### CSU-CEL Taxonomy: Classifying a Student-Centered Approach to Community-Engaged Learning Courses

The COCCE uses community-engaged learning (CEL) as the umbrella term to identify a broad array of courses in which community engagement is embedded. This Community-Engaged Learning (CEL) Taxonomy identifies an implementation spectrum for a student-centered approach to CEL courses. The Chancellor’s Office defines service learning as one type of CEL which must include all six essential elements from the CEL taxonomy. A companion CEL Tool (CELT) based on this taxonomy will be utilized by CSU faculty and campus Community Engagement offices to identify where in the spectrum of CEL a course falls, and will result in the assigning of one of two attributes: community-based learning (CBL) or curricular community-engaged learning (CCEL). Both the CEL Taxonomy and CELT support the CSU’s systemwide effort to better gather data of community-engaged learning experiences taking place across our 23 institutions. Campus SL/CE Offices and the COCCE will utilize this information to provide on-going support to faculty, students and the CSU’s community partners.

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<th>Essential Elements</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Implementation Spectrum</th>
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<td><strong>Reciprocal Partnerships</strong></td>
<td>Reciprocal partnerships and processes shape the community activities and course design to enhance student understanding of the importance of community learning.</td>
<td>INSTRUCTOR AND COMMUNITY PARTNER COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY OR THROUGH CAMPUS SL/CE OFFICE. The communication between instructor and community partner includes course overview (e.g., learning outcomes, syllabus) and the value of the partnership to both community and student learning is shared with students.</td>
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<td><strong>Student Community Involvement</strong></td>
<td>Student community involvement has a specific benefit to the material, cultural or institutional interests that members of society have in common. This specific benefit to the common good is intentional, planned for, communicated and assessed with community partners in mind. This may include the organizational capacity, student/client growth, social and economic benefits, etc.</td>
<td>BENEFIT TO THE COMMON GOOD IS INTENTIONAL, PLANNED FOR AND IMPLIED. Benefit to the common good as an intentional and planned component of the course is implied but not explicitly stated in course materials (e.g. in syllabus, discussion or materials). Course does not include assessment of benefit to the common good.</td>
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<td><strong>Academically Relevant Community Involvement</strong></td>
<td>Student community involvement is relevant to and integrated with the discipline-based academic content and assignments.</td>
<td>COMMUNITY PROJECT SUPPLEMENTS COURSE CONTENT. The community project/activity is a component of the course but not integrated with academic content or assignments. Purposes of the community project not included within syllabus.</td>
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<td><strong>Explicit Civic Learning Goals</strong></td>
<td>Civic learning goals are articulated and develop students’ capacities to understand and address critical social issues.</td>
<td>CIVIC LEARNING GOALS ARE IMPLIED AND FOCUS PRIMARILY ON COURSE CONTENT. Emphasis in syllabus is primarily on discipline-based academic content. Civic learning goals and/or relevant social issues may be addressed informally and/or indirectly.</td>
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<td>CIVIC LEARNING IS FULLY INTEGRATED IN SYLLABUS, COURSE CONTENT, AND COMMUNITY PROJECT/ACTIVITY. All course components highlight the integration of civic learning goals with discipline-based academic content. Students gain knowledge and skills relevant to addressing underlying systemic issues of inequity and injustice.</td>
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**Community-Engaged Learning (CEL) Taxonomy**

- **Student Understanding:**
  - Benefit to the Common Good
  - Benefit to the Common Good is Intentional, Planned for and Implied
  - Benefit to the Common Good is Intentional, Planned for and Explicitly Stated
  - Benefit to the Common Good is Identified, Planned for, Communicated and Assessed
  - Benefit to the Common Good is Co-Identified, Planned for, Communicated and Assessed

- **Course Content:**
  - Community Project is a Component of Course Content
  - Community Project is Integrated Throughout the Course and Experience

