

CSU-CEL Taxonomy: Classifying a Student-Centered Approach to Community-Engaged Learning Courses

This Community-Engaged Learning (CEL) Taxonomy identifies an implementation spectrum for a student-centered approach to CEL courses. The Chancellor's Office defines service learning as one type of CEL which must include all six essential elements from the CEL taxonomy. A companion CEL Framework based on this taxonomy will be utilized by CSU faculty and campus Community Engagement offices to identify where in the spectrum of CEL a course falls, and will result in the assigning of one of two attributes: service-learning (CSL) or curricular community-engaged learning (CEL). Both the CEL Taxonomy and Framework support the CSU's systemwide effort to better gather data of community-engaged learning experiences taking place across our 23 institutions. Campus SL/CE Offices and the COCCE will utilize this information to provide on-going support to faculty, students and the CSU's community partners.

Essential Elements	Description	Implementation Spectrum 		
Reciprocal Partnerships	Reciprocal partnerships and processes shape the community activities and course design to enhance student understanding of the importance of community learning.	INSTRUCTOR AND COMMUNITY PARTNER COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY OR THROUGH CAMPUS SL/CE OFFICE The communication between instructor and community partner includes course overview (e.g., learning outcomes, syllabus) and the value of the partnership to both community and student learning is shared with students.	INSTRUCTOR AND COMMUNITY PARTNER MEET The instructor and community partner meet virtually or in person to discuss the course (e.g., preparation/orientation of students, learning outcomes, syllabus), and to identify how the community project can enrich student learning and benefit the organization's mission and work within the community. The value of the partnership to both community and student learning is shared with students.	INSTRUCTOR AND COMMUNITY PARTNER COLLABORATE AS CO-EDUCATORS The instructor and community partner collaborate as co-educators in various aspects of course planning and design (e.g., learning outcomes, readings, preparation/orientation of students, reflection, assessment) and together they identify how the community project can enrich student learning and add to the capacity of the organization in meeting community needs. The value of the partnership to both community and student learning is shared with students.
Student Community Involvement Benefits the Common Good	Student community involvement has a specific benefit to the material, cultural or institutional interests that members of society have in common. This specific benefit to the common good is intentional, planned for, communicated and assessed with community partners in mind. This may include the organizational capacity, student/client growth, social and economic benefits, etc.	BENEFIT TO THE COMMON GOOD IS INTENTIONAL, PLANNED FOR AND IMPLIED Benefit to the common good as an intentional and planned for component of the course is implied but not explicitly stated in course materials (e.g. in syllabus, discussion or materials). Course does not include assessment of benefit to the common good.	BENEFIT TO THE COMMON GOOD IS INTENTIONAL, PLANNED FOR AND EXPLICITLY STATED Benefit to the common good is intentional, planned for and explicitly stated in course materials, and is identified (i.e. organizational capacity, student/ client growth, social and economic benefits, etc.). Course may include assessment of benefit to the common good.	BENEFIT TO THE COMMON GOOD IS CO-IDENTIFIED, PLANNED FOR, COMMUNICATED AND ASSESSED Benefit to the common good is explicitly stated in multiple places and achievable in the context of the course (i.e. organizational capacity, student/client growth, social and economic benefits, etc.). Instructor and community partner have developed tools and systems to collect data and communicate insights on the results of students' involvement.
Academically Relevant Community Involvement	Student community involvement is relevant to and integrated with the discipline-based academic content and assignments.	COMMUNITY PROJECT SUPPLEMENTS COURSE CONTENT The community project/activity is added as a component of the course but not integrated with academic content or assignments. Purposes of the community project not included within syllabus.	COMMUNITY PROJECT IS A COMPONENT OF COURSE CONTENT Community project utilized as a "text" to provide additional insight into student understanding of academic content and enhance student's ability to complete assignments. The syllabus describes the relationship of the community project to learning outcomes.	COMMUNITY PROJECT IS INTEGRATED THROUGHOUT THE COURSE AND EXPERIENCE The instructor integrates the community project and relevant social issue(s) as critical dimensions for student understanding of academic content which significantly enhance student's ability to complete assignments. The syllabus provides a strong rationale for the relationship of the community project to learning outcomes
Explicit Civic Learning Goals	Civic learning goals are articulated and develop students' capacities to understand and address critical social issues.	CIVIC LEARNING GOALS ARE IMPLIED AND FOCUS PRIMARILY ON COURSE CONTENT Emphasis in syllabus is primarily on discipline-based academic content. Civic learning goals and/or relevant social issues may be addressed informally and/or indirectly.	CIVIC LEARNING IS EXPLICITLY STATED AND COMPLEMENTS COURSE CONTENT AND ASSISTS STUDENT UNDERSTANDING Specific civic learning outcomes that complement the discipline-based academic content are explicitly stated (e.g., in syllabus, discussion or materials). The civic learning assists students to understand underlying social issues.	CIVIC LEARNING IS FULLY INTEGRATED IN SYLLABUS, COURSE CONTENT, AND COMMUNITY PROJECT/ACTIVITY All course components highlight the integration of civic learning goals with discipline-based academic content. Students gain knowledge and skills relevant to addressing underlying systemic issues of inequity and injustice.

