

HVERFORD

Institutional Effectiveness Committee Civic Engagement at Haverford College Communities as Classrooms

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Working Group:

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A. Introduction

There are a number of ways to learn, and in the traditional college setting, students learn through reading, discussions, writing, listening, and discovery-based approaches. They also learn through hands-on experiences, and in the arts, for example, performances, artwork, and composition are integral to the educational process. For the natural sciences, laboratory work is essential for reinforcing concepts or pushing the boundaries of scientific theories. The IEC working group focused on yet another mode of learning, experiential learning ('learning from experience') where students can gain additional knowledge, insight and values from direct experiences outside the traditional academic setting. Students interact with, and in some cases live within, communities to learn from the people and organizations in these communities. They witness first hand how classroom theories and discussions apply to real world situations, and how they, as citizens, and future leaders, could have a productive and positive impact through community partnerships.

There are a number of approaches to experiential learning, and some of the more prevalent methodologies include Civic Engagement (CE), Community Based Learning (CBL), Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility (CESR), Service Learning (SL) and Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR).

Civic Engagement (CE) involves working with communities to identify and address problems by establishing vibrant partnerships with community members and organizations that would be genuinely collaborative and empowering. Goals would include fostering higher levels of civic knowledge and skills, a broader capacity to engage diverse perspectives and populations, a more sophisticated ability to reflect on existing social, economic, cultural, and political structures and

processes, and a deeper desire to become more active and constructive citizens in the life of a community.

Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility (CESR), a term that seems to be replacing Community Based Learning (CBL) as the nomenclature of choice, is a pedagogical approach in which faculty members identify avenues through which students can partner with community based organizations to identify ideas, issues, and challenges that can be addressed through theory and practice. CESR initiatives seek to establish vibrant and sustainable collaborations with community members and organizations that not only extend students' theoretical purview and practical experience, but also have a productive impact on the community. Goals would include fostering higher levels of civic knowledge and skills, a broader capacity to engage diverse perspectives and populations, a more sophisticated ability to reflect on existing social, economic, cultural, and political structures and processes, and a deeper desire to become more active and constructive citizens in the life of a community. CESR differs from earlier iterations of Community-Based Learning (CBL) in highlighting both the need for critical reflection on the part of students and a move to work more actively with community members and organizations in assessing the success of a project or partnership.

Service Learning facilitates student academic learning through meaningful service experiences, which encourage and enable faculty and students to positively impact the community. Lastly, Community Service covers a much wider range of student engagement, from individual events where a student may devote several hours per week, a weekend or an afternoon to ongoing individual working and mentoring relationships, to more sustained partnerships with community based organizations that involve the coordinated efforts of many students and offices on campus. These activities provide important opportunities for the students, but are not usually aligned with a student's academic trajectory.

Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) involves collaborative research projects that focus on issues of significant importance to communities, and brings together researchers, representatives from organizations and community members as equitable partners to increase knowledge, advance policy and affect positive social change.

Classrooms serve as crucibles for ideas and discussions based on critical reading and analysis and writing. However, seeing theory in practice first-hand by confronting and working with others to recognize and address problems and possibilities in specific contexts, and critically reflecting on those experiences can enhance the traditional modes of learning and help to enrich the undergraduate education. CESR/Community Based Learning/Civic Engagement and Service Learning have gained prominence in university and college settings because of the important civic values and educational experiences they provide for students.

B. Working Group Initiatives

I. Inventory of Activities

The first task for the IEC working group was to create an inventory of Haverford College's current Civic Engagement projects and opportunities. The working group contacted all faculty members (via email), the three Academic Centers, Eighth Dimension, the Pre-Health Office, CCPA (Center for Career and Professional Advising), Athletics and various staff members to learn about Community Based Learning/Civic Engagement, Service Learning and Community Service projects on campus. The information gathered from the various constituencies revealed that Haverford College is actively involved in these areas at the local, national and global level. Below is a *snapshot*, and not a complete list, of the activities that occur through College sponsored programs, offices, groups, and individual faculty members. (The IEC working group has maintained detailed inventories, but will highlight only some of the projects and activities, and provide summaries, where appropriate.)

