ASSOCIATED
COLLEGES OF THE SOUTH

ACS Final Report Form
Grant Cycle August 2021 – August 2022

Due August 15, 2022 by 5 pm EST via email (PDF/Word) to grants@acsouth.edu

- Complete this form in no more than five pages.
- Attach your final financial report in a separate document and submit it along with your report to grants@acsouth.edu.
- Note that portions or the entirety of your final report may be reprinted on the ACS grants webpage.

> Name of project lead: Sascha Goluboff
> Campus: Washington and Lee University
> Project title: Community-Engaged Teaching: A Collaborative Peer Learning Model
>
> Today's date: 5/5/22

I. Project summary
Briefly describe the purpose, intended goals, and major activities of your project.

This project facilitated a peer-learning community for ACS faculty and instructors interested in creating community-engaged learning classes. Often called "learning by doing," community-engaged learning is a recognized high impact experience that goes beyond volunteerism by creating course-based opportunities for students to apply and more fully understand academic knowledge through projects that address genuine community needs.

These virtual meetings trained faculty on the best and most innovative practices in the field, as well as provide them with key resources and connections across institutions to foster professional and institutional growth.

The project included two opportunities for faculty to participate:
1. *Discussion facilitators* (2) who had experience teaching community-engaged learning. These individuals will organize, schedule, and facilitate discussions.
2. *Participants* (11) who were interested in learning more about community-engaged learning in and across their disciplines.

II. Attainment of goals

Explain the steps you took to achieve and evaluate the success of *each* project goal. Provide details regarding the tools and methods used to measure each goal and the extent to which, based on those measurements, each goal was met.

Goal	Learning Strategies	Assessment Methods/Instruments	Outcome
1. Establish a community of ACS faculty who can communicate the nuances of community-engaged learning pedagogy within and across primary disciplines.	The cohort met for an hour and a half twice a month. In preparation for the first monthly meeting, participants completed a set of readings. The meeting consisted of a facilitator-led exploration of the readings followed by break-out rooms where participants discuss how the material shared relates to their planned community-engaged-learning course. August – Fundamentals of CEL September – Syllabus October – Community Partnerships November – Assignments January – Reflection February- Assessing Learning March- Scholarship of Engagement April- Showcase of projects	Pre/Post test evaluating participant's understanding of CEL.	100% of participants will demonstrate an increased understanding of CEL best practices. **This goal was met.** 100% of participants scored higher competencies at the end of the learning community. The average total increase in scores was 25 points.
2. Participants will apply CEL principles and best practices to their courses, including: . designing mutually beneficial community-learning partnerships	Each month participants completed an assignment related to the month's theme, which they discussed and evaluated in the meetings.	Each participant will create a portfolio of assignments that will be evaluated by the two facilitators.	100% of participants will demonstrate proficiency in all CEL components as evaluated by the two facilitators.

a. designing CEL course syllabus including assignments and reflection b. assessing student learning through coursework and end of the term evaluations	These assignments were included in their final portfolio. 1. Draft a syllabus for a CEL class that you would like to teach 2. Create a list of community partners in consultation with your Office of Community Engagement. Consider partners that you think would be optimal for your proposed class and describe why. 3. Craft at least one CEL assignment for the proposed class 4. Draft a reflection assignment that would address the CEL goals of the course 5. Create a rubric of how you would grade the assignment you created earlier.If you opt for upgrading, provide a rationale and how you would explain that to the students. Also consider how you would gauge the successful fulfillment of the student learning outcomes for the course. 6. Considering the community-engaged research or scholarship projects shared by Cecilia (pg. 14) , which type fits best with your project? Would your research involve community partners? How would you frame this scholarship?		**Goal was not met.** 9/11 or 82% demonstrated proficiency. One person did not submit a final portfolio at all, and another did not fully meet all requirements for proficiency.

