



UGA Graduate Portfolio in Community Engagement
<http://servicelearning.uga.edu/graduate-portfolio-in-community-engagement/>
 2015

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Introduction to Community Engagement



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The University of Georgia was recognized in 2010 as a "Community Engaged Institution" by the Carnegie Foundation



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What is Community Engagement?
 "...the collaboration between higher education institutions and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity."
(Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2006)

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Integrating Higher Education's Missions

Engagement is the partnership of university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to:

- enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity;
- enhance curriculum, teaching and learning;
- prepare educated, engaged citizens;
- strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility;
- address critical societal issues;
- and contribute to the public good.

<http://www.cic.uiuc.edu/groups/CommitteeOnEngagement/index.shtml>

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Multiple Pathways to Engagement:

- Community-Engaged Research
- Community-Engaged Teaching
- Community-Engaged Public Service & Outreach



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Community-Engaged Research

...is characterized by **reciprocity** between the university and partners, with meaningful and respectful involvement of the community in developing and addressing a research topic of importance to the community with the aim of enhancing and improving quality of life.



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Community-Engaged Research:

- Is NOT just research “on” a community organization or issue, but “with” community
- Should involve the community partner in identifying the area of need or topic for researching and its potential impact
- Might involve the community in actually conducting research and analyzing results, though usually that relies on university skills
- Needs to “close the loop” so that the community can use/access the results

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Community-Engaged Teaching

...is conducted primarily through **academic service-learning**, a course-based activity in which students apply academic skills and knowledge to address community needs in order to enhance academic learning and provide mutual benefit to the community.



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Service-Learning

- Includes a series of best practices, such as:
 - Structured, relevant community service activities by students in a university course
 - Community-identified needs or issues addressed
 - Strong academic learning goals and rigor
 - Effective reflection incorporated throughout course to link service and learning
- Separate workshops and GRSC 7870S course available to help develop skills in this area

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Portfolio Example: Engaged Teaching

Supporting Children & Families in Vulnerable Situations

Ph.D. student taught service-learning course in Counseling & Human Development for four semesters, developing partnerships to involve students in camps for people from diverse settings (e.g., teens with cancer; refugees). Students developed professional skills and better understood adolescent development in specific populations, who benefited from student involvement in program development and implementation.



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Community-Engaged Public Service & Outreach

...often takes place at UGA through the work of **PSO**, academic faculty engaged in university-community partnerships, and Cooperative Extension.

- 8 stand-alone units & over 400 faculty and staff members throughout the state
- “PSO applies the knowledge of the university to the state’s evolving economic, social, and community needs.”

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Engaged PSO Activities

- Should respond to an identified need within the community or state, allowing the university's resources to be mobilized to help
- Might include projects where the PSO unit's community partners are the beneficiaries
- Might incorporate training or applied research benefiting the state or community
- Could focus on economic development, community development, leadership, government, or many other areas

Portfolio Example: Engaged PSO

Public Art Inventory

Based on a request from the Mayor and the Cultural Affairs Commission, MPA student created an inventory of local public art, through research, interviews, database design and data entry. Database will be used by government offices, for economic development, and for future scholarship.



Portfolio Example: Engaged PSO

Young Urban Farmers Program

With the Athens Land Trust and the Classic City High School, Ph.D. student in Rec. & Leisure Studies created curriculum and coordinated the "Young Urban Farmers" youth entrepreneurship program. Accessing UGA resources, people and organizations, he engaged high school students in gardening, composting, farmer's market sales, attending conferences, writing business plans, tutoring, campus visits, and leadership development.



Best Practices in Community Engagement

- Equal partnership between university and community, emphasizing reciprocity and mutual respect
 - Goals and objectives of project are jointly developed, addressing community-identified needs
 - Expertise and resources are shared
 - Each partner benefits from activities
 - Deliverables are shared with community partners
 - Working "with" the community, not doing "for" or "to" them

Best Practices, continued

- Community engagement projects may also:
 - Allow students opportunities to develop civic awareness and competencies
 - Cross traditional boundaries between teaching, research, and service/outreach
 - Include assessment of broader impact and of the partnership process



Who is the Community?

- Community-based organizations
- Agencies that work on behalf of residents
- Educational institutions
- Groups of people that share...
 - Geographical association (including international communities)
 - Interest around cultural, social, political, health, or economic issues

(Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, & Donahue, 2003, p. 3)

Service vs. Engagement

- **Service** is an initiative generated by the institution or institutional representatives in which knowledge, information, and expertise is provided for the benefit of external constituencies. Service initiatives may be generated in response to requests from an external constituent, but do not imply a mutually beneficial exchange
- University **engagement** is direct, two-way interaction with external constituencies through the development, exchange, and application of knowledge, information, and expertise for mutual benefit. Engagement activities may be initiated by community partners or by University faculty, staff, or students

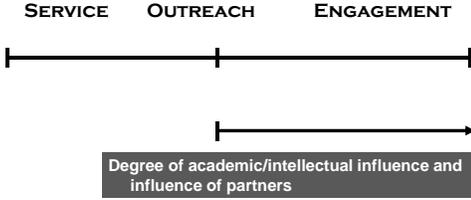
(Courtesy of Lorilee Sandmann)

University of Southern Indiana, 2005



A Continuum...

SERVICE OUTREACH ENGAGEMENT



Degree of academic/intellectual influence and influence of partners

Courtesy Lorilee Sandmann, 2009



What do you think about these examples?

