Partnering academics and community engagement

ANNUAL REPORT 2018-2019

LEWIS UNIVERSITY
When one neighbor helps another, we strengthen our communities.
MISSION

The Office of Community Engaged Learning (OCEL) at Lewis University promotes the common good through the development of academic opportunities to apply learning by meeting real-world needs. In collaboration with community agencies and faculty members, students engage with the community through service, explore realities of justice and injustice, and are transformed by reflecting on their experiences in light of course and program objectives.

FORMS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING

COURSE DESIGNATION

**Project-based Community Engagement**

Project-based community engagement invites students to creatively and collaboratively respond to and facilitate more effective operations and fulfillment of partner goals in tangible ways. Through hands-on projects, students learn experientially while applying what they've learning in the classroom.

**Direct Community Engagement**

Instructors and students collaborate with area organizations toward the fulfillment of some ongoing or specific goals articulated by community partners while deepening student learning through theory and practice integration. This instructional method promotes relationship-building and cultural boundary-crossing which enrich scholarship.

OUTSIDE DESIGNATION

**Community-based Research**

Students being trained to do qualitative and/or quantitative research may provide important partnership with agencies or community members as they engage in inquiry, seek data, and/or perform analysis that will support strategic planning or collaborative processes to address community identified problems.

**Community-based Learning**

Certain professional programs ensure students are prepared to work with the human community, individuals or environment through experiential learning. Examples of these include nursing clinicals, teaching observation, or social work practice.
MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Building relationships is at the core of what we do in the Office of Community Engaged Learning. We connect with faculty members to support their student learning goals, we connect with partners to understand and respond to their priorities, and we connect with students to create opportunities for deep, transformational learning. This year, as we have continued to focus energy on building and sustaining relationships, staff in OCEL have also recognized a call to engage more fully as an office – and as an institution – in the community and region around the University.

In attending a Lasallian formation program recently, I realized that this sense that we should and could do more is deeply grounded in the Lasallian mission. Specifically, it became clear to me that work with the community is an outward manifestation of our mission. As we reflect on the 2018-19 academic year, I am pleased by how deeply aligned our efforts are with these values – justice, association, knowledge, wisdom, and fidelity – and that our work “responds to the real needs of society and the community at large” (Circular 470, 2015).
It has been exciting to observe the growth in number of engaged faculty, but even more so, to explore together with them ways of deepening the quality and nature of our engagement with community partners. One goal of OCEL has been to empower faculty with tools and connections necessary to ensure high quality CEL courses. Both the OCEL Director and Curriculum Development Advisor have met with dozens of faculty, one-on-one and in small groups, over the course of the academic year to explore goals and hopes that they have and to provide them with the practical resources and the community relationships they need to enrich teaching and student learning.

We’ve fostered effective partnerships through the biannual Faculty-Partner Roundtable with the participation of engaged faculty as well as dedicated and emerging community partners. In relationship with the General Education Committee and University Academic Affairs Committee, our office sponsored a workshop in March 2019 on best practices in development and delivery of Interdisciplinary Seminars. We were pleased to welcome Chris Skrable, Director
COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING
FACULTY 2018-2019

Tennille Allen
Sociology

Khaled Alzoubi*
Computer Science

Christie Billups*
Theology/Peace Studies

Jennifer Buntin*
Sociology

James Burke*
Theology/Peace Studies

Jennifer Buss*
Education

Kristin Callahan
Graphic Design

Susan Charnley
Occupational Therapy

Bill Chura*
Biology

Dominic Colonna
Theology

Jennifer Consilio*
English

Erica Davila
Education

Karen Davis
Philosophy

Justin Delacour*
Political Science

John Halloran*
Social Work

Tracy Hemmingway*
Communications

Gretchen Hoge*
Social Work

Cynthia Howard*
Computer Science

Sheila Kennedy*
English

Jung Kim*
Education

Jim Krejci*
Business Administration

Michael Lewis*
Computer Science

Laurette Liesen*
Political Science

Shan Lin
Marketing

Gina Martinez
Computer Engineering

Steve Nawara*
Political Science

Jim Oakley*
Marketing

Ann O’Brien*
Education

Lisa O’Toole*
Communications

Laura Quaynor
Education

Elizabeth Sturm*
Education

Jeff Trask*
Business Administration

Laura Wilmarth Tyna*
Political Science/CEL

*Designated CEL Course Instructors

of Chicago Studies and Experiential Learning at University of Chicago, to facilitate the workshop.

