COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Recommended by the members of the SRU 2026 Carnegie Elective Community Engagement Reclassification Steering Committee

PURPOSE OF GLOSSARY

The purpose of this glossary is to enhance understanding of specific terms and meanings related to community engagement at Slippery Rock University, as well as promote broader recognition of the value and benefit of the practice for diverse units and entities within the institution. Additionally, it serves to align current efforts within a shared framework of understanding, as well as be inviting of efforts that may be near, or in close proximity, to becoming community engaged. While the glossary seeks to define and delineate the parameters of what constitutes community engagement and what does not, it simultaneously seeks to promote a broad range of possibilities for diverse stakeholders who seek to engage in forms and expressions of the practice that are most relevant and meaningful to them. While institutional mission, identity, commitments, and practices will place greater value on some forms of community engagement over others, we have made every attempt to withhold critique or judgement of different terms, rather defining and describing their meaning and relevance for Slippery Rock University as objectively as possible.

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KEY TERMS & DEFINTIONS

The definitions in this section can be attributed to the University of Delaware's Community Engagement Terms and Meanings: A Deeper dive into definitions as defined by their Center for Research in Education & Social Policy (2023), as well as from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2024).

COMMUNITIES

groups of people in the public and private sectors who are affiliated by geographic proximity, special interests, or situational commonalities at the local/regional, state, national, or global levels. Communities may be fluid and subject to change.

VOLUNTEERISM

the provision of individual, uncompensated, non-organizational service that does not require continued involvement or reflection.

OUTREACH

the unidirectional provision of services or resources that benefit an audience but does not require engagement with that audience.

ENGAGEMENT

a collaborative relationship between partners that values reciprocity and mutual respect for each partner's respective knowledge and expertise.

COMMUNITY PARTNER(S)

any non-higher education individuals, groups, and organizations from the public and private sectors actively engaged in a partnership with SRU.

PARTNERSHIP

an association between community partner(s) and SRU to undertake a collaborative and mutually beneficial action or endeavor.

MUTUAL BENEFIT

the assurance that all parties involved achieve outputs and/or outcomes that serve their interests.

RECIPROCITY

includes all partners, especially community partners and students, as thought-partners and collaborators who help decide and inform the direction, activity, assessment, and dissemination of the partnerships' efforts.

ASSET-BASED
recognizing and valuing the knowledge, capacities, resources, and resilience of all partners, especially community and student partners.

MUTUALITY
an interdependence of shared interest, purpose, or benefit between two or more collaborators.

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION
a methodology whereby the student engages in practical experience and reflection on the experience to enhance their knowledge and understanding of issues and developed skills.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING
a process that addresses the needs and wants of the student, through a learner-centered approach where students learn by doing. From participation in an assignment, the student gains understanding from their experience through inquiry and reflection.

WHAT IS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT?

Community engagement is the collaboration between Slippery Rock University and its larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial creation and exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity (adapted from Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2024).

The purpose of community engagement is the partnership of university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2024).

WHERE IS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IDENTIFIED AS A GOAL AND OUTCOME AT SRU?

SRU VISION, MISSION AND CORE VALUES

Our Vision, Mission, and Values

SRU STRATEGIC PLAN

Pillar 3: Commitment to Community Impact and Collaboration:
- Expand community engagement partnerships.
- Expand educational, learning, and growth opportunities that add value to external constituencies.
- Develop mutually-beneficial, long-term partnerships with local and national industries.
- Engage in environmentally-sustainable practices.(Adopted 2024).

UNIVERSITY WIDE OUTCOMES

Become civically engaged (Outcome #7).
- Acquire and apply skills and knowledge based on partnership and reciprocity within and beyond the university community.
- Contribute to the betterment of society. (Adopted May 2017).

THREE FACETS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY

Service
- Community Service
- Outreach/Partnerships
- Civic Engagement
- Professional-Training

Teaching & Learning
- Community-Engaged Learning
  - Service-Learning
  - Practice-Based Learning
  - Internships/Clinicals

Community Engagement

Research & Scholarship
- Community-Based Participatory Research
- Engaged Scholarship
- Practice-Based Research
- Scholarship of Engagement

COMMUNITY

SRU's model (adapted from the University of Louisville's Community Engagement Glossary of Terms as defined by their Community Engagement Steering Committee, 2011).

