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# PARTNERING WITH PURPOSE

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A Guide to  
Community-Based  
Learning at  
Temple University



Temple  
University

Center for the Advancement  
of Teaching



# PARTNERING WITH PURPOSE: A GUIDE TO COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING

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# PREFACE

By Dana Dawson

**T**his guide emerged from a Faculty Learning Community (FLC) focused on Community-Based Learning offered as part of the Center for the Advancement of Teaching's programming in Fall 2025. Faculty members from across the university were selected to explore, along with their colleagues, best practices for designing and delivering community-based learning courses. Throughout the semester, nine incredible, dedicated faculty members representing six schools and colleges met bi-weekly to discuss readings and resources, share ideas and experiences and form community around expanding access for Temple University students to this high-impact practice.

There are many reasons that promoting community-based learning at Temple is an important priority, not least of which is its connection with the mission and ethos of the institution. Since Temple's founding as a night school for laboring folks, we have been deeply entwined with the surrounding community. A robust literature has also shown that participation in community-based learning activities has benefits for students including increased social responsibility, higher graduation and retention rates and improved retention of course concepts.

By the fifth meeting of the Community-Based Learning FLC, the group had decided that a guide to getting started with community-based learning at Temple would be a much-needed resource for faculty and a key deliverable for the group. We're thrilled with their choice! Faculty frequently express a desire for support with implementing courses that engage students meaningfully with the community, but it is a complicated undertaking from both a course design and logistical standpoint. This resource will help any faculty member considering creating a community-based learning course with both the conceptual and practical grounding to get started.



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# DEFINING COMMUNITY- BASED LEARNING



**Community-based learning (CBL) is a model of teaching and learning that brings together academic work in the classroom and meaningful community engagement and exchange. Through a framework of equitable partnership, faculty, students, and community groups collaborate toward mutually pursuing community-identified goals and academic course objectives. Community-based learning offers an opportunity for students to actively engage with the world through their chosen field of study, increasing their skills in civic engagement, leadership, empathy, and offering important professional development.**

## **WHAT ARE SOME KEY ELEMENTS OF A COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING COURSE?**

- The community experience relates to the subject matter of the course.
- Students work towards community-identified needs.
- Community partners, students and educators are equitably involved in needs assessment, planning and evaluating the service or research.
- The course uses discipline-specific knowledge. Academic knowledge and skills inform the community work, which in turn expands and deepens knowledge from course content.
- The course structure offers peer learning opportunities so that students are able to learn from each other as well as from faculty and the community.
- The class activities offer opportunities for reflection. Students are provided methods to think deeply about what they learned through their experience and how it relates to course content and their own future.
- Methods to assess learning derived from the service/research focus on academic content, not on service/research alone.

*Adapted from the Gettysburg College CBL Toolkit, 2015*



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# BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING

**Community-based learning (CBL) creates shared benefits for students, community partners, and faculty. By connecting coursework with real-world contexts and community priorities, CBL deepens learning, supports community goals, and strengthens relationships between Temple and its surrounding communities. This section highlights some of these key benefits for each group.**

## **FOR STUDENTS:**

- Allows students to apply what they are learning in real-world settings and reflect in a classroom setting.
- Supports complexity of understanding, problem analysis, critical thinking, and cognitive development.
- Enables the possibility for cognitive dissonance/disequilibrium to occur in a setting where students can receive support from faculty, peers, and course content.
- Encourages personal development such as sense of personal efficacy, personal identity,
- Spiritual growth, communication skills and moral development.
- Resonates with students from a variety of cultural backgrounds.
- Reduces stereotypes and facilitates cultural and racial understanding.
- Deepens relationships with faculty, peers and community.
- Provides students with direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze problems in the community.
- Has been demonstrated to promote improved student retention and graduation rates.

## **FOR COMMUNITY:**

- Expands mission and reach of community organizations without increasing costs.
- Valuable human resources help achieve community goals. Students may complete work the community partner has no bandwidth to complete.
- Gain fresh ideas and energy from student participation and contributions.
- Reduces barriers.
- Long-lasting relationships between organizations, students and educators build trust. (*Nchaga 2025*)
- Opens the door to more networking possibilities.
- Satisfaction with student participation.

## **FOR FACULTY:**

- Develops more powerful curricula by providing students with a “real world” context for academic theory and engaging students in discussions that invite new perspectives and relevant personal experiences.
- Identifies new areas for research and publication, thus increasing opportunities for knowledge creation and dissemination, and professional recognition.
- Reinvigorates frequently taught courses or longstanding curricula.
- Helps faculty stay current on applications of course content and provides concrete examples of future use of skills and knowledge.
- Opportunities for cross-disciplinary and campus-community collaboration.



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# ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING

## ALIGNMENT WITH COURSE GOALS

In community-based learning courses, engagement with community supports achievement of course goals or learning outcomes. When choosing a community partner and working with that partner to define what students will do with and/or for them, consider how the project or activity will meet the community partner's needs while helping students practice and ultimately demonstrate mastery of skills, knowledge and values addressed by the course. What students do with and/or for the community will be part of the course assessment plan.

