expertise
5. Challenge but support—stretch students, don’t break them (be aware of how much you’re stretching them in terms of intensity, novelty, etc.)

6. **Reflect**: on topic as well as self, in writing and in speech, alone and in groups (e.g., journals, daily check-in, Circle Process)

7. Give credit for **demonstration of learning**, not for the experience; design assessment that reflects this philosophy

8. Under-promise and over-deliver **deliverables**

9. Respect **Risk Management** (see Guide)

10. Focus on sustainable **relationships** with partners
Resources

Human
• Center for Social Concerns: Connie Mick, Annie Cahill Kelly
• Indiana Campus Compact
• Tracks within your discipline (e.g. Conference on Community Writing)

Material
• Bibliography
• Campus Compact Website (national & Indiana)
  • Sample syllabi
• TRUCEN Toolkit
  • Engaged scholarship, promotion & tenure advice
• Guide to Community-Based Teaching
• CBL Guide to Risk Management
CSC Opportunities for CBL

- **Community Engagement Faculty Institute**: May 24-26, 2016, Application Deadline February 9, 2016
- **Center for Social Concerns Course Development Grants**: Deadline February 9, 2016
- **Center for Social Concerns Border Issues Faculty Seminar**: Tentative January 2017
Thank you!

Feel free to follow up with me: cmick@nd.edu