THREE FACETS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY

I. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN SERVICE

INTRODUCTION

Community engaged service defines collaboration between members of SRU and a community or community-based group that results in beneficial services. Community engaged service may or may not be related to an academic program and can be performed by students, faculty, and staff. Community engaged service includes co-curricular service and civic engagement. The definitions in this section can be attributed to the University of Delaware's Community Engagement Terms and Meanings: A Deeper dive into definitions as defined by their Center for Research in Education & Social Policy (2023).

COMMUNITY SERVICE

defined as engaging with the community to provide services for the community. Community service may be performed by faculty, staff, and students and may not require specific academic preparation or be linked to specific curricular activities. Community service includes civic engagement.

- One example of both outreach and community service is the work of Dr. Lua Augustin, Associate Professor of Finance, who shared financial expertise with the Butler Clergy Network during their exploration phase of 501c3 nonprofit status.

CO-CURRICULAR SERVICE

performed by students outside of, but complementary to an established curriculum. It includes community service work done by individual or groups of students as part of a department or program requirement, including federal work study positions used for community service.

- The SRU Bonner Leaders and Civic Scholars are examples of student leadership programs based on extensive co-curricular service and civic engagement activities utilized for student development and fulfillment of program requirements.
- Another example is the SRU Sport Management program that requires 120 verified hours of community service as a requirement for graduation.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

a type of community engaged service that fosters citizenship through engagement in non-political issues of public interest and/or political participation in governance activities.

- Historically, the Student Government Association has organized voter engagement activities. https://www.sru.edu/news/091918b
- The Civic Action Scorecard is an online toolkit that supports and documents all SRU students' civic engagement and leadership activities.
- The Black Male/Female Leadership Development Institutes are week-long summer programs led by SRU faculty and students in partnership with the Urban League to prepare students in grades 9-12 with skills and tools to foster social action and change in their communities.

PHILANTHROPY

giving of money, goods, time, and other services to support a social cause beneficial to the community.

- The Office of Community Engagement organizes SRU constituents such as the Women's Field Hockey Team to work in partnership with the Butler Springhill Marriott Suites and the Butler YWCA to prepare and distribute bags for the Homeless Bag Project Donation Drive to be distributed during key community events throughout the year.
- Greek life and registered student organizations conduct numerous food, toiletry, and clothing drives and fundraising for the SRU Rock Pantry and local nonprofit organizations such as the Salvation Army and Lighthouse Foundation.
- SRU Bonner Leaders organize the "Elf Project" on behalf of the Salvation Army and its Angel Tree annual holiday gift giving program.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

focuses on the application and provision of institutional resources for community use. These may take many forms such as public access to university facilities, provision of professional services or expertise for those who otherwise would not have them, or building awareness and sharing information about available programs, resources, and services with people in a particular community. While outreach is characterized as unidirectional and generally lacking reciprocation with those being served, communities can and should be consulted so their interests are better addressed; thereby enhancing the social responsiveness of the institution's outreach initiatives. Community outreach values the relationship between a community and a service providing institution but distinguishes the relationship as one of service and awareness, not collaboration.

- Dr. Naresh Adhikari and his students developed and delivered an Online Fraud Education and Prevention workshop to Butler senior citizens, Area Agency on Aging participants, and non-technical local community audiences. In spring 2024, a customized version of the workshop took place in Butler with the Tri-County Manufacturing Consortium membership.
- The SRU Office for Community Engagement partners with Trilogy Wellness to offer quarterly Narcan Trainings in the Butler community.
- SRU theater and sporting events, Bailey Library, the ARC, McCoskey Center Initiatives, Summer Youth Programs/Clinics are open to community member participation.
- Local and regional youth sports organizations utilize SRU facilities for training and competition.

PARTNERSHIPS

focus on collaborative interactions with community and related scholarship for the mutually beneficial exchange, exploration, and application of knowledge, information, and resources (research, capacity building, economic development, etc.). High quality partnerships are distinguished from outreach by a two-way collaboration that is mutually-beneficial, reciprocal, and asset-based (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2024).

- The Office for Community Engagement partners with the MidWestern Intermediate Unit to deliver an online tutoring program that matches SRU students to K-12 youth identified as homeless and/or in foster care.
- The SRU College of Liberal Arts has historically funded an AmeriCorps VISTA member to implement community and civic engagement activities on campus and in community.
- Numerous academic departments and programs have long-standing partnerships with nonprofit and for-profit organizations that place students in internships, clinicals, and other experiential learning activities.

