THE CORELLA & BERTRAM F.
BONNER FOUNDATION

Professional Development for Community-Engaged Learning and Scholarship
Workshops for a Cohort of Faculty, Student Leaders, and Co-Educators
#4: **Developing Sustained Relationships and Projects with Community Partners**

Overview

This session facilitates discussion around creating a shared vision of community, learning about community (assets, and issues/impact areas), building deep and sustainable partnerships, and preparing students for community-engaged learning. Using the Bonner Community Partnership framework, participants will be guided to think about deep, reciprocal, sustained relationships and projects that build capacity. Participants will be guided to consider a broad range of partners, including schools, non-profits, government agencies, and collaboratives. Additionally, they will think through tools for asset-based community relationships and mapping.

In this facilitator's guide, you will find:

I.   Session Introduction and Outline
II.   Materials Needed (Articles, Handouts, etc.)
III. Suggested Facilitator's Guide
IV.   Additional Resources
V.   Credits and Citations

Please note that this session is designed to use participatory practices which support the creation and growth of learning communities. Use of AV and technology are minimal or optional. You may download related slides, but all handouts can also be presented without this equipment.

Session Introduction and Outline

This session is intended to be used in conjunction with guiding a cohort of faculty who are involved in building community engaged teaching and learning into their coursework. The session opens with a scenario, and participants share their perspectives on effective and less effective practices in building community partnerships based on their prior experiences. This is followed by an explanation of how centers could help institutions bridge the "town-gown" gap and the importance of reciprocity in building relationships. Participants learn about the asset-mapping tools and other resources to prepare students for community-engaged learning. Please review and modify sections to fit your institutional context and participant knowledge base.

Suggested Agenda (60 minutes):

I.   Scenario Discussion
II.   Working with Community Partners
III. Bonner Community Partnership Framework
IV.   Next Steps & Meeting Announcement

Materials Needed

Print and have copies of handouts or alternatively share these documents electronically with participants before the session. These are intended as resources to build understanding by participating faculty (and others), but reading them is not necessary for preparation for this session.

- Handouts (Included in this document)
- Davis, K. L., Kliewer, B. W., & Nicolaides, A. (2017). Power and reciprocity in partnerships: Deliberative civic engagement and transformative learning in community-engaged scholarship. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement,* 21(1), 30-54.

Suggested Facilitator's Guide

I.   Scenario

To begin the session, either read the following scenario with the participants out loud or distribute copies of it and pose some questions for the participants with reference to the scenario. It will engage them in a conversation about effective and ineffective approaches to community partnerships.

Scenario: (Community Partner's Perspective/Experience)

"Yesterday when I got back to the office . . . one of my staff came in and said they got sixteen calls from interns - students from University B. It was a class of social workers. They came to class and were given a list of agencies to call for a 32-hour placement . . . my assistant called the professor and said, "stop it." . . . There's no preparation for the students or advanced discussion with the agencies. While we want to assist, we can not do 32-hour placements. . .we need to do police background checks on anyone that works in our programs."

- Source: Creighton, S. (2008). The scholarship of community partner voice. *Higher Education Exchange: The Kettering Foundation.*

Some discussion questions for the scenario could be:
- What are some effective and ineffective ways of collaborating with partners?
- Based on your experiences, what approaches worked well for you and what didn't? What factors played a role in that?
- What are some important things to consider while engaging in community-based work?

Note for the facilitator:
- After participants share their perspectives on partnership and experiences with community partners, refer back to the scenario and some key issues around communication, staff capacity, and reciprocity.
- In context of this scenario, there was a lack of communication between the faculty and the organization prior to the course assignment. The goal seemed to have student learning in mind, but there was no attempt to identify how the community would benefit from this project. It did not reflect a strong reciprocal relationship between the institution and the community.
- Explain how you and your Center serve as a bridge between the institution and the community. Highlight the importance of your Center's role in building relationships with community, identifying community assets and needs, preparing students to work in community, and facilitating ways to establish clear communication channels. Emphasize the importance of considering types of organizations (service, advocacy), partners' staff capacity, scheduling, quality of client services, etc. while designing community-based projects.

