Community-Engaged & Civic Education: Definitions

Community / Civic Engagement: To collaborate with others to improve the community through political or non-political means. A civic actor is someone, no matter age or citizenship status, who wants the quality of life in the community to improve and feels that they can play an active role in making that happen. The terms 'community' and 'improve' can be defined differently by different people, and will vary based on cultural context.

Community-Engaged & Civic Education (CECE): A term adopted by Bellevue College in Fall 2020 to broaden the formats of community-based pedagogies supported by the RISE Learning Institute. Students in CECE courses:

- Learn about social, environmental, or civic issues in a way that connects to or applies the course content to the course outcomes
- Participate, in-person or remotely, in the broader community (see definition above) in an action-oriented way
- Reflect critically on experiences and connections to help grow more holistically

The six formats (and sub-formats) of CECE are *(All icons courtesy of Eucalyp from Flaticon.)*:

Direct Service-Learning: Volunteering with a partner agency (in the community or at BC) for a certain number of hours, either at a site or remotely. Usually for 16+ hours spread over the quarter (aka "ongoing"), or for a single shift.
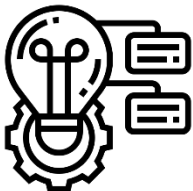
Project-Based Service-Learning: Creating a product or 'consulting' for a nonprofit or government client. Usually this lasts for more than one module or is a final project for a class. Work typically does not occur 'on-site,' at the client agency.

Community-Engaged Problem-Based Learning: Using a community issue to formulate a problem for students to explore. May or may not engage with external clients or agencies, and may last for one module or longer.

Community-Engaged Research: Conducting research and/or analysis in partnership with, and for, a community organization. Usually lasts for multiple teaching modules.

Community-Based Research: Conducting research and/or analysis on community issues, with or without external inputs. May last for one module or longer.

Civic Education: Engaging with a community or broad issue to change student and community behaviors through education, advocacy, or democratic participation. Often without a partner agency.

Community Economic Engagement: Partnering with small or minority-run businesses to help improve their capacity as a part of a class. Often is framed as a form of community support or revitalization. This is the only form of CECE that can work with for-profit businesses.

Philanthropy: Fundraising or collecting food/goods for an organization as a part of a class.

Community: A group of people and/or setting that is beyond the individual student. The scope of the community can be defined as needed by the instructor and/or student, and can include one's personal community (neighborhood, house of worship, affiliated club or group, etc), college community (Bellevue College), region (city and state), or larger.

Civic Action: An action focused on changing behaviors, educating communities, fostering dialogue, amplifying community voices, impacting policy, and more. Civic actions can provide community impact without engaging with a specific nonprofit partner.

Community Dialogue: A conversation with 5-10 members of a chosen community (beyond family) about an important issue that may impact that community. The goal is to foster a deeper understanding of community perspectives around that issue and hopefully change some beliefs and behaviors.

Transcript Notation for Service-Learning: Additional course, with no grade and zero credits, added to a student's transcript to acknowledge the completion of a course with a service-learning component. All formats of CECE can qualify for the Transcript Notation as long as they meet three requirements:

1. Students must actively contribute to and benefit the community (and incorporate community perspectives and interests however possible).
2. A minimum of three (3) robust reflective activities, assignments, and/or assessments must be offered to help students learn from the experience (the CECE post-survey can represent one of the reflections).
3. The CECE components must demonstrate clearly integration into the course, the syllabus, and grading structures.