

Introduction

I participated in the Laidlaw Research and Leadership Scholars Program at Cornell University in the summer of 2022. My research is about community-based learning and my mentors are Richard Kiely and Amy K. Somchanhmvong. During the summer, I first attended the community-based global learning collaborative, then I read some books and articles to gain more background information about community-based learning, and finally, I did some literature review about institutional change.

Background Information about community-based learning

During the first several weeks of research, I read some background books and articles to become more familiar with the concepts of the field. One important book is Community-Based Global Learning: the Theory and Practice of Ethical Engagement at Home and Abroad written by Eric Hartman, Richard Kiely, Christopher Boettcher, and Jessica Friedrichs.



COMMUNITY-BASED GLOBAL LEARNING

The Theory and Practice of Ethical Engagement at Home and Abroad

Eric Hartman, Richard Kiely,
Christopher Boettcher, and Jessica Friedrichs
Foreword by Rafia Zakaria



Here are some key ideas:

- One important value and aim of community-based global learning is to help students develop **global citizenship** and contribute to global ethics. There are multiple ways/theories/philosophies to justify equal human dignity, and the belief is more important than the justification.

- It is important to engage in **critical reflections** before, during, and after the CBGL experience. Critical reflection means we need to be critically aware of the existing structures, ideologies, and assumptions. Critical reflection can help people challenge dominant norms and assumptions.
- **Intercultural learning** has three components. Firstly, we need to understand ourselves as cultural beings. Secondly, we need to develop cultural humility. Thirdly, we need to be able to behave appropriately in different cultural settings.



- It is important to develop continuous, deep relationships with community partners. **Collaboration** is important. People need to understand the values of community partners and listen to their ideas.
- Different institutions work in different ways, and program design and the planning for CBGL varies according to the specific context. When designing the program, it is important to consider the specific policy environment, identify allies, and consider the costs. When planning for the program, we can use the sandwich model to include pre-engagement (for example, plan some team-building activities), community engagement, and post-engagement stages.
- During the CBGL, we should **be prepared** to deal with accidents. It is important to prepare for potential risks (for example, become familiar with the available resources in advance and enroll in insurance).

Research

Later I researched the institutional change of community-based learning in universities. I reviewed the special journal issue edited by John Saltmarsh (eJournal of Public Affairs, 8(3).) The author designed a rubric to help guide college-level community engagement practices. They focused on the question of "what an engaged college would mean to be". Four colleges participated in the rubric pilot study: College of Arts and Humanities at Weber State University; College of Arts and Sciences at Rutgers University, Newark; College of Arts and Sciences at Drexel University; and School of Health and Human Sciences at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Some common findings are:

- Community-engaged scholarship in a college is core academic work, requires faculty input and buy-in, and can shape the culture of a college.
- College-level engagement requires administrative leadership from the dean but also associate deans and department chairs.
- Focusing on the college as the unit of engagement revealed, as one campus noted "asymmetry of structure or fragmentation of efforts between the campus as a whole and the college." Putting a spotlight on the college catalyzed a re-evaluation of university-wide engagement efforts.



- Engagement in a college is not a substitute for institutional engagement, but **deeper college engagement can enhance wider institutional engagement**, particularly if multiple colleges align their practices with a commitment to community-engaged scholarship.

- **"Alignment"**—how college, department, and institutional engagement efforts were aligned across the campus — is an important thing to consider.

Conclusions

Colleges within a university may be a powerful place to advance the work of community-engaged scholarship. The authors argue that college-level institutionalization of community-engaged scholarship can be evaluated as a complement to department- and institution-level efforts. Attention to college-level engagement offers new possibilities for deeper institutionalization of community-engaged scholarship.

Researchers in this study developed a College-Level Self-Assessment Rubric. This rubric can help advance a structured conversation about the status of Community-engaged scholarship on campus and identify the next steps.



References

- Hartman, E., Kiely, R., Boettcher, C., & Friedrichs J. (2018). Community-based Global Learning: The Theory and practice of ethical engagement at home and abroad. Stylus.
- Saltmarsh, J., Middleton, M., & Quan, M. (2019). Institutionalizing Community Engagement: The College within a University as a Missing Organizational Link. eJournal of Public Affairs, 8(3), 2.