

McMaster University Office of Community Engagement
Community-Engaged Education Toolkit
DRAFT – FEBRUARY 2018*

**This draft document has been created and shared with colleagues of the Office of Community Engagement as an initial version of the Community-Engaged Education Toolkit.*

Over the spring of 2018, the project team will be seeking feedback from partners to address any existing gaps or other issues with the toolkit, while also adding additional resources related to toolkit content and finalizing references noted throughout the document.

THIS IS NOT THE FINAL VERSION AND SHOULD NOT BE SHARED BROADLY

A final and public version of this document will be shared broadly by the Office of Community Engagement in September 2018.

Any and all feedback related to this document can be directed to Dave Heidebrecht at dheide@mcmaster.ca.

Acknowledgements : This toolkit was developed by the Office of Community Engagement with the support of the Network for Community-Campus Partnerships community-engaged education working group. We would like to thank the MacPherson Institute for both supporting the hiring of our project assistant and for further support through the Student Partner Program. Thanks also to our dedicated project team and advisory group for support throughout this process.

Project Team: The following individuals worked directly on developing the toolkit and creating methods to deliver toolkit content, both online and in person:

- Rodrigo Narro Perez, Project Assistant, Office of Community Engagement
- Sheila Sammon, Director, Community Engagement
- Dave Heidebrecht, Manager, Community Engagement
- Sashaina Singh, Project Coordinator, Community Engagement
- Christine Yachouh, Student Partner
- Tanya Kakkar, Student Partner
- Sabrina Denicola, Student Partner
- Kate Brown, Student Partner

Community-Engaged Education Working Group: Group members provided consultation as the toolkit was developed and will inform the ongoing development of the toolkit and related materials. Alongside those listed above, they include:

- Karen Balcom
- Sean Beaudette
- Kimberley Dej
- Maureen Hupfer
- David Latulippe
- Beth Levinson
- John Maclachlan
- Sandra Preston

Welcome!

The purpose of the Community Engaged Education Toolkit is **to support, guide and provide resources for McMaster faculty and staff who are preparing students for community-engaged educational opportunities.**

Background

In 2011, President Patrick Deane identified Community Engagement as one of four institutional priorities when he wrote his vision for McMaster, *Forward With Integrity*. In 2013, the Network for Community-Campus Partnerships¹ was established to build relationships with community partners. Over 2015-2016, the Network completed an extensive consultation with community partners, students, faculty and staff as part of the strategic planning process.

A Common Approach to Community-Engaged Education

Throughout this consultation, the need for a coordinated and common approach to community-engaged education was repeatedly identified. This toolkit is a response to that call and is meant to provide information, examples and materials useful when developing courses, programs or experiences containing a community engagement component. It was developed in consultation with faculty and staff who have experience developing and delivering community engaged courses and opportunities.

Your Feedback is Appreciated

This draft version of the toolkit, published in February 2018, is being shared broadly across the University with those who have an interest in building capacity for community-engaged education. While these pages and the resources that they speak to have been developed based on the guidance of our colleagues, we know that there will likely be gaps in material and resources that, if added, could improve the toolkit in the future.

Please keep this in mind when reading, and **if you have any questions or concerns regarding navigation or toolkit content, please contact McMaster's Office of Community Engagement:**

Office of Community Engagement
Hamilton Hall 103B
905 55 9140 Ext. 26279
community@mcmaster.ca

¹ The Network's membership is comprised of community-involved representatives from across the University. Read more here: <http://community.mcmaster.ca/macconnect/about/about-us-home/network-members>

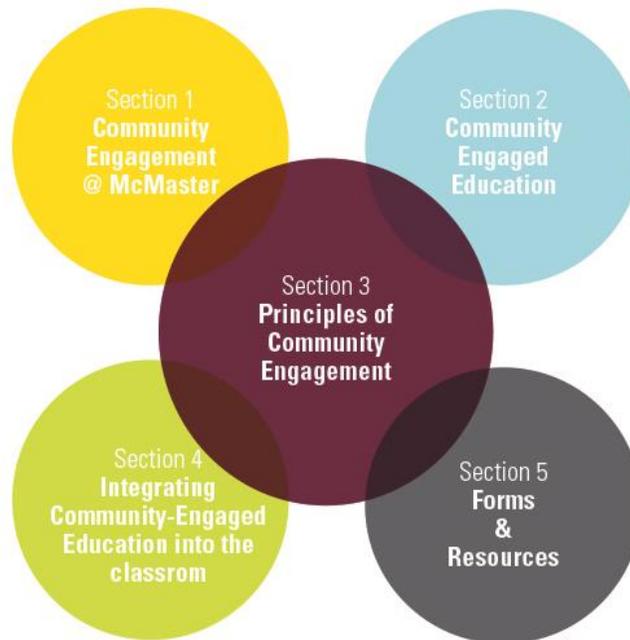
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NAVIGATE VIA THE TABLE OF CONTENTS: All of the sections listed in the table of contents can be easily accessed by clicking on them directly. For example, to navigate to Section 4.1 you can hover over *4.1 Getting Started: What would you like to achieve?* and by clicking on the heading you will be taken directly to that section.

How to Use the Toolkit



This toolkit is a flexible teaching and learning tool that has been created to help you develop community-engaged education activities. To gain a comprehensive understanding of community-engaged education you may read through the entire toolkit, or you can use it to find specific supports as needed. **The toolkit has been divided and structured into five main sections:**

1. **Section 1 | Community Engagement at McMaster:** A brief overview of the history and context of community engagement at the University.
2. **Section 2 | Community-Engaged Education:** An overview of what community-engaged education is and how it is defined at McMaster.
3. **Section 3 | McMaster's Principles of Community Engagement:** Co-developed by community and University partners, the principles of community engagement were created to guide McMaster's community engagement activities. This section goes into each of the six principles in detail and includes examples of the principles in action.
4. **Section 4 | Integrating Community-Engaged Education into the Classroom:** An overview of the process that one can take to design, implement, and learn from community-engaged education activities.
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16. Section 5 | Tools & Resources: A section that provides guidance, context, and documentation related to student activities in the community, partnership development, and classroom-based activities.

FOLLOW THE LINKS PROVIDED: Throughout the toolkit, documents and links to relevant sections are **bolded and in blue** (hover over the headings above and you will see the opportunity to click through). Use your mouse to click on areas and documents of interest.

Section 1 | Community Engagement at McMaster

SECTION OVERVIEW

As you begin considering how to develop or build upon your own community-engaged education activities, it may be helpful to review McMaster's position on community engagement. This section covers:

- [1.1 McMaster's Definition of Community Engagement](#)
- [1.2 McMaster's Community Engagement Strategic Plan](#)
- [1.3 McMaster's Principles of Community Engagement](#)
- Error! Reference source not found.

1.1 McMaster's Definition of Community Engagement

At McMaster University, **Community engagement (CE)** is defined as valuing the expert knowledge and passion that members of the community (both local and global) have about their communities and issues affecting them; fostering ongoing collaboration between

University and community partners on how to better understand and consider the issues identified as priorities by local and global communities; and performing research, teaching and service with community members and partners for the public good.²

1.2 McMaster's Community Engagement Strategic Plan³

Building on the work done by McMaster's Network for Community-Campus Partnerships, a vision of ***working together for an inclusive, sustainable greater Hamilton*** emerged through a strategic planning process.⁴ Guided by the following aspects of this vision, the 2016-2021 strategic plan was launched in June 2016 to set the direction for community engagement at McMaster:

- **Working Together:** McMaster is a proactive, responsive, and collaborative partner in our community. We connect people, ideas, and communities.
- **Inclusive:** Every person can access, contribute to, and potentially benefit from our work together, irrespective of discipline, gender, ethnicity, age, or ability.
- **Sustainable:** Healthy social, environmental, and economic systems support thriving communities. Recognizing and valuing both the interconnectedness and limits of these systems, short-term actions and long-term planning decisions are made with the health and prosperity of both present and future generations in mind.
- **Greater Hamilton:** We are embedded in and connected to multiple communities in and around the city of Hamilton. We also recognize that we are connected to and working with many communities outside of Hamilton's geographical and political boundaries.

1.3 McMaster's Principles of Community Engagement

During McMaster's community engagement strategic planning process, community and campus partners strongly recommended that a co-developed set of action-oriented principles serve as the foundation of our work together. These principles are meant to be broadly applicable to any partnership, from local to global, and can be applied across all faculties, disciplines, and sectors. These principles are particularly helpful when constructing educational experiences for students. The emphasis on relationships, respect and reciprocity ensures that engagement is designed to be mutually beneficial to both students and community partners.

Our Foundational Principle: Relationships Build Community

We can't have community without relationships—these are the connections that build community. Any successful partnership must be built on trusting and respectful relationships

² This definition was developed by McMaster's Community Engagement Task Force in 2013. See *Network for Community-Campus Partnerships* (June 2013): <http://macconnector.mcmaster.ca/docs/default-source/default-document-library/network-for-ccp--overview.pdf>

³ http://community.mcmaster.ca/docs/default-source/default-document-library/nccp-strategic-plan_2016-2021_final.pdf

⁴ While this vision speaks directly to McMaster's community engagement initiatives in Hamilton, Ontario—the city where McMaster is located—the goals, objectives, and principles of community engagement can also be applied to regional, national, and global community engagement activities.

guided by integrity. We realize that relationships take time to develop and thus we commit to providing opportunities to connect people across communities, sectors, and disciplines to foster a genuine and interconnected network of colleagues to work together for an inclusive, sustainable Greater Hamilton Area. The following principles are central to our work:

1. **3.3 Reciprocity:** From design, to participation, to the outcomes of a project, we strive to work together for mutual benefit.
2. **3.4 Equity:** We are conscious of the historical and structural inequities that exist in society and strive to provide access and opportunities to all residents and members of our communities.
3. **3.5 Continuity:** Acknowledging that different communities work on different timelines and schedules, we strive to consider both the short and long-term implications of our work together.
4. **3.6 Openness to Learning:** Change takes time. We are committed to continually learn from and evaluate our work together, reflecting on and sharing both our successes and failures to grow as individuals, partnerships, and communities.
5. **3.7 Commitment to Act:** We aspire to make a positive difference in our community by sharing and acting on our knowledge to contribute to the greater social good.

1.4 How the Office of Community Engagement can support your work

The Office of Community Engagement

The Office of Community Engagement is the administrative unit responsible for facilitating partnership opportunities through the management and coordination of the Network for Community-Campus Partnerships. Through working groups and other activities, the Office supports activities that strive to achieve the goals and objectives of McMaster's community engagement strategy. For example, between September 2016 and February 2018 the office's *Community-Engaged Education Working Group* was involved in the creation of this toolkit.

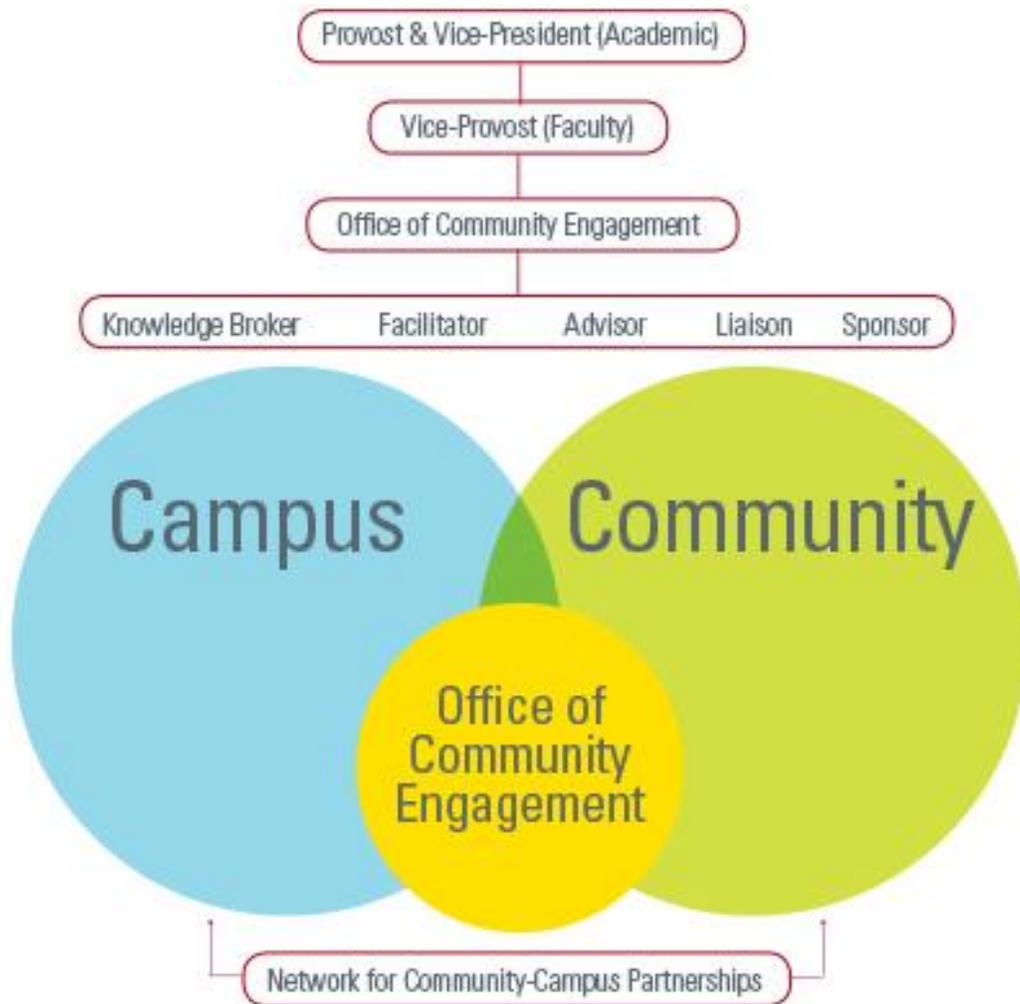


Figure 1-1 The Office of Community Engagement is situated within the Office of the Provost, reporting to the Vice-Provost (Faculty). The Office is responsible for several functions in supporting partnership development through the Network for Community-Campus Partnerships.