## PRODUCT DELIVERABLES

In some community-based courses, students will co-create products guided by community requests. Some examples of possible products might include the design of an infographic, brochure, or social media posts focused on a particular community education campaign; the collection and/or analysis of data to inform decision-making or initiative planning; planning and delivering a workshop or educational resource on a topic of interest to the community; or working with community members to create an exhibit, film or other artistic product. Students also might undertake specific projects to meet community needs. For example, students might collaborate on a community needs assessment that identifies the strengths and challenges of a given neighborhood or a survey to identify possible community member interests.

In assessing student work, it is important to emphasize that the learning is in the doing. Both students and community members need to understand that these products may not be “perfect.” Evaluation factors should include items such as: level of collaboration, timeliness, and responsiveness to community. Community feedback to students should be integrated into the overall course design. Reflection assessments help students understand what they learned through the process and should be included in overall student evaluation.

## REFLECTIVE ASSESSMENTS

Reflective assessments are essential in community-based learning because they help students make meaningful connections between the applied learning experiences and the course objectives. When students are encouraged to think critically about what they observed, how they felt, and why certain outcomes occurred, it helps to deepen their understanding and supports their personal and professional growth. Below are a few examples of some types of reflection assessments that can be used in community-based learning courses.

**Journal Reflections:** Journal reflections allow students to maintain a personal record of their experiences throughout the course. These journals may be submitted to the instructor at set intervals, such as weekly or monthly, or used later to support a comprehensive reflection paper. The goal of journaling is not to just document community-based learning activities, but to thoughtfully connect personal experiences in the community with course concepts and learning outcomes. There are several different styles of journaling that can be incorporated as a form of reflection with a few examples listed below.

**Personal Journaling:** This form allows students to write freely about their experiences. Guidance can be provided to help students connect their writing to course objectives.

**Key Phrase Journaling:** This form allows students to connect the course content with the service experience. At the beginning of the course, the instructor provides a few phrases that help guide students through their journal writing.

**Double-entry Journaling:** This form of journaling allows the students to align their personal reflections with course objectives. On the left side of the page, the students write about their own personal experiences and then on the right side of the page, they write about key readings or discussions from class.

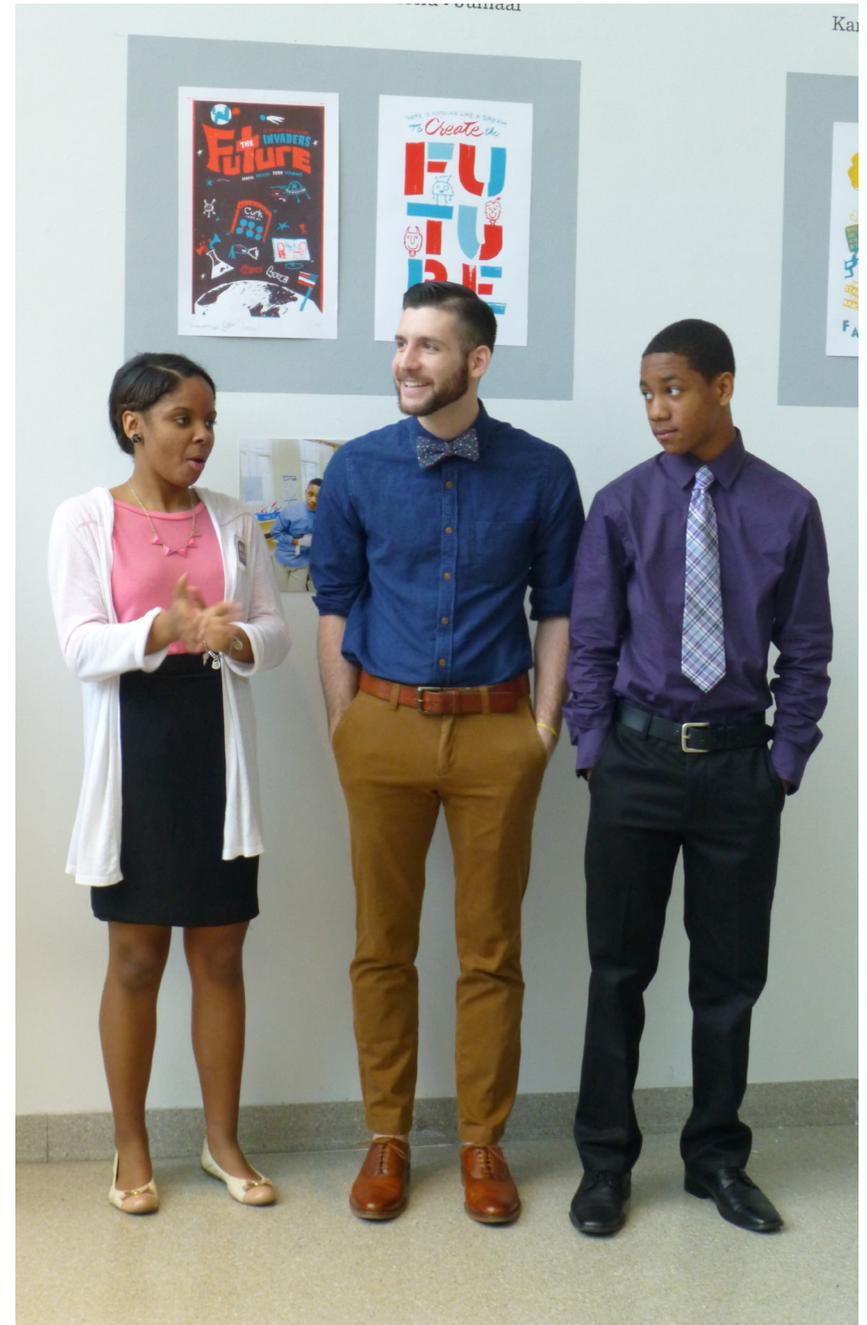
**Directed Writings:** Directed writing assignments guide students to examine their community-based learning experiences in relation to course content. Instructors select specific readings or concepts and create questions for students to respond to.

