Community-Engaged Learning (CEL) Pedagogy and Scholarship in Rural Ohio

Civic Engagement and the Liberal Arts: Local Practices, Global Impact

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Objectives

- Enhance our understanding of CEL pedagogy in a rural setting and its relevance to our teaching and creative work
- Share a model to introduce community engaged learning opportunities in our courses
- Engage with GLCA faculty colleagues to explore the interconnections in our work
CEL Projects

- Latinos in Rural America (LiRA) (20 min)
  - Production of materials for traveling exhibit
  - Bilingual College-Preparation Handbook

- Crunch Out Obesity: An Evaluation (20 min)
  - Focused on the evaluation of a health and fitness program used in schools throughout Knox County.
Agenda

- How was CEL incorporated into our courses
- How data were collected, analyzed and shared
- How students, community partners, and the public at large responded to the experience
Latinos in Rural America

- A CEL-enabled, public humanities project that sought to broaden knowledge, engagement with and understanding of the Latino/a experience in rural Ohio.

- Drawing on visits and interviews with members of the community, the project highlighted Latinos' distinctive challenges and rewards as they conduct their daily lives in a rural setting.

- We met college professors, workers in the business sector, agricultural workers, an athlete, and youth of various ages, representing a range of experiences, cultural origins, and personal and family values.
Latinos in Rural America

Income & Education

A Sense of Place & Displacement

Circular Journeys

Dreams & Aspirations
LiRA, A Traveling Exhibit


- The exhibit comprised three related elements:
  - Panels with text in both English and Spanish provided snapshots of Latino families in Knox County;
  - A video presented the participants talking about their lives;
  - Viewers were able to interact with the project by providing feedback on their thoughts and experiences after having seen the exhibit.
LiRA, a Bilingual Traveling Exhibit
LiRA – Curricular Application

Students applied academic research on education inequalities, the Latino/a Civil Rights Movement, and standardized testing strategies to develop and facilitate CEL projects emerging from LiRA, including:

- Translation of interviews
- Archiving of materials
- Creation of flyer for cross-cultural development
- Creation of the Bilingual College Prep Program
The Bilingual College Prep Program

- Questionnaire

  - Helped us identify community interests in, and reservations about, the LiRA project.

  - We asked how we could best support the Latino community in exchange for their participation and their answer was:
We want our kids to go to college
Need Identification

- According to the Pew Research Center (left chart), only 15% of Hispanics between ages 25-29 hold a bachelor’s degree or more (2014)

- The College Board (the right chart) depicts discrepancy in SAT scores by parental income
The Bilingual College Prep Objectives

- The BCP program sought to empower Latino/a students to achieve at the highest level in preparation to enter college.

- It focused on:
  - assets of the community (such as bilingualism and strong family values) and
The Bilingual College Prep Objectives

- Four potential areas of improvement:
  - barriers to college entrance and tools for navigating them,
  - a curriculum with five lesson plans per ACT/SAT subject area,
  - 3 parent and student workshops on college application and financial aid (Kenyon College Office of Admissions), and
  - a framework for tutor training and for a sustainable Kenyon-community partnership.
The Bilingual College Prep Program

- Currently supported by student mentors and Kenyon Office for Community Partnerships.

- The BCP Handbook is free to download under a Creative Commons license @ http://digital.kenyon.edu/lkca_pub/1/
BCP Outcomes

- The first junior in our cohort improved her ACT results by 4 points in ACT Reading and 2 points in ACT Math.

- The BCP program provided Kenyon seniors with enabling experiences for future careers in bilingual education, not-for-profit collaboration, and minority rights activism.

- The collaborative efforts of Kenyon Office of Admissions, faculty and students empowered first-generation students and their families to successfully navigate the complicated college admissions process.
Kenyon students highlighted the value of a direct connection with the Latino community to ground and inform meaning and authenticity in textual translation and academic work.

The CEL project helped students to recognize the necessity of thinking about, and committing to, applying what is learned in academia to what is needed in society through civic engagement efforts.

Still others recognized that there can be an underlying and direct connection between what an individual learns and how he/she will be able to implement it to effect social change.
Crunch Out Obesity: An Evaluation
CEL in a Feminist Classroom

- Collaboration between researchers and community partners and between professor and students
- Validate multiple sources of knowledge
- Awareness of power relations
- Reciprocity
- Feminist in both pedagogies and methodologies used
- Aims at social action and social change
Crunch Out Obesity

- Community Partners
  - United Way of Knox County
  - Mount Vernon YMCA
  - Knox County Health Department

- Evaluation of program outcomes
  - Retention of basic health information (5-2-1-0)
  - Utilization of the exercise balls
  - Student exercise and eating habits
Project Components

- Content analysis of 4th grader essays submitted for the program
- One-on-one interviews with 4th graders and 5th graders who had participated in the program
- Body Appreciation and Body Image Scale
- Attended an orientation session for PE teachers in the program, PE classes, and familiarized ourselves with the exercises
Was this a Feminist Project?

- **Power dynamics:**
  - Not a student chosen project (CEL Tag)
  - Researcher-research subject interaction
  - Interacting with others in the community (PE teachers, principals)

- **Promoting body positivity:**
  - What if the values of the community and the values of the researcher are in conflict?

- **Were we promoting positive social change?**
  - What did our research subjects gain?
  - What did students in the class gain?
Recommendations for CEL Courses

- Connect community interests with course objectives
- Define the project in collaboration
- Delimiting the Project
  - Student Activities
  - Timetable
  - Evaluation
- Create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- See, CEL Toolkit: Logistics & Evaluation
  
http://www.kenyon.edu/directories/offices-services/community-partnerships/cel/faculty-resources/
Recommendations for CEL Courses

- Institutional Requirements
- CITI Training For Research with Human Subjects

- Entering and Exiting the Community
  - Initiating Contact (via email or CEL Office)
  - Brainstorm face-to-face
  - On-Site Student Orientation
  - Student Transportation
  - Check Points
  - Evaluation
  - Celebration & Closure
Conclusions

- Our outcomes strongly validate research on the impact of CEL as a high impact pedagogy regarding
  - mastery of academic content
  - career choice
  - civic engagement

[Grobman & Rosenberg (2015); Butin (2010); Danielson and Fallon (2007); Mathieu, 2005, Boss 1994]
Resources

- Databases
- Journals
- Articles
- Bibliography
- Consort Ohio LINK subject search
- [http://kenyon.libguides.com/cel](http://kenyon.libguides.com/cel)

- Joe Bandy’s Best Practices for CE Teaching & Learning (Vanderbilt University)

Resources

LiRA Archives

- [http://digital.kenyon.edu/lkca/](http://digital.kenyon.edu/lkca/)
- [http://digital.kenyon.edu/lkca_pub/1/](http://digital.kenyon.edu/lkca_pub/1/)
Questions? Comments?

Thank you!