0.　　Participants will critically reflect at the beginning, middle, and end of the experience focusing on their own community-engaged learning pedagogies.	All participants were asked to share their personal goals at the beginning of the experience. We also incorporated group and personal reflection at each meeting. At the end of the experience participants were asked to write a personal reflection on their learning throughout. They were asked to reflect on this prompt: *Consider your own goals for this community of practice. What were these goals? Did this community of practice meet your goals? Why or why not? How will you use the knowledge you've gained through this community of practice?*	Written reflections	100% of participants will critically reflect using the what, so what, now what framework. **Goal was not met.** 8/11 or 73% of participants submitted a final reflection.

III. Impact of project

Our learning community had a strong impact on the faculty who fully participated in the meetings and completed the assignments. As demonstrated in our pre and post assessment, all participants increased their competency in community-engaged learning best practices. Participants represented seven different ACS colleges and universities, and eleven new community-engaged learning classes have been developed or planned.

IV. Consortial (ACS-wide) value of the project

Describe how your project results can or will strengthen ACS, e.g., via the dissemination of a final report, the future training of campus leaders, or the building of an inclusive community of practice.

In this cohort, faculty members have strengthened teaching and scholarship on Community Engaged Learning across the ACS network. Most specifically, cohort members new to CEL became proficient in its pedagogical theory, best practices, and ethics. They have completed the cohort with an enthusiasm to add CEL components to their existing classes or create new courses built around the CEL curriculum. Those participants who were more experienced in CEL gained additional frameworks for thinking about course formats, student assignments, and grading rubrics, and they developed a revitalized sense of purpose for teaching CEL. Mostly everyone indicated that they will pass on the information they learned through workshops at their universities or give presentations at conferences. All of these outcomes will increase CEL in the ACS network.

V. Lessons Learned

Describe the surprises, challenges, and lessons learned during the project, e.g., is there something you are very glad you did or would do differently? Did you face obstacles that called for creative problem-solving? What would have made the project even more successful?

<u>What went well</u>
We were glad that we facilitated this cohort together since we contributed different skills and experiences. We evenly shared the responsibilities.

The structure of the monthly meetings (introductory readings/lecture followed by a second session reviewing an associated assignment) worked effectively. Participants experienced the following positive outcomes:
- Making connections with a community of like-minded scholars
- Learning rubrics for grading and presentation/publication
- Completing assignments that built on previous ones
- Readings texts that provided robust touchstones
- Receiving constructive feedback on assignments

<u>Obstacles faced</u>

In the interim report, we noted that we as facilitators needed to do more deliberate work to create a feeling of community, so as to engender more fluid conversations and deeper connections among participants. We initiated a new icebreaker and dialogue section at the beginning of each session to help with this, as well as provided participants with more time in their breakout rooms for non-goal related conversations. While we believe this was successful, one of the downsides to discussion groups was the pairing of individuals – some of whom were prepared and others who were not.

And this gets into another challenge we faced. Not all faculty had the time to do the readings and assignments. We should have realized this earlier and found ways to be more flexible for faculty who have other things come up, and we could have created ways to assess how much work they've done for the session so as to properly pair up participants.

Finally, we didn't think through the fact that we would have participants with different levels of experience, and if we do this cohort again, we would find ways to address these different levels through varying activities.

Surprises
Through feedback, we realized that participants really enjoyed the guest speakers, and they wanted additional time spent on grading rubrics and publication possibilities. We also realized that participants wanted more interactive media like quick surveys and video clips.

VI. Next Steps
Explain what you intend to do with/how to you intend to use or build on the results of your project.

We plan to keep the Box folder active with their final projects, the monthly readings, lecture texts, and assignment prompts. We plan on reconvening in the fall to check in. Sascha plans on using the structure and lessons learned to create an in-person CEL cohort for new faculty at Washington and Lee.

VII. Feedback/suggestions for the ACS grant program (optional)

We could have used more help from ACS in recruiting participants from all the affiliated schools. The online video didn't attract much interest, so we had to use our own networks to find people, which really mitigates a main purpose of the ACS grant.