THREE FACETS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY

II. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

INTRODUCTION

Service-learning, academic service-learning, and community engaged teaching and learning are virtually identical in practice. Definitions of one term often denote the other terms as the same practice. The variation in terminology reflects the shifting landscape of priorities the practice seeks to address or promote. From service-learning's nearly 50-year legacy of addressing community-defined "needs," to the more recent influence of asset-based practices of engaging communities by "strengths," the ultimate choice of terminology is specific to each context and may shift or change over time. Such is the case at SRU where the long-standing use of the term service-learning was institutionalized through its association with High-Impact Practices (HIPs) in 2018 and subsequently changed to community engaged learning in 2022. It was the voices of HIPS-designated faculty that proposed establishing community engaged learning as a means to "modernize" the terminology and promote greater access and inclusivity of the practice with a broader range of diverse teaching and learning structures and strategies across the institution. Another reason for the change in terminology was to place greater emphasis on asset-based principles that promote reciprocity and mutuality in campus-community partnerships as a means to enhance mutually-beneficial outcomes among stakeholders – especially community partners and students. This emphasis is clearly outlined in SRU's conceptual framework for community engaged learning where the attribute of diversity of interactions and dialogue is defined through the criteria of "working with and learning from community partners and/or their constituencies." The criteria accentuate a two-way exchange of knowledge and learning, in addition to service deliverables, that embody the broader spectrum of outcome possibilities achieved through high-quality partnerships based on mutual benefit, reciprocity, and asset-based collaborations. Regardless of the specific choice of language, all three terms describe learning opportunities that integrate community service activities with instruction and reflection, resulting in more in-depth academic and civic learning overall for students and definable benefits for community partners and/or their constituencies.

COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING

(CEL) integrates meaningful community engagement with instruction and reflection to enhance the learning experience, promote civic engagement, and strengthen communities. A Community-Engaged Learning course requires students to engage in activities that clearly serve the public good by partnering with a community organization in a way that is mutually beneficial. At SRU, such a course:

1. Addresses a community-defined interest, priority, or public concern;
2. Involves working with and learning from a community partner and/ or their constituencies;
3. Connects and integrates community service activities with educational content;
4. Promotes civic learning and development;
5. Utilizes critical reflection that is structured, consistent, and guided;
6. Assesses student learning and community service outcomes.

At Slippery Rock University, community engaged learning is utilized as a powerful pedagogy to transform the intellectual, social, [physical, and leadership capacities of students to serve the common good and work toward the improvement of self and society. CEL courses may integrate a range of teaching and learning strategies and structures including, but not limited to: service-learning, internships, practicums, clinicals, capstone, research projects, field experiences, practice-based learning, and other forms of experiential learning. Community engaged learning uses a defined curriculum and can be formal (credit granting) or non-formal (non-credit granting). Slippery Rock University's model of community engaged learning (next page) is based on (six) value-informed attributes that characterize the practice and define the specific criteria for each.

COMMUNITY- ENGAGED LEARNING AT SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY

WE BELIEVE	ATTRIBUTE		OUR CRITERIA
...that campus and community, working as equitable partners and co-educators, can create transformative change	Reciprocal Partnerships		Address a community- defined interest, priority, or public concern.
...engaging across difference promotes an awareness of the inter-dependence between self and society, which serves to humanize others and build vibrant communities	Diversity of Interactions & Dialogue		Includes working with and learning from a community partner and/ or their constituencies.
...engaging in activities that reflect the concerns and priorities of the community deepens both civic and academic learning and enhances community wellbeing	Community Activities		Connect and integrates community activities with educational content.
...the public purpose of higher education is to promote the development of engaged citizens who will uphold democratic values and serve the public good	Civil Competencies		Promotes civic learning and development.
...critical reflection bridges service and learning in order to enhance and reinforce both, enabling meaning to be deprived from the experience, and hastening the creation of capable citizens	Critical Reflection		Utilize critical reflection that is structured, consistent, and guided.
...assessment shows evidence of impact among multiple stakeholders for purpose of continuous quality improvement, including teaching, learning, partnership, and community outcomes	Assessment		Assess student learning and community outcomes.