**Example Prompt:** For this journal, tell me about conflict you have experienced at your community-based learning site or previous site/experience. Have you had to use any of the principles of negotiation or mediation? Have you had to advocate for yourself, your project, or your priorities? Is there anything you wish went differently? Journals should be between 250-500 words. You will be graded complete/incomplete.

**Presentations:** Students can share their community-based learning experiences with peers, faculty, and community partners through formal presentations. These presentations provide an opportunity to showcase their work and insights in a public setting. Additionally, the presentation can be a way to recognize the students' contributions and highlight the products/outcomes of their involvement.

**Exit Cards:** These brief note card reflections can be turned in at the end of each class period or at the end of the week. Students are asked to reflect on class discussions and relate course content to their community experiences.

*Adapted from the Gettysburg College CBL Toolkit, 2015*



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# GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS



**Building meaningful community partnerships is at the heart of community-based learning (CBL) at Temple University. These collaborations depend on relationships grounded in respect, reciprocity, and mutual growth. Whether you are integrating a short-term class project, a semester-long engagement, or an ongoing research partnership, the success of your work depends on how you approach the process—how you listen, communicate, and co-create with community members. The following ten strategies, adapted from *Designing for Social Change* by Andrew Shea (Princeton Architectural Press, 2012), outline best practices for developing and sustaining ethical, equitable, and effective partnerships that enhance both student learning and community well-being.**

## **IMMERSE YOURSELF**

Before beginning any community-based project, take time to understand the community's lived experiences, values, and environment. Immersion means actively engaging with people and spaces—listening, observing, and participating. You might conduct site visits, attend meetings, or collaborate with residents to see issues firsthand. Immersion builds understanding and empathy, helping faculty and students recognize community priorities, assets, and challenges before proposing solutions.

## **BUILD TRUST**

Successful collaborations depend on trust, transparency, and respect. Trust develops through consistency—showing up, following through, and honoring commitments. It also means acknowledging the power and privilege that university partners may bring and ensuring community members' voices guide decision-making from the start. Reciprocity is key: each partner should have a clear understanding of the shared goals, responsibilities, and intended outcomes. Effective partnerships are equitable, allowing both community organizations and students to benefit—meeting course objectives while addressing community-identified needs.

## **PROMISE ONLY WHAT YOU CAN DELIVER**

Set clear expectations about what your class or project can realistically achieve within the semester or program timeline. Avoid overpromising or committing to outcomes that exceed available time, funding, or expertise. Clear boundaries ensure credibility and strengthen relationships for future collaboration.

## **PRIORITIZE PROCESS**

In community-based learning, how you work together is just as important as what you produce. Prioritizing process means emphasizing collaboration, communication, and reflection throughout every phase of the partnership. Continuous communication—before, during, and after the semester—is essential to building understanding and trust. Regular check-ins, shared planning meetings, and project follow-up ensure that both university and community partners remain aligned and supported.

Purposeful and planned feedback should occur at least mid-way through the semester and again at the end. This feedback

should address the overall experience, student performance, the project's impact on the organization, and progress toward shared goals. When faculty and students dedicate time for communication and feedback, they create stronger relationships, adapt more effectively to challenges, and ensure that the learning experience is mutually meaningful and sustainable.

## **CONFRONT CONTROVERSY**

Complex social issues often surface disagreement, tension, or discomfort—and that's okay. In community-based learning, controversy can be a sign of meaningful engagement with real-world challenges. Rather than avoiding difficult conversations, approach them with openness, respect, and curiosity. Create a classroom and partnership culture that values dialogue, active listening, and multiple perspectives. Faculty can model how to discuss sensitive topics constructively, encourage students to reflect on differing viewpoints, and ensure that all participants—students and community members alike—feel heard and respected. When handled thoughtfully, confronting controversy deepens understanding, promotes critical thinking, and strengthens community relationships.

## **IDENTIFY THE COMMUNITY'S STRENGTHS**

Effective partnerships begin with recognizing and valuing the strengths already present in the community. Every neighborhood, school, or organization has its own expertise, networks, traditions, and resources. By focusing on these existing assets—rather than framing the community in terms of its challenges—faculty and students adopt an asset-based approach that fosters respect and collaboration. This perspective shifts the relationship from one of “helping” to one of mutual learning and growth, where both the community and the university build new knowledge and capabilities together. Projects designed with this mindset strengthen community pride, highlight local leadership, and support long-term sustainability.