- **Partnership:**
  - Instructor and Community Partner Collaborate as Co-Educators
  - Instructor and Community Partner Meet and Communicate Directly or Through Instructor and Community Partner Meet and Communicate Directly or Through
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<th>Critical Reflection Facilitates Learning</th>
<th>Critical reflection activities and assignments integrate classroom and community learning.</th>
<th>INFORMAL AND UNSTRUCTURED REFLECTION Students engage in informal and unstructured reflection about the community project, often at the end of the semester.</th>
<th>CRITICAL REFLECTION CONNECTS COURSE CONTENT TO COMMUNITY PROJECT/ACTIVITY Reflection activities and products critically connect student community involvement to academic and civic content, require moderate analysis, lead to new action, and provide ongoing feedback to the student throughout the semester.</th>
<th>CRITICAL REFLECTION IS FULLY INTEGRATED IN COURSE CONTENT, COMMUNITY PROJECT/ACTIVITY, AND IN COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNITY PARTNER Instructor and community partner(s) collaborate to build student capacity to critically reflect and develop products that explore the relevance of the experience to academic content and provide ongoing feedback to support student learning. Students use critical thinking to analyze social issues, recognize systems of power, and/or lead to new action.</th>
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<td>Integrated Assessment of Student Learning</td>
<td>Student learning assessment addresses both the discipline-based and civic learning goals, and includes learning from community involvement.</td>
<td>STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT Focuses Primarily on Course Content Student learning assessment is largely based on the discipline-based content; some credit is given for completion of the community involvement component of the course.</td>
<td>STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT INCLUDES DISCIPLINE LEARNING, CIVIC LEARNING AND SOME COMMUNITY FEEDBACK Student learning assessment articulates varying levels of expectations for both the discipline-based and civic learning aspects of the course. Community partner provides some feedback on individual student performance.</td>
<td>STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT INTEGRATES COMMUNITY PROJECT/ACTIVITY WITH MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY FEEDBACK AND COURSE CONTENT Student learning assessment holistically addresses both discipline-based and civic learning outcomes, and students are expected to demonstrate competency in both aspects of learning in the course. Community partner provides meaningful feedback on relevant aspects of student learning.</td>
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revised 4-8-20
CSU Community-Engaged Learning Definitions

**ATTRIBUTES**
Attributes are back-end notations in the student information system that provide additional course type information.

**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**
Civic engagement means working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes. (Thomas Ehrlich (Ed.) Civic Responsibility and Higher Education. Phoenix: Oryx Press, 2000)

**CIVIC LEARNING GOALS**
Civic learning goals are the knowledge, skills, and values that make explicitly direct and purposeful contribution to the preparation of students for active civic participation (Howard, 2001).

**COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING**
Community Engaged Learning (CEL) is the collaboration between institutions of higher education and community partners (entities, organizations, or groups with whom a relationship can be developed) in which students learn and develop through participation in the collaboration; the outcomes of which benefit the common good.*

**COMMON GOOD**
Distinguished from private or individual interests, the term “common good” refers to the material, cultural or institutional interests and goals that members of a society have in common that embody sustained mutual respect. (Adapted from Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.)

**COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**
Community Partners (entities, organizations, or groups with whom a relationship can be developed) in which students learn and develop through participation in the collaboration; the outcomes of which benefit the common good. Reciprocal community partnerships and processes shape the community-based activities and course design to enhance student understanding of the importance of community learning. Community-engaged learning experiences may include organized service activities, project- or place-based learning activities.
CRITICAL REFLECTION
Critical Reflection is the powerful process of making meaning out of a purposeful combination of experiences and academic content. It adds depth and breadth to meaning by challenging simplistic conclusions, comparing varying perspectives, examining causality, and raising more challenging questions. (Barbara Jacoby, December 2010)

CURRICULAR COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING
Curricular community-engaged learning is a course-based community service experience characterized by reciprocal partnerships that enhance student understanding, the outcomes of which benefit the common good.

SERVICE-LEARNING (referred as COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING on some CSU campuses)
Service Learning is a teaching method in which meaningful service is a critical component of course curriculum and assessment of student learning. It is characterized by critical reflection and a collaborative partnership among the instructor, students, and community, with a focus on both student learning and community impact.

SERVICE-LEARNING/COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING COURSE
An academic course (in any discipline) that provides students opportunities to participate in organized service activities that align with community focus areas while linking the community service experiences to the course content. This makes service learning a very different experience than community service.

*Functional definition for CEL activities*