How can the Office of Community Engagement support my work?

The Office of Community Engagement can provide a variety of supports as you consider how to incorporate community-engaged education into the classroom, including:

- **Connect:** We can help you make connections and build relationships with community and university partners who may be interested in working with you and/or sharing information or approaches to this work.
- **Facilitate:** Our office often supports partnership development by facilitating meetings or workshops between community and university partners.
- **Consult:** We are very happy to meet with you as you are considering different options or ideas. Based on what we hear, we are happy to give advice on how you might move forward, where you may find funding, or what types of partners might be an ideal fit.

- **Sponsor:** Our office has developed a variety of approaches to catalyze and support new partnerships as they take shape, while also helping point colleagues towards other funding opportunities.
- **Reduce Barriers:** Often we hear of barriers that colleagues face when attempting to develop new partnerships. If you let us know what these barriers are, we can do our best to help reduce the burden on your work.

Existing Resources

While we are happy to meet with you to discuss your ideas and interests, we have also developed some helpful tools that may help you with your partnership development. These include:

- **Community Connector 101:** A short 2-sided document that is easy to print provides basic information on community engagement in an accessible format. [Click here to download.](#)
- **Paths to Collaboration:** A short document oriented towards helping community partners navigate research and education partnerships with McMaster. [Click here to download.](#)
- **Office Map:** A visualization of the Office of Community Engagement and Network for Community-Campus Partnerships. [Click here to download.](#)
- **Community Campus Updates:** Our newsletter provides regular updates on community engagement news, resources, and opportunities. [Click here to subscribe to the community-campus update.](#)
- **Reduced Parking:** If you are hosting a partner on campus for a talk or event, you can get a reduced rate to remove any financial barriers for them to park on campus. [Click here to access our parking pass request form.](#)

Section 2 | Community-Engaged Education

SECTION OVERVIEW

Community-engaged education at McMaster aims to provide students with the opportunity to integrate their academic knowledge with experiences in the community to address social, economic, environmental and health concerns. Community-engaged education enables students to learn from and give to communities. This section covers:

- [2.1 Defining Community-Engaged Education](#)
- [2.2 Benefits of Community-Engaged Education](#)
- [2.3 Types of Community-Engaged Experiences](#)

2.1 Defining Community-Engaged Education

Education that integrates community engagement may be referred to by various terms⁵. For the purposes of this toolkit, *community-engaged education* will be used to describe a type of experiential education that benefits both the community and the student. *Community-engaged education* can occur both within a course as well as through a co-curricular experience. It can be distinguished from other types of experiential education as it intends to equally benefit both the student and the community, while also focusing on both the community engagement taking place and learning that is occurring. Figure 2-1 on the following page shows the various types of activities that can fall under the broad definition of community-engaged education.

While it is important to note what community-engaged education is and the different forms it can take, it is also important to note what community-engaged education is not. **Community-engaged education is not:**

- An add-on to an unaltered academic course. Community-engaged education for course credit intentionally relates the community engagement aspect of the course directly to course material and learning objectives
- Having students “log” placement or volunteer hours without connecting their learning back to course material.
- Incorporating community experiences without critical and thoughtful reflection afterwards.

⁵ In literature, research and in practice, community-engaged education may be referred to as *academic service learning*, *community service learning*, and *community-based learning* among other terms.

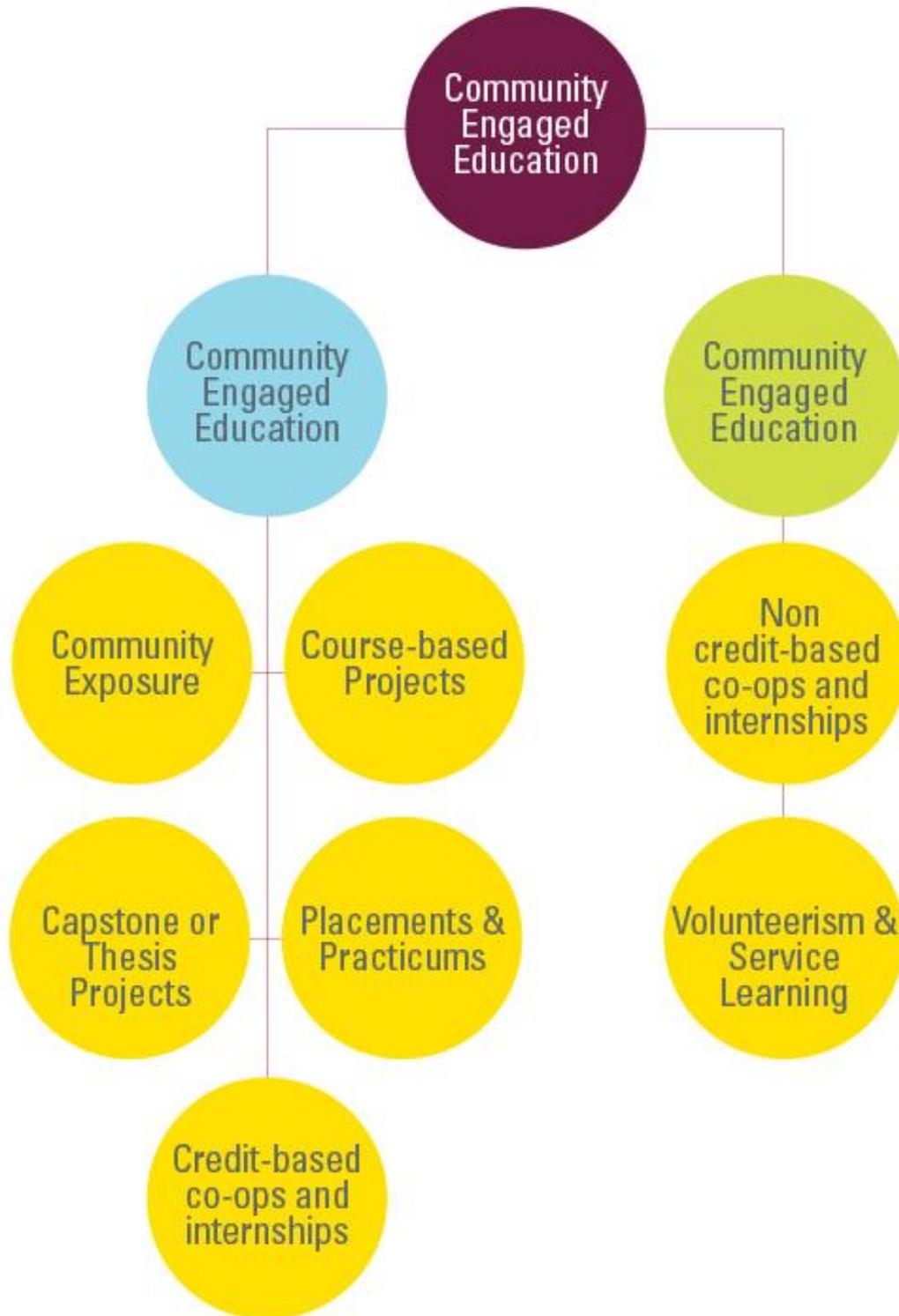


Figure 2-1 Types of Community-Engaged Education: *Definitions of community-engaged education vary broadly. This diagram gives a broad overview of the types of community-engaged education that exist at McMaster. A description of each type of curriculum-based community-engaged education is included in this section.*

2.2 Benefits of Community-Engaged Education

Community-engaged education provides benefits to the students, to the instructor, and to the community. When facilitated in a principled manner, all parties involved should ideally both contribute to, and benefit from, the experience.

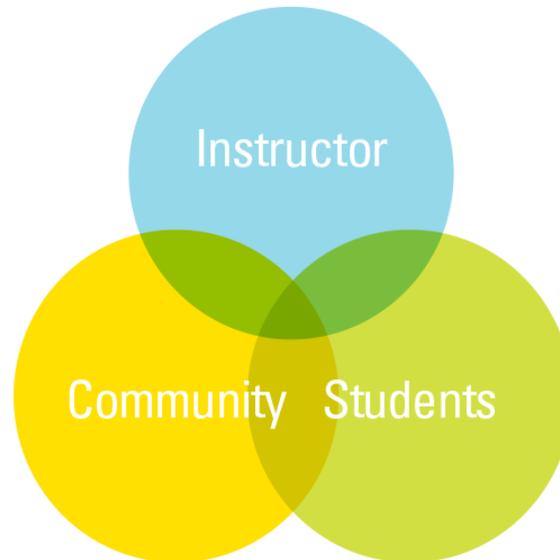


Figure 2-2 *Community-Engaged Education should benefit all parties involved—community, students, and the course instructor(s) and/or support staff.*

Community-engaged education can benefit students by...

- Allowing students to **develop a variety of skills** (e.g. critical thinking, problem-solving, leadership, communication).
- Allowing students to **apply theory to real-life scenarios**, and through reflection, increase their understanding of the material learned in class.
- **Enhancing social awareness, responsibility, and citizenship.**
- Allowing students to **explore their educational, career, and/or professional goals.**
- **Improving academic performance.**⁶

Community-engaged education can benefit community members and groups by...

- Providing them with **access to up-to-date knowledge and skills** that students have gained through their academic learning.
- **Addressing their organizational needs or enhancing projects** by providing additional student input that can complement staff resources and knowledge.

⁶ Warren, J.L., 2012. Does Service-Learning Increase Student Learning?: A Meta-Analysis. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*. Spring 2012, 56-61

- **Connecting them with faculty and staff expertise that** could further support their mission.
- **Being an active participant and mentor** in student learning.

Community-engaged education can benefit instructors and support staff by...

- **Providing practical scenarios to their students** through partnerships with community partners.
- **Enhancing student experience through experiential learning** opportunities.
- Creating educational **partnerships can potentially lead to other collaborative initiatives** (e.g. research).
- **Raising their awareness and understanding of community issues** that relate to their academic discipline
- **Having a positive impact on their pedagogy and teaching skills**⁷

2.3 Types of Community-Engaged Experiences

Community-engaged education can come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Before we cover specific details on how to integrate community-engaged education into a course, this part of the toolkit will review the forms that community-engaged education can take, focusing on both the time and resources required for each approach. Despite this extra time and energy, many instructors continue to integrate community-engaged education in their courses as the experience not only benefits their students, but also benefits the communities their students work with and learn from. As a result, we often hear that these courses are the ones that colleagues most enjoy teaching!

Developed to reflect the increasing amount of time and energy that different types of approaches require, Figure 2-3 gives a broad overview of the different curriculum-based community-engaged education approaches used at McMaster.

⁷ Bringle, R.G., & Hatcher, J.A., 1995. A Service-Learning Curriculum for Faculty. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, Fall 1995 – 112-122.

Types of Community-Engaged Education

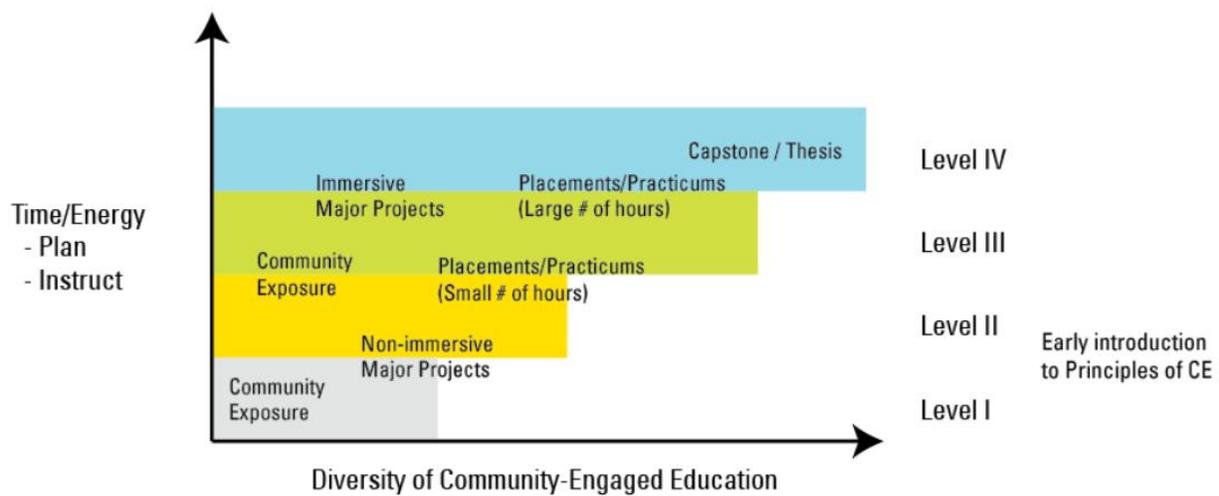


Figure 2-3 Types of Curricular Community-Engaged Education: *This image demonstrates some of the many ways in which you could integrate community-engaged education components into your course. It is possible to integrate community-engaged education at all levels of undergraduate education, but the scope of assessment and activities usually increases in upper-level courses. Depending on the community-engaged education component, the time and energy that may be required of you will vary.*

The remainder of this section provides detailed descriptions of each approach noted in Figure - 2-3, focusing on examples of each approach and details on the time and energy required of instructors.



“It is the most exhausting work I do and it is also the work that students respond to the most. They are really proud of themselves and I’m really proud of them” – Karen Balcom

Community Exposure

Description: Students are exposed to the community by observing or participating in community events or visiting the communities. Exposure can also occur when community partners are brought into the classroom to discuss concepts, ideas or theory with the students. Instructors may organize outings with students or may encourage students to participate in such activities on their own time.

Examples

- **Walking through a neighbourhood** to learn about specific aspects of a community.
- **Visiting a public space or organization** to learn about how the space or organization is part of a community (e.g. the Hamilton Farmer's Market).
- **Inviting community partners into the classroom** to tell students about their work, give guest lectures that discuss course concepts, and/or participate in panel discussions.
- **Participating in a public event** and have students reflect on their experience as it relates to course material (e.g. City Council meeting, music festival, street festival).