The three Academic Centers--the Koshland Integrated Natural Science Center (KINSC), the Hurford Center for the Arts and Humanities (HCAH) and in particular, the Center for Peace and Global Citizenship (CPGC)--supported domestic and international internships, Service Learning projects, off-campus conferences and workshops, student and faculty research, campus events, Community Based Learning courses, speakers and symposia, which focus on issues of social justice with local and global significance. Projects included participating in the launch of a computer center in rural Ghana; promoting equal opportunities for children with special needs in Varna, Bulgaria; performing research on biofuels in Brazil; studying cervical cancer as a cultural construct in Managua, Nicaragua; exploring methods for preventing and responding to violence against Native American women in South Dakota and broadening educational opportunities for low-income middle school students in Philadelphia. In 2012-2013, over 129 Haverford students were involved in internships in the United States and abroad.

Eighth Dimension, founded in 1978, is Haverford's Office of Community Service. It provides opportunities to all members of the College, and promotes service and experiential learning as part of a liberal arts education. In the academic year 2012-2013, hundreds of students participated in various projects and assisted organizations, including Philabundance, Weavers Way Community Programs, Neighbors in Action, AIDS Service Network, Oxfam Hunger Auction, Street Outreach, and Housing Ownership Assistance Program (HOAP). For the past two years, Eighth Dimension has been working closely with Customs through the Ambassadors of Multicultural Awareness who facilitate service and experiential learning opportunities for first-year students.

Haverford undergraduates served as tutors and laboratory teachers in The Mentoring And Student Teaching program (MAST), a long-standing outreach program that provides science laboratory experiences and writing tutorials for 60 Philadelphia area high school and middle school students who come from backgrounds traditionally underrepresented in the sciences. Eight upperclass students served as science and writing coordinators, while over 40 Haverford (and Bryn Mawr) students participated as writing tutors and laboratory assistants.

Haverford House, a College-sponsored program in which six young alumni live together in West Philadelphia and work at non-profit organizations, organized a variety of projects designed to deepen the relationship between the campus and the region. Some of these endeavors included a reading group for undergraduates to learn about restorative justice and to volunteer alongside project leaders who are men incarcerated at Graterford prison, an athletic enrichment program fostering the values of collaboration, mutual respect and the spirit of the game through Ultimate Frisbee at a Community Partnership School in North Philadelphia, and a panel discussion on homelessness in Philadelphia featuring activists and academics.

In 2012-2013, Haverford student-athletes participated in a variety of Community Service activities and Civic Engagement projects as teams and as a collective group. The men's lacrosse team participated in Books for Breast Cancer, and L.E.A.P.S. for inner city youth (Lacrosse.Education.Attitude.Perserverance.Success). The baseball team ran a holiday toy drive to benefit Support Center for Child Advocates in Philadelphia, and the women's basketball team helped to organize and staff the ALS Billy Lake Marathon for the ALS Philadelphia Chapter/Educational Program. Collectively, 200 Haverford student athletes assisted the Special Olympics at Villanova University, and all Haverford student-athletes participated in the Thanksgiving Food Drive for Community Action Agency of Delaware County.

II. Civic Engagement in the Curriculum

At least twenty academic courses in the Haverford curriculum incorporate some form of CESR/CBL or Service Learning. In Shannon Mudd's Economics 202 course, 'Impact Investing, Theory and Practice,' students attend monthly Investors' Circle (IC) meetings, an impact angel network, to hear pitches by outside entrepreneurs seeking investment for their fledgling projects. The students screen the projects, participate in the due diligence process, and then make a recommendation to an alumnus's foundation for the best investment opportunity. Class meetings include lectures, guest speakers, case work, and group work on the investment process. The students end the semester with presentations to an Investment Advisory Council comprised of alumni with professional impact investment backgrounds.

In Sorelle Friedler's Computer Science 207 course, 'Mobile Development for Social Change,' students develop an Android application ('app') for a non-profit organization. The students in the class have four scheduled meetings with their non-profit group for periodic project checkpoints. At the end of the semester, each student presents his/her work to the class and provides a demonstration of the newly developed app. In addition, the students evaluate the non-profit organization's satisfaction with the customized app based on feedback from ten users.

Steve McGovern teaches Political Science 325, 'Grassroots Politics in Philadelphia' in which the students examine the inner workings of community organizing and grassroots advocacy to empower ordinary people. Along with weekly class meetings to discuss and analyze assigned readings on the theory and practice of community organizing, each student participates in an internship in Philadelphia with a community-based organization or public interest group concerned with popular mobilization around issues related to housing and community development, economic development, education, immigrants' rights, domestic violence, criminal

justice, and poverty.

