Deepening Campus & Community Collaboration at Lewis

On Tuesday, February 28th, nearly 50 faculty, community partners, administrators, staff, students, and area directors of campus service learning programs gathered at Lewis to explore community engaged learning. The event, *Magnifying the Transformative Potential of Community Engaged Learning*, was designed to create a space for conversation among representatives of community organizations in the region and university constituents interested in growing partnership and making collaboration truly meaningful.

Presenters for the day included Sam Dennison and Carmen Barsody of Faithful Fools Street Ministry, and Dr. Marshall Welch, formerly of St. Mary’s College in Moraga, CA, a Lasallian institution. Faithful Fools is a San Francisco-based organization which accompanies people on the streets through education, research, and connection. The organization has a strong relationship with the University of San Francisco and engages students in their work in masterfully creative ways. Marshall has experience working in higher education with community engaged learning and has developed innovative programs at multiple institutions. He recently published *Engaging Higher Education: Purpose Platforms, and Programs for Community Engagement*, a well-written tool to aid colleges and universities in strengthening and growing their service-oriented programs.

There were four distinct sessions with varying purposes and target audiences throughout the day. Participants explored the many definitions and variations of involvement in the community, such as service learning, volunteerism, direct service, and community engagement, among others. Distinguishing among these methods of connecting university students and community organizations often become points of confusion; it was useful to ensure that in-service participants were using the same language. One of the afternoon sessions provided an opportunity for community partners to caucus, beginning a conversation around the idea of community leaders serving as co-educators in student learning. During this same time frame, staff and faculty of Lewis, and a few other Campus Compact institutions, gathered to consider co-curricular approaches to community collaboration as vital ways to foster a culture of service and engagement on campuses. The day ended with time for brainstorming between community partners, faculty, and staff about the many ideas that emerged as the day unfolded.

The Office of Service Learning team was thrilled to offer such an energizing day of learning and interaction among campus and community constituents. We hope to continue this rich exchange through ongoing faculty and community partner development opportunities each year.

~Dr. Christie Billups & Laura Wilmarth Tyna, Office of Service Learning
Sam Dennison of Faithful Fools sharing the reality of true community engaged learning in the words of Lilla Watson, “If you have come to help me, don’t waste your time. But if your liberation and well-being are bound up with mine, let us work together.”

Dr. Marshall Welch, formerly of St. Mary’s College, Moraga, CA, motivating attendees to anonymously share their own definition of terms around community engaged learning.

Carmen Barsody sharing stories of Faithful Fools’ “Street Retreats”: a time to identify common humanity on the streets of the Tenderloin Neighborhood in San Francisco, CA.
Last fall, I taught a communications class called Community News & Information where students got off campus and into surrounding communities to cover local issues. One example of a project that they produced focused on Syrian refugee families in Rogers Park, IL. We worked with the Syrian Community Network videotaping their mentoring programs and interviewing families in their homes. The footage was used to create news packages about the immigration crisis, personalizing the issue through local family interviews. One student also created a longer documentary piece incorporating an interview with a doctor who helped Syrian refugees working in an underground Turkish hospital.

The students really gave great feedback. Student Ahimme Cazarez said, “Hearing their stories first hand was truly an eye-opening experience that not only changed my perspective on the issue, but also sparked a newfound passion to tell the stories of those suffering from injustice.” Student Patrick O’Carroll said, “All in all this was by far the best class I have taken at Lewis. It broke me out of my comfort zone quicker than I thought possible.”

Another project the students worked on was a senior political forum at the Senior Services Center of Will County. A team of students produced a 20-minute forum moderated by a political science major. A group of senior citizens engaged in a round table discussion about the climate of the 2016 Presidential Election. The segment was aired on LUTN-TV and was very well received.

Students were also paired up with a senior served by the center to create a mini-documentary about the individual’s life juxtaposing his/her interview with old pictures and footage. The interaction between the students and seniors was very impactful. Most students said they really didn’t have much experience with the older generation and enjoyed listening to their stories and insights.

Gina Glasgow, Senior Life Manager at the Senior Services Center of Will County, said, “It was such an uplifting project for the center and for the spirits of the seniors. It really made an impact on them, touching across the generations. I wish we could have touched more of them!”

Overall, it was an incredible experience to witness the students making a difference in their community by covering social justice issues such as the immigration crisis as well as interacting with people they had never encountered before. They demonstrated that they could be agents of change by using their crafts of journalism and video production. It was a very meaningful opportunity for all of those involved.