## **UTILIZE LOCAL RESOURCES**

Whenever possible, build on the resources, expertise, and networks that already exist within the community. Partnering with local organizations, leaders, and professionals helps ensure that projects are relevant, responsive, and grounded in real contexts. Utilizing local resources also supports the community's own infrastructure—strengthening relationships between Temple and Philadelphia's neighborhoods and allowing students to learn directly from the experiences and insights of people who work and live in those communities. Faculty can also consider how university resources—facilities, research, and student energy—can be shared responsibly to meet community goals.

## **DESIGN WITH THE COMMUNITY'S VOICE**

Effective community partnerships center the voices of those most directly affected by the issues being explored. This means co-creating goals, messages, and project outcomes with community members rather than for them. Inviting partners into course discussions, presentations, and decision-making helps ensure that their perspectives shape the process and results. When the community's voice is integrated throughout, the project reflects authentic lived experiences, strengthens cultural understanding, and produces outcomes that truly resonate with the people they are meant to serve.



## GIVE COMMUNITIES OWNERSHIP

Shared ownership transforms collaboration into lasting impact. When community partners have agency in both the process and the results—through co-leadership, authorship, or decision-making—the work becomes more sustainable and empowering. Faculty can support ownership by clarifying how the community will use, maintain, or expand upon the project after the semester ends. This approach ensures that students are not simply completing a class assignment but contributing to something that continues to live within and serve the community beyond the academic calendar.

## SUSTAINED ENGAGEMENT

Long-term relationships build trust, accountability, and deeper impact. Whenever possible, continue communication after a project ends, share results, and explore ways to stay connected. Even small follow-ups—like sharing outcomes or celebrating successes—reinforce Temple’s commitment to mutual, ongoing learning.

Sustained involvement is key: stepping in and out of a community development process only when it benefits a course or research project can be harmful to relationships and trust. When possible, faculty are encouraged to maintain involvement with their partner organizations or communities over time—through volunteering, membership, or ongoing collaboration. This commitment creates more meaningful experiences for students and fosters stronger, more authentic partnerships grounded in trust and understanding.

**Community-based learning is most successful when it is approached as an ongoing relationship rather than a one-time project. These strategies are meant to guide faculty in building partnerships rooted in respect, reciprocity, and shared purpose—where students learn from communities, and communities gain value from the collaboration. By practicing these principles, Temple faculty and students help strengthen the university’s connection to Philadelphia and beyond, creating pathways for enduring impact and mutual growth.**

A group of four young adults (three women and one man) are gathered around a table, laughing and smiling joyfully. They appear to be in a collaborative or social setting, possibly a workshop or meeting. The background is a solid blue wall. The overall mood is positive and energetic.

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**COMMUNITY  
AFFILIATION AGREEMENTS**

**Community-based learning agreements between universities and community-based partners can be formal or informal documents that define expectations, responsibilities, and outcomes for the community-based learning experience to ensure mutual understanding and benefit.**

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):** This is a non-binding agreement between the university and community partner. The MOU helps to establish a shared understanding of the goals, expectations, and general responsibilities between the parties.

**Affiliation Agreement:** This is a legally binding document between the university and community partner. The agreement helps to clarify each party's roles and responsibilities such as liability coverage, confidentiality, compliance requirements, student assignment, supervision, and severability.

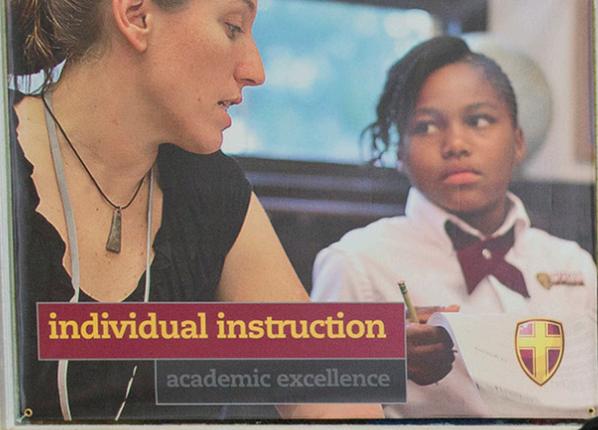
## KEY BEST PRACTICES

- 1. Start with conversations, not documents**  
Begin with purposeful dialogue between all partners to identify shared goals, mutual benefits, and what each party can contribute before drafting formal language.
- 2. Clarify roles and responsibilities explicitly**  
Delineate specific expectations for the community partner, instructor, and students, including who does what, when, and how decisions will be made.
- 3. Include essential structural elements**
  - Partner identification and authorized signatories
  - Project purpose and learning goals or outcomes
  - Timeline with clear start/end dates
  - Decision-making process

- Conflict resolution provisions
  - Financial terms (if applicable)
- 4. Address intellectual property and confidentiality upfront**  
Specify who owns project outputs, what requires confidentiality, and whether students need separate non-disclosure agreements. Create a community-approved project description students can use professionally.
  - 5. Plan for sustainability and evolution**  
Articulate whether and how the partnership will continue beyond initial funding or course completion, and establish procedures for amending the MOU when partners join or leave.
  - 6. Ensure institutional compliance**  
Secure necessary approvals from department chairs or deans, verify research compliance requirements (IRB, IACUC), and have authorized university representatives sign the agreement.
  - 7. Use the MOU as a learning tool**  
Reference it in course syllabi, involve students in understanding partnership commitments, and frame it as both a process document and outcome of collaborative relationship-building.
  - 8. Clarify the legal nature of the agreement**  
Explicitly state whether the MOU is legally binding or operates as a more informal agreement expressing shared commitments and mutual respect.

