COMMUNITY-ENGAGED EDUCATION: PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR INSTRUCTORS

Experiential Education, Faculty of Social Sciences in partnership with The McMaster Institute for Innovation and Excellence in Teaching and Learning, and the Student Success Centre have created a training manual for instructors to support them in providing community engaged education. This is the first step in a collaborative process to develop best practices in this area of pedagogy. Here is an illustration of how we hope the process will unfold.

**The Community Engagement Task Force, created by Patrick Deane as an aspect of Forward with Integrity, has defined Community Engagement as follows:**

"McMaster University is a committed member of the greater Hamilton community and broader society and recognizes that true excellence can only be achieved when we are working together with our community partners. We are mindful of the interconnectedness of our globalized world. We value community and public engagement that is mutually beneficial, supports our academic, research, service, and civic outreach missions, and collaboratively leads to meaningful outcomes and sustained actions and relationships. Regardless of the discipline, graduates of McMaster will be citizens engaged in multiple communities (academic, geographic, economic, global) in multiple ways, but we recognize that our relationships within the community we call home are paramount to supporting the vitality and well-being of the greater Hamilton area."

**Community:** A definition of community should recognize that although we talk about community as a singular entity it is actually many communities. It may be the university community, the neighbourhoods just outside of the university, the city we are located in, or our provincial, national or global communities. It is important to consider which communities or even which aspects of a community you will engage in your pedagogy.

**Community-Engaged Education:** A type of pedagogy that incorporates the understandings, needs and views of communities into its practice. This usually occurs through the inclusion of community-engaged education in the curriculum and sometimes, more specifically, service-learning.

**Why Community Engaged Education?**

**For students**
- Increased student engagement with course material specifically and their academic work generally
- Improved academic performance
- Increased self-awareness of contemporary issues
- Increased interest in and likelihood to become engaged in community
- Long-term commitment to social justice issues
- Increased sensitivity and capacity to manage diversity

**For Communities**
- Student citizens with a greater connection to the community
- Students can provide an extra resource
- Increased awareness of an organization’s service provision
- Access to university resources

**For Faculty**
- Greater knowledge of the community and improved community connections
- Positive impact on teaching style and ability
- Closer relationships with students and increased enjoyment of teaching
- Improved results from students
- University increase in positive perceptions, and knowledge of the university
- Increased retention of students