Carol Schilling in the Independent College Programs Department offers a class called ‘Bodies of Injustice: Health, Illness and Healing in Contexts of Inequality.’ Students use course readings and discussions to more fully understand their internship experiences and to clarify their aspirations for future work towards social justice. The course addresses the social injustices of health, illness, and healing from multiple disciplinary perspectives, and explores how these issues manifest in the United States and in other countries. The students conclude their studies by examining models for collaboration with communities to deliver ethically sound, compassionate, and effective health care.

Independent College Programs and the Center for Peace and Global Citizenship support a course in ‘Restorative Justice: Designing Justice, Designing Spaces’ which has been taught for over six years by Barbara Toews. Haverford and Bryn Mawr students begin with an introduction to the restorative justice philosophy and practice, and its potential to influence the design of justice settings, including prisons. Readings focus on restorative justice, environmental psychology and design. A key component of the class includes joint sessions with incarcerated students inside a jail.

Students in Kaye Edwards’ “Reproductive Health and Justice” seminar traveled to Nicaragua for a 10-day educational delegation, where they dialogued with health care providers, grassroots activists, and government officials to learn about programs that are improving maternal health outcomes, reducing domestic violence, increasing cervical cancer screening, and providing sex education and family planning services in rural and urban communities. In addition, some students in Edwards’ “Violence and Public Health” class complete training with the Montgomery Women’s Center to respond to domestic violence hot-line calls or work with staff and patients at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Philadelphia, while some students in her “Quaker Social Witness” course train to become AVP (Alternatives to Violence Project) facilitators or work with the Friends Committee on National Legislation to learn lobbying skills to talk with their Congressional representatives about peace and justice legislation.

In Paul Farber’s Writing Course 159, “Memory, Monuments, and Urban Space,” the students formed a partnership with the Mural Arts Program in Philadelphia, at the Southeast by Southeast worksite, and they tutored high school students at the storefront in SE Philadelphia. The students later joined a discussion with several professional guests who combine art and activism in their work including Chris Bartlett of William Way LGBT Center and photographer Jamel Shabazz.

The Bryn Mawr-Haverford Bi-Co Education program is based on the philosophy that people of all ages learn through action and reflection, dialogue and silence, collaboration and struggle. Faculty members draw on and integrate students’ multiple intelligences, personal experience, and cultural knowledge by including them within the curriculum in order to enrich students’ inquiries and equip them to do so with the learners they serve. In keeping with the progressive philosophy of the program, each bi-college education course includes a field component through which students are taught to integrate academic and experiential knowledge, theory and practice, in the classroom and beyond it.

Tom Lloyd tours internationally with the students who enroll in his Haverford Chamber singers

course in the Music Department. The undergraduates participate in international cultural exchange opportunities and at a more local level, they perform concerts for underserved audiences such as the developmentally disabled children at St Edmonds Home in Villanova and homeless families at the St. Barnabas Mission in West Philadelphia.

There are other existing courses, in addition to the ones summarized here, which would qualify as CESR/CBL courses; moreover, the establishment of a vigorous Civic Engagement initiative at the College could likely stimulate additional faculty members to integrate a CESR/CBL component to their courses over time.

III. Senior Capstone Work

Close examination of the senior thesis abstract books indicates that approximately a dozen Haverford seniors each year, mainly social science majors, (Anthropology, Sociology and Political Science), and a few Humanities (Fine Arts) and Natural Science majors (Chemistry and Computer Science), collaborate with outside communities to incorporate civic engagement research as part of their senior thesis projects.

IV. Benchmarking

Members of the working group reviewed the websites of peer institutions to assess their involvement with CESR and/or Community-Based Learning. This was not an exhaustive, systematic analysis, but an informal review of two to three dozen liberal arts colleges that are comparable to Haverford.

Civic Engagement/Community-Based Learning (CE/CBL) is a significant presence at many leading liberal arts colleges, but certainly not all. Moreover, among colleges that do feature CE/CBL on their websites, there is considerable variation in quality. Many colleges have established in recent years a central office to coordinate CE/CBL programs, typically through an entity such as a “Center for Civic Engagement” (cf. Hobart & William Smith; Macalester; Williams; and Franklin & Marshall). Such Centers tend to have a dedicated staff of two to five people, and in some cases, more. Websites for these Centers are most often found through links on the College’s primary webpage like “Campus Life” or “Student Life.” In a few instances, however, the link to CE/CBL is through “Academics” (cf. Connecticut; Smith). That distinction may reveal much about how a college views CE/CBL in terms of its overall mission.