• Add that they could learn more about the role of centers in promoting and deepening institutional engagement in another session (Bonner CEL Workshop session 9).

II.   Effective Approaches to Community Partnership

At this point, distribute Handout 1, which includes basic practice suggestions to develop partnerships and discusses crucial factors to keep in mind while engaging in community-based work. It emphasizes the importance of community partner's voice and developing a shared vision.

Note for the facilitator:
Ask faculty to think about the course they plan to teach or their scope of research. Explain the type of partnerships you have with different community organizations, and how they could leverage those partnerships for respective courses and projects, and ask them to consider how these partnerships could benefit the community. Prepare a list (in advance) of key partners, the population they serve, the types of services they provide, and if they have any project needs. Distribute copies of this handout during the meeting and ask them to respond to the following six factors in context of their course/research.

The handout includes questions and suggestions for these factors. The following are a few questions to initiate the conversation:

• Defining community
  • *In context of your course/project, how do you define a community?*
• Learning about community
  • *What approaches will you take to learn about the assets and needs of this community? (people, resources)*
• Identifying community partners
  • *Have you consulted the Center staff to identify community partners that would best match your research/course needs, help you align your course goals and community needs, and guide students? What other sources may you tap into to identify community partners*
• Understanding the importance of reciprocity
  • *How will your approach demonstrate respect for everyone's time and effort*
• Relationship building:
  • *When and how do you plan to introduce yourself to the community partner? What will be some of the most effective communication methods for this purpose?*
• Preparing students for community-engaged courses:
  • *How may the Center help you prepare your students for community-engaged learning? What other resources (on campus and off campus) do you have to prepare students for community engagement?*

III. Bonner Community Partnership Framework

The earlier section focused on factors of community partnership, whereas this section will look at the type of partners and projects that contribute to student learning. The chart below captures how this work might also be conceived up in a developmental progression. As per the chart, the partners could be:
- Service providers
- Collaboratives
- Campaigns

Students' roles and projects would depend on the type of partners we identify. At this point, distribute copies of Handout 2 - Bonner Community Partnership Framework, and ask participants which type of partners and projects do they envision for their course/research.

Partners (Focus)	Service Provider (Individuals)		Collaborative (Systems)	Campaign (Policies)
Student Roles	Client Service	Program Coordinator	Organization Capacity Building	Advocacy
Tasks	e.g., tutoring, serving soup, etc.	Recruiting, training, and supervising volunteers	1) Volunteer Management 2) Program Development 3) Fundraising 4) Communication 5) Research: CBR & PolicyOptions	e.g., letter writing, community organizing, etc.

At the end of the discussion, you could make a list of project ideas / research ideas that faculty shared, and brainstorm as a whole group, potential key partners to conclude the session.

Handouts 3 and 4 are for faculty to refer to while imitating discussions with community partners and while developing course/research agenda.

IV. Next Steps and Meeting (suggested time 3-5 minutes)

Wrap this session with some open reflection (i.e., what did people think, who do they know in the community to be their allies for CBL, what concerns do they have, what could be the next steps etc.). If you have elected to save some concepts for discussion in a future meeting, reiterate what participants should do next. Remind people when the cohort is meeting next and what will be happening.

Credits and Citations (APA):

This workshop and the series of Professional Development for Community-Engaged Learning and Scholarship has been developed by Rachayita Shah, Community-Engagement Scholarship Director, and Ariane Hoy, Vice President, and the Bonner Foundation staff team for use by colleges and universities. It integrates scholarship including:

Resources for Facilitator and Faculty Participants:

- Asset-based Community Development Institute at DePaul University - https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/Pages/default.aspx
- Creighton, S. (2008). The scholarship of community partner voice. *Higher Education Exchange: The Kettering Foundation.*
- Davis, K. L., Kliewer, B. W., & Nicolaides, A. (2017). Power and reciprocity in partnerships: Deliberative civic engagement and transformative learning in community-engaged scholarship. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement,* 21(1), 30-54.
- Freeman, E., Gust, S., & Aloshen, D. (2009). Why faculty promotion and tenure matters to community partners. *Metropolitan Universities Journal,* 20(2), 87-103.

