Community Engagement: Opportunities and Considerations

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Forms of Community Engagement

• **Community capacity building** — enabling community-based organizations and institutions to become strong and effective by providing support, training, and access to resources and information.
  • **Example:** Center for Social Policy & Community Development at Temple University: Nonprofit Certificate program ([www.temple.edu/cspcd](http://www.temple.edu/cspcd))

• **Teaching and learning** — involving faculty and students in solving problems facing communities.
  • **Examples:** Experiential Learning/Service Learning/Community Based Learning

• **Economic development** — responding to the needs of the university and the needs of communities as ASU pursues its role as an economic engine
  • **Examples:** Procurement and hiring policies; Small Business Development Centers; Entrepreneurship training; Business incubation

Terms are from Arizona State University ([www.asu.edu](http://www.asu.edu))
Forms of Community Engagement

- **Social development** — enhancing the well-being of the diverse people and communities of Arizona by working closely with public and private institutions
  - **Examples:** University-assisted community schools: bring together schools, families and communities through support services and systems
- **Research** — advancing relevant inquiry by valuing community input, knowledge, and needs
  - **Example:** Community Based Research: Philadelphia Collaborative Violence Prevention Center. [www.chop.edu.pcvpc](http://www.chop.edu.pcvpc)
  - “...reduce frequency and impact of youth violence in West and Southwest Philadelphia.” Three universities and community partners.
The University Community Collaborative of Philadelphia (UCCP): A Case Study of Engagement

Founded in 1997, the UCCP “prepares and supports youth and young adults to become confident, effective leaders and collaborates with organizations to create cultures that value and integrate the contributions of youth, thereby building stronger communities.”

We carry out this mission through direct programming, training and technical assistance activities, and applied research.
PROGRESSIVE YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CONTINUUM

UCCP’s youth programming is designed to empower youth to use their voice for positive social change. We aim to build the individual and collective power of youth through the process of education, collaborative research, media production and relationship building with community partners, government agencies and non-profit organizations.

Youth Ages 14 - 18

- **Temple Youth VOICES**
  - After school program combining youth media, youth leadership development and youth organizing activities.

- **POWER Internship**
  - Credit-bearing internship combining exposure to nonprofit work environments with project-based learning.

Youth Action Scholar Institute

- 8-week summer planning institute for the youth action scholar campaigns with intensive training in political education, community organizing, applied research techniques, and presentation and public speaking skills.

Youth Action Scholars

- Closely mentored youth-led team engaged in a year long research-driven campaign on a community issue using outreach, media and peer education.

Leadership Development Institute

- 8-week intensive training in all aspects of positive youth leadership development, including facilitation, curriculum design, project development and management.

Leaders Corps

- Part-time staff position, responsible for carrying out UCCP programming, supporting UCCP’s community capacity building initiatives, developing and conducting workshops, and participating in UCCP staff meetings and decision making.

V-MEDIA

- Peer media literacy and production training team, responsible for conducting workshops for youth and adults in UCCP’s programs and project based collaborations, and for creating promotional media for UCCP and partner organizations.

Special Ongoing Opportunities

- Field trips, leadership retreats, travel-abroad opportunities, exposure to community organizations and leaders.

- Networking with non-profits and community leaders, Senior Project assistance, resume and college application help, LC mentoring.

- Ongoing professional development workshops, individual staff mentoring, travel and presentation opportunities.
Project Based Collaborations
Capacity Building = Developing the organization’s ability to work effectively with youth

Youth leadership development is not just about the training youth receive.

Youth leadership development requires the commitment of the organization to support, encourage and create opportunities of true youth leadership within the organization.
Project Based Collaborations

We work with organizations across a broad spectrum of categories including:

• youth driven-project ➔ Red Cross
• board development ➔ ENPYSC
• youth led research ➔ DECLS
• youth philanthropy ➔ YOUTHadelphia
• youth driven multi-media ➔ Students Run Philly Style
• youth organizing, networking and coalition building ➔ Starfinder

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What they Say

“To be completely honest, if it weren’t for the UCCP to guide me along the way, I wouldn’t even consider higher education. It has taught me the skills necessary to succeed”
- former participant, current Leaders Corps member, sophomore at Community College majoring in Education.

“The UCCP changed my outlook on life by giving me another perspective. I literally went from wanting to be a lawyer wanting to incarcerate individuals to wanting to prevent them from getting to that point by engaging them in their community.” – Earl J, Temple University Philosophy Major

“Since the UCCP is housed on a college campus, it inspired me to attend Temple University because I experienced the many opportunities Temple provided such as shows, education, and diversity. As a participant, I learned skill building and did research. I even used one of the projects as my high school senior project.” – Earla J, CCP Criminal Justice and Media student (won scholarship to attend Temple University in 2010)

“The Youth Action Scholars helped me in so many ways including school. It was hard speaking with a speech impediment and an anxiety disorder. But the whole YAS including the Leaders Corps inspired me to be the leader that they knew I could be. Thanks for everything.” YAS participant 2010 and current member of the Leaders Corps

“I have come to value the work of the UCCP with the youth of our city. Their understanding of youth development and youth issues makes them a vital organization in the youth programming landscape in Philadelphia.” – former Executive Director, Philadelphia Youth Commission.

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Things to Think About

1. LANGUAGE

**Useful Group Exercise:** What would a common discourse around the engaged university look like? What are the key terms; What is the mission, objectives, benchmarks?

2. THE COMMUNITY

**Useful Group Exercise:** How can the university become more responsive to the community? What kinds of projects can we do with the community that foster social inclusion?

3. MOTIVATIONS, ASSETS & EXPERTISE
Considerations When Doing Community-Based Research

1. Who is picking the research question(s)?
2. Who is conducting the research?
3. What research methods are being used and why?
4. Who owns the data?
5. How will the research be used and who is making that decision?
6. Who will benefit from the research and how?
7. What is the capacity of the community and the researchers?
Considerations When Doing Engaged Teaching

What are your learning goals for your students?
How can engaged teaching further these learning goals?
The community-classroom nexus
Reflection is critical!!!
Value Added for Students

Real world experience
Exposure to other communities, cultures, practices
Develop civic skills and competencies
Develop soft and hard skills that help professionally
Networking which can help with future employment
Value Added for Community

• Break down barriers
• De-Mystification of the University
• Access
  • To people
  • To resources
  • To events
  • To technology
  • To experience

Employment
Value Added for University

• Break down barriers
• De-Mystification of the community
• Knowledge
• Access
  • To people
  • To resources
  • To events
  • To technology
  • To experience
GOALS FOR TODAY

Small group activity designed to investigate the following:

• what are we already doing?
• what are the needs?
• what is our capacity?
• who are our partners?
• what support is there and how can we get more?
• what is our charge leaving this room?