~Tracy Hemmingway, Assistant Professor of Communications
The Office of Service Learning is excited to be the partner to two College of Business service learning courses: Dr. Jim Krejci’s designated Strategic Management capstone course and Dr. Jim Oakley’s pilot Marketing Strategies course. Dr. Krejci’s students are building a strategic plan for the Office that includes short-term and long-range plans for the expansion of the Office and transition in language from service learning to community engaged learning. Dr. Oakley’s course is enhancing the marketing and branding for the Office of Service Learning including the potential future name of the Office, as the transition is made toward community engaged learning. Additional efforts are being made in the areas of publications, such as a new look for this newsletter, social media, and event structure and advertisement. Two students from each course shared their outlook as service learning neophytes.

Marketing major Elijah Kimbrell is a senior in Dr. Oakley’s course. Elijah described his introduction to service learning as a pleasant surprise, not having taken a service learning course prior and finding on the first day of class that he was going to be participating in service learning. When asked what he liked most thus far about service learning vs. traditional learning, he shared, “This is a great opportunity to apply my studies in the field whereas I’m used to simply reading out of a textbook.” Elijah is most excited about revamping the newsletter to make it more colorful, easy-to-read, and accessible. He also looks forward to gearing up social media for more interaction with both students and faculty. Regarding future plans, Elijah is looking forward to having these created marketing materials to offer future employers as an example of his field experience in addition to his educational experience at Lewis. “It makes me look harder at what type of job I really want after graduation. It makes me prioritize company culture around service to the community.” As a message to other students, Elijah expressed urgency in engaging more students and faculty with service learning saying, “Service learning is an opportunity for busy students to be involved in the community, especially for those students that don’t have time to participate in as many extracurricular organizations as they would like.” How will Elijah measure success of his project? If more students take service learning courses!

As a student in Dr. Krejci’ Strategic Management course, senior and Business Administration major, Taylor Gonzalez, too, has no past experience with service learning and did not know the course was service learning oriented prior to registration. Taylor shared that students would undoubtedly take more service learning courses if they understood just how beneficial service learning outcomes can be saying, “We get to actually help someone… I’m not just focused on copying what’s on the board.” She is most excited about, “…making service learning better known to students and helping the department grow. I want my peers to have this experience too.” As a senior beginning the grueling task of a job search, Taylor plans on including the Office of Service Learning’s Strategic Plan in her portfolio, because, in her own words, “I think it will be beneficial for employers to know that I’ve actually gone through the real life experience of building this plan and have had time to reflect on my experience.” These skills, Taylor is sure, will put her ahead of the hiring curve. When asked about partnering with a university department and non-profits through service learning, Taylor explained that partners, “… have different experience than you and real-life knowledge. We can learn their story and apply it to collective success... We have to let go of bias so we can make change and build trust that will allow us to work with the community and the university in the future.” Taylor would like to see service learning emphasized during the College of Business Ethics Week as a tool for becoming more socially responsible men and women of business. As a closing thought, Taylor emphasized, “Finally, I have the leeway to do the work I’m passionate about. I don’t have a college end-goal of reading PowerPoints. That’s not the real world. Now, I’m gearing up for the real world.”

~Samantha Bluemer, Graduate Assistant to the Office of Service Learning
Relationships are transformative. When educating teachers, we want to help them build relationships not only with schools and other teachers, but also with families and communities raising young people. As a human services professional, education majors are constantly embedded in community organizations known as schools. For initial licensure as a teacher, students generally complete 100 hours of field experiences in schools before a full-time, 16-week student teaching internship the semester before graduation.

However, educational research indicates that family, student, and community knowledge is not fully recognized in schools. Mismatches between communities and schools are one source of underperformance of students from minoritized communities in the United States. As teacher educators, we want to help Lewis University College of Education students recognize and build on the bounty of knowledge K-12 students bring with them to school. One way to do this is to support time embedded in community-run organizations.

The challenge we experience is adding on service hours to an already intense schedule of fieldwork that College of Education students undertake. It is not realistic to create a community engaged experience requiring 20 additional hours of community experience if a candidate is completing a 75-hour field experience during the same semester on top of a full course schedule.