## EXAMPLES OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

- *UCLA How to Design a Community-Academic Partnered MOU Form*
- *University of Minnesota: Partnership MOU Resource*
- *University of Wisconsin LaCross Community Engagement Memorandum of Understanding & Research Compliance Resource*



# PREPARING YOUR STUDENTS

Preparing students for respectful and mutually beneficial engagement with the community requires intentionality on behalf of the instructor. Effective preparation for community-based learning means preparing students for all aspects of their experience.

### **SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN PREPARING STUDENTS:**

- Understanding the roles of participants
- Skills and information required
- Safety precautions
- The people with whom they will be working.

Activities help students understand their roles, expectations and logistics, as well as relevant context for interacting with community members and completing the designated activity or project

### **SOME ACTIVITIES MIGHT INCLUDE:**

- Participation in a special training or orientation
- Reading relevant newspapers, magazines, textbooks, or novels
- Conducting research online, in the community, or in textbooks
- Mapping community assets
- Interviewing community members about their ideas and concerns for the community
- Listening to a guest speaker or attend a relevant program
- Accessing a preparatory guide or handbook

*Adapted from the Gettysburg College CBL Toolkit, 2015*

### **SOME TOPICS TO INCLUDE IN PRE-ENGAGEMENT PREPARATION ACTIVITIES:**

- Students will need to reflect on their biases and preconceptions prior to engaging with the community to avoid missteps that harm trust and could diminish faculty members' willingness to continue partnering. Students may also experience cognitive dissonance as they begin their work. Discussing this explicitly and providing resources ahead of time helps.
- Ensure students clearly understand what they will do, the time commitment, how and when they will engage and the reciprocal nature of the partnership. Emphasize principles of equitable partnership and teach relevant skills such as active listening.
- Connect the community-based activity with the course goals and course content they have been studying or skills they have been practicing.
- Introduce the reflection framework early, encouraging students to reflect on their experiences before, during and after engagement.
- Share rubrics for reflection and assessment to support student understanding of your expectations.

### **PRACTICAL PREPARATION**

- Clarify logistical details such as transportation arrangements, contact information for community partners, communication protocols, key dates, etc.
- If there is an MOU or Affiliation Agreement, share it with students and ensure they clearly understand its contents.



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# SAMPLE COMMUNITY- BASED LEARNING SYLLABUS

A community-based learning (CBL) syllabus gives students a clear picture of how the course connects to real work in the community. It explains who they will partner with, what they will be doing, and why their involvement matters. A strong CBL syllabus also prepares students for entering community spaces by setting expectations for communication, professionalism, and reflection. It helps students understand that learning will take place both in the classroom and through experiences with community partners.

At Temple, this focus on meaningful engagement is central to our CBL courses. The samples included here come from Health in Philadelphia and Disability Justice in Action Community Practicum in Philadelphia. Both show how a syllabus can introduce local partners, guide students through community experiences, and support their learning as they move through the city. Faculty can use these examples as a starting point when designing their own community-based learning courses.

## SAMPLE CBL COURSE SYLLABUS

### Course Name:

Disability Justice in Action –  
Community Practicum in Philadelphia

College of Education  
Temple University

### Course Information:

*Class Sessions (Culture Circles):*

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:00–2:30 PM

*Fieldwork:* 10 hours/week at community placement site

### Course Description:

This practicum engages students in the theory and practice of disability justice through community-based learning. Students will partner with Philadelphia organizations that support people with disabilities, working 10 hours per week in the field. Twice-weekly class meetings function as culture circles—dialogic, participatory spaces grounded in Paulo Freire’s problem-posing pedagogy. Together, we will analyze lived experiences from the field, identify systems of oppression, and collectively imagine actions toward access, interdependence, and liberation.

### Course Goals:

1. Apply disability justice principles to real-world contexts within community organizations.
2. Critically examine the intersections of race, class, gender, and disability across social systems.
3. Engage in reflective, dialogic learning through culture circles and community practice.
4. Co-create and sustain reciprocal partnerships with disabled communities.
5. Develop justice-oriented actions grounded in care, accountability, and interdependence.

## Pedagogical Framework: Culture Circles

Each class operates as a culture circle:

**Generate:** Students bring experiences, tensions, or questions from their field sites.

**Name:** The group identifies shared problems or themes.

**Dialogue:** We collectively analyze the issue through disability justice theory.

**Act:** Students develop possible responses or actions to apply in their fieldwork.

**Reflect:** We revisit and assess actions taken in the following week's dialogue.

This iterative process fosters praxis—the ongoing cycle of reflection and action for transformation.