Time and Energy Required of Instructor

When compared to other community-engaged education activities, community exposure involves a smaller amount of time and energy to plan and implement. That being said, and especially if this is your first experience developing a community partnership, you should plan to spend some time on the following areas:

- **Relationship-building:** Depending on the activity that you may want to do, you may need to contact the venue (e.g. Farmer's Market) to inform them that you are taking your class to their venue. Building this initial relationship may help to reduce barriers to your class (e.g. identifying accessibility issues), while also helping the group or organization to plan on how to accommodate the number of students attending.
- **Navigating Campus:** If you are having a community partner visit campus, you may need to prepare instructions on how to navigate campus. Consider providing bus tickets or parking as a gesture of thanks for your community partner. The Office of Community Engagement can provide you with discounted parking passes for community guests, something you might consider building into your course or program budget. Campus maps⁸ are available online and you can also access an app⁹ that has been developed by Parking Services to help people navigate when they are on campus.
- **Health & Safety:** When leaving campus with students, you'll need to fill out EOHSS Form 801 ([See Section 5.1.1 Risk Management](#)).

⁸ You can find a McMaster Campus Map here: http://www.mcmaster.ca/welcome/images/campus_map.pdf

⁹ The MUSST McMaster application can be found on Apple App Store and Google Play Store, search "McMaster MUSST" to download it.

- **Timing:** Depending on the structure of your course, you may want to think about whether this experience can happen during class time (easier in 2-3 hour slots) or if students will need to participate outside of their regular course schedule.
- **Preparing your students for an off-campus activity:** Depending upon the activity, you will need to discuss expectations of student behavior when taking part in a community event or exploring a neighbourhood. This is especially important in situations where students may be interacting with community groups or spending time in areas of the community that they may be unfamiliar with.¹⁰ Preparing yourself and your students can lead to a better learning experience for everyone.
- **Reflection:** After exposing your students to the community, incorporating a reflective component can help students to connect their experience back to course content.

Exposure activities are a great opportunity for students to reflect on their misconceptions regarding themselves, the community and their role within the community.

EXAMPLE @ MAC: In **WOMENT ST 1AA3 (Women Transforming the World)** Karen Balcom exposes her students to community engagement through exposing students to materials that they must read and write from both academic sources and from activist community sources (such as newspaper, activist reports, websites, etc.).

Karen tells us *“We do this to show that knowledge goes in and out, through and around and isn’t owned in one place”*.

¹⁰ Hamilton-based partners have shared specific concerns with McMaster about well-meaning students and researchers spending time in Hamilton’s Code Red neighbourhoods to learn about poverty and social inequality. Before venturing into the community, or taking your class on a neighbourhood-wide walking tour, we strongly encourage instructors to reach out to the Office of Community Engagement so that we can help make connections with appropriate groups and organizations and give feedback on the concept being explored.

Placement/Practicum

Description: Students are placed within a community partner's organization for a specific amount of hours during an academic term(s). Placements/Practicums provide students the opportunity to apply theory and concepts learned in class in a real-world setting under the supervision of a community partner who is a professional in the field of study.¹¹ Courses that have a placement/practicum often still have a component that takes place on campus where an instructor will lead discussions and reflection surrounding the experiences, as well as additional theory classes. Placements and practicums can take a range of forms:

- In some courses, hours of contact may be limited to **1-5 hours per week on average**. In these situations, a student's roles and responsibilities will be limited in scope.
- In other courses, hours of contact can vary from **8-35 hours per week**. Professional programs often offer this type of community component (i.e. Nursing, Social Work).

Examples

- **Health, Aging and Society** students are placed in community organizations in a level III course for 40 hours within a 3-unit course. [Click here for more information.](#)
- **School of Nursing** students are placed in clinical placements such as hospitals, hospices, and clinics at all levels of their undergraduate education. Hours per week increase at every level. [Click here for more information.](#)
- **School of Social Work** students have two placement courses (one in level III and one in Level IV) and are placed in community agencies and organizations. Students must complete 390 hours of placement for each course. [Click here for more information.](#)

Time and Energy Required of Instructor

Practicums and placements take a great deal of time and energy. It is incredibly important for an instructor and (where possible) a support staff member (e.g. from an experiential education unit) to develop strong relationships with each partner organization to ensure a common understanding of the scope and expectations of students, community partners, and the instructor(s)/staff.¹² Professional programs that incorporate in-depth experiences into student learning spend years developing relationships and have paid staff to support partnership development and maintenance. If you are exploring how to incorporate a practicum or placement into a course or program, please consider the following:

¹¹ Lam, D., 2004. Problem-Based Learning: An Integration of Theory and Field. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 40, 3, 371-389.; Fortune, A.E., Mccarthy, M., Abramson, J.S., 2001. Student Learning Processes in Field Education. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 37, 1, 111-124; Mooney, L.A., & Edwards, B., 2001. Experiential Learning in Sociology: Service Learning and other Community-Based Learning Initiatives. *Teaching Sociology*, 29, 181-194.

¹² When considering a new practicum or placement, it is important to spend time reaching out to potential partners to get their feedback on the amount of time and energy they may be interested in committing if they were to serve as a partner. For example, while a 4 hour/week placement may seem like a relatively small commitment, it may require much more work from the partner than what the placement looks like on the surface.

- **Relationships:** Developing a functional and sustainable course or program that connects large numbers of students to a variety of groups and organizations is a time-consuming task. Strong relationships are at the heart of any successful partnership, especially one that involves multiple partners, students, and instructors. When planning a complex program, it will be important to consider which partners to reach out to—both in the community and on campus—to understand the “lay of the land” in terms of partnerships that already exist, while also getting a sense of potential partners in the community.
- **Time Required:** Placement and practicums always require more work and time from an instructor. The instructor, or in many cases a staff member, acts as a liaison between the community partner and McMaster University. This person (or people) will serve as ongoing points of communication for the community partner throughout the placement/practicum.
- **Administrative Load:** If the program/course does not have a practicum/placement coordinator, then the instructor will be responsible for all administrative paperwork regarding insurance, liability and contracts between the student and community organizations (see 5.1 In the Community).
- **University Policies:** Instructors and staff are expected to know all McMaster policies regarding unpaid student placements to ensure that all situations and emergencies can be properly handled ([See 5.1.3 Unpaid Student Work Placement](#)).
- **Mentorship:** During their placement/practicum, students may look towards the instructor as a source of support and guidance, adding to the administrative and teaching responsibilities associated with the course. Professional programs and some courses plan for this support by identifying specific instructors, staff, or teaching assistants to serve as mentors throughout a program or course experience.

EXAMPLE @ MAC: In **HLTH AGE 3BB3 (Field Experience)** Anju Joshi oversees the placement of her third year health and aging students in a variety of field placements in an agency/organization where students spend a minimum of 40 hours throughout a term.

“The third year field course, consistently students have told me that it is their favorite course in terms of how it allowed them to pursue their own learning objectives but also engage in the community. To apply what they learn in the classroom and apply it in real life settings and learning from their supervisors is a life changing experience.”

– Anju Joshi

Major Project

Description: Students will complete a major project related to community engagement as part of one of the assessments for their course. To ensure that projects are informed by what community partners need (rather than what McMaster may think they need), instructors will often connect with a community partner to discuss what project may be of use to the partner. In these situations, partners may come and speak to students about the problem, invite students to their organization to learn about the problem, or even serve as project champions—meeting with students on a semi-regular basis to give feedback on the development of their project. Reinforcing principles of reciprocity and a commitment to act, instructors are encouraged to have students present projects back to the community partner at the end of the semester. At the end of the project, a reflective component can also help students to connect their project experience back to the course material. Major projects will have a significant weight in the final grade, often ranging from 20-50% depending on the learning outcomes of each course.

Types of Major Projects:

- **Non-Immersive:** Does not ask or require the community partner to make a significant time commitment towards the students (or course). The project is defined by the community partner often in consultation with the faculty member. The community partner may meet once or twice with the student (or the class as a whole) as the project progresses, or the community partner may choose to be contacted if a student, a group of students, or the instructor deems it necessary. Points of contact with the community partner will often be at the beginning of the project and at the end.
- **Immersive:** Requires a significant commitment of time and involvement from a community partner. The community partner may participate throughout the project and may do one or more of the following: host the student within their organization, provide weekly support and feedback (in-person or electronic), supervise, instruct, come to campus on a regular basis, provide information/data to the student, and/or act as co-researcher. When planning this type of project, it is important for the instructor to ensure that the community partner is clear on the amount of time and supervision that they are agreeing to—many instructors will spend the semester prior to the launch of a course firming up these agreements through one-on-one meetings with partners.

Examples

- **Writing a research paper** based on a question or challenge that the partner has identified
- **Creating a tool or resource** for the partner that can support their work
- **Working with the partner to plan, implement, and evaluate an event**
- **Creating a multimedia tool or communications strategy** to be used by the partner

Time and Energy Required of Instructor

Coming in a range of shapes and sizes, major projects can be a great way for instructors to build a real-world experience into student learning. If you are exploring how to incorporate a major project into a course or program, please consider the following:

- **Reciprocity:** As you develop your project concept, consider how you, as the instructor, will contribute to the project and your students learning, while also considering how your community partner will contribute to the project, as well as the contribution you envision your students making by responding to a community-identified need. Similarly, how will each of you—yourself, your partner, and your students—benefit from the experience?
- **Relationship-building:** You will need to contact your community partners in advance of your course to establish how the project will address the needs/wants of the community partner, the role that the community partner will have on the project, and various deadlines (these may change as the course progresses).¹³
- **Be Realistic:** A major and important piece of feedback that we continually receive from our partners is that students often take on a project that is much larger in scope than possible within a 3 or 6 unit course (e.g. trying to “solve” a complex social issue such as poverty). This often results in wasted time of our partners and an unsatisfying learning experience for students. Community-based projects can help students understand just how large and complex the issues facing our society are, but being realistic about what type of project they can take on within one or two semesters is very important. Having a small, manageable project that can illustrate or illuminate pieces of a broader issue will likely result in a better learning experience for everyone—your students, your partner(s), and you.
- **Project Weight:** You will need to assess the value of a project in your course and how students will benefit from it. If you are embedding a community-based project into an existing course, how will your grading scheme and overall course structure change? If you did have a project in your course but are thinking of working with a community partner, what is the reason for including community engagement in the project?
- **Embedding Project Early On:** At the beginning of the course, you may want to dedicate a lecture on introducing the project, its objectives, the various topics, expectations and timelines associated with the project. Making this connection early on, rather than introducing a project halfway through the semester, gives more time for students to engage in the project, while also encouraging them to apply the project lens to their course material throughout.
- **Connecting Students with Partners:** Depending on the type of project, you may invite your community partner to meet the class and discuss how the project will help address their needs. Hearing directly from partners can help students get a first-hand account of an issue, while also beginning to establish the relationships that may take shape over

¹³ For those new to community-engaged education, it may be helpful to begin by exploring how one challenge posed by one specific partner organization may be pitched to the entire class, rather than attempting to bring multiple partners that will require additional time and resources to support and connect with.

the semester (that is, if your community partner(s) has/have agreed to serve a more active role in student learning).

- **Clarify Student, Partner, & Instructor Expectations & Roles:** Given that a project will only be one component of your course, it is important to clearly establish how students may interact with your community partner(s) and how they can communicate with them throughout the duration of the project. Discussing expectations with your community partner prior to beginning your course will ensure that you mutually agree on an approach that is amicable to your partner and respects their time and energy (See 5.3 Classroom Activities, Assignments, and Resources for Service Learning Contract).
- **Commitment to Act:** While often grounded in course-based theory, it is important for students to ensure that their project findings contribute back to your community partner and that your students are clear on how their project can be useful for the partner moving forward. For example, if students have done research into an issue at the request of a partner, rather than simply creating a project report for academic merit, students should be encouraged to share that information back to the partner (or community), identifying how their findings may be used by that partner (or community).

EXAMPLE @ MAC: In **ENGINEERING 1P03 (Engineering Profession and Practice)** Robert Fleisig integrates a **non-immersive** team project to his first-year engineering students. In his first-year course, he places over 1000 students into groups who must then work on 2-4 projects that address the needs of selected community partners.

To learn about Robert and his course, check this article out:

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/health/engineering-with-a-heart-students-impress-by-helping-wheelchair-users-do-laundry-1.3900186>

Capstone/Thesis

Description: Each discipline uses a specific term for a senior level course (usually at least a 6-unit course) designed to provide an opportunity to integrate and apply the knowledge acquired over the span of the specific disciplinary studies. The course may involve a thesis, major project, practicum, internship, or co-op. To be considered a ‘community engaged’ integrative course, students will work with or for a community partner. Instructors will collaborate with a community partner to identify, facilitate and support realistic projects that will be of use to the partner and provide the students with a rich learning opportunity. Students may be placed at the community partner’s facilities during the duration of their capstone. This type of project could take the shape of a team capstone project or an individual project.

Examples

- **Partnering with Hamilton Neighbourhoods for Health (HTH SCI 3HN3)** brings together students from a variety of disciplines such as: nursing, geography, business, social work, health studies, engineering and health sciences to acquire and integrate knowledge of the principles of primary health care with a focus on intersectoral action and community participation, asset-based community development processes, ecosystems approaches to health, integrated knowledge exchange approaches with citizens, and population health interventions for healthier neighbourhoods and communities.
- **Addressing Social Problems Through Business, Engineering and the Social Sciences (SOCSCI 4ID3)** is a final-year course where students work in interdisciplinary teams on an experiential project that incorporates business, engineering and social sciences elements.

Time and Energy Required of Instructor

- **Relationship-Building:** Capstone/Thesis courses will often partner student(s) working on a project with a community partner throughout the duration of the course. The instructor of the course fosters relationships with partners to determine the challenge or project that students take on, while also acting as a touch point throughout the project to ensure students are on track and partners are satisfied. This will also often involve administrative work and ensuring that all McMaster policies are being followed by students and partners.
- **Reflection, Guidance, & Mentorship:** Capstone/Thesis courses will often still have course time scheduled throughout its duration where the instructor can lead discussions and reflections based on the progress being achieved by students, while also helping students navigate any challenging situations or findings that have arisen through their project.
- **Sharing Outcomes:** Depending on the course’s outcomes, there may be an end of term celebration where students, the community partners and broader community come to celebrate the final deliverables of the students. This is often an opportunity to thank all partners involved in student’s capstone/thesis for their participation in the course.