Some programs in the College of Education are considering including community engaged experiences into the required 100 hours of field work; for example, structuring the first 20 hours to be with a non-profit organization and the final 80 hours in a traditional classroom. Another model is to require a 10-hour community experience, allowing students with significant fieldwork responsibilities to use alternate means to complete their hours. In this way, students in ESL/bilingual endorsement courses have partnered with the Glen Ellyn Children’s Resource Center and Valley View School District’s Adult ESL program in the past year. Another strategy used at times is to build in community knowledge projects into course work, requiring students to complete parent or student interviews, or investigating community resources before designing a lesson plan.

Allowing current and future teachers the opportunity to listen to parents and youth can be a life-changing experience. After completing an interview project, one teacher reflected: "Knowing the student and her story more thoroughly will improve my teaching of ESL in that I don’t think I can forget the student’s words about how she felt during the school day with her peers and teacher." Another teacher noted the ways that this type of project helped her rethink her own assumptions, saying, “At first, I had a difficult time getting in touch with ESOL parents and I made the assumption that my students do not have a lot of support at home, but when I made contact with this parent, I learned that this particular student is receiving a lot of support at home.”

~Dr. Laura Quaynor, Assistant Professor of Literacy
Community engagement as a form of service learning offers great opportunities for students, and faculty, to respond to needs within the local community while developing a relationship and spirit of mutual goal setting with community members. The curriculum objectives of the College of Nursing’s senior level community health nursing course are a perfect fit for community experiences that foster community engagement. One particular course objective, to “assume an active role in initiating programs designed to meet the health promotion needs of diverse populations in the community setting” is being met in a unique way by members of one community clinical group. Senior Monserrat Martinez states, “This clinical experience ties in with the course perfectly, namely because it gives us insight into the views of vulnerable members of society.”

For the past several semesters, a group of six to eight student nurses have participated in providing health education for inmates at the DuPage County Correctional Center in Wheaton, IL. In collaboration with JUST of DuPage, a faith-based non-profit social services organization that provides support services such as addiction classes, Bible study, and GED programs, the CONHP developed health empowerment classes for both men and women. With its goal of justice, understanding, service, and teaching. JUST believes empowering people to make positive changes is an important aspect of sharing God’s love. This mission fits extremely well with Lewis’ values of justice and association and makes the collaboration all the more meaningful.

For each of the five weeks of programming, the students assess the needs of the inmates through research and personnel communication. The students then develop curriculum based on what they have learned. Topics generally cover areas such as health literacy and self-advocacy, infection control and infectious diseases, safety and emergency procedures as well as healthy eating. One of the most popular sessions is when hands-only CPR and choking rescue are taught. Comments from the men and women often reflect their appreciation for being able to learn something that may help save a friend or family member’s life. The nursing students often identify the positive effect that this bit of empowerment has on the participants and the students’ weekly reflections often mention how impactful it is to be able to offer some hope and ability that can change someone’s future. “It gave me a sense of accomplishment, like I was helping them or at least giving them some semblance of taking charge of their life,” reflects student Sarah George.

The process of reflection and debriefing is an important aspect of community engaged learning. Faculty also use the reflections to better prepare future nurses for the experience and provide additional support or guidance into the sometimes difficult questions that the interactions bring up. Overall, the several dozen students that have participated in the JUST Health Empowerment classes have had very positive comments and appreciate the ability to help those in unfortunate circumstances to see the possibilities in their future. Maureen Tite explained how the program impacted her personally and as a future nurse, “I love being able to educate a vulnerable population that is so open to education.”

~Nanci Reiland, MSN, RN, Assistant Professor of Nursing
**UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE OF SERVICE LEARNING**

**May Institute**

The Service Learning team is pleased to again offer in-service opportunities during May Institute 2017. While the Faculty Center is still making key decisions about content, our office hopes to offer two activity-based, in-service days for faculty members interested in developing or strengthening service learning courses.

**Day 1**: For faculty who have a course they may be interested in developing into a strong, designated service learning course, the first in-service day will examine and create syllabi which effectively incorporate all aspects of community engaged learning. We will use the rubric developed by Marshall Welch, called OPERA (Objectives, Partnerships, Engagement, Reflection and Assessment), in conjunction with exploring our own rubric and criteria for Lewis designation as touchstones for the day. According to the overall institute schedule, we will ask interested faculty to spend the entire in-service day exploring and applying best practices for service learning syllabus development.