- A kinesiology PhD student partners with the Police Athletic League and the Institute for Youth Sports. Responding to their request, she designs and conducts four focus groups and in-depth interviews with girls to explore why they are not participating in the sports programming as much as boys. She shares these findings in briefings and newsletters for coaches to change the messages that girls receive to encourage participation. This collaboration results in the following year becoming the "Year of the Girl."



What do you think about these examples?

- A public administration student interviews and observes staff of organizations that serve the Latino community, to assess whether a theoretical framework developed to explain non-profit decision making is applicable in cross-cultural contexts, and makes tentative recommendations to improve the model's fit in this context. The student shares his thesis with the participating organizations.



What do you think about these examples?

- A grad student in HDFS collaborates with three local school districts to offer a restorative justice program. The facilitated intervention process is designed to help students, parents, teachers and others resolve conflicts and develop a sense of community. The graduate student then conducts evaluation of the program's success and because of this work is now working with the local Department of Education to rewrite the State Board of Education's school discipline policy and model code of student conduct.



What do you think about these examples?

- An MPH student and an instructional technology MEd student collaborate to develop an app that helps diabetics monitor the glycemic index of their food intake and access online information about diabetes care and prevention. They disseminate information about the app through flyers in county health clinics and have tracked over 600 downloads of the app.



What do you think about these examples?

- A Ph.D. candidate in journalism partners with the area Community Media Center to develop a two-semester-long project where undergrads in his S-L course investigate and analyze the place of community media in American culture while developing media projects to serve local community organizations. Their team projects respond to the organizations' requests and include website redesign, video clips with garden tips, advertising materials, and more. Student reflections demonstrate that they have learned key course concepts through these activities.

Preparing the Graduate Community Engagement Portfolio



Portfolio Process and Steps

- Indicate interest in taking part (PDF form)
- Consider whether current/past projects are suitable, or whether you'll take on something new
- Confirm your faculty mentor (we can help)
- Attend workshops on *Intro to Community Engagement* and *Preparing the Graduate Portfolio* and/or courses:
 - GRSC 7870S, Service-Learning Course Design
 - GRSC 7970S, Approaches to Community Engagement

Portfolio Process and Steps

- Develop and implement your community engaged teaching, research, and/or service
- Meet with us, if possible, periodically
- Document this work and impact in portfolio
- Submit portfolio to OSL following guidelines
 - (by April 1 or November 1, but don't have to wait!)
- Receive feedback (rubric) and/or recognition



Graduate Portfolio (~15 pp, PDF)

- Cover Sheet
- Personal Engagement Philosophy (2 pp)
- Description and Assessment of Community Engagement Project/Activity, including
 - Narrative overview/description of project (1 p)
 - Impact (actual or anticipated) of project (1-2 pp)
 - Reflective assessment, linked to best practices & future (2 pp)
- Curriculum Vitae, including engagement work (2-4 pp)
- Letter of support from faculty mentor (1-2 pp)
- Appendices with supporting information, including letter/feedback from community partner

Personal Engagement Philosophy

- Your opportunity to showcase your understanding of the tenets of community engagement work
- Also, your rationale for interest/involvement in this work
- Ways that these tenets intersect with those from your own discipline/field

Narrative/Overview of Project (The “What”)

- Describe the project/activity
 - Who is the “community” for your project?
 - What is the community-identified need?
 - Describe project timing, goals, partners, activities, methods, outcomes
- Clarify its classification as engaged teaching (service-learning), engaged research, or engaged public service and outreach
- Keep the description fairly succinct (~1-2 pages)

Project Impact (The “So What”)

- How does the project respond specifically to the community-identified need?
- Whom does the project benefit, and how? (For service-learning, for instance, it could impact the students as well as the community)
- If the project is very recent, what is the *anticipated* impact?
- What evidence does or will document impact? (Include evidence in appendix)

Reflective Assessment (The “Now What”)

- Specifically *link* the tenets of community engagement in your personal philosophy statement to the work you did, and reflect on how they match
- What changes or modifications were made to the project from what was initially anticipated and why? What did YOU learn?
- How will the experience impact your professional and/or personal future?

Curriculum Vitae

- Follow standard academic conventions for your CV
- Include community-engaged work that you have done, beyond the portfolio project



Faculty Member Letter of Support

- Letter confirms the work that was done for the portfolio project
- Should also contextualize the significance of the student’s community engagement work in the discipline/field
- Also may comment on the processes and outcomes of the work

Appendix

- Includes a **letter** or other feedback from the **community partner** addressing the project, processes, and impact
- Includes any **supporting material** documenting the project/activity, its outcomes, or impact, such as:
 - Project reports
 - Photos or documents
 - Additional evidence of impact, e.g. evaluations

Support for Engagement Work

- Faculty including Mentor and OSL Staff
- Courses including
 - GRSC 7870S: Service-Learning Course Design
 - GRSC 7970S: Approaches to Community Engagement
- OSL Workshops—service-learning course design, reflection, and community engagement
- Pre-existing initiatives, e.g., Experience UGA

Support for Portfolio

- Online information, including suggestions for preparing CV and for preparing philosophy statement
- Sample portfolios and projects (though criteria have changed somewhat based on feedback)
- Portfolio-oriented workshops from CTL
- <http://servicelearning.uga.edu/graduate-portfolio-in-community-engagement/>

Some Final Tips

- Think about what you want to do and intentionally build engagement into the project
- Consider how to best tell the story of your work and which category it best fits
- Does not need to be a large-scale project, but does need to exemplify community engagement
- Your role should be made clear, even if you are not the only one working on the project

Questions?



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Graduate Portfolio online information:
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