Planning the timing and location of event to be accessible to both community and student partners can also take time and energy.

EXAMPLE @ MAC: In **Sustain 4S06** (Leadership in Sustainability) Kate Whalen supports her students through a year-long capstone project with the support of a Community Project Champion (CPC). For more information about the types of projects Kate's students are working with please see: <http://dailynews.mcmaster.ca/article/unique-programs-offer-students-hand-on-opportunities-to-learn-about-sustainability/> or <https://asp.mcmaster.ca/our-story/>

2.4 Community-Engaged Education Literature

Below are a number of peer-reviewed articles and a suggested reading list on community-engaged education. These documents may be helpful for those who are new to this type of education and interested in getting some more background and ideas:

- [**Eyler 2002 - Reflection: Linking Service and Learning - Linking Students and Communities:**](#) A scholarly article explaining the significance of community engaged courses to the development of the knowledge, skills, and cognitive capacities necessary for students to deal effectively with the complex social issues.
- [**Fortune et al., 2001 - Student Learning Processes in Field Education:**](#) an article highlighting the importance for social work students to both understand and apply what they have learned in the classroom to the field.
- [**Hatcher et al. 2004 - Designing Effective Reflection: What Matters to Service Learning?:**](#) an article describing the quality and design of community-engaged education courses. The author indicates that the degree of integration of academic content with community engagement as well as involving reflection activities resulted in improved course quality.
- [**Lam, 2004 - Problem Based Learning: An Integration of Theory and Field:**](#) an article commenting on the weaknesses of traditional classroom models and presents an alternative model that was piloted at the University of Hong Kong involving classroom activities, skills workshops, and community engagement.
- [**Warren 2012 - Does Service Learning Increase Student Learning?: A Meta-Analysis:**](#) an analysis suggesting that community-engaged education has a positive effect on a student's education.

2.5 Experiential Learning Policy & Context Documents

The documents and information below capture the current (February 2018) experiential learning context that McMaster is operating within. They may be helpful for instructors to see how and where these directions are coming from:

- **Partnering for a Better Future for Ontario (Council of Ontario Universities):** This 2017 report outlines recommendations that Ontario universities and the government should implement in order to help students thrive while also supporting communities.
 - [Full Report](#)
 - [Summary Report](#)
- **[Guiding Principles for Experiential Learning \(Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development\)](#):** This document outlines principles that are guiding provincial support of experiential learning across Ontario.

Section 3 | McMaster's Principles of Community Engagement

SECTION OVERVIEW

During the Network for Community-Campus Partnerships' strategic planning process, community and campus partners strongly recommended that a co-developed set of action-oriented principles serve as the foundation of our work together. Informed by our consultations, these principles are meant to guide our work in initiating, sustaining, monitoring, and evaluating community-campus partnerships. They are meant to be broadly applicable for any partnership, from local to global, and can be applied across all Faculties, disciplines, and sectors.

With examples of how each principle can be integrated into your course, and how to consider applying the principles in your partnerships, this section covers:

- [3.1 Introducing McMaster's Principles of Community Engagement](#)
- [3.2 Relationships](#)
- [3.3 Reciprocity](#)
- [3.4 Equity](#)
- [3.5 Continuity](#)
- [3.6 Openness to Learning](#)
- [3.7 Commitment to Act](#)

3.1 Introducing McMaster's Principles of Community Engagement

McMaster's Principles of Community Engagement were developed in consultation with community partners, faculty, students and staff in addition to a review of current literature.¹⁴ McMaster's Principles of Community Engagement are as follows:

1. **Our Foundational Principle – Relationships Build Community:** We can't have community without relationships—these are the connections that build community. Any successful partnership must be built on trusting and respectful relationships guided by integrity.
2. **Reciprocity:** From design, to participation, to the outcomes of a project, we strive to work together for mutual benefit.
3. **Equity:** We are conscious of the historical and structural inequities that exist in society and strive to provide access and opportunities to all residents and members of our communities.
4. **Continuity:** Acknowledging that different communities work on different timelines and schedules, we strive to consider both the short and long-term implications of our work together.

¹⁴ Examples: Cornwall, A., 2008. Unpacking 'Participation': models, meanings and practices. *Community Development Journal*, 3,1, 269-283.; Aslin, H.J., & Brown, V.A., 2004. Towards Whole of Community Engagement: A Practical Toolkit. Murray-Darling Basin Commisoin

5. **Openness to Learning:** Change takes time. We are committed to continually learn from and evaluate our work together, reflecting on and sharing both our successes and failures to grow as individuals, partnerships, and communities.
6. **Commitment to Act:** We aspire to make a positive difference in our community by sharing and acting on our knowledge to contribute to the greater social good.

3.2 Relationships

Our Foundational Principle: Relationships Build Community: We can't have community without relationships—these are the connections that build community. Any successful partnership must be built on trusting and respectful relationships guided by integrity.

Building a respectful relationship with your partners can help you to:

- **Get to know your partner & their interests:** Community partners need to know that they can trust university partners (faculty, students, staff) to understand their needs and interests and to respect their knowledge, expertise and time commitments.
- **Clarify expectations:** As an instructor or staff person, you will likely be hoping that your potential community partner(s) is/are willing to participate in educational activities so that students' learning goals can be met.
- **Find mutual benefit:** The community-engaged learning activity (e.g. observation, placement, project, research) needs to be carefully negotiated. As much as possible and where appropriate, roles, timelines and conflict resolution strategies can be discussed at the onset. Finding the shared value of your partnership is incredibly important for long-term success.
- **Identify future partnership opportunities:** It is easier to negotiate community-engaged education opportunities if there is an already established relationship with community partners and one or more university representatives.¹⁵

When developing new relationships, please keep in mind this important feedback from community partners:

- It is difficult to respond to 'cold calls' from university representatives. This is especially challenging when there is a short timeline between the request and the project start.¹⁶
- Community partners can become overwhelmed by requests from different parts of the campus. Partners suggest that there be some coordination. This is particularly a concern when faculty suggest students find their own community-based learning. When

¹⁵ The Office of Community Engagement has many established relationships in the greater Hamilton area. If you are exploring potential opportunities, please feel free to contact us, as we may know a person or organization who may be a great fit.

¹⁶ [Paths to Collaboration: A Community Guide to Working with McMaster Researchers](#) was developed to help community partners navigate the University. It helps to clarify the importance of timelines from both a community and a university perspective.

you are developing a new partnership idea, consider approaching others in your faculty who may already have community partnerships, or connecting with the Office of Community Engagement, to better coordinate and understand what partnerships might already exist.

- Many community partners request a campus contact in case there is a concern or problem.
- Community partners hope to receive feedback about student or faculty concerns.

Principles in Action: Classroom Activity

The following scenarios are examples for use within the classroom to help your students consider the importance of relationships in community-engaged education. Using them as a model, consider developing similar scenarios that reflect the types of situations that your students may find themselves in—creating good examples and bad examples of relationship building—and invite the class to consider the principle of respectful relationship in this scenario. Questions to consider include:

- How is the importance of relationships reflected in each scenario?
- How are the scenarios similar? How are they different?
- What can we learn from each of these scenarios when considering our own partnerships?

Scenario 1:

Students studying the health and social consequences of homelessness decide to conduct a winter clothing drive as part of their course without any community consultation. Following the clothing drive, they deliver the clothing unannounced to a local social service organization. As they have never heard from any McMaster staff or students about this idea, the staff of the organization are not prepared for this donation. Given that they don't provide front-line services related to clothing, they are faced with either turning down the donation or taking time away from their work to sort and store the clothing before sending it to an appropriate agency who has capacity to handle the donation. In the end, they decide to turn down the donation and suggest the students learn about existing clothing drives that they can connect with in the future. As the students need to complete their project before a class presentation that evening, the students are upset with the staff and suggest that the university avoid engaging with the organization. As a result, the community organization decides that in future it will avoid any possible partnerships with McMaster.

Scenario 2:

A new communications course includes a community project where students develop a social media strategy for a community organization. Prior to the semester, the course instructor spends time developing relationships with a community organization that has reached out to McMaster to express an interest in student support for social media. At the beginning of the semester, students are introduced to the community organization and learn about the organization's vision, mission, and goals, as well as their communications challenges, as part of a presentation that the course instructor has carefully planned in consultation with the community partner. Student teams respond to the challenges identified by the partner, checking in twice during the semester during sessions that have been coordinated by the course instructor during times that work for the partner. At the end of the semester, the partner attends a class-based presentation where students share their proposed ideas for a social media strategy. Given the clear alignment of the project with the organization's goals over

the semester, the partner also brings their entire staff team to hear the presentations. As a result, the community organization not only adopts some of the ideas developed by the student teams, but approaches the instructor to discuss possible challenges to bring forward in the following year.

Principles in Action: Perspectives from the Classroom

There were various challenges: the time and commitment to do this, the process of actually finding community partners to do this. Engaging them through a process of discussion usually takes several meetings; (it) takes a lot of time and preparation. There was some level of risk: what is it that we can do for them and that would in fact deliver a useful solution.

- Robert Fleisig, Engineering I

3.3 Reciprocity

Reciprocity: From design, to participation, to the outcomes of a project, we strive to work together for mutual benefit.

Striving for reciprocity within your partnerships entails:

- **Planning for, and pursuing, mutual benefit** for all partners involved.
- **Respecting that all partners bring valuable knowledge, skills, experiences, and resources** to any partnership.

Examples of reciprocity include:

- You approach a community organization asking if they would be interested in providing your students with a community based learning opportunity. The staff agree to mentor your students if you will provide a one-hour research consultation.
- As part of your course, you decide to run an educational event. You (the campus representative) decide to fund most of the cost for the event but your community partner will provide volunteers and help shape the talk/panel, as well as be a speaker in the event.
- You invite a speaker to your classroom. You provide transportation costs and an honorarium. The community partner provides knowledge and expertise that they will share with your course.
- Students are placed at a community organization. They provide a service (i.e. research, logistical support, time) to your community partner. The community partner provides guidance, mentorship and in-the-field practical experience for your students.

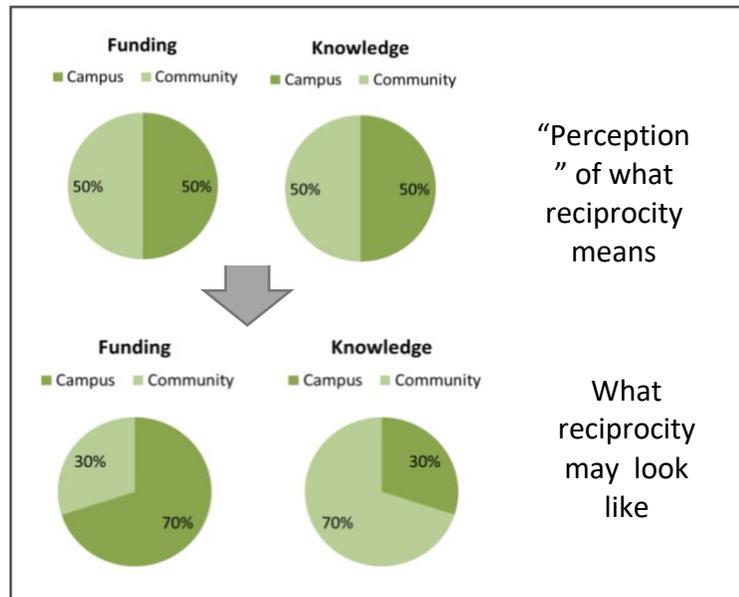


Figure 3-1 *Reciprocity does not mean that all partners contribute the same amount of resources or knowledge, but rather that you attempt to find a balance in contributions that strives towards shared value for all partners.*

A note about knowledge. Often students and faculty are familiar with the most current research about a particular topic. They also may have expertise in research, education or project development. However, community partners may have similar knowledge and also have knowledge acquired through lived experience. When negotiating projects, it is helpful to be mindful and respectful of the knowledge held by potential community partners. It is equally important for community partners to know what students and faculty might bring to the project.

Principles in Action: Classroom Activity

The following activity can be used to consider the importance of reciprocity. The content may be adapted to your own unique context. Questions to pose to your students:

- If the student convinces the organization to do this, is this partnership a reciprocal one? Yes or no, what is your reasoning?
- What other approaches could be used to strive towards a reciprocal relationship with the community organization?

Scenario

A student approaches a community organization with the idea of an event that relates to a course they are taking. The student has researched the topic and believes that the event will educate the public, raise the profile of the organization and will raise awareness for their cause. The student has acquired the funds to run the event, has other students who are willing to volunteer at the event, and is willing to do all the marketing that is necessary to attract community members and other students to attend the event. The student is determined to run the event and is only asking for some of the organization’s staff members to speak about the work they do during the event.

3.4 Equity

Equity: We are conscious of the historical and structural inequities that exist in society and strive to provide access and opportunities to all residents and members of our communities.

Striving for equity within your partnerships entails:

- Being aware that partners may have different opportunities and resources to engage with you that are related to complex social factors.
- Acknowledging that the barriers and structures (e.g. classism, racism, sexism, heteronormativity, ageism, ableism) that create power imbalances within society will influence relationships with community partners.
- Striving to reduce barriers to participation wherever possible.
- Attending to your privilege and working toward equitable relationships.
- Understanding that campus partners may also be vulnerable and lack access due to societal barriers.
- That campus partners are mindful of intersectionality.¹⁷

Figure 3-2 below illustrates the difference between equality and equity. Equality suggests that all have the same opportunities, implying that all people start at the same place with equal personal and societal resources. Equity suggests that societal barriers prevent people from accessing opportunities and asserts that barriers need to be removed, or resources provided to ensure equal access and opportunity. Equity strives towards a level playing field for all.

