

Community-based Engaged Learning (C-bEL)

Students learning through collaboration with community partners to promote public well being.

Keys to success

Set goals

- Articulate mutually agreed-upon goals with your partner.
- Make the community work integral to the course goals and grades.

Communicate

- Establish frequent communication among partners
- Let your community partner know what to expect.
- Clearly identify responsibilities for all involved (educator, partner, students)
- Establish deadlines. Remember community partners don't work on course calendars.
- Invite the partner to your class to communicate expectations

Plan

- How will you engage the community partner in planning the project?
- How will students engage with community partner?
- How often will students be in community?
- What is the expected outcome for the project?
- What work-product will you provide the community partner?
- How often will the students consult with community partner?

Prepare

- Prepare students to work with populations different from their own.
- Prepare students to apply knowledge in their service work.
- Prepare students to be professionals.
- Prepare community partners to work with students.
- Prepare course activities that support the community work.
- You don't have to do it alone! Tap into ENGAGE and The GIVE Center.

Reflect

- Provide opportunities for students to reflect on their experiences in the community.
- Use the ENGAGE Critical Reflection prompts.
- Evaluate student reflection with the ENGAGE Critical Reflection Rubric.
- Including your community partner in the reflection process will improve the project.

Close the loop

- Build in time for students to communicate their work to the partner organization.
- Provide a report, video or some other product the organization can keep.
- Ask your partner to evaluate the student work and share that with students.

Core Characteristics of C-bEL:

- Students integrate theory and practice
- Students have direct community experiences
- Partnerships are mutually-beneficial
- Incorporate structured critical reflection

The best partnerships ...

- address mutually-identified needs through collaboration
- provide direct community experiences for students.
- help students become informed citizens.
- prepare students to serve the public good.
- are mutually beneficial..

The best projects...

- allow students to apply academic knowledge and critical thinking skills in community settings.
- are developed through collaboration with students, educators and community partners.
- include structured reflection that integrates course content with community goals.
- prepare students to work effectively in community settings.



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A strong partnership will withstand the inevitable hurdles that come with community work. When issues arise, initiate an honest conversation with your partner and students to work through the problem and get back on track. Don't give up! We have a great community that wants to work with your students!