Websites for Centers of Civic Engagement are commonly subdivided into a number of categories, each with its own link. Most contain a subdivision that provides a list of academic courses with a significant CE/CBL component by discipline or issue area, and often list courses offered during the current semester and in recent semesters. The courses purport to satisfy a particular definition of Civic Engagement or Community-Based Learning, but that definition can be rather amorphous. As a result, while some courses clearly fit the definition, others seem to be a stretch. The number of courses listed varies quite a bit but there are usually at least a dozen. Some disciplines are regularly represented (e.g. education, sociology).

Another subdivision that appears in practically every website for a Center for Civic Engagement concerns “Co-Curricular Activities.” This tends to be a large category that is further subdivided into separate links for internships, externships, service learning, and study away. Yet another common subdivision covers “Research,” which provides information on opportunities for rigorous scholarship for both faculty and students that are consistent with the Center’s mission regarding CE/CBL. There is often an emphasis here on faculty-student collaboration.

One clear virtue of these Centers for Civic Engagement is that there is one central place where faculty, students, and staff can go to learn about a wide variety of courses, programs, activities, and research possibilities. In addition, colleges with well-established Centers offer a sense of cohesion that stands in contrast to the situation at Haverford with its multiple silos approach to CE/CBL. At some colleges, furthermore, there is an impressive effort to develop strong connections between curricular and co-curricular offerings and sustained relationships with community partners. Finally, some Centers (cf. Amherst and Bryn Mawr) feature a prominent leadership role for students in terms of developing liaisons to community-based organizations, brainstorming to create new and innovative community initiatives, and recruiting volunteers.

Not surprisingly, colleges with well-established and well-resourced Centers are at the forefront in developing innovative programs for CE/CBL. For example, Amherst runs three-day community engagement orientation trips in the surrounding region for new students interested in CE/CBL. Williams offers a number of robust study-away programs (e.g. Teach NYC during winter break; Capetown Policy in Action; Mystic/Williams). Some colleges have developed CE/CBL athletic programs that are far more extensive than what is customary (e.g. athletic teams establishing ongoing relationships with underserved schools and their corresponding athletic team).

One somewhat surprising finding concerns the lack of curricular or co-curricular requirements regarding CE/CBL. Although there has been a noticeable trend among liberal arts colleges to expand CE/CBL offerings during the past decade, very few have gone so far as to adopt a formal curricular or co-curricular *requirement*. And given that many colleges have revised their General Education requirements in recent years, it is interesting that they have stopped short of taking that step. One possible reason may be a lack of course offerings that would satisfy a CE/CBL curricular requirement.

C. Proposed Initiatives

After compiling and analyzing the above information, the IEC working group identified several areas for improvement, and offers the following suggestions for short term and long term strategies:

I. Centralized Office/Location

Because there are many activities spread among various constituencies, it is clear that the College should marshal resources and coordinate activities. A short term strategy would be to first create a Civic Engagement website, with links to the three academic centers, College offices, (Eighth Dimension, CCPA, Athletics, etc.) and curricular programs that offer and support community based learning/civic engagement activities. The College should also foster collaboration and communication among these various constituents to build synergistic relationships and structures. In the long term, the working group recommends that the College create a centralized office, possibly the Center for Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility (CCESR), which would serve as a coordination nucleus to track activities, support faculty initiatives, build networks, and develop robust partnerships with community members, institutions, agencies and umbrella organizations. It would heighten the visibility of the myriad curricular and co-curricular offerings, and it could serve as spawning ground for new initiatives by faculty, students, and community organizations. The Center also would assess the impact of the CESR activities in terms of student learning outcomes, employment opportunities post-Haverford, and ultimate career paths, in addition to working with the communities to assess CESR's impact on the communities. This office should be coordinated and led by a Director, who would be a Dean-level administrator.

Having a Center for Civic Engagement and Social Responsibility (CCESR) will provide one central place where faculty, students, and staff can go to learn about the wide variety of courses, programs, activities, and research possibilities currently offered. Peer Institutions with well-established Centers offer a sense of cohesion that stands in contrast to Haverford with its multiple-silo approach. At some colleges, there is an impressive effort to develop strong connections between curricular and co-curricular offerings and sustained relationships with community partners; some also feature a prominent leadership role for students in terms of developing liaisons to community-based organizations, brainstorming new and innovative community initiatives, and recruiting volunteers.

II. Civic Engagement Council

The working group also suggests that Haverford create a Civic Engagement Council, and invite students, alumni, community organizations, faculty and staff to serve on this Council to discuss ideas, develop initiatives and assess projects.