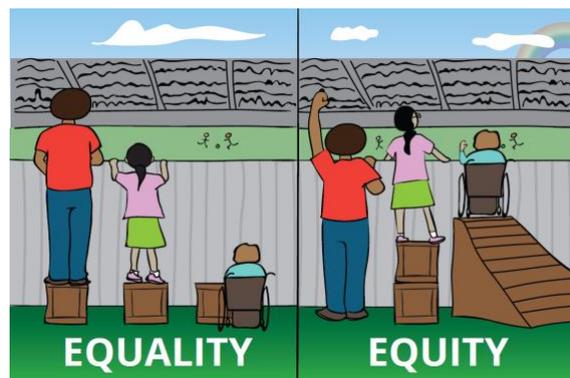


Figure 3-2 Equality vs. Equity. Source <https://cltoronto.ca/bd-summer2016/> adapted from <http://interactioninstitute.org/illustrating-equality-vs-equity/>

¹⁷ An individual's life experience is a complex interwoven experience that is the combination of a person's socioeconomic status, race, sexual orientation, gender, etc. Considering these experiences in isolation (i.e. removing a person's race when having a discussion on gender) may create misconceptions or false realities.

Equity can be applied to partnerships through:

- Developing your partnership with diversity and inclusion in mind. Each community partner and community you engage will have diverse voices, actors and opinions that should be part of any conversation.
- Considering which voices are missing when engaging with a community.
- Ensuring that you understand your partner's obligations and constraints when you build your partnership. Adapt your expectations to ensure the success of your partnership.
- Being flexible. As you get to know your partner you may find that the partnerships objectives, expectations, roles and responsibilities may shift, be amicable to those changes - your partner may have reasons for those (reasons that may or may not be communicated with you).

Principles in Action: Classroom Activity

Scenario 1:

As part of a course, you and other students are asked to work with one of Hamilton's "priority" neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods have been identified as having a much higher poverty rate than the average neighbourhood in Canada. The residents ask you to help them organize to "clean up" the neighbourhood. They identify that a major concern is the number of sex trade workers in the neighbourhood. There are worries about safety - drugs, traffic, and influences on children. Their ideas include lobbying for greater police presence and/or creating a neighbourhood watch group to remove the sex trade workers.

Questions to pose to your students:

- In this situation, how do you apply the principle of equity?
- Given the principles of community engagement, how would you respond to this request from the neighbourhood?

Scenario 2:

A team of McMaster students and a faculty member are participating in a community engagement project related to a globalization course. A community in Zambia does not have easy access to clean water. Women in the village have to walk for an hour to wash and get drinking water. They walk together daily to a stream and carry the water back to the village. Engineers and geologists know that drilling a well in the town is feasible. They have consulted with the men who are community leaders and have agreed to move forward with the plans to create a well in the village centre.

Questions to pose to your students:

- Considering the principle of equity, how would you approach this project?

3.5 Continuity

Continuity: Acknowledging that different communities work on different timelines and schedules, we strive to consider both the short and long-term implications of our work together.

Considering continuity in your partnership can include:

- Acknowledging that campus and community timelines are often different. For example, a community may request student involvement in a research project scheduled to begin in a month's time. The students involved may need to develop an ethics application and wait for approval. In this example, the delay may mean that students will only be available for part of the project. Applying the principle of continuity will mean ensuring that a different group of students completes the project.
- Discussing when the project will end early on in your relationship with a partner, including whether there may be an interest in an ongoing relationship between the partners involved.
- Developing plans for sustainability if you are exploring a longer-term partnership.
- Maintaining and fostering ongoing relationships within the community. Not all relationships will or should be continued. However, in some situations, ongoing relationships are developed and nurtured.

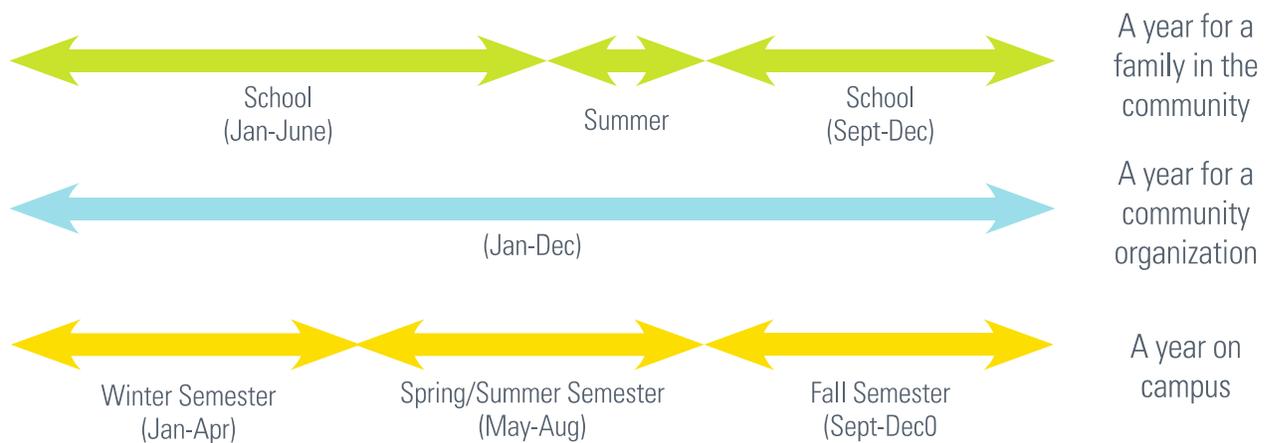


Figure 3-3 On campus we break up the year into three terms, and often we do our planning within the bounds of this structure. When building a partnership and ensuring its continuity, we must be aware of the time frames of our community partners and how that may affect the partnerships, its goals, its limitations and the logistics of it. This example notes three different timelines from three sample perspectives, though many other possible groups and organizations may structure their year in a different manner.

Applying continuity to your partnerships: As you explore how continuity may play a role in your own partnerships, consider the following questions:

- You are aware that your course may run for four (or eight) months. How will you address your course timeline with your partner?
- How will you plan for long-term sustainability of your partnership? Are you planning on working with the same partners each year, or are you hoping to have a new partner each time you deliver the course?
- Have you considered how this partnership may continue and evolve after your course? Are there other faculty or staff who will be the main points of contact for this partnership?
- If you don't see a good fit long-term, but your partner is interested in continuing to work with McMaster, are there other areas of your department or Faculty, or beyond, who you think may be a good fit?

Principles in Action: Classroom Activity

Scenario 1:

You are registered in a third-year course with a community-engaged project. You have a class size of 30 students and this project accounts for 50% of your final grade. After creating a list of possible organizations who do work in a field related to the course, your instructor sent an email to a community organization outlining your course and the project, noting that the class has 30 students at their disposal to address one of their yearly goals. The process taken by the instructor is as follows:

- The same email is sent to 10 organizations and the instructor receives four replies back.
- The instructor chooses one organization to work with.
- The instructor comes to an agreeable deliverable with this organization, determining that the organization will present the problem at the beginning of term, allowing students to work independently and present their results to your partners at the end of term.
- End of term project presentations are somewhat underwhelming, if not completely off target of the original goal.
- Reflecting on the experience, the instructor is disappointed with the support provided to the students and did not have a good relationship with the partner, deciding that next year they will pick a different organization.

Questions to pose to your students:

- Did the instructor do everything possible to ensure continuity in their partnership?
- Was the process of developing this partnership appropriate?
- What could have changed to maintain this partnership?

Scenario 2:

As part of a course, you are placed at an organization that works with vulnerable children and youth through the local school board. Your role, and the role of your fellow students, is to function as mentors and supports to the children and youth. You spend the semester developing strong relationships, but only begin making strides towards a pilot program a few weeks before your

semester ends—the pilot will be launched during exams and run until the end of the school board semester two months later.

Questions to pose to your students:

- What planning could have been done prior to the start of the semester to address this situation?
- What ideas do you have to address this gap in continuity?
- What can be done to mitigate the potential harm to the children and youth that have been engaged to date?

3.6 Openness to Learning

We are committed to continually learn from and evaluate our work together, reflecting on and sharing both our successes and failures to grow as individuals, partnerships, and communities. Going beyond traditional academic approaches to teaching, learning, and research can involve doing new things, taking risks, and going outside of our comfort zone. As such, being open to learning from our experiences can help us to continually improve our efforts and partnerships.

Being open to learning in the context of community-engaged education can include:

- Evaluating your partnership throughout the duration and taking time to discuss both the positive experiences and negative experiences with your partner(s). Taking time to prepare for evaluation prior to beginning a new partnership, including developing agreed upon goals with your partners, may be helpful when you reflect and evaluate.
- Proactively seeking feedback from your partners, the community and students regarding your course, program, or community-engaged activities.
- Taking time to share feedback gathered from various partners with the other participants in the partnership, and using this feedback to adapt and change your partnership when needed to ensure its success and continuity.

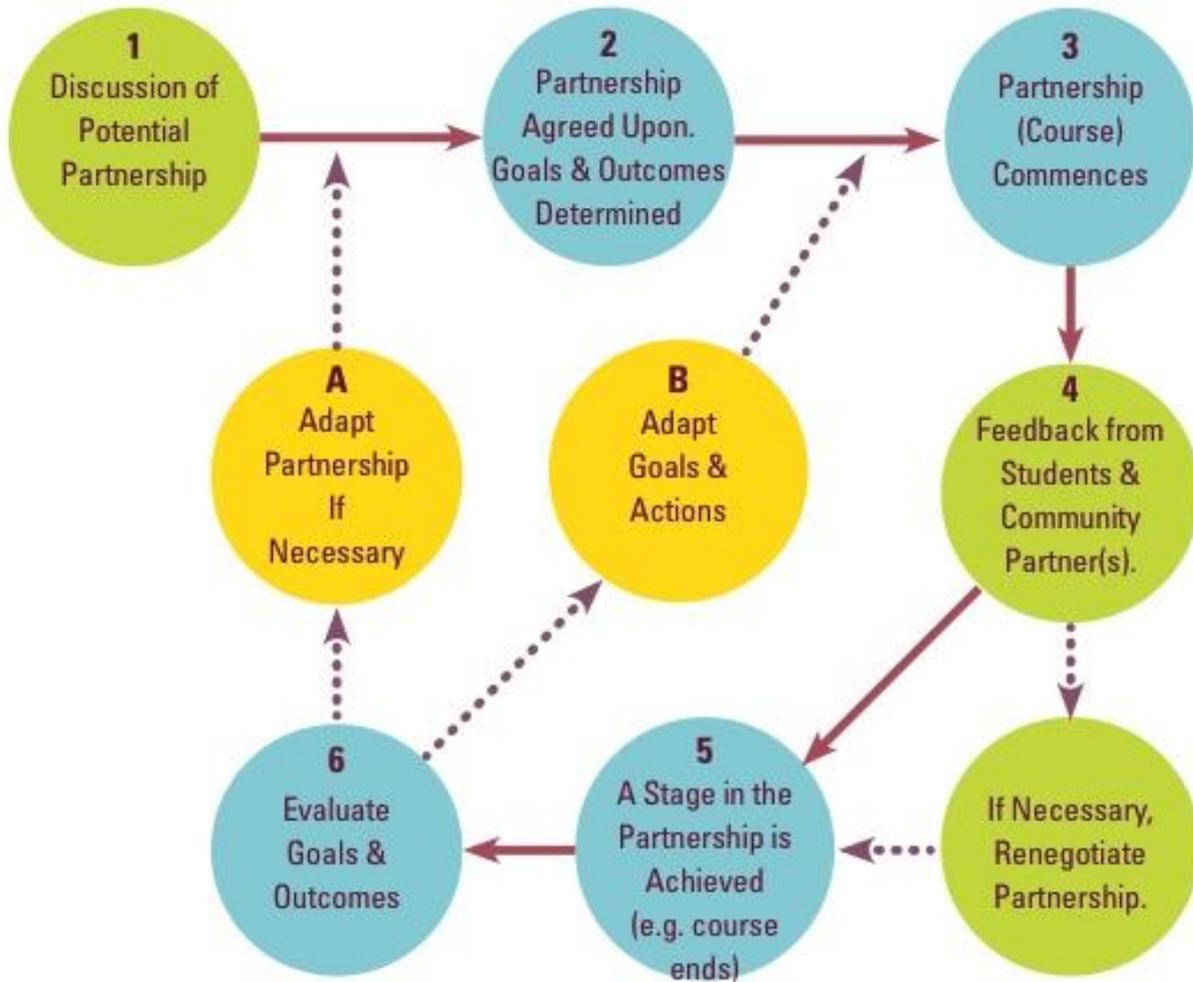


Figure 3-4 Community partnerships are dynamic. It is useful to request feedback at various points of partnership development, as well as during the course, so that you can, where appropriate, adapt or renegotiate expectations. When the course ends, it is useful to review the experience through feedback from your partner(s) and students and adapt as necessary going forward.

Setting your partnership up for a successful shared learning experience may include:

- In collaboration with your partner, creating milestones and dates where you can come together and evaluate your partnership and work.
- Being clear and constructive in the way feedback is communicated within your partnership, including proactively seeking and providing constructive feedback.
- Adapting over the course of a partnership. Even with a plan in place, you may find your partner communicating that changes need to be made in the middle of a project or program.
- Understanding that developing a mutually beneficial relationship takes time. Changes in the expectations, roles and responsibilities will occur as time progresses and as each party develops trust and expertise.

- Respecting your community partner’s expertise, perspective, and feedback, even if it requires significant changes to your schedule or course structure.

Principles in Action: Classroom Activity

As part of your course, students are working on a term project with three community organizations to look at ways to involve the community in taking action on climate change issues. Your partners and you have decided that aside from the three times your partners will be on campus to give feedback on the progress of the projects, students may contact them via email if needed. Halfway through your term, one of your partners (partner A) tells you that the volume of student emails is unmanageable. You worry about Group A being disadvantaged and about changing things halfway through the course. You suggest that Partner A ask the students to decrease the volume of emails and ask Partner A to do their best to respond. At the end of term, students working with Partner A complain that they couldn’t finish their project because Partner A was unresponsive, claiming that their final grades were affected by the difficulties. Partners B and C are happy with the final projects, but Partner A has decided not to participate in your course next year.