<p>Reflection Facilitates Learning</p>	<p>Critical reflection activities and assignments integrate classroom and community learning.</p>	<p>INFORMAL AND UNSTRUCTURED REFLECTION Students engage in informal and unstructured reflection about the community project, often at the end of the semester.</p>	<p>CRITICAL REFLECTION CONNECTS COURSE CONTENT TO COMMUNITY PROJECT/ACTIVITY Reflection activities and products critically connect student community involvement to academic and civic content, require moderate analysis, lead to new action, and provide ongoing feedback to the student throughout the semester.</p>	<p>CRITICAL REFLECTION IS FULLY INTEGRATED IN COURSE CONTENT, COMMUNITY PROJECT/ACTIVITY, AND IN COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNITY PARTNER Instructor and community partner(s) collaborate to build student capacity to critically reflect and develop products that explore the relevance of the experience to academic content and provide ongoing feedback to support student learning. Students use critical thinking to analyze social issues, recognize systems of power, and/or lead to new action.</p>
<p>Integrated Assessment of Student Learning</p>	<p>Student learning assessment addresses both the discipline-based and civic learning goals, and includes learning from community involvement.</p>	<p>STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT FOCUSES PRIMARILY ON COURSE CONTENT Student learning assessment is largely based on the discipline-based content; some credit is given for completion of the community involvement component of the course.</p>	<p>STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT INCLUDES DISCIPLINE LEARNING, CIVIC LEARNING AND SOME COMMUNITY FEEDBACK Student learning assessment articulates varying levels of expectations for both the discipline-based and civic learning aspects of the course. Community partner provides some feedback on individual student performance.</p>	<p>STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT INTEGRATES COMMUNITY PROJECT/ACTIVITY WITH MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY FEEDBACK AND COURSE CONTENT Student learning assessment holistically addresses both discipline-based and civic learning outcomes, and students are expected to demonstrate competency in both aspects of learning in the course. Community partner provides meaningful feedback on relevant aspects of student learning.</p>

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CSU Community-Engaged Learning Definitions

COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING DEFINITION (NEW)

Community Engaged Learning (CEL) is the collaboration between institutions of higher education and community partners (entities, organizations, or groups with whom a relationship can be developed) in which students learn and develop through participation in the collaboration; the outcomes of which benefit the **common good**.*

COMMON GOOD: Distinguished from private or individual interests, the term “common good” refers to the material, cultural or institutional interests and goals that members of a society have in common that embody sustained mutual respect. (Adapted from Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.)

SERVICE-LEARNING (referred as *COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING* on some CSU campuses) DEFINITION (NEW DRAFT)

Service Learning is a teaching method in which meaningful service is a critical component of course curriculum and assessment of student learning. It is characterized by critical reflection and a collaborative partnership among the instructor, students, and community, with a focus on both student learning and community impact.

SERVICE-LEARNING/COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING COURSE:

An academic course (in any discipline) that provides students opportunities to participate in organized service activities that meet community needs while linking the community service experiences to the course content. This makes service learning a very different experience than community service. [Source: CSU Center for Community Engagement (2011). A Resource Guide for Managing Risk in Service Learning, p. 4]

*Functional definition for CEL activities