## Course Requirements and Evaluation

Component	Description	%
Community Fieldwork	10 hours/week at approved community organization; weekly site log and supervisor check-in	30%
Weekly Reflections (Choose 7 of 10)	1-2 pages connecting field experience to weekly theme and readings	25%
Community-Based Justice Portfolio	Final project documenting engagement, learning, and action (e.g., report, creative project, toolkit, or digital story + reflective summary)	25%
Culture Circle Participation	Active engagement, dialogue leadership, attendance, and peer accountability	20%

## Texts and Readings

*Required Texts:*

Sins Invalid (Eds.). (2019). *Skin, Tooth, and Bone: The Basis of Movement Is Our People* (2nd ed.).

Alice Wong (Ed.). (2020). *Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty-First Century*.

Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha. (2018). *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*.

Additional readings, podcasts, and multimedia will be provided via Canvas and will feature Philadelphia-based disability activists, scholars, and community organizations.

## Weekly Schedule and Themes

Weeks 1-12 feature culture circle dialogues centered on weekly themes and prompts. Students select seven of ten weeks for written reflection.

Weeks 12-15 focus on project development and applied praxis, and Week 16 concludes with presentations and reflection.

## Final Project: Community-Based Justice Portfolio

Students will identify a problem or theme from their community placement and co-design an action, resource, or creative intervention in collaboration with their site. Examples include:

- Accessibility audit and proposal
- Storytelling zine or podcast featuring community voices
- Disability justice training module
- Creative art or performance piece on community issue

*Portfolio Components:*

1. Project artifact or documentation (product, report, or creative work)
2. 3-4 page reflective analysis linking field experience, theory, and justice principles
3. Feedback statement from community partner

Due: Final Week (Week 16)

### Access and Collective Care Statement

Access is a collective responsibility. The course will:

- Begin with a shared Access Mapping Activity to identify needs.
- Encourage flexibility and use of “crip time.”
- Welcome multiple forms of participation (verbal, written, creative).
- Practice mutual accountability and care.

If you have any access needs, please share them with the instructor early; we will adapt collaboratively.

### Weekly Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Assignments
1	Welcome and introduction	10 hours at practice sites
2	Theme: Intersectionality	10 hours at practice site Reflection #1 CC participation
3	Theme: Leadership of the most impacted	10 hours at practice site Reflection #2 CC participation
4	Theme: Anti-capitalist politic	10 hours at practice site Reflection #3 CC participation
5	Theme: Commitment to cross movement organizing	10 hours at practice site Reflection #4 CC participation
6	Theme: Recognizing wholeness	10 hours at practice site Reflection #5 CC participation
7	Theme: Sustainability	10 hours at practice site Reflection #6 CC participation

Week	Topic	Assignments
8	SPRING BREAK	
9	Theme: Commitment to Cross Disability Solidarity	10 hours at practice site Reflection #7 CC participation
10	Theme: Interdependence	10 hours at practice site Reflection #8 CC participation
11	Theme: Collective Access	10 hours at practice site Reflection #9 CC participation
12	Theme: Collective Liberation	10 hours at practice site Reflection #10 CC participation
13	Identify elements of portfolio	10 hours at practice site
14	Develop community-based justice portfolio	10 hours at practice site
15	Develop community-based justice portfolio	10 hours at practice site
16	Present community-based justice portfolio	10 hours at practice site

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**ADMINISTRATION  
CONSIDERATIONS FOR CBL**



**University administrators are critical actors in providing the needed support for faculty undertaking community-based courses. Here are some ways that administration can provide logistical, material, and professional support for faculty:**

## **RECOGNIZE THE TIME INVESTMENT:**

Creating and facilitating community-based courses takes time, often well beyond the usual hours that instructors put into teaching a course. Time requirements for these courses include:

- Building relationships with community stakeholders and organizations. This investment of time is necessary to understand the scope of work to be done, maintain equity in faculty – community relationships, and provide accountability. Community members may be wary in partnering with faculty and students, especially if there exist problematic histories between university and community. Taking the time to cultivate trust is essential to having a successful course experience for all.
- Developing the course. The logistics for community-engaged courses are different from those of more traditional courses. Negotiating with the community partner to determine schedules of activities and deliverables that respect community members and students requires time commitment well in advance of the course.
- Conducting the course. With the addition of a community partner, and the engagement of students in “real life” activities, there are additional monitoring demands that necessitate instructor time. This includes time getting to and from a community site, to making sure that activities are completed, to holding space for community members or students to raise concerns while a project is underway.

## **COURSE SCHEDULING**

Because these courses rely on community partners, when they meet matters. Standard university time blocks often don't fit community logistics. Community-based courses typically work best in longer class sessions (e.g., one three-hour block), often evenings and/or weekends, with travel time considered. Instructors should be consulted before scheduling.