Questions to pose to your students:

- What happened in this scenario?
- What can we learn from this experience? What could have been done differently?

3.7 Commitment to Act

We aspire to make a positive difference in our community by sharing and acting on our knowledge to contribute to the greater social good. **Being committed to acting on the knowledge gained through a partnership involves:**

- Acknowledging that community-engaged education outcomes should be oriented towards fostering social good, while also enhancing student learning.
- Understanding that meaningful dialogue is important and must occur for student learning, but it is only at its most powerful when followed by meaningful action.
- Orienting student projects towards the needs of your community partners.
- Sharing the results of student projects back with the partners or communities that they have gathered information from and/or for.

Incorporating a commitment to act into the classroom may include:

- Developing your partnership, its goals and objectives with your community partner to address a need or a want that they have identified and are poised to act upon in the near future.
- Intentionally building various stages of action and follow-up into your partnership.
- Providing an opportunity for the community to voice their feedback regarding the partnership and the outcomes or recommendations that have come as a result.
- Ensuring your course or partnership are not seen as burdens in the community, but rather as assets that can help move a complex issue forward.
- Striving to ensure your students situate their projects towards making a positive difference in the community, rather than simply to gain academic credit.

Principles in Action: Classroom Activities

The project component of a community-engaged course requires students to work with partners on an issue that partner organizations have identified. Specifically, each organization that the course is partnering with has been asked by the instructor to identify an issue that they are currently focused on so that the information gathered by the students will be useful to the partner organization's work over the following year. Over the course of the semester, student teams develop project reports that respond to issues identified by partner organizations. At the end of the semester, the teams present their findings to their classmates in an academic format, while their reports are graded by the instructor. Given that exam season has arrived, the instructor plans to email reports to partners the following month.

- How has the principle of a commitment to act been considered in this situation?
- What would you change from this approach?
- How could an instructor, community partners, and students ensure that a commitment to act is clear from the start of the semester and delivered by the end of the semester?

Section 4 | Integrating Community-Engaged Education into the Classroom

SECTION OVERVIEW

Having considered what community engagement at McMaster looks like, including an understanding of McMaster's principles of community engagement, as well as different types of community-engaged education, this section will help provide some insights on how you can integrate community-engaged education into your teaching. This section covers:

- 4.1 Getting Started: What would you like to achieve?
- 4.2 Planning for Success: Design, Partnership, & Learning
- 4.3 Design
- 4.4 Partnership
- 4.5 Reflection in Community-Engaged Education

4.1 Getting Started: What would you like to achieve?

Incorporating a community-engaged education component into your course or program may involve added work at the front end, but with time and commitment to the task, can be an incredibly rewarding experience for you, for your students, and for your community partner(s). As you begin to think about how to integrate community-engaged education in a course or program, we encourage you to consider the following questions. Your answers to these questions will be important as you continue through this section of the toolkit.

Focus and Objectives

- Why do you want to integrate community-engaged education in your course?
- What are the societal or public purposes of the discipline? What social, environmental, or cultural issues are related to the course content and/or program focus?
- What are the current issues of the day in your field or discipline, and how are these issues being experienced locally, nationally, and globally?
- What are the objectives underlying this work? For learning? For service? Who will you involve in determining objectives?
- What would "success" mean in this effort to integrate community-engaged education into your course or program?
- How will you ensure that your community partner(s) is/are truly a **partner** in your course that can not only contribute but also benefit from such a partnership?

Participants

- **Who are your students?** What experiences, skills, knowledge, abilities, interests, and perspectives will they be bringing into the classroom? What experiences, skills, knowledge, abilities, interests, and perspectives do you hope they might gain from a community-engaged experience?
- **Who are your community partner(s)?** What experiences, skills, knowledge, abilities, interests, and perspectives do they bring to this work? What experiences, skills, knowledge, abilities, interests, and perspectives do you hope they might gain from a community-engaged experience?
- **What is your motivation as an instructor?** What experiences, skills, knowledge, abilities, interests, and perspectives do you (the instructor) bring to this work? What experiences, skills, knowledge, abilities, interests, and perspectives do you hope you might gain from a community-engaged experience?

Processes (How/Where/When)

- **What specific elements of the course curriculum do you envision coming together in the community engaged education activity/project?** In what ways are these various elements aligned with one another and in what ways are they in tension with one another? What are the implications for efforts to integrate them via community-engagement?
- **What challenges/obstacles/constraints do you anticipate in integrating community-engaged education into this course successfully?**
- **What is needed in terms of capacity building among all participants in order for this effort to succeed,** in light of all of the above? What resources might you draw on? Do you and/or your support staff have the time and resources to build and maintain relationships with all of the partners you anticipate engaging with?

Planning for Success: Identifying your Goals & Resources

Whether you're planning a course, one small community-engaged activity, or developing a new program, taking time early on in your planning to answer the questions above will help you to set reasonable expectations for yourself, your students, and your potential partners, while also triggering thoughts around resources, project ideas, and how you might structure your course or program to align with your goals. We encourage you to work your way through these questions, summarize your thoughts, and share them with others who you may plan on approaching to serve as partners in your new endeavor.

Summarizing Your Idea: Creating a short 1 or 2 page concept note is not only a good way to communicate your plans to others, but can also help you clarify in your own mind (and on paper!) just exactly what your plan is going forward. The Office of Community Engagement is

always happy to meet with colleagues to learn about ideas, share insights, and make connections with partners who may be a great fit with your concept.

4.2 Planning for Success: Design, Partnership, & Learning

Now that you have considered your goals and motivations, and hopefully have some general ideas together to explore further, let's look at a few steps that can help you to create a successful, meaningful, and impactful experience for you, your students and the community. According to Gemmel & Clayton (2010), the three important elements in community-engaged education involve: 1) Design, 2) Partnership, and 3) Learning. The remainder of this section will discuss how you can plan to address these three elements in your community-engaged education initiative, while also considering how McMaster's principles of community engagement can be applied to each.

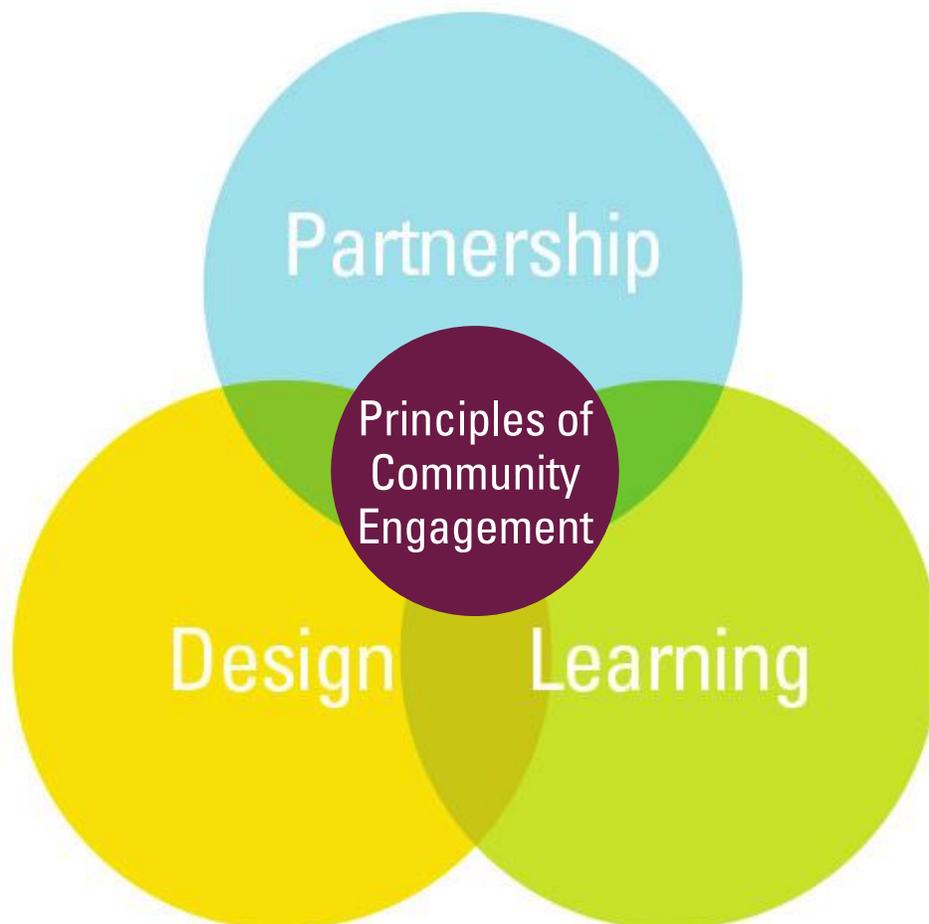
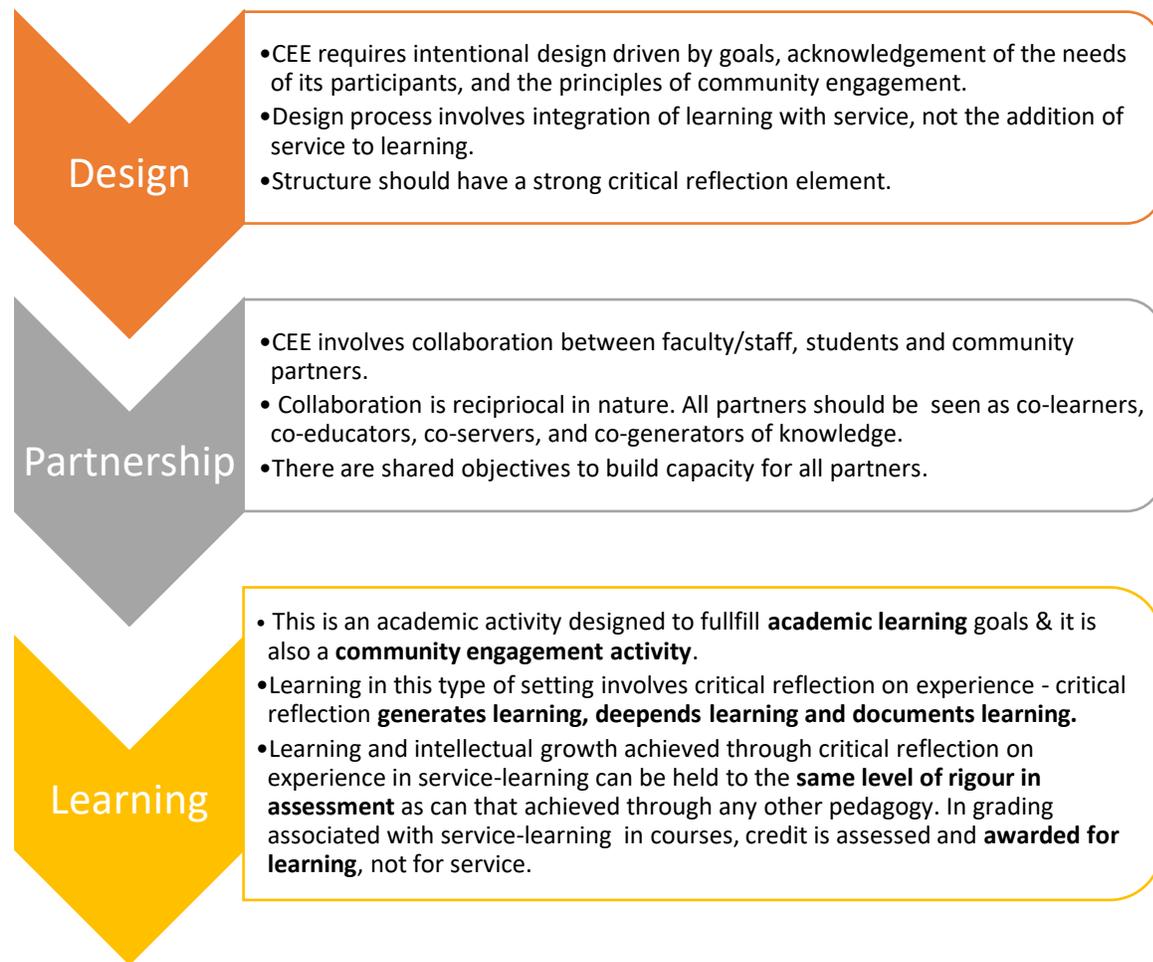


Figure 4-1: Design, Partnership, and Learning are three integrated, and important, aspects of community-engaged education. Applying McMaster's principles of community engagement to each of these three aspects will benefit you, your students, and your partners as you strive to create meaningful, mutually-beneficial community-engaged education experiences.

As you move from concept to launching your new community-engaged education course or program, considering the three steps of design, partnership, and learning can help you plan, implement, and evaluate your course or program. Below are some bullets that note the importance of each of these three elements. Following this, we will walk through each element in more detail, providing examples of how you can integrate principles of community engagement throughout the process.



“We are modest in our goals. They are first year students; they have a limited amount of time and training. We try and think about how to give a robust and meaningful introduction to what it is to work in the community without throwing them over their heads or create a project that is burdensome without being reciprocal to our community partners”

-Karen Balcom, History & Women’s Studies

4.3 Design

Having answered the questions in Section 4.1, you should now have a relatively good sense of *what* you want to do and *why*. Having consulted with colleagues or potential partners, you are now ready to take your concept and figure out *how* you will deliver the course, program, or activity. This subsection provides suggestions that can guide you in this design process.

Principles of Community Engagement

McMaster's principles of community engagement are mentioned throughout this document for good reason—they are the most valuable tools we have in supporting our efforts to develop any community engagement partnership. As you begin thinking about design, consider the following:

Relationships: Do you have the relationships necessary to implement your idea without a great deal of work? If not, do you have the time necessary to develop the relationships you imagine will be needed to ensure your idea is successful? As you design your course, you may want consider the following questions:

- ***Have you engaged your partner(s) in the design process?*** When doing so, are you considering their time and resources to ensure that you are both providing an opportunity for them to engage, while also respecting their time?
- ***Are there colleagues at the University or in the community who have taken similar approaches to your idea?*** Have you reached out to them for insights or to share ideas?