For the third year, OCEL coordinated a session for May Institute focused on getting faculty out into the community. For the second time, we went as a group to spend time in Fairmont, south of Lockport Township. We were exceptionally pleased that over 20 faculty chose to join us there, and the quantity and quality of ideas surfaced were energizing and practicable. Evaluations of the experience were extremely positive.
CEL STUDENTS: LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES & EXPERIENCES
Engaging students and encouraging their leadership in the community is an essential part of the work of the Office of Community Engaged Learning. This engagement has continually grown over the past 2-3 years through the ongoing efforts of OCEL as the office has 1) made intentional efforts to prepare and support student to serve as leaders in the community, and 2) partnered with colleagues across campus to honor students’ demonstrations of leadership. This year was a particularly exciting one with increased numbers of students demonstrating their leadership capacity in a variety of ways.

In 2018-19, through the Community Engaged Learning Facilitator (CELF) program, 10 students paired with academic Community Engaged Learning courses to support a faculty partner and their peers in quality CEL experiences. Together they supported 12 classes, 11 faculty members, 166 students, and 48 community partners during their semester or year as student leaders.

In the Peace Studies Capstone taught by Dr. Christie Billups, four individuals applied their learning from the Peace Studies minor by engaging directly with the Fairmont Community. Students developed a learning garden in the local elementary school, explored the benefits of 501(c)3 designation for the Fairmont Community Partnership Group, worked with leadership from Shiloh Baptist Church to create a transitional housing program for single-parent families, and facilitated mural painting with youth, also with Shiloh Baptist Church. Beginning in January 2018, a commitment was made to continually collaborate with the Fairmont Community through the Capstone course and this growing relationship has deepened student learning and enriched the quality of the partnership.

These growing opportunities for student leadership have challenged OCEL staff to reimagine what is needed to effectively prepare students for community leadership, continually giving new life to the work of the office.
Growing relationships with community partners has been a focus in the Office of Community Engaged Learning for the last four years. As such, it was a busy year of collaborating, connecting, and celebrating!

New last year, OCEL again hosted two Faculty-Partner Roundtable events during the 2018-19 academic year. These programs brought together 18 faculty and 35 partners to brainstorm about ways in which they might collaborate. Bringing these entities together directly allows individual community and faculty partners to share about their priorities and goals, allowing for greater relationship building and, as such, more successful, mutually-beneficial collaboration.

The Community Partner Advisory Board (CPAB), now in its third year, continued to thrive. The group of Lewis and community organization representatives met in August, January, and April to think together about the roles and responsibilities of Lewis University in the Will County region. Members of the Community Engagement Cooperative (CEC), of which OCEL is a part, have utilized CPAB gatherings as opportunities to seek community feedback on institutional plans for the overall engagement of Lewis with regional neighbors. As a result, CEC and OCEL will look to offer new opportunities for community-based organizations to connect with the University in the future.
There were also many opportunities to celebrate the relationship between Lewis and key community partners during the course of the year. These included hosting the second annual Celebration of Community Partnership in collaboration with the CEC, which honored University partner Heart Haven Outreach (H2O) with the De La Salle Medallion for Excellence in Community Partnership.

According to their mission, Heart Haven Outreach (H2O) is an organization that works to “transform the lives of struggling teens through caring relationships and programs that support healthy development.” They impact hundreds of youth and families in Romeoville and Bolingbrook each year through their programming.

With more than five years of close collaboration, H2O has been a wonderful partner, inviting Lewis students into their work to help us educate future social workers, sociologists, and computer scientists, in addition to simply helping Lewis to graduate individuals who care about the common good. The staff have been there to serve the youth in our local community, while also serving our Lewis students in important, often transformational, ways.

The level of relationship with the local community has evolved significantly during recent years. This academic year truly moved some of those connections forward through deepening commitment and communication in ways that will continue to bear fruit on campus and in the local community for many years to come.
CEL NETWORKING: COLLABORATING & BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS
In the process of building relationships, we are finding a myriad of intersecting circles of committees, initiatives and partnerships. The intersections touch on the various aspects of CEL that we hope to emphasize in our work.

Ensuring quality partnership is aided by our leadership in the Community Engagement Cooperative (CEC), the Community Partner Advisory Board (CPAB), and the Community Engaged Learning Team (CELT).

- **CEC** includes several Lewis University offices that team up to support the development of mutually beneficial collaborations and justice-seeking with our neighbors in the region. To this end, students, staff, faculty and alumni engage with the community through volunteering, community service, academic community engaged learning, and internships.

- **CPAB** includes several Lewis University offices and local community partners to serve as a working partner in guiding the University’s curricular and co-curricular community engagement activities by representing the voice of the community.

- **CELT** is an advisory board to the office which is comprised of at least one faculty liaison from each college in the university, with ex officio representation from administration and staff.