## **COMMUNITY COMPENSATION**

To avoid extractive relationships, community members should be compensated for their time and expertise when possible. Compensation may include stipends for participants, payments to host organizations, or meaningful in-kind support beyond course deliverables.

## **SUSTAINING COURSES**

Given the time and resource investment—and that successful partnerships often take more than one iteration—administration should support continuity. This can include protecting the course in the schedule, adjusting workload to reflect added demands, and offering ongoing incentives that support community participation.

## **RECOGNITION IN FACULTY DEVELOPMENT**

Metrics for promotion, tenure, contract renewal, and merit need to take into account the ways in which community-engaged teaching manifest different outcomes compared to teaching traditional courses. This especially includes recognizing deliverables such as community-centered information or scholarship of teaching and learning products that do not resemble the “typical” faculty output but nonetheless have generated new knowledge and practice.



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# ADDITIONAL CBL RESOURCES

To support faculty in deepening their understanding and implementation of community-based learning (CBL), this section brings together a curated collection of supplemental materials and resources. The resources included here offer diverse perspectives, evidence-based guidance, and practical tools.

You will find peer-reviewed journals that highlight current scholarship in community engagement, experiential education, and partnerships that promote equitable, sustainable impact. A selection of textbooks and academic titles available through the Temple University Libraries provides accessible frameworks, theoretical foundations, and instructional strategies to enrich course design. Additionally, we offer links to leading organizations and associations, both national and local, that support community-engaged teaching, foster professional networks, and provide ongoing learning opportunities.

Together, these resources are intended to help you explore CBL from multiple angles, connect with broader communities of practice, and design learning experiences that are meaningful for students and beneficial to community partners. Feel free to browse, adapt, and revisit this section as your work evolves.

## TEMPLE RESOURCES

1. **Office of Community Impact and Civic Engagement (OCICE):** The centralized hub for Temple's place-based community initiatives, OCICE coordinates and mobilizes university resources—academic, clinical and operational—across four pillars of impact: education, economic inclusion, healthy neighborhoods and civic engagement.
2. **Center for the Advancement of Teaching (CAT):** Supports faculty in using evidence-based practices to design and deliver effective learning experiences. Faculty planning and teaching

community-based learning courses are invited to attend workshops, schedule one-on-one consultations and use the CAT's course observation services. The CAT also helps faculty conduct research on educational interventions through their *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* resources.

3. **Office of Community Affairs and Engagement:** Connects Temple faculty, staff, students, and alumni with volunteer opportunities and community-engaged learning experiences in Philadelphia, particularly North Philadelphia. It facilitates partnerships between the university and local communities through initiatives like Owls for Philly, workforce development programs, and scholarship opportunities that help Temple members engage meaningfully with their neighbors.
4. **Institutional Advancement and Development Offices:** Connect with your school or college's development officer to discuss possible funding for community-based learning initiatives through donor support.
5. **Institutional Diversity, Equity, Advocacy and Leadership (IDEAL):** Support and resources relevant to preparing students to engage with the community by examining possible biases and assumptions and learning strategies for respectful engagement.
6. **Office of the Vice President for Research Funding Portals:** Temple faculty and staff have access to a number of databases to search grants or other sources of funding in support of community-based initiatives.
7. **Risk Management and Insurance:** Consult with this office if you have questions about safety, legal liability, working with minors or insurance.
8. **Temple Research Compliance:** If your class involves research activities involving the community, consult with the relevant research compliance office to ensure the necessary approvals are in place. If you are not sure whether IRB approval will be required, a simple email to [irb@temple.edu](mailto:irb@temple.edu) outlining your planned activity is a good starting place.

## JOURNALS

1. ***Collaborations: A Journal of Community-Based Research and Practice***

A peer-reviewed, open access journal, sponsored by the University of Miami and Rutgers University. It is a site for sharing research and practice emanating from university-community collaborations. It was created to highlight research that describes, examines and evaluates the many different forms of university-community collaborations.

2. ***Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship***

A peer-reviewed international journal through which faculty, staff, students, and community partners disseminate scholarly works. JCES integrates teaching, research, and community engagement in all disciplines, addressing critical problems identified through a community-participatory process.

3. ***Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement***

Serve[s] as the premier peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary journal to advance theory and practice related to all forms of outreach and engagement between higher education institutions and communities.

4. ***Journal of Participatory Research Methods***

A transdisciplinary, peer-reviewed journal that is focused on the methods, techniques, tools and strategies of participatory research. The journal features articles about research methods as a means to share concepts and techniques unique to research work that involves participants and communities in the research process. JPRM aims to publish articles that show and tell about the methods authors use in conducting participatory research so that other researchers can use and adapt those methods for their own work.

5. ***Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning***

The MJCSL is a national, peer-reviewed journal for college and university faculty and administrators, with an editorial board of faculty from many academic disciplines and professional fields

at the University of Michigan and other US higher education institutions.

6. ***Partnerships: A Journal of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement***

Partnerships recognizes that successful engaged learning depends on effective partnerships between students, faculty, community agencies, administrators, disciplines, and more. The articles in this peer-reviewed journal focus on how theories and practices can inform and improve such partnerships, connections, and collaborations. Studies co-authored by faculty, students, and/or community partners examining practices across disciplines or campuses; or exploring international networks, are all encouraged.”