**Day 2**: For faculty and staff who facilitate and accompany community engaged experiences with students, one of the most challenging parts of ensuring that encounters between students and community members are positive and transformative is critical reflection. From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (on to-be-determined date), participants will engage in and be trained to use Peace Circles in classrooms and other community engaged experiences. Circles are very powerful and effective means of more deeply incorporating reflection into service learning courses or in facilitating discussions that are truly insightful and transformative.

Stay tuned for more information and details in the near future. If you are interested, please contact Christie Billups, billupch@lewisu.edu; 815-836-5829.

**Reimagining the Office of Service Learning Webpage**

With title transitions and the addition of a new Graduate Assistant, the Office of Service Learning (OSL) is taking time to update the office’s webpage on the Lewis University website following requests from faculty and students for more online resources. Now, faculty can access copies of pre- and post-surveys online and other Service Learning resources including updated model syllabi for those faculty seeking Service Learning course designation. The OSL’s events are now up-to-date and information regarding student participation in poster presentations at September 2017’s ENGAGE! can be accessed through the website. With an increased demand for digital resources, the OSL is making an earnest effort to better serve faculty, students, and community partners by reintroducing the OSL webpage as a major resource. The OSL is excited to share these changes to the OSL webpage.

Visit http://www.lewisu.edu/servicelearning/index.htm today!

Scan Here
Meet the Interns of Our Community Partners

Name: Jessica Oliver
Major: Environmental Science
Year: Senior
Internship Location: Warren-Sharpe Community Center
Career Goal: Professor of Environmental Science or Yellowstone National Park Restoration Team Member

How has your internship experience changed your perspective on the community?
I didn’t realize how many people were located in a food desert. It was eye-opening to see that so many families do not have access to the fresh foods that I do on a daily basis. It also brings up questions that I have asked myself and would like to ask community leaders as to why this is not a larger priority or why hasn’t more been done to promote change? I feel like as a community, it is everyone’s responsibility to take care of each other and at least provide a place where fresh food is accessible.

How did your internship change your outlook on your discipline?
In some of the classes I have taken here at Lewis, we have addressed the issue of food deserts around the world and how people don’t have access to healthy, fresh foods. It was totally different to see it for yourself. It broke my heart knowing that these children were so enthusiastic about their vegetables but they were not always able to get them.

How did your internship affect your personal development?
I would say this experience has made me more aware of what is going on in my community. It has made me want to take action and do something that could have a positive impact on the community. It has also made me more engaged in my community as to what is going on and what else can be done to assist others.

How has this impacted your job aspirations?
I have always been interested in the food production side of environmental science, but on a larger scale. This has brought my attention to farming on a smaller scale, like a farmer’s market. I think it would be neat to provide fresh and local food to the community, especially in areas where fresh food is hard to find. I know that whatever I choose as a career, I will definitely want to give back and help my community.

~Christina Martinez, Career Advisor and Internship Coordinator for Career Services
Community Lifeline Ministries (CLM) was established in September 2014 to provide outreach programs and services that improve the community’s quality of life in Joliet. According to Lou Ann Johnson, executive director, CLM has three pillar programs – GEMS (after school and summer camp program), Blessing Table (food pantry and soup kitchen), and Sons of Thunder (anti-violence program).

After three semesters of partnering, CLM and Lewis have collaborated in many ways during the past 18 months, beginning with engagement with instructor Lisa O’Toole’s Public Relations Writing course. This introductory-level course provided an opportunity for Lou Ann and her team to develop a newsletter, brochure, informational flyers, and a press release for the GEMS program. After that first engagement, CLM was ready for more and the Office of Service Learning (OSL) staff had been excited to brainstorm and plan 2-3 semesters into the future, strategically identifying courses which will help move forward the organization’s mission and goals.

This semester, CLM is collaborating with the following courses and instructors:

- **Dr. Tennille Allen, Applied Sociology** – 3 groups of students are working on projects, such as curriculum development for the summer GEMS program, developing a parent newsletter with junior high students, and developing a community survey for Blessing Table participants.

- **Dr. Jim Oakley, Marketing Strategy** – a group of 4-5 students is designing and implementing a social media marketing plan for CLM’s Facebook page and website.

- **Dr. Cindy Howard, Computer Infrastructure Capstone** – a team of students is developing a database for capturing student, parent, employee, and volunteer information.

- **Lisa O’Toole, Public Relations Writing** – an individual student is creating a brochure, press release, and newsletter specifically for Blessing Table.

