



## DEFINITIONS:

### COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING, SERVICE LEARNING, AND CURRICULAR COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING

#### What is Community-Engaged Learning?

**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. CEL includes both Service Learning and Curricular Community-Engaged Learning.

#### What are the core elements of Community-Engaged Learning?

Reciprocal & Collaborative Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reciprocal partnerships and collaborative processes shape the community activities and course design to enhance student learning.</li></ul>
Mutual Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CEL contributes to student success</li><li>• Student community involvement has a specific and intended benefit to the common interests of society.</li></ul>
Academically Relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student community involvement is relevant to and integrated with the discipline-based academic content and assignments.</li></ul>
Civic Learning Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Civic learning goals are articulated and develop students' capacities to understand and address critical social issues.</li></ul>
Reflection Facilitates Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critical reflection activities and assignments integrate classroom and community learning.</li></ul>
Integrated Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student learning assessment addresses both the discipline-based and civic learning goals and includes learning from community involvement.</li></ul>

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#### What is Service Learning?

**Service Learning (SL)** is a teaching method that faculty use to help students deepen their



understanding of course material. Students participate in on or off-campus activities and experiences at a business, non-profit, or governmental setting (also known as community partners). They participate in these activities to engage in community issues and initiatives.

**In Service Learning**, students are asked to articulate how the service experience affirms, expands, integrates, or calls into question the academic content of the course. Students consider these issues through the process of structured reflections. This form of experiential learning or learning by doing is mutually beneficial to the student and the community partner. All six elements of CEL are required for SL:

1. Reciprocal & Collaborative Partnerships. Reciprocal partnerships and collaborative processes shape the community activities and course design to enhance student understanding of the importance of community learning.
2. Benefit to 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.
3. Academic Relevance. Student community involvement is relevant to and integrated with the discipline-based academic content and assignments.
4. Explicit Civic Learning Goals. Civic learning goals are articulated and develop students' capacities to understand and address critical social issues.
5. Critical Reflection Activities. Critical reflection activities and assignments integrate classroom and community learning.
6. Integrated Assessment. Student learning assessment addresses both the discipline-based and civic learning goals, and includes learning from community involvement.

### **SL Objectives:**

- Develop appreciation for the diversity of communities that make up Sacramento.
- Develop an understanding of local social issues facing our community facing our community.
- Feel connected to the course content, the major, and the field of study.
- Develop skills at working with others effectively.
- Develop new social connections at the university.

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### **What is Curricular Community-Engaged Learning?**

**Curricular Community-Engaged Learning (CCEL)** is a course-based community service experience characterized by reciprocal partnerships that enhance student understanding, the outcomes of which benefit the common good. Students also participate in on or off-



campus experiences with a community partner organization.

In **Curricular Community-Engaged Learning**, students engage in community service that meets a specific social need or provides a specific social benefit. CCEL offers greater flexibility for faculty and students to participate in a form of community-engaged learning without all the elements of Service Learning. Only two elements of CEL are required for CCEL:

1. Reciprocal & Collaborative Partnerships. Reciprocal partnerships and collaborative processes shape the community activities and course design to enhance student understanding of the importance of community learning.
2. Benefit to 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.

#### **CCEL objectives:**

- Develop an appreciation of the importance of community partnerships and community learning that enhance student understanding.
- Participate in a community-engaged experience that provides a specific benefit to the common good.
- Plus, any relevant Service-Learning Objectives.

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#### **Other defining features of Community-Engaged Learning (CEL):**

- CEL may be performed at a site either **on or off campus**.
- CEL sites may be **in person or remote**.
- CEL may involve **direct service or be project-based**.

**Direct Service** Learning is performed on site with students working either directly with clients or employees at an organization. This work should be beneficial to the community partner and educationally beneficial to the student. Examples of direct service work include:

- Tutoring, mentoring, and reading or writing with PreK-12 students;
- Volunteering hours at a food bank or a homeless shelter;
- Volunteering with programs at a local park, library, or hospital;
- Facilitating health education programs; and
- Developing and leading activities for people with disabilities.

**Project-based** Learning may involve more abbreviated contact with an organization and the bulk of the work students do focuses on developing a particular project that is beneficial to the



community partner and of educational benefit to the student. Such projects have included:

- Designing or upgrading a website;
- Conducting telephone surveys or on-line research;
- Analyzing data and providing feedback to the partner;
- Designing informational or promotional materials; and
- Assisting with grant writing.