Adapted from Hatcher, Bringle, & Hahn, Nov. 2016

SlipperyRock University Community-Engaged Learning

- Dr. Dan Dieter and his senior capstone public relations students partnered with the Butler Symphony Orchestra Association in spring 2024 to create a summer concert series campaign entitled, "A Taste of The Symphony: Summer Concert Series". The campaign enabled students to explore and apply knowledge, information, and resources they learned about in the course, while increasing exposure and attendance at the concert series.
- Dr. Seth Lee partnered with Robin's Home in Butler, PA to deliver his Critical Writing course. As a course assignment, students were partnered with a veteran whom they interviewed using oral history techniques to document and preserve their military and combat experience. These activities enhanced students' qualitative interviewing and analysis skills and the resulting compilation of oral lived experience narratives benefitted Robin's Home in their service delivery and honored the veteran participants' stories and legacies.
- During the Covid pandemic, Dr. Martha E. Kemeny and students worked with the Pennsylvania Department on Aging, Butler Area Agency on Aging, and senior centers to conduct weekly virtual interactions with senior citizens. Students assessed, planned, implemented, and evaluated the process and engaged clients through individual sessions. These efforts resulted in the development and continuation of programming after the pandemic.

- Dr. Elizabeth Geib-Chavin and students in her Writing Community Stories course are examining the United Way of Southwestern PA grant application processes using a community development lens and learning more about the "why" behind applicants' need for grant funding. The course culminates with students serving on the United Way Mini-Grant Review Team.
- Dr. Doug Strahler and his students applied project management practices in partnership with a nonprofit organization. Students identified, discussed, and demonstrated their understanding of digital media communication issues through a communication campaign that incorporated an understanding of the organization's mission, weekly memos and reflections, and client media deliverables. They presented their results to community partners Legacy Fitness, the Institute for Learning and Retirement, and Harrisville Borough Council.

THREE FACETS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY

III. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

INTRODUCTION

Community engaged research and scholarship involves community-based participatory research, practice-based research, engaged scholarship, and scholarship of engagement. The commonality in these types of research and scholarship is the benefit or involvement of the community on some part of the continuum. Community-based participatory research partners with the community to conduct the research on one end of the continuum, while practice-based research may have a long-term benefit on the community if it improves practice. The definitions in this section can be attributed to the University of Louisville's Community Engagement Glossary of Terms as defined by their Community Engagement Steering Committee (2011).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH & SCHOLARSHIP
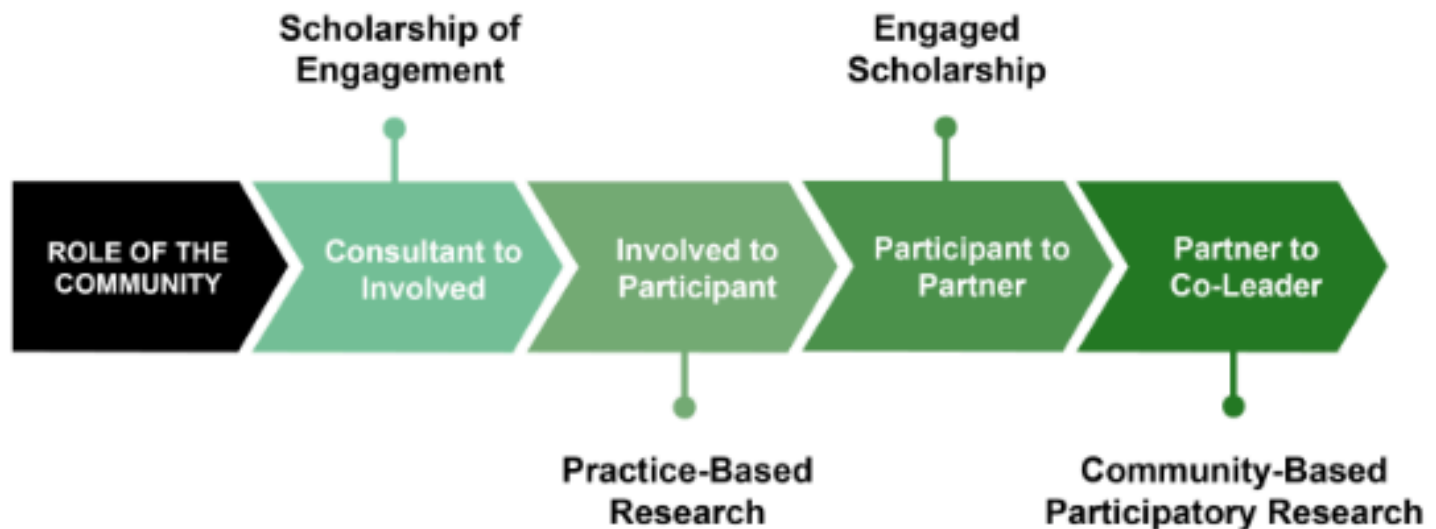
COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