- Hoy, A. & Johnson, M. (2013). *Deepening community engagement in higher education: Forging new pathways*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Hatcher, J. & Studer, M. L. (2015). Service-learning and philanthropy: Implications for course design. *Theory Into Practice*, 54(1), 11-19.

- Yamamura, E. K. & Koth, K. (2018). *Place-based community engagement in higher education: A strategy to transform universities and communities*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Handout 1
Working with Community Partners

Defining Community
Community could take many different forms, so it is useful to consider how you define community in context of your course.

- Community could mean a group of people from a specific geographic location. A course may include a week-long service-trip, summer internship, or consulting project, which could take place locally, regionally, nationally, or globally.
- Community could also refer to a group of people with shared experiences and who feel a sense of belonging (e.g. ethnic groups, religious groups, LGBTQ groups etc.). A course may include working with marginalized populations with a view to understanding their shared experiences and struggles, and being an ally in advocating for their well-being.

Learning about the Community
Once we identify the community, it is important to learn about the community and potential community partners to collaborate with.

- Learning about the community includes learning about its history, social context, assets, and needs. What do we know about the community? What more do we need to know and how do we access that information (people, libraries, online resources)?
- Here is a useful resource to conduct Asset-based Community Mapping to prepare students for community-based learning and/or to develop a better understanding of the community: https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/resources/Pages/tool-kit.aspx

Identifying Community Partners in Conjunction with Center Staff

- For community-engaged learning, community partners can include government or public agencies, nonprofit organizations, social enterprises, schools at all levels, and faith-based organizations serving the communities, and community members/ leaders. For your research/courses, which community partners would be the best in terms of knowing the community, helping you align your course goals and community needs, and their capacity to guide students. Center staff maintain a number of deep, sustained partnerships and can help or advise you in finding a partner that will work with your course and CEL project focus areas. Center staff may want to provide a list of these partners to you. If you cannot find a current partner, you may want to work with center staff as you develop a new partnership, so that the agency is also able to tap other resources, such as student volunteers and programs. Good sources to consult to identify partners are:
  - University/College's Center for Community-Engagement Staff
  - Issue-based organizations
  - https://www.guidestar.org/NonprofitDirectory.aspx
  - https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/about-us
  - https://www.volunteermatch.org/
  - https://www.usa.gov/volunteer
  - https://www.asha.org/members/international/IntNonProfRes/

Relationship-building
How do you plan to introduce yourself to the community partner? What has been your mode of communication with partners? How often do you communicate? Which of the following would be the most effective for you to develop deep partnership?
- Introduce yourself via email or let a staff member from your school's Center introduce you to the partner
- Email your course (brief description / goals) and/or brief explanation of the course assignment and ask if the community partner has the availability, willingness, and capacity to collaborate with you for the course
- Follow-up to arrange for a meeting or a phone conversation to discuss how this could benefit students and the community and in what capacity they could collaborate with, and what feedback they have to identify or develop projects. You could use Bonner Community Partner Framework (Handout 2) to facilitate the discussion
- Meet to develop/revise/discuss projects based on community-assets and needs
- If useful, develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to bring clarity around each stakeholder's role (See workshop 2a Handout for more information)
- Be in conversation with students and community partners to discuss updates and progress

Understanding the importance of reciprocity
How do you define reciprocity? What would it look like in your case (research/course)?
- It is important to remind everyone (students, faculty, community partners) about the shared vision for which they are working together
- Reciprocity means respecting students' time and commitment, and acknowledging their silliness to be resources rather than viewing them as burden
- Reciprocity means respecting community partners' time and guidance, acknowledging their expertise rather than viewing this work as charity. This collaboration aims for mutual benefit and growth.

