



Operational Definitions for Community Engagement

Civic Engagement involves working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the knowledge, skills, values, and motivations to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes. (Ehrlich, 2000)

Community is a broad term used to define groups of people external to campus, whether they are stakeholders, interest groups, or citizen groups. A community may be a geographic location (community of place), a community of similar interest (community of practice), or a community of affiliation or identity. Communities can, therefore, be geographical, cultural, linguistic, religious, generational, national, social, economic, or professional. ([Penn State Department of Agricultural Sciences](#))

Community Engagement is, at its best, made up of reciprocal collaborations with local, regional, national, and global communities for the purpose of a mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources. College-community partnerships enrich scholarship, research and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good by effecting positive change in the civic and cultural life of our communities.

Engagement entails: (a) purposeful collaboration of the college with the communities external to the college; and (b) mutual benefits from such collaboration.

Community engagement is a term that can be used to encompass a broad category of specific forms of engagement. Examples of specific engagement activities include, but are not limited to, community-based research, clinic services, board membership, and service-learning.

Community-Engaged Economic Development initiatives are designed with community and business leaders to revitalize communities, develop, and rehabilitate affordable housing, promote sustainability, attract investments, build wealth, encourage entrepreneurship, and create jobs. (* adapted from [Community Action Partnership](#))

Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning is a pedagogical approach that connects the university and community in the broadening and sharing of knowledge to deepen academic and civic learning. Community-engaged teaching and learning integrates service in the academic curriculum in order to experientially teach course content and active citizenship skills. This term is often used interchangeably with service-learning. ([Marquette University](#))

Community-Based Research is a participatory and action research methodology. It is a collaborative process between the researcher and community partner that creates and disseminates knowledge and creative expression with the goal of contributing to the discipline and strengthening the well-being of the community. Community-based research identifies the assets of all stakeholders and incorporates them in the design and conduct of the different phases of the research process. ([Marquette University](#))

Community Partners are individuals and/or entities within the community that accurately represent its interests, needs, and/or concerns because they are knowledgeable and empowered to represent the community. (Sadler, L. S., Updegrove, S., Bouregy, S., Breny-Bontempi, J., D'Agostino, G., Dickey-Saucier, L., ... (2009))

Community Service is often unidirectional application and provision of institutional resources, knowledge, or services that directly benefits community individuals, groups, organizations, and/or the public in general. Examples include benefit concerts, student volunteers, public lectures, or health fairs. ([Marquette University](#), Janke & Clayton, 2012)

Engaged Scholarship is the co-creation of knowledge that shifts the position of students and community groups from knowledge consumers to knowledge producers and partners in problem-solving. Engaged scholarship is the generation of new knowledge through the combining of academic knowledge and community-based knowledge, eliminating a hierarchy of knowledge and a one-way flow of knowledge outward from the college or university. (Brown University's College and University Engagement Initiative)

Participation in External Boards, Chambers, and Coalitions - representing Salt Lake Community College in your service to a board, chamber, or coalition.

Partnerships are sustained relationships between institutions, individuals, or communities (*see community partner definition*) for the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration and application of knowledge, information, and resources. Examples are research, capacity building, or economic development. ([Marquette University](#))

Pathways of Public Service is an approach that describes a range of engagement types with the goal of advancing the common good.

- *Community Engaged Learning and Research* - Connecting coursework and academic research to community-identified concerns to enrich knowledge and inform action on social issues.
- *Community Organizing and Activism* - Involving, educating, and mobilizing individual or collective action to influence or persuade others.

- *Direct Service* - Working to address the immediate needs of individuals or a community, often involving contact with the people or places being served.
- *Philanthropy* - Donating or using private funds or charitable contributions from individuals or institutions to contribute to the public good.
- *Policy and Governance* - Participating in political processes, policymaking, and public governance.
- *Social Entrepreneurship and Corporate Social Responsibility* - Using ethical business or private sector approaches to create or expand market-oriented responses to social or environmental problems.

(*Adapted from [Pathways of Public Service, in partnership with the Haas Center for Public Service, Stanford University](#))

Place-Based Community Engagement (PBCE) is a long-term, university-wide commitment to partner with residents, organizations, and other leaders to focus equally on campus and community impact within a clearly defined geographic area. This definition of PBCE includes a number of key components: 1. a geographically defined focus, 2. equal emphasis on campus and community (50/50 proposition), 3. long-term vision and commitment, 4. university-wide engagement that animates the mission and develops the institution, and 5. drawing upon collective impact. (Yamamura & Koth, 2018)

Public Scholarship encompasses diverse modes of creating and circulating knowledge for and with the public (external to the college). It often involves mutually beneficial partnerships between higher education and organizations in the public and private sectors. Its goals include enriching research, creative activity, and public knowledge; enhancing curriculum, teaching, and learning; preparing educated and engaged citizens; strengthening democratic values and civic responsibility; addressing and helping to solve critical social problems; and contributing to the public good. (<https://imaginingamerica.org/>)

Reciprocity is the continuous and intentional practice of valuing and drawing on the various forms of knowledge, resources, and other assets that each person contributes to the shared activity and outcomes to a degree that the experience is felt by all to be equitable. (adapted from Janke from Janke & Clayton, 2012)

Service-Learning is a pedagogy that incorporates critical reflective thinking and civic engagement into academic coursework by means of integrating service opportunities with nonprofits, governmental, and/or educational community partners. Service-learning involves students in activities that attend to local needs while developing their academic skills, increasing their subject matter knowledge, and commitment to their communities. This term is often used interchangeable with community-engaged learning. ([SLCC Service-Learning](#))