Academically relevant community focused research that partners with the community equitably to conduct research. The partners contribute their expertise and share responsibility and ownership to enhance understanding and to integrate knowledge gained into action for change. Such research and scholarship may appear in a range of content-specific disciplines or in multidisciplinary journals.

ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarly work done in full partnership with the community. It consists of research, teaching, and the application of scholarship for mutual benefits for the institution and community partner.

- Dr. Betsy Kemeny collaborated with Dr. Adelle Williams, and Stephanie Cole, Special Assistant to the Secretary of Aging for the state of Pennsylvania to present and publish government and university partner for virtual service-learning. This supported intergenerational social interaction in Innovations on Aging with Gerontological Society of America. This intergenerational service-learning program with college students was designed for at-risk older adults to alleviate loneliness related to social isolation of the pandemic and to support student learning about older adults needs in a manner that did not support ageism or ableism.

SCHOLARSHIP OF ENGAGEMENT

Another type of systematic research and scholarly inquiry that focuses on the impact of community engagement on teaching and learning. It aims to provide evidence and data to inform and influence community engagement theory and practice. The goal of this work is to advance the field of community engagement in teaching, research or service by assessing the impact of outreach work on faculty, students, the institution, the discipline, and the community partners.

- Dr. Doug Strahler, Dr. Christine Walsh, Dr. Steve Verba, and Community Engagement Director, Jeffrey Rathlef submitted a journal article, "Service Learning, Faculty Learning Communities as a Model for Institutional Change," to the Journal of Higher Education Outreach for publication.
- Former faculty member, Dr. Jana Asher, student Alyssa Hilliard, and Community Engagement Director Jeffrey Rathlef have produced scholarship entitled, "A Model for Assessing Civic Learning and Engagement Outcomes," used to assess civic competencies in community engaged learning courses at SRU.
- Numerous faculty, staff, and students have presented at the annual Beyond the Classroom: Community Engaged Teaching and Research conference sponsored by Partners for Campus Community Engagement (PCCE).
- Dr. Doug Strahler presented "Reinforcing Inclusive Design in a Digital Media & Community-Engaged Learning Course" at the 2023 International Association for Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement (IARSLCE) conference.
- Dr. Betsy Kemeny published in Innovations in Aging, Community engaged learning: Competencies in higher education for empowering all ages to educate other faculty who teach in gerontology.

PRACTICE BASED RESEARCH

A form of academic research which incorporates an element of practice in the methodology or output. It aims to advance knowledge through practice and is commonly used among practitioners trying to find answers to questions to better understand and address issues.

- Dr. Jennifer Willford, in collaboration with Dr. Robert Gallen (University of Pittsburgh), students in her research capstone course, and the Ohio Department of Children and Youth assessed the impact of training in Reflective Supervision/Consultation (RSC) in the early childhood intervention workforce. They found early childhood staff who receive RSC show improved quality in their services to children and families, reduced negative judgment of families, and improved fidelity to treatment models. Students in the capstone course learned research and program evaluation skills while producing scholarship that informs best practice in their discipline.
- Dr. Betsy Kemeny, in collaboration with Dr. Stephanie Burk, Dr. Deborah Hutchins, and Courtney Gramlich, published research in the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders on the practice of recreational therapy with youth on the autism spectrum at Storm Harbor Equestrian Center. When they compared the effectiveness of therapeutic horseback riding and mindfulness groups facilitated by a therapist and students, they found both interventions significantly decreased salivary cortisol levels (stress). Some indicators of self-and parent-reported stress also significantly improved when compared to control. This article informs best practice in Recreational Therapy.

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