Preparing students for community-engaged courses
What resources (on campus and off campus) do you have to prepare students for community engagement? How prepared do you feel?
- Explain that the Center (you) could facilitate training for students in respective classes about what community-engaged learning entails and what their roles and responsibilities will be (Communication, accountability, organization)
- Discuss helpful vs. harmful approaches (e.g. Deficit perspective, Toxic charity, Savior mentality)
- Help them reflect on one's power and privilege and how to navigate that
- Guide them about how to work with people from diverse backgrounds
- Provide background information about the organization
- Encourage them to learn about the community (Assets and needs)

*Adapted from: Davis, K. L., Kliewer, B. W., & Nicolaides, A. (2017). Power and reciprocity in partnerships: Deliberative civic engagement and transformative learning in community-engaged scholarship. *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement,* 21(1), 30-54.

Handout 2
Bonner Community Partnership Framework

Partners (Focus)	Service Provider (Individuals)		Collaborative (Systems)	Campaign (Policies)
Student Roles	Client Service	Program Coordinator	Organization Capacity Building	Advocacy
Tasks	e.g., tutoring, serving soup, etc.	Recruiting, training, and supervising volunteers	1) Volunteer Management 2) Program Development 3) Fundraising 4) Communication 5) Research: CBR & PolicyOptions	e.g., letter writing, community organizing, etc.

Within the Bonner network, schools use a **capacity-building framework** that nurtures conversations and planning with partners on a full range of these activities. For faculty, it can be helpful to engage in this work, working closely with center staff, to develop a long-range strategy that can occur over multiple terms and years. Understanding an agency or school's needs in the following capacity building areas can help to unearth a variety of project requests that can be tied to academic research and projects:

1) Volunteer Management (Direct Client Service)

2) Program Development and Training (i.e., depending on the issue, this can include a range of projects – curriculum development, oral histories, theater and arts, nutrition studies, inventories and studies of community needs, business plans, social enterprise, etc.)

3) Fundraising (i.e., donor research, grant writing, auxiliary services, developing new revenue streams, giving campaigns, etc.)

4) Communication (i.e., a range of projects that build the capacity of the site and its programs, such as marketing, website development, social media, technology projects, PR campaigns, etc.)

5) Community-Based Research (i.e., research and studies that connect with disciplinary goals, public policy research, program model research, etc.)

6) Advocacy and Social Action (i.e., public education initiatives, forums on issues, living wage campaigns, policy action campaigns, etc.)

Learn more and find resources on the Bonner Wiki at http://bonner.pbworks.com/w/page/105852429/Community%20Partnerships%20-%20Goals%20and%20Framework

Handout 3
Principles to Nurture in a Community Partner Relationship
Guidelines for Selection and Discussion

o **Willingness to collaborate**
> Available for regular communication (i.e., phone calls, meeting)
> Responsive to mutual problem solving
> Open to meeting both student needs and agency goals
> Ability to supervise and interact with college students

o **Agency has adequate resources to orient, train, and monitor students and other volunteers**
> Designated staff willing to supervise students
> Procedures to orient and train students
> Provides necessary space for program needs
> Procedures to track student attendance and contributions

o **Congruence of learning and service goals**
> Interest in learning objectives of class or program
> Flexibility in adjusting service projects to meet learning goals

o **Identification of appropriate service (and other) activities and projects**
> Clearly defines expectations for students
> Provides direction for project implementation
> Identify tasks appropriate to the knowledge and skills of students

o **Intercultural sensitivity of agency**
> Demonstrates culture of respect for diversity
> Receptive to working with students of different backgrounds and abilities
> Provides orientation to culture and traditions of agency

o **Accessibility**
> Near public transportation
> Location is convenient for students
> Appropriate compliance with ADA or similar statutes

o **Liability and risk management**
> Provides information on agency's liability insurance, if applicable
> Screens students according to agency volunteer guidelines
> Provides safe and supervised environment for students
> Provides training on universal precautions, if applicable
> Provides students with procedures for crisis management
> Handling IRB and ethical concerns, if relevant

Note areas of strength and limitations for discussion.