Reciprocity: Have you considered how all parties involved will benefit from your idea? As you design your course, you may want consider the following questions:

- ***How will the work of your students benefit any partners you might engage with?***
- ***What value do you imagine your community partner will add to your course?***
- ***Have you tested these thoughts with your partners?*** Do they see the mutual benefit of contributing to your course or program?

Equity: How are you planning to acknowledge and address differences in capacity, abilities, or access to resources within your course or program? As you design your course, you may want consider the following questions:

- ***If you want to engage with neighbourhood groups or non-profit organizations who are under-resourced or lack capacity to support students, in what ways might you provide support or resources to them?***
- ***If you plan on inviting partners to campus who may not have the means or resources to get to you, how might you address this?***

- ***Have you considered how to ensure that all of your students are able to participate in an activity or project in a meaningful way?***

Continuity: What will happen after your course? As you design your course, you may want consider the following questions:

- ***Do you plan on continuing a relationship with your partner(s) beyond one semester?*** If so, have you discussed this with your partners to see if this is something they are also interested in? If not, are your partners clear and agreeable to participating only once?
- ***Have you considered how to build on this activity to connect it with a future course?*** Is your partner interested in developing a more in-depth relationship over time?
- ***Where will you direct students who are interested in continuing on with their community project?***

Openness to Learning: As you pilot a new initiative, have you considered how you will track your learning over the duration of the course or program? As you design your course, you may want consider the following questions:

- ***Do you have ways to evaluate or measure the outcomes of your course or program against the goals you initially set?***
- ***Are you developing your partnership in a way that will allow you to constructively reflect on both positive and negative outcomes?***

Commitment to Act: How will the work your students are doing contribute back to the community that you are working with? As you design your course, you may want consider the following questions:

- ***Who will learn about the work that students have done?*** How will decision-makers in an organization, sector, or community learn about their ideas?
- ***Are your partners prepared to use information developed by students in their future work?*** If not, can you consider what you would need to do to ensure that student project work could be useful to your partner?

Considering these questions early on in the design phase of your work will help you to develop your activity, course, or program in a principled way that is informed by the collective wisdom of hundreds of community and campus partners. You will likely not know all of the answers to these questions immediately, but having them top-of-mind as you move forward to develop course content is very important.

Designing Community-Engaged Course Content

Keeping in mind the principles and questions mentioned above, you can now begin considering the content of your activity, course, or program.

As with any course development, early on you will want to develop a clear sense of the learning objective(s) of your activity, course, or program. Depending on the scope and scale—one activity within a course is much smaller than an overall course, or an entire program—this planning may range from a small brainstorm to a larger consultation with multiple campus and community partners. Regardless of the route you take when developing a clear set of learning objectives, you are encouraged to keep the following elements in mind:¹⁸

The Community Component works towards social change	• Students work towards community-identified needs and/or requests in order to create social change
Relation to course-curriculum present	• The community-engaged education component relates directly to the subject matter of the course
Equal Partnership	• Community partners, students and educators are equally involved in the planing, evaluation and assessment
Reflection	• Throughout the course and in particular during the community-engaged education component, students are reflecting on their experiences and how it relates to the course content and their future
Use Discipline Knowledge	• The academic knowledge and skills of your discipline inform the community-engaged education component and in turn this experience deepens knowledge from course content
Assessment	• The focus of how the learning is assessed is focuses on the academic content AND the commnity-engaged education componetn, not just the component alone.
Peer Learning	• The structure of your courses allows for students to interact with one another and learn from one another.

Keeping these elements in mind, a few ideas to consider in your syllabus include:

- **Including a description of the community-engaged education component** in your course description that covers both the approach you will be taking, while also outlining student, community partner, and instructor responsibilities for this aspect of the course (or the course as a whole).
- **Clearly stating the learning objectives and goals** for students that are directly related to the community-engaged education component, including clear evaluation criteria.

¹⁸ [Insert reference here](#)

- **Stating the specific challenge/issue that the community-engaged education component will be addressing** (with multiple partners you may have multiple challenge statements) and the anticipated outcomes for students and community partners. If possible, and reflecting the principle of committing to act, consider including the anticipated target of the knowledge that students will be generating (e.g. City council, a community organization).
- **Identifying how and where students will be asked to incorporate reflection** into their learning.
- **Sharing additional readings or information** (perhaps required, perhaps suggested) that relate to the community-engaged education component.¹⁹
- **Making direct and deliberate connections between the core academic theory and content and the community-engaged education component** throughout the course.

A Commitment to Act: Celebrating & Demonstrating Outcomes

Celebrating a successful term project or final deliverable may be something that you consider doing. This also allows students to step back, reflect and share what they have accomplished at the end of term, while also allowing partners to come together to learn about what students have done and how it can support their work. Here are some of the things you may want to keep in mind if you want to do a small celebration at the end of your course:

- What will you demonstrate or exhibit? Possible ideas include:
 - Presentation of concepts learned during the project and how they relate to the work of community partners
 - Demonstration of the service or “product” that students have created
 - Possibilities for additional community engagement opportunities
- Who will be invited to the celebration? Will it be an open event? Possible ideas include:
 - Community partner
 - Students and instructors from other classes
 - Local groups with shared interest in the topics/issues

A Checklist for Designing Community-Engaged Education Curriculum

Here is checklist for you to consider when designing your community-engaged education curriculum²⁰:

- Goals and Objectives:** Have you clearly identified the learning goals and objectives of the activity, course, or program?

¹⁹ For example, if your students will be learning about a community issue that is consistently covered in local, national, or global media, you may want to note a few important media outlets for them to look into during the course.

²⁰ Adapted from Geiger, E. – Service Learning Toolbox: Work Pages and Checklists to Help You Get Started and Keep you Going. – Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

- Curriculum and Assessment:** How will the community-engaged education aspect of the course relate to the broader curriculum of the program you are situated within? How will you assess student learning? Will you be incorporating partner feedback into assessment? If so, how will you do this without being a burden on their time?
- Structure:** What structure will you take? Have you considered the time and energy required for this approach?
- Scheduling:** What planning do you need to do in terms of gathering ideas from partners, inviting guests into the classroom, planning field trips, or booking partners in for review and feedback sessions?
- Supervision:** How are you ensuring that you and/or additional staff are giving all of your students adequate supervision? Have you agreed on a specific number of hours that your partners are committing to supervising a student or group of students? Where partners are providing some supervision, have you developed a process for checking in with them to ensure that they feel supported?
- Timeline:** Have you considered how your community-engaged component(s) will be built into the semester?
- Training:** Will you, your partners, your staff, or your students require any additional training beyond the course content? If so, have you considered when and how this will happen?
- Participant Roles:** Have you clearly identified your role, the role of your students, and the role of your partners? How will you be communicating these roles so that everyone is on the same page?
- Budget Requirements:** If your initiative will involve visits from partners to campus, have you considered parking pass costs or an honorarium? If you plan to take students to an off-campus destination will there be additional costs for travel, food, or other needs?
- Liability Issues (See 5.1.1 Risk Management for more information):** Depending on the type of community-engaged education initiative you are undertaking, you will need to consider risk management and liability.
- Transportation:** How will your students be travelling off-campus? Have you accommodated for any partners travelling to campus?
- Reflection activities (See 4.5 Reflection in Community-Engaged Education):** How have you built reflection into the course?

Each of these points will be important for the development of any community-engaged education initiative.

Budgeting for Success

Community-engaged education does not need to be costly, and in many instances, there may be no additional costs associated with your initiative. However, as you begin to either send your students out into the community, or host a partner (or partners) on campus, you may find that you will need some funds to support materials, transportation, or additional staff. As you design your course, consider identifying what parts of the project (if any) require funds? Potential Sources of funds include:

- Grants
- Department and/or Faculty aid

Acknowledging Our Partners' Time

When working with community partners, it is often easy to forget that they are dedicating their time and energy to support McMaster students without any additional resources from the institution. While some partners have time to contribute within paid positions, others are providing unpaid support. Keeping this in mind, it is important to consider where and how to acknowledge partner contributions through honorariums or other forms of recognition.

4.4 Partnership

When moving from design to delivery of your course or program, it is important to be conscious of how you will maintain the relationships and partnerships that you have developed. Despite our best laid plans, it is likely that some element of your community-engaged education component will not take shape as planned. Strong partnerships built on trust and respect can make it easier to work through challenges as they arise.

Strategies for Maintaining Your Partnership

Having designed your course or program with your partners in mind, you will hopefully have already engaged them to ensure that your content and approach are striving towards mutually beneficial outcomes for everyone involved. With this strong foundation in place, you may consider the following strategies to support your partnership throughout the course or program:

- **Develop and share clear timelines and your plan for the semester** with your partners. This can be as simple as a one-page document noting major dates and student deadlines. Helping partners to understand the academic calendar, and where they fit in to the broader course or program, can ensure a mutual understanding of timelines and expectations.
- **Create open communications channels** so that your partners feel comfortable reaching out to you in any circumstance—both to share positive feedback and to share any concerns as they may arise. Making it clear through this communication that your partners can (and should) reach out to you early on if they are concerned about how a project is taking shape may help to catch small issues before they become large issues.
- **Schedule regular check-ins** via email, phone, or face-to-face. During the design process, consider getting feedback from your partners on how often they would like you to touch base with them throughout the project. This may only be once over a semester, but planning a time to touch base can help to support open communications and feedback.
- **Acknowledge and (where appropriate) resource the time and energy of your partners** to ensure that they are recognized for their contribution to McMaster student learning.

- **Proactively explore whether your partner would like to continue with the partnership** as your course or program end for the semester or academic year. Not all partners will want to remain involved (and that is ok), though for those who do want to continue partnering with you, having a sense of shared vision for where the partnership will go will be very helpful for the next academic year.

Following these steps will help towards creating a positive, collaborative environment for your students, your partners, and yourself during the partnership. Being mindful of these steps will hopefully help all parties involved have a positive experience built on reciprocity, co-learning, and co-generation of knowledge—ideally resulting in outcomes that benefit all partners, building capacity for students, partners and yourself.

Building active reflection into your course or program can help to ensure that an understanding of benefits and lessons learned—both the challenges and successes—is embedded into the learning experience.

4.5 Reflection in Community-Engaged Education

Experiential learning occurs when carefully chosen experiences occur alongside critical reflection exercises

Why Reflection?

In experiential education and community-engaged education, reflection allows students to investigate and evaluate their experiences, connect this learning to their course theory, and then build on this learning to expand their understanding of not only the course material, but the broader world around them (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999; Elyer & Giles, 1999; Hatcher, Bringle, & Muthiah, 2004).² In community-engaged education, when purposeful reflection occurs, it clarifies for students how the course content, theory and concepts apply to their community engagement experience and how this experience further expands their own understanding of course content.²¹

Because community-engaged education is a type of experiential learning, we know that reflection is really integral in the learning process. To define experiential experience from learning experience you need reflection. We have developed a framework for guiding and assessing reflections that really dive deeper in the cognitive process and learning that students are undergoing in the course.

Kate Whalen, Sustainability 4S06 – Leadership in Sustainability

²¹ California State University, Service Learning Curriculum

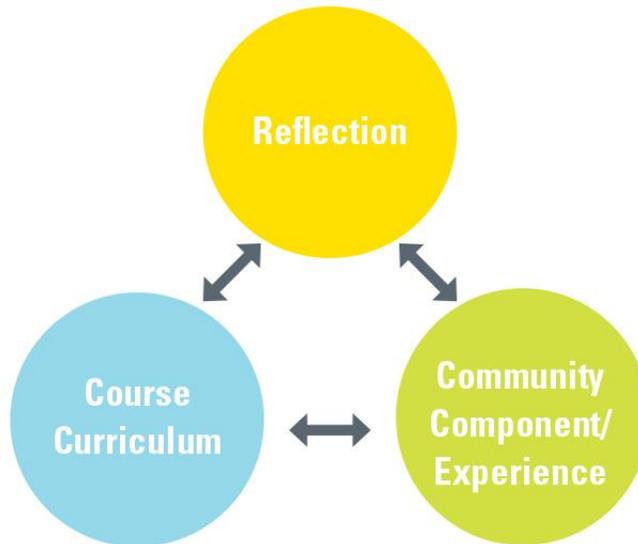


Figure 4-5 Students can reflect at a variety of times throughout the course. A reflective exercise can occur after being exposed to the community component/experience, or after students are exposed to core course curriculum learned through traditional lecture and/or tutorial discussions.^{22 23 24}

Whenever preparing the reflection activity and assessment for your community-engaged education component, it may be helpful to consider the following four components:²⁵

1. **Reflection should be continuous** and take place throughout the course, rather than at the end. This can take the form of various small reflection assignments or regular class discussions.
2. **Reflection should be connected** by structuring and relating the process to the course's learning objectives. Reflection activities should be developed to require students to synthesize and analyze the activity in relation to the course content and learning objectives as set in the beginning of the course.
3. **Reflection should be challenging**. It is important to set high expectations for reflection as a valued learning activity. Whether through evaluation or otherwise, it is important to communicate to students that reflections require the same academic rigor as any other assignment within the course.
4. **Reflection should be contextualized** in a manner that is appropriate to the level and type of course.

²² Kolb, D. A., 1984. *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. FT press.

²³ <http://www.servicelearning.umn.edu/crimson/dependancies/multimedia/reflection1.pdf>

²⁴ Gemmel, L.J., & Clayton, P.H., 2009. *A comprehensive Framework for Community Service-Learning in Canada*. Canadian Alliance for Community Service-Learning.