These collaborations clearly result in significant outcomes for CLM, but partnership does not come without its challenges. Lou Ann and her team have to navigate the challenges of meeting around students’ school and work schedules. Additionally, as the relationships are new, faculty haven’t fully involved CLM in course planning related to the projects, recognizing Lou Ann and others as co-educators in student learning. As these connections continue to grow, the OSL staff hopes to make significant gains in this area.

Partnering together has allowed CLM to connect with a new pool of potential volunteers and is providing them with tools for sharing information with financial supporters and constituents. When asked, Lou Ann indicated, “Partnership allows the [Lewis] students to get real ‘on the job’ experience and I get tools and resources for my organization for free. Both partners get the benefit of interacting and sharing ideas.” Here’s hoping that the work contributed by Lewis students and faculty will result in supporting the great efforts of Community Lifeline Ministries on the Southeast side of Joliet!

~Laura Wilmarth Tyna, Director of Service Learning
Sean Ruane of University Ministry shared his experience of turning passion for justice into action during spring 2017’s ENGAGE! premiere TED talks.


Students from Tracy Hemmingsway’s communications course interviewed individuals from the Senior Services Center in Joliet to build mini-documentaries about their lives.

Dr. Livingston visited community partners at the Spring 2017 ENGAGE! and witnessed the powerful learning potential of Community Engaged Learning.
Practicing Faithful Justice: Faith Behind Bars
(THEO 26700.001) Dr. Christie Billups
This course will explore justice as understood through the lens of Christian teachings. Engaged with the community through service learning, the course will examine social realities related to incarceration and the prison system and practical responses to address a variety of concerns affecting today's marginalized and oppressed persons and communities.

Cultural Diversity and Intergroup Relations
(SOCI 29000.005) Dr. Jennifer Buntin
Based on the Lewis University Mission ideals, especially those of knowledge, association, and justice, the primary goal of this course is to give students an understanding of the roles that race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability play in the social inequality experienced within the United States.

Foundations of Peace Studies
(THEO 25000.001) Dr. James Burke
This course provides an overview of peace studies which examines human conflict and its peaceful transformation. Drawing from Catholic social teaching's imperatives, the emphasis will be on acquiring a just peace lens in order to do social analysis through service learning and civic engagement.

Introduction to Professional Writing
(ENGL 30000.001) Dr. Jennifer Consilio
This course teaches the rhetorical principles and writing practices necessary for producing effective business documents and individual and collaborative projects in professional contexts while exploring the rhetorical principles that help shape business writing ethically, for multiple audiences, and in a variety of professional situations.

Software Systems Capstone
(CPSC 49200.001) Dr. Cindy Howard
This course will require students to incorporate knowledge from other core computer science courses to design, implement, and test a large scale software project. Students will gain experience in software development in the context of a software project that benefits the community.

Strategic Management
(BSAD 46000.001) Dr. James Krejci
This is the capstone, integrative course for graduating business administration students. Students use all the knowledge acquired from prior business courses, coupled with new strategic-management techniques learned, to chart the future direction of different organizations.

State & Local Government
(POLS 21000.001) Dr. Laurette Liesen
This course will examine state and local governments in the United States. Students will learn about political structures and environments, how interest groups and political parties operate within the states, how the executive, legislative, and judicial branches operate at the state and local level, and the policies and issues that are impacting the states today. Students will partner with a local government agency or local charity that works with local governments.

Field Experience 1: Community and School Immersion
(ELED 20000.001) Ann O'Brien
This course helps develop pre-service teachers' abilities to view the total picture of the teaching profession; to foster effective collaborative relationships; to explore characteristics and assets of the communities around schools; to consider the role communities play in educating students and to dialog about social justice within communities of their partner schools.

Methods and Content of Teaching Social Studies
(ELED/SPED 35400.001) Dr. Elizabeth Sturm
This course focuses on instructional strategies, resources, national curriculum standards, and the Illinois Learning Standards and CEC standards for social studies. The emphasis of the course is on understanding and using the interrelationships among history, geography, economics, politics, sociology, anthropology, psychology, and archaeology to develop in students an appreciation and responsibility toward citizenship, multiculturalism, and a democratic society. Methods of differentiating instruction and assessment to meet the individual needs of students will be explored.

Don't hesitate to designate!
Contact Dr. Christie Billups for more information.
Phone: 815-836-5829
Email: billupch@lewisu.edu
Office of Service Learning Contact Info

Send us photos of your service learning experiences! We want to include them in our next newsletter.

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