INTEGRATING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INTO TEACHING & LEARNING THROUGH CBL

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Learning Theory
David Kolb’s Learning Cycle (1981)

Concrete Experience
(designing / having an experience)

Active Experimentation
(planning / trying out what you have learned)

Reflective Observation
(reviewing / reflecting on the experience)

Abstract Conceptualisation
(concluding / learning from the experience)

Graphic from http://www.ldu.leeds.ac.uk/ldu/sddu_multimedia/kolb/static_version.php
Learning Theory

- Dewey (1938): Role of experience in education

- Ibarra (2001): depending upon cultural background and gender, Ibarra argues that students have varying needs of context and collaboration for effective learning to occur.

- Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule (1986): Connected knowing
Research on Student Outcomes

(Eyler, Giles, Stenson, & Gray, 2001).

- Increased academic learning as reported by students and faculty
- Increased complexity of understanding, problem analysis, critical thinking, and cognitive development.
- Reduction in stereotyping and increased cultural and racial understanding
- Increased sense of social responsibility and citizenship
- Increased likelihood of graduating
- Stronger faculty relationships and college satisfaction
- Personal development in numerous arenas.
“Learning begins with curiosity, with wanting to know. As we saw in our survey...students often find the link between learning and doing to be a powerful source of motivation and they recognize the role of service [community engagement] in producing a passion to learn more...this passion for the experience also spills over into the classroom, producing higher levels of engagement in the subject.” (Eyler & Giles, 1999, p. 85).

“Our universities also boast a splendid variety of in-service programs, outreach programs, insertion programs, off-campus contacts, and hands-on courses. These should not be too optional or peripheral, but at the core of every Jesuit university’s program of studies…. Every discipline, beyond its necessary specialization, must engage with human society, human life, and the environment in appropriate ways, cultivating moral concern about how people ought to live together.”

– Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach
Community-based learning (CBL) is a teaching approach that connects classroom learning objectives with civic engagement. Civic engagement occurs through service that meets community-identified needs or through research and experience that holds promise of social or scientific value to the community. In this mutually beneficial process, students are able to gain a deeper understanding of course content by integrating theory with practice, while communities gain access to volunteers, resources, and the wide-ranging research and scholarly expertise housed in the College's many disciplinary departments.

Consistent with the Holy Cross tradition of preparing students for a lifetime of learning and moral citizenship, CBL students at Holy Cross are invited to reflect upon moral and ethical questions of social responsibility while considering how to live purposefully in a manner that enables one’s unique gifts to positively contribute to society.
Themes incorporated into the definition:

- Pedagogical strategy
- Integration of theory with practice
- Reciprocal partnerships
- Reflection
- Variation in how CBL is implemented
Types of Experiential Education

- Experiential Education
- Field work, Practica, Clinicals
- Internships
- Laboratory Experience
- Community-Based Learning
- Community Service
CBL Examples & Variations

- Project-Based: Professor Amanda Luyster’s *Introduction to Visual Arts*

- Placement-Based: Professor Bryan Engelhardt’s *Labor Economics*

- Optional or nonoptional

- Links to Syllabi Databases on our website

- *SL in the Disciplines* Series at Dinand Library
The Donelan Office: A Bridge Facilitating Connections

- Connections between community-based organizations and Holy Cross
- Connections between theory and experience
- Connections between the head, the heart, and the hands in the learning process
- Connections between HC resources and resources needed by CBOs.
Connections between the national dialogue on CBL/Community Engagement and HC

Connections between the knowledge of Worcester community members and knowledge needed by our students and our faculty

Connections between students who have done CBL and students currently doing CBL

Connections between students’ present and their future

Connecting the Jesuit mission to academics.
Implementation of the Vision

- Providing faculty support
- An efficient placement process
- Managing logistical details
- Assessment of impact
- Deep and sustained partnerships
- Communications
- CBL Scholars
- CBL and engaged scholarship
How can you get involved?

- Visit our website at: http://www.academics.holycross.edu/cbl
- Stop by our office: Fenwick 321-323
- E-mail: msbarret@holycross.edu
- Call 508-793-3006
References