III. Opportunities for Reflection, Analysis, Discussion,

An *essential* element for an educationally powerful CESR project is dedicated time for skillfully

facilitated reflection, discussion, reading and analysis. Without the critical and conceptual frameworks that enable students to understand the structural underpinnings that create the contexts in which they are working, the meaning and implications of the community work may be lost or misunderstood. For example, CPGC requires all students returning from international or domestic internships to take ICPR301: Human Rights: Development and International Activism; ICPR302: Bodies of Injustice; or a course approved by CPCG staff as providing the necessary constructs in which a student can address the issues encountered during the internship.

While there are many courses in the Haverford College curriculum that focus on theories and conceptual frameworks regarding injustice and social transformation, there are few opportunities to mindfully link these to the experiential opportunities already available on campus. In the short term, the working group proposes other structures to carve out time for reflection: Haverford House Fellows could work with undergraduate students to organize workshops that involve readings and discussion groups; the Academic Centers could sponsor retreats and workshops; student leaders, who have received training and have experience in civic engagement activities, could organize reading discussion groups. This latter model is consistent with the College's initiatives to foster and promote ethical leadership development for Haverford undergraduates. For the long term, it is important that the reflection piece be an essential part of the civic engagement experience, and it is hoped that faculty, in collaboration with students, will play a prominent role in developing or altering existing courses to provide space for reflection and analysis of civic engagement activities. (A TLI workshop for faculty could focus on how to structure such classes, for example.)

IV. Coordinate with Bryn Mawr College to Maximize Opportunities and Efficiency

Bryn Mawr has a well-established, nationally recognized, robust Civic Engagement Office (CEO). Haverford undergraduates currently collaborate with Bryn Mawr undergraduates, graduate students, staff and faculty on a number of projects through the CEO at our partner institution. The IEC working group recommends that we continue in the short term and in the long term to build on this relationship, maximize resources, utilize established expertise, and avoid, where possible, duplication of effort.

Civic Engagement Offices at Peer Institutions (for reference):

Bryn Mawr College

<http://www.brynmawr.edu/ceo/>

Carleton College

<http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/ccce/>

Williams College

<http://learning-in-action.williams.edu/>

Amherst College

<https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/cce>

Proposal for 2014-2015

The working group recommends that President Dan Weiss invite a group of faculty, staff, and students to serve on a Civic Engagement Council in 2014-2015. The major goals of this Council would be to make civic engagement activities more visible to the community, examine how civic engagement can work more effectively and efficiently on campus, and look for ways to encourage and expand civic engagement activities at Haverford College.

Possible Directives for the Council:

- a) Develop a website that would link to
 - Eighth Dimension
 - CPGC
 - HCAH
 - KINSC (MAST Program, in particular)
 - CCPA
 - Curricular Programs/Courses
 - Athletics

This web site could be launched from the Eighth Dimension website to start.

- b) Examine the published information/research about assessment of civic engagement activities and the learning outcomes associated with CE in college curricula. Share the information with the community, particularly the faculty.
- c) Research and discuss various models for reflection, analysis and discussion of CE activities. Propose models that could work well within the Haverford curriculum.
- d) Look into funding opportunities for CE work, and build a resource database. With this information, Centers, College offices and faculty members might be encouraged to engage in CE work if funding is available to support their initiatives.
- e) Continue dialog with Bryn Mawr College's Civic Engagement Office to develop ideas for synergy. Also Council members could visit other colleges and universities that have robust CE programs.
- f) Work with Bi-Co Education faculty to investigate ways the Teaching, Learning Initiative (TLI) can support CE work.
- g) Propose ways to track and report on civic engagement activities in the institution
- h) Propose infrastructure and model for a future centralized office and describe the resources necessary for this Civic Engagement Center to support existing initiatives and help increase participation.

The Council should feel free to consult with faculty, staff and students in the community who have expertise, knowledge, interest and ideas about Civic Engagement.

Suggested Composition of the Civic Engagement Council for 2014-2015

Associate Provost

Jesse Lytle

2-3 faculty members

Kelly Cleary

MariLou Allen

Janice Lion

2-3 undergraduates (could include Eighth Dimension student coordinator, CPGC intern, MAST coordinator, for example)

Julie Sheehan

Suggested consultants could include but are not limited to:

Theresa Tensuan

Haverford House Fellows

HCAH Director

KINSC Director

Athletics Director

John Mosteller

Faculty, those involved in CE activities and those thinking about getting involved.