Handout 4
Common Steps in Course & Project Development
for Community-Engaged Learning

Partner Selection:

Choosing the best community partner or project is a critical step in making your community engagement a worthwhile and meaningful experience. Learning about the community partner's goals, expectations, history, philosophy, staff, and previous volunteers can help in the selection of a partner that best matches the student's or faculty's interests, skills, and learning goals.

1. **Learn from experience. Work through your center.** Find out if other faculty or students from your campus have served the partner before. Inquire about the goals of the organization, as well as its duration, structure and funding.

2. Consider the **relationship**. How is the partner is situated and perceived within the larger community. What is the relationship with the institution (and how is the institution perceived)? Do you need to address any issues?

3. Are they willing to **be collaborative**? Will they be available to you or your students for regular communications? Are they responsive to mutual problem solving and open to meeting student needs?

4. Do they have an **interest in the learning goals** of the course or program? Are they flexible in adjusting the community projects to meet learning goals?

5. Do they have **adequate resources to orient and train students**, if necessary? Do they have staff and procedures for doing so? Can they track student activities and contributions, if necessary?

6. Do they help to define **expectations for students** and provide **direction for project** implementation? Do they identify tasks appropriate to the knowledge and skills of students?

7. How will **meetings and ongoing communication** be structured? What is manageable but necessary on both sides?

8. Is the partner sensitive to **intercultural issues** and demonstrate a **respect for diversity?** Are you sensitive to their concerns? Who can provide an orientation to the **culture and traditions** of the community or agency?

9. Are they **accessible**? Are they relatively convenient for students and in compliance with ADA or similar statutes? What is necessary for transportation?

10. Do they have **liability procedures**, if applicable? Do they have liability insurance? Do they have screens or guidelines for student assistance? Do they provide a safe and supervised environment? Do they provide students with procedures for crisis management?

Note ideas here:

Goals and Objectives:

- Set clear goals and objectives for both the learning and community-based components of the course. Connect learning outcomes from your course with the project requests and ideas from the partner.

- What knowledge and learning concepts (understanding, etc.) are elemental to course learning goals and community goals?

- What more applied skills will be necessary for students and community partners to use when working with one another?

- What secondary personal development do you hope to facilitate regarding ethical formation, interpersonal skills, leadership capacities, intellectual understanding of the discipline, etc.?

- What resources are necessary for students and partners to achieve these goals? Readings? Lectures? Technologies? Trainings?

Ethical Issues:

- **Ethical Issues** – If your community-based project involves students conducting research with human subjects, it will likely involve ethical issues that are important to consider before you begin. In all community projects it is imperative to ensure the just and benevolent treatment of human subjects, but particularly if students are conducting research that involves community participation. All project participants should consider carefully about ethical issues before the research begins. Find applicable guidelines for ethical considerations and related IRB procedures if necessary.

- **IRB Procedures and Approval** – Many community-based research projects may require IRB approval, while other more straightforward roles may not. Review campus policies. Work with center staff and faculty liaisons to assist you.

- **Liability and Off Campus Travel** – Make sure to also find out if you need to complete any other procedures to address liability concerns or off campus travel policies. Some types of engagement might also require criminal background checks or other steps.

Logistics:

Logistics considerations, including when and where the group will meet and how the students or group will get to the community site:

- **Liability Issues** – Not all projects have liability concerns, but some may. It is important to consider such issues in advance, such as drivers insurance and licensing for those providing transportation, van certification, site/agency insurance for volunteers, developing an emergency binder with home contact information, or agency certification/screening, particularly schools.

- **Media Coverage** – Decide if local media will be involved during and after the project is in action, and/or seek alternative ideas, such as writing letters to the editor of the local newspaper.

- **Participant Roles** – Roles may differ from those in a traditional classroom setting. Students may be cast as planners and collaborators and teachers may be seen as community resource experts or public relations directors. Be clear with all project participants what their respective roles may be.

