May 16th, 9:45 AM - 11:15 AM

Intro to Community-Engaged Research & Service Learning

Katie Elliott  
Virginia Commonwealth University, elliottkl@vcu.edu

Valerie Holton  
vholton@vcu.edu

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**Description**
Definitions of community engagement, research, and service-learning. Benefits of utilizing service-learning at VCU, such as increased graduation rate, building professional skills, addressing social problems, engaging faculty with community experts, and creating opportunities for faculty led community-engaged research.

**Location**
VCU ASPIRE, 835 West Grace Street, Richmond, Virginia

**Disciplines**
Civic and Community Engagement | Community-Based Learning | Community-Based Research | Higher Education | Service Learning

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Intro to Community-Engaged Research & Service Learning

May 16, 2017

Valerie Holton,
Director of Community-Engaged Research
VCU Division of Community Engagement

Katie Elliott
Associate Director of Service Learning
VCU Division of Community Engagement
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>A group of people external to the campus who are affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, similar situation or shared values. Communities may share characteristics such as age, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partnership</td>
<td>Sustained collaboration between institutions of higher education and communities for the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration, and application of knowledge, information, and resources. Examples are research, capacity building, or economic development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Outreach</td>
<td>The application and provision of institutional resources, knowledge or services that directly benefits the community. Examples include music concerts, athletic events, student volunteers, public lectures, or health fairs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Engagement</td>
<td>The collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in the context of partnership and reciprocity. It can involve partnerships and coalitions that help mobilize resources and influence systems and serve as catalysts for initiating and/or changing policies, programs, and practices.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community-Engaged Scholarship</td>
<td>The creation and dissemination of knowledge and creative expression in furtherance of the mission and goals of the university and in collaboration with the community. Community-engaged scholarship (CES) addresses community needs through research, teaching and service in a mutually beneficial partnership. The quality and impact of CES are determined by academic peers and community partners.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community-Engaged Service</td>
<td>The application of one’s professional expertise that addresses a community-identified need and supports the goals and mission of the university and the community. Community-engaged service may entail the delivery of expertise, resources and services to the community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community-Engaged Teaching/Learning</td>
<td>A pedagogical approach that connects students and faculty with activities that address community-identified needs through mutually beneficial partnerships that deepened students’ academic and civic learning. Examples are service-learning courses or service-learning clinical practica.</td>
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What is Research?

“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.”

~Zora Neale Hurston 1903-1960

What is Community-Engaged Research?

Collaborative Curiosity
VCU’s official definition states that CEnR is:

*a collaborative process between the researcher and community partner that creates and disseminates knowledge and creative expression with the goal of contributing to the discipline and strengthening the well-being of the community.*

*CEnR identifies the assets of all stakeholders and incorporates them in the design and conduct of the different phases of the research process.*

For more definitions, see [http://www.community.vcu.edu](http://www.community.vcu.edu)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Traditional Research</th>
<th>Community Research</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal of research</td>
<td>Advance knowledge</td>
<td>Betterment of community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of research question</td>
<td>Theoretical work</td>
<td>Community-identified problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designer of research</td>
<td>Trained researcher</td>
<td>Trained researcher &amp; community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of researcher</td>
<td>Outside expert</td>
<td>Collaborator, learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of community</td>
<td>Subject of study</td>
<td>Collaborator, learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship of researcher to</td>
<td>Short-term, task-oriented, detached</td>
<td>Long-term, multifaceted, connected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of research</td>
<td>Acceptance by peers (e.g., publication)</td>
<td>Contribution to community change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership of data</td>
<td>Academic researcher</td>
<td>Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means of dissemination</td>
<td>Academic conference, journal</td>
<td>Any and all forums, media, meetings, community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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(Strand K, et al. 2003)
Benefits to Community and Academic Partners
Introduction to Service-Learning
What is service-learning?

Credit-Bearing & Experiential
At VCU, service-learning is a credit-bearing educational experience that engages students in organized service activities and guided reflection.

Reciprocal
The service benefits the community and, paired with reflection, enhances students’ understanding of the course content and builds students’ sense of civic responsibility.

Three Key Ingredients.
In essence, service-learning involves:
- Community service
- Curriculum connection
- Reflection
VCU Service-Learning Course Designation

Approved service-learning classes at VCU are listed as a “SRV LRN” class in the VCU Course Schedule and recognized as service-learning in Banner. Classes must meet quality criteria to be approved.

Criteria for service-learning classes:

1. Each enrolled student must complete a minimum of 20 hours of direct or indirect service.
2. Students must engage in planned reflection activities/assignments that connect the students’ service experiences with the academic content of the class.
3. The service must meet a community-identified need.

*Increasing student enrollment numbers in designated service-learning classes is a Quest goal!*
How is service-learning different from other forms of experiential education?
Top 5 reasons why VCU supports service-learning

2. Service-learning addresses social problems in the local metro Richmond region.
3. Service-learning builds students’ professional skills, including teamwork and intercultural competence.
4. Service-learning engages faculty members with community-based experts.
5. Service-learning opens opportunities for faculty to do community-engaged research.
This year at VCU, more than 3,500 students participated in nearly 200 service-learning classes.
How to designate a course as Service-Learning

Only the Service-Learning Office can designate a class as SRV LRN, and only designated classes are recognized by the Provost’s Office as service-learning.

To have a course designated as an official service-learning class, instructors should:

• Ensure that the course meets the minimum requirements for VCU service-learning courses.
• Complete a brief online Service-Learning Course Designation Form.
• Submit their syllabus to the VCU Service-Learning Office.

Approved classes retain the service-learning designation for 3 academic years. After 3 years, instructors can renew the designation by submitting an updated syllabus and course designation form.
For more information, visit:
www.servicelearning.vcu.edu