

# FACULTY TEACHING LEARNING CENTER-DEFINITION OF TERMS

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AT GRAND VALLEY

Civic engagement is an activity in which people work to make a positive difference in the life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference. Additionally, civic engagement encompasses actions wherein individuals participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community. (Adapted from Thomas Ehrlich, 2000)

## COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING

GVSU values its connections to, participation with, and responsibility to local communities. We value the collaboration of faculty members, staff members, and students with external partners in addressing mutual interests and community needs. Students are encouraged to take part in various service learning and volunteer opportunities in their communities and abroad. In community-based learning (CBL) students engage in a community experience. A core assumption of CBL is that all partners bring rich knowledge, skills, and other expertise to a problem, research question, or learning goal being addressed.

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*Courses must meet the following criteria to be designated as CBL:*

- **Learning objectives:** The learning objectives in the syllabus articulate the specific interaction with the community partner.
- **Application and integration:** Guided by their instructor and working with a community partner, students engage with a community issue, integrating theory and practice.
- **Reciprocity:** The community experience seeks to offer value to the community partner as well as to the students.
- **Reflection:** Students participate in an articulated reflection process around the ethical and civic dimensions of the community experience, the discipline, and themselves.

We recognize that community-based learning extends beyond academic coursework and may include a field experience, practicum, internship, capstone, research project, clinical, co-op, or co-curricular activity. The experience may be a direct service/ activity that takes place on site, or research or other off-site work that benefits the community partner. A community partner may include a for-profit business or industry, educational institution, health organization, nonprofit organization, government agency, professional association, and/or community group. Communities may be local, regional, state, national, or global.

## CO-CURRICULAR

Co-curricular refers to programs and initiatives that enhance student learning inside and outside the classroom. These programs and initiatives are designed with specific learning outcomes.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement describes the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their communities (local, regional/state, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. (Adapted from the Carnegie Foundation)