- **Scheduling** – Figure out how much time is needed for each component of the project. Plan each unit and site visit carefully to make sure the students' time and that of the community partner is well spent.

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- **Supervision** – Students may supervise themselves or need some guidance from faculty or the community partner. It is important to know what supervision is needed and to ensure it is in place before project work begins.

- **Timeline** – Map out a timeline for the project. Include start and end dates, onsite activities and any classroom instruction or reflections related to the project.

- **Training** — Training is a good idea for all participants before community placement because it gives participants a better understanding of expectations and procedures, and may signal other needs. Tailor the general training needs to the project. Formal or informal training can take place in the classroom, on site, or in smaller meeting spaces, if appropriate. Prior to starting the project, a preliminary meeting for all participants, where students can ask questions or raise concerns, is advised.

- **Transportation** – If the community project takes place outside school, the issue of transportation needs to be addressed. Options include school buses or vans, public transportation, walking (if appropriate), or student cars.

- **Presentations and Celebration** – It is important to have students share the project results with their community partner and to celebrate everyone's achievements.

Expectations:

It is important to discuss expectations and assumptions all around – those of students, community partners, and your own. Mismatched assumptions can lead to dissatisfaction from students, agency staff, and in your own teaching. It is helpful to discuss how the project may not go according to plans and to keep a sense of flexibility. The following actions can help:

- **Share your syllabi**, roles, and schedules with students and community partners.

- **Provide or set up additional course resources** and trainings for students.

- **Maintain regular contact** with the community agency. Engage in site visits and orientations. Develop and maintain regular communication and even meetings with the partner.

- **Incorporate community partners** or residents into the course. They can be co-educators.

- **Ensure regular progress reports and assessments** of student and project development. Student leaders can help with this as peer managers and facilitators.

- **Include reflection and formative evaluative moments** throughout the course. A best practice is to make these more transparent, involving peers in developing and using the evaluation guidelines (like rubrics) with their own work.

- **Plan and run final student presentations or dialogues** with community partners or larger audiences. Make sure that they get a product they can use too.

- **Celebrate student and community achievements.** Consider publishing and sharing work.

Course Content:

The following are components you should consider including as you develop content for your course. You may want to build these into your syllabus or course materials.

- **Information about the content of the project** including training, community work to be performed, what will happen after project completion, and where and how reflection and evaluation will take place.

- **Information about broader issues and contexts relating to the project aids in understanding.** Include strategies and sources (such as how to use Census data, interview local constituents, etc.) for students to research these issues and community contexts on their own. Build in assignments that underscore this learning. This includes information about the demographics and population that the students or group will be working with and the context of larger social issues (such as power and inequality).

- **Activities that stimulate the acquisition and application of course learning** or understanding, knowledge, and skills. Think about your assignment design. Build in milestones.

- **Foster high levels of problem solving, critical thinking, analysis, application and theorization, and reflection.** Engaged pedagogies (such as group assignments, simulations, dialogue, student presentations, etc.) can help.

Assessment:

In addition to assessing student work in relationship to course objectives and disciplinary learning outcomes, consider assessing the work from student and community perspectives. Community projects should be evaluated from the perspectives of the community partner, those who use the partner's services, and students. Evaluation of each community experience is important in determining to what extent the goals and learning objectives of the project were met. Evaluation helps ensure the success of the next community project — reinforcing design and implementation practices.

Develop a brief set of questions and ask students to respond in writing and then in small groups. Questions might include:

- To what extent did the experience meet expectations?
- What might have made the experience better?
- What community needs or requests did your work fulfill?
- What community needs or requests were not addressed?
- What changes would you suggest to improve the project?

To enhance the experience from the perspective of the community organization, faculty should ask the community partner's staff how successful they found the experience to be. Additionally, ask what people could do differently next time or how they could be better prepared for their involvement in the community in the future.

Source: This material is largely drawn from content available on the Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching at https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/community-engaged-teaching-step-by-step/