7. ***Journal of Community Practice***

The Journal of Community Practice is an interdisciplinary journal grounded in social welfare. The journal provides a forum for community practice, including community organizing, planning, social administration, organizational development, community development, social action, and social change. The journal contributes to the advancement of knowledge related to numerous disciplines, including social work and the social sciences, urban planning, social and economic development, community organizing, policy analysis, urban and rural sociology, community health, public administration, and nonprofit management. As a forum for authors and a resource for readers, this journal makes an invaluable contribution to practice in community settings from conceptualization to implementation to evaluation.

8. ***Metropolitan University Journal***

Metropolitan Universities journal (MUJ) is the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities’ *quarterly online journal*. First published in 1990, the journal disseminates scholarship and research relevant to urban and metropolitan universities. Articles amplify the mission of CUMU by reinforcing the value of place-based institutions and illuminating our collective work

of supporting the changing needs of our students, institutions, and cities. Readership includes those working to address issues facing modern universities and the communities they serve. Authors with diverse institutional and professional perspectives present research on the best practices and applications of theory in each issue.

## RELATED ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

### *Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development (PHENND)*

A network of over 25 colleges and universities that strengthens service-learning, civic engagement, and community partnership in Philadelphia, connecting academics with community involvement.

### *Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) – Civic Learning*

Through its Office of Global Citizenship for Campus, Community, and Careers (GC4), AAC&U promotes integrative global & civic learning through initiatives and practices that empower students to engage meaningfully and ethically with global challenges.

### *Campus Compact*

The largest and most inclusive national conference focused on the role of higher education in building healthy communities and fostering a just and equal democracy.

### *Coalition for Urban and Metropolitan Universities (CUMU)*

The leading voice and forum for higher education leaders anchoring and energizing urban and metropolitan communities.

### *Community-based Global Learning Collaborative*

A network of educational institutions and community organizations. The Collaborative advances community-based global learning and research for more just, inclusive, and sustainable communities.

### *Engaged Scholarship Consortium*

Composed of higher education member institutions, a mix of state-public and private institutions. Our goal is to work collaboratively to build strong university-community partnerships anchored in the rigor of scholarship and designed to help build community capacity.

### *Mayor of Philadelphia's Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer Service*

The Community Action Agency (CAA) for Philadelphia. As a CAA since 1964, our agency has a unique role in promoting racial equity, greater financial stability, and self-sufficiency for the city's most vulnerable populations. Our ultimate goal is to ensure that all Philadelphians can share in the city's prosperous future, regardless of race or where they were born.

### *Place-Based Justice Network*

Focusing on a place-based community engagement strategy invites institutions of higher education and their communities into a deeper examination of how transformation and change occurs on campus and in communities.

## TEXTS AVAILABLE THROUGH TEMPLE LIBRARY

Gray, J. B. (2018). *A professor's lessons learned in community-based research and service-learning*. SAGE Publications Ltd.

Hartman, E., Kiely, R. C., Friedrichs, J., & Boettcher, J. V. (2023). *Community-based global learning: The theory and practice of ethical engagement at home and abroad*. Routledge.

Clifford, J., & Reisinger, D. S. (2019). *Community-based language learning: A framework for educators*. Georgetown University Press.

Prast, H. A., & Viegut, D. J. (2015). *Community-based learning: Awakening the mission of public schools*. Corwin.

Mayo, M. (2020). *Community-based learning and social movements: Popular education in a populist age*. Policy Press.

Eatman, T. K., Beckman, M., & Long, J. F. (Eds.). (2023). *Community-based research: Teaching for community impact*. Stylus Publishing.

Winterbottom, C., Nicholson, J. S., & Dan, R. F. (2020). *Community-based transformational learning: An interdisciplinary inquiry into student experiences and challenges*. Bloomsbury.

Kramer, L. A., & Freedman Fask, J. (2017). *Creative collaborations through inclusive theatre and community-based learning: Students in transition*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Dawson, T., Etmanski, C., & Hall, B. L. (Eds.). (2018). *Learning and teaching community-based research: Linking pedagogy to practice*. University of Toronto Press.

Etmanski, C., Hall, B. L., & Dawson, T. (2014). *Learning and teaching community-based research: Linking pedagogy to practice*. University of Toronto Press.

Reed, S. C., & Marienau, C. (2008). *Linking adults with community: Promoting civic engagement through community-based learning*. Jossey-Bass.

Evans, M., Moran, C. M., & Sanchez, E. (2024). *Place-based learning: Connecting inquiry, community, and culture*. Solution Tree.

Evans, R., Kurantowicz, E., & Lucio-Villegas, E. (2022). *Remaking communities and adult learning: Social and community-based learning, new forms of knowledge and action for change*. Brill.

Shah, R. W. (2020). *Rewriting partnerships: Community perspectives on community-based learning*. Utah State University Press.

Butterwick, S., & Roy, C. (2016). *Working the margins of community-based adult learning: The power of arts-making in finding voice and creating conditions for seeing/listening*. SensePublishers.



Partnering with Purpose:  
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