Prioritizing initiatives which foster social justice are enhanced by our participation in the newly forming Fairmont-Lewis Coalition, the Social Justice Alliance, and the Br. Jeffrey Gros, FSC Institute for Dialogue, Justice & Social Action (Gros Institute), of which Laura and Christie are founding members.

Beyond the Fairmont-Lewis Coalition, Laura has been contributing leadership to the Community Services Council of Will County, this year serving as president, thus making Lewis a vibrant neighbor and contributor to the common good in the region.

Building relationships and collaborating well with a variety of campus and community partners ensures sustained thriving for the OCEL and Lewis University as a whole.
Though she has been at Lewis for a relatively brief time, it was our distinct pleasure to award this year’s De La Salle Medallion for Community Engaged Learning Excellence to Dr. Gretchen Hoge of the Social Work department. She has been exceptional in her partnership with our office and the Community Engaged Learning Facilitators with whom she has worked, as well as taking initiative to grow relationships with key partners in the community with whom her Introduction to Social Work students have engaged. We know she will continue to enable the OCEL to prosper and grow for years to come.

The De La Salle Medallion for Excellence in Community Partnership honors a community-based organization which has “demonstrated outstanding collaboration with Lewis University through curricular and co-curricular community engagement”. University partner Heart Haven Outreach (H2O) was lifted up for more than five years of close collaboration.
Carley Maupin, a Peace Studies minor who helped initiate the learning garden at Fairmont School, was awarded the medallion for Excellence in Promotion of Intentional Faith.

Ziarra Miller, a CELF who worked with the State and Local Government course for two semesters, was recognized for her Excellence in Justice Advocacy.

Nicole Pratl, a CELF who served as a leader in both OCEL and University Ministry and who supported Dr. Gretchen Hoge's Introduction to Social Work course for two semesters, was honored for her Excellence in Service and Community Engagement.

**To learn more about CELFs, please refer to page 9.**
Benefits of CEL
Quotes from Faculty

“...creating meaningful connections with partners.”

“...reminding students of the dignity of all people.”

“...projects are real and being utilized by organizations.”

“...encouraging and empowering students to use their voice.”

“...helping students learn they have the power to create change.”

“...making a difference that carries on.”

“...helping students become people who influence the world around them.”
### Data

#### Growth of CEL Courses

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<th>2017-2018</th>
<th>2018-2019</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Number of students in CEL courses</td>
<td>Designated: 480 Pilot: 339</td>
<td>Designated: 600 Pilot: 207</td>
<td>Designated: 1,080 Pilot: 546</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of CELFs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
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</tbody>
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#### Breakdown

- **112** partners who worked with CEL courses in '18-'19
- **166** partners who receive CEL communication
What lies ahead for the Office of Community Engaged Learning involves, in many ways, more of the same. Staff will continue building relationships with community-based organizations and faculty members to develop high quality opportunities for student learning and community development. However, there are many new initiatives on the horizon that will expand the ways OCEL serves both the campus and local community.

Beginning in August 2019, OCEL will welcome an AmeriCorps VISTA into the office to coordinate efforts related to Lewis’ growing relationships with the Fairmont community. The VISTA position was granted for a one-year term through Illinois Campus Compact, with the option to re-apply for two additional years. Lewis graduate, Frank Voltattorni (’18), has agreed to serve in the role, which fits nicely with his previous experience working with Fairmont.

As OCEL says goodbye to Christie, the office will celebrate the start of Dr. Gretchen Hoge, Assistant Professor of Social Work, as Curriculum Development Advisor. Gretchen jumped into Community Engaged Learning pedagogy immediately upon her arrival at the University two years ago, and she brings that experience and her commitment to building strong curriculum and partnerships into the position.
The future will also take OCEL into uncharted territory in exploring how to be an even more effective partner to the local community. In collaboration with the Community Engagement Cooperative (CEC), the office will:

- Guide the roll out of a new Articulation of Partnership document and process, which will influence how Lewis initiates and follows through on community-based relationships.

- Facilitate the expansion of the CEC to include existing member offices (i.e., OCEL, University Ministry, Career Services, Alumni Engagement, and Sustainability), along with a core group of faculty who support community-engaged work.

- Continue advocating for Lewis’ adoption of an anchor institution model of community engagement. This place-based model encourages organizations like universities and hospitals to invest regionally through relationship-building in the community, hiring and purchasing locally, and committing to work both for the good of the institution and the common good. The model aligns nicely with the University’s Lasallian identity, allowing for a more full realization of Lewis’ core mission values.

While 2018-19 was a year focused on moving toward important goals, the 2019-20 academic year is shaping up to be one that shifts OCEL toward implementation of plans that have been long in-the-making!
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