<http://www.communityservicelearning.ca/en/documents/AComprehensiveFrameworkforCSL.pdf>

²⁵ Eyer et al, 1996

Types of Reflection to Consider

The type of reflection your students engage in will depend on your course and the specific CEE component that students are engaged in. The chart below provides a list of examples of activities and assessments that stimulate reflection:

Type of Activity	Benefits
Final Analysis Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows students to view their experience in retrospect • For example, if on placement, they may include a section on how the placement related to course material, what they gained from the experience, and how the agency in which they were placed benefited. • Allows the instructor to assess how the CEE component is being implemented.
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students can discuss the CEE component in class, covering challenges and lessons learned. • Students may share anecdotes during lecture as they relate to course material. • May take place in class or tutorial, in a formal or informal setting.
Journal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students write to reflect on events/experiences and may be encouraged to address situations objectively, subjectively, and/or analytically. • If on placement, there could be a daily entry, with multiple entries analyzing overall experiences. • May be used as the framework for an analysis paper or presentation.
Portfolio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students compile reflection material: journals, proposals, essays, presentation notes, etc. • May include multiple mediums (e.g. photo journal, video journal) • May include projects or reflections developed throughout the course
In-class presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students may share their experience with their classmates, noting the challenges they have faced, how they related course content to their experience, or other lessons learned. • Students may also reflect on course content or class discussions. • Community partners may be invited to share in reflection and learning.

Reflection Questions for Students as they start a placement

1. What are my learning objectives? What do I hope to gain from this opportunity?
2. What skills, experience, and knowledge do I bring to this partnership?
3. What interests do I hold that might be relevant to work being done at this community organization?
4. What skills would I like to develop from this partnership?

A Student Contract can provide a focus and direction for the field observation and provide a basis for evaluation. As such, it can be a useful tool for the field supervisor and student to use together. In written format (appr. 4-5 pages in total), and guided by the instructor, the student provides:

- A 1-2 page overview of the field setting where they are doing the placement;
- A list of learning objectives appropriate to the student's individual learning needs and the opportunities available in the setting;
- An outline of the strategies and resources the student proposes to use in achieving his/her learning objectives;
- A clear description of how learning objectives will be evaluated by the student and the supervisor.

Reflective Journals can support intentional reflection throughout a community-engaged experience. Depending upon the context, reflections can be recorded daily, weekly, or after specific activities in the community and may include:

1. **Description** of the experience/activity, what was seen and what was done.
2. **Reflection** on the experience, possibly including questions, reactions, emotions, and/or feelings that arose during the experience/activity.
3. **Analysis** of how the community experience/activity is related to the course content and/or class discussions.

Additional McMaster Resources: In recent years, a number of helpful resources have been developed at McMaster that can give additional context and ideas for integrating community-engaged education into the classroom. As these resources were developed prior to the creation of McMaster's principles of community engagement, they do not speak directly to the principles, but incorporate many of the ideas noted in this section in particular. Please take some time to explore them as they are excellent resources to inform this work.

- [**Incorporating Community-Engaged Education into Courses: A Guidebook:**](#) This manual is intended to provide faculty members with the tools they need to develop or refine community-engaged elements in their courses. While experiential and community-engaged education are being taken up in universities across the country, McMaster, as always, will develop its own unique approach. This manual is intended to help with this process.
- **My Grad Skills Modules:** Developed with an orientation towards graduate students interested in an introduction to the foundations of community engagement, these modules can be accessed by anyone with a McMaster email address:
 - [**Foundations of Community Engagement \(Part 1\):**](#) This module covers key definitions and principles that underlie community engagement.
 - [**Foundations of Community Engaged Scholarship \(Part 2\):**](#) Foundations of Community Engaged Scholarship is the second module in a two-part series on

community engagement. By the end of this module, you will be able to critically examine the role of the researcher in different community engaged scholarship projects through the lens of shared power and control, as well as hear from actual community partners and campus representatives who discuss their experiences with community engaged scholarship projects.

- [Assessing Community-Based Participatory Research Projects in the Hamilton Community: The Community Partner's Perspective](#): This report captures feedback from community partners about their experience with McMaster's HSC 3DD3 *Engaging the City* undergraduate course. It is an excellent example of how instructors and students sought feedback from community partners to inform the ongoing development of their partnerships.

Section 5 | Tools & Resources

SECTION OVERVIEW

It takes a great deal of time and energy to develop any type of community-engaged education opportunity. This section focuses on the administrative and logistical development of community-engaged education opportunities, such as risk management, unpaid student placements and accommodations. In addition, this section has various resources, templates and tools that have been discussed in previous section (such as meeting agendas, learning resources. This section covers:

- **5.1 In the Community**
 - **5.1.1 Risk Management**
 - **5.1.1 Risk Management**
 - **5.1.3 Unpaid Student Work Placement**
 -
 - **5.1.4 Academic Accommodations of Students with Disabilities**
- **5.2 Partnership Development Tools**
- **5.3 Classroom Activities, Assignments, and Resources**

5.1 In the Community

If you have decided to bring students into the community for any type of experience, then you will need to know the steps to take regarding risk management. The information below has been summarized from various sources from McMaster University and the Ministry for Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD). We strongly encourage you to look over these pages before doing any off-campus activities.

If you need any clarification regarding this information, please contact Environmental & Occupational Health Support Services (EOHSS) at eooss@mcmaster.ca

5.1.1 Risk Management

At McMaster, details and guidance on how instructors can plan for course-based off-campus activities and placements are provided by Environmental & Occupational Health Support Services (EOHSS). EOHSS has a helpful website that speaks to Unpaid Student Work Placements, while also providing links to resources related to field trips and other activities involving travel. The information in this section is a summary of information that EOHSS provides. **Two very important websites that may provide more detailed information and may include updates beyond the most recent version of this document (February 2018) are:**

- [EOHSS Unpaid Student Work Placements](#)
- [MAESD Guidelines for Workplace Insurance for Postsecondary Students of Publicly Assisted Institutions on Unpaid Work Placements](#)

It is important to note that all course-based community-engaged education initiatives at McMaster qualify for insurance coverage from MAESD, however, there are a number of specific forms and steps that one must take depending on the context. Insurance and waiver requirements must be considered early in the field trip or elective planning process. EOHSS must be contacted for advice relative to insurance coverage and use of waivers.

5.1.2 Off-Campus Field Trips & Activities

The Risk Management Form 801: Field Trips & Electives Planning and Approval Program form (see above) must be filled out if you are Facilitating any off-campus activities that are part of McMaster academic for credit courses or programs (Community Exposure).

- **[Risk Management Form 801: Field Trips & Electives Planning and Approval Program](#)**: McMaster program that outlines the various steps that instructors must make for local (and international) trips.

While not all community-engaged education activities taking place off campus are of low risk, most will follow the low risk guidelines outlined in the [Planning and Approval Guidelines](#). Most often your responsibilities as an instructor include the following:

- Ensuring the activity has support for the Chair/Director of the department
- Reviewing the safety travel checklist ([within the Planning and Approval Guideline document](#))
- If at any point the risks associated with the activity change, revisit this process and adjust accordingly
- Note that depending on the risk level of your field trip you may require students to fill out the Declaration of Health Status form ([see page 15 of Risk Management Form 801](#)).

Once you have read the guidelines and thought about what is appropriate you must have the following approval forms:

- **[Risk Management Form 801: Approval Form](#)**: The 1-page field trip approval form that must be signed by your department chair/director and then submitted by EOHSS.
- **[Risk Management Form 801 Statement of Responsibilities Checklist](#)**: The 1-page checklist that you must hand in with the *RMM 801 Field Trip Approval Form* that demonstrates you've done your due diligence.

5.1.3 Unpaid Student Work Placement

This section covers information for course(s) or programs that include unpaid student work placements in the local community. Students that go on unpaid placements are eligible for

Ministry (MAESD) insurance coverage (WSIA (Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997) and Chubb Insurance (Private Insurance Company retained by the Government of Ontario). **The following conditions must be met for insurance eligibility:**

- **Placement is unpaid.** The Placement is considered to be unpaid even if the Student Trainee receives one or more of the following types of payment:
 - Social assistance benefits (e.g. through Ontario Works Program);
 - Training allowances;
 - Honoraria;
 - Reimbursement of expenses; and
 - Stipends or any money paid to the student trained by the training agency
- **The Placement, which may be required or optional, is part of an Approved Program,** includes a formal assessment component, and successful completion of the placement is recognized by the Training Agency for the purposes of the completion of the Approved Program.
- **The Placement is authorized by the Training agency**
- **The Placement is a non-classroom activity.** Any in-class portion of a training program that occurs at the Training Agency is not an Unpaid Work Placement.

As per the Ministry's guidelines, McMaster is responsible for arranging students unpaid work placement(s) and providing students and employers with the relevant information and documentation prior to the commencement of an unpaid work placement. **Depending on how your course/program is organized, the placement coordinator (this role may be your role), is thus responsible for the following:**

- **Communicate (all letters/declarations) the roles and responsibilities of the student(s), the employer(s) and the institution(s).**
 - **Student Placement: Letter to Unpaid Placement Employer:** Letter that must be signed by the placement supervisor and submitted to placement coordinator that discusses placement's responsibilities regarding workplace insurance. This letter notes that MAESD provides WSIB coverage, ensuring that the placement supervisor understands that their WSIB premiums will not be impacted by the placement.
 - **Student Placement: Student Declaration of Understanding:** Required letter to be provided to the placement supervisor, signed by student, that outlines the responsibilities and understanding of the student regarding workplace insurance.
- **In the event of an injury or disease the University (placement coordinator) will:**
 - Complete the Postsecondary Student Unpaid Work Placement Workplace Insurance Claim Form and submit it to WSIB and MAESD in the event of an injury/disease.
 - Submit source documentation to the Ministry for WSIB payment/reimbursement via fax or e-mail:
 - MAESD Claim Form
 - WSIB Form 7

- Letter of authorization to represent the employer

The [McMaster School of Social Work's Field Practice Manual](#) provides additional risk management insights for those developing placement-based programs—see pages 69-70 within the manual for details.

5.1.4 Academic Accommodations of Students with Disabilities

On September 1, 2017, the Policy for *Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities*²⁶ was revised to ensure that McMaster continues to be a place where, based on the principles of equitable access and individual dignity, Academic Accommodation is a shared responsibility.

- [McMaster Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#): McMaster Policy that outlines responsibilities regarding student accommodations.
 - **Appendix C: Off-Site Placement** discusses accommodations in off-campus placements.

As per the policy, a disability includes:

- a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language; and
- d) a mental health disorder/illness, or
- e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act.

For community-engaged education course(s)/programs that have off-campus experiences it is important to be aware of how you may accommodate students with disability should an accommodation be required. For example:

- Ensure that the location you are visiting is accessible
- Ensure you have an accessible vehicle (e.g accessible bus) if the class is travelling to the location together

²⁶ <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf>

5.2 Partnership Development Tools

In this section you will find templates that can be referenced as you develop tools unique to your own partnership development. Please note that not all resources may be applicable for your partnership but they may act as a starting point to fit your needs:

- [Community Partner & Instructor Meeting Agenda](#): Sample agenda that can be adapted to facilitate meetings with the instructor and the community partner to guide a meeting to develop your partnership.
- [Community Partner & Instructor Partnership Agreement](#): Sample partnership agreement that can be adapted that outlines responsibilities and roles of the instructor and community partner and other details regarding the partnership.
- [Student Project Manual](#): Developed within the Faculty of Humanities, this manual serves as a guide for students, academic supervisors, and community partners.

5.3 Classroom Activities, Assignments, and Resources

In this section you will find a variety of templates, activities, rubrics and resources for the classroom that can be referenced as you develop activities within your own course. Please note that not all resources may be applicable for your course but they may act as a starting point to fit your needs:

- [Placement Student Log Sheet \(Developed by the School of Nursing\)](#): A sample log sheet that can be used for students to track down their placement hours. This log sheet is a resource that may be used for students who are in placement to log their hours in the community organization that they will do their community-engaged education placement. Please note that this log sheet is used for Nursing students and thus, it has been created to suit their needs. To ensure that a learning contract between a student, the community partner and yourself is appropriate for your course, changes should be made as needed.
- [Placement Contract Sample \(Developed by the School of Nursing\)](#): A sample contract that can be used for a student placement. This contract is to be used when the community-engaged education component of your course is a placement within a community organization. Please note that this service learning contract is used for Nursing students and thus, it has been created to suit their needs. To ensure that a learning contract between a student, the community partner and yourself is appropriate for your course, changes should be made as needed.
- [Community Partner Evaluation of Students \(Developed by the Academic Sustainability Program\)](#): A rubric that a community partner can use to assess a student's deliverables. This resource is used as an evaluation form that can be filled out by the community partner (note: the Academic Sustainability Program uses the term Community Project Champion (CPC) when referring to community partners for their program) to evaluate

the student's project objectives and provides some space for reflection on how students performed throughout the term.

- **[Community-Engaged Project Plan Template](#) (Developed by the Academic Sustainability Program):** A template that students can submit that outlines their plan for their community-engaged project. This rubric can be used when setting up a term community-engaged project where students are working with a community partner. These project plan allows students to set goals for their project and then assess the evaluation of their goals once the project has come to completion. Please note that this log sheet is used for Sustainability students and thus, it has been created to suit their needs. To ensure that a Project plan between a student, the community partner and yourself is appropriate for your course, changes should be made as needed.
- **[Community-Engaged Project Plan Evaluation Template](#) (Developed by the Academic Sustainability Program):** A rubric that assesses the project plan for the community-engaged education project.
- **[Community-Engaged Project Evaluation Rubric](#) (Developed by the Academic Sustainability Program):** A rubric that assess the final deliverable of a community-engaged project.
- **[Assessment of Student Reflections](#):** Sample rubric and guiding questions that can aid in assessing student reflections.
- **[Reflection Questions for a student](#):** A variety of guiding questions that can be given to students to guide their reflections after a community-engaged experience.

**Do you have comments, questions, or suggestions for additional resources?
Your feedback is appreciated!**

This draft version of the toolkit, published in February 2018, is being shared broadly across the University with those who have an interest in building capacity for community-engaged education. While these pages and the resources that they speak to have been developed based on the guidance of our colleagues, we know that there will likely be gaps in material and resources that, if added, could improve the toolkit in the future.

Please keep this in mind when reading, and **if you have any questions or concerns regarding navigation or toolkit content, please contact McMaster's Office of Community Engagement:**

Office of Community Engagement
Hamilton Hall 103B
905 55 9140 Ext. 26279
community@mcmaster.ca

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