

## **INTD 0121 Community-Connected Learning Syllabus**

### **Fall 2021**

Community-connected learning supports civic knowledge cultivation, skill building, and identity development. In this course students will apply their relevant coursework to place-based contexts by collaborating with community partners independently or in groups to complete a community-connected learning project that will contribute to the public good. A Center for Community Engagement (CCE) instructor will meet with students weekly in cohorts to explore the social issues raised in their experiences. Final projects may take a variety of forms, such as a portfolio, media production, or presentation.

### **Class times**

Discussion: Tuesdays 1:30-2:45pm in person at 26 Blinn Lane (Center for Community Engagement)

Lab: Thursdays 1:30-2:45pm in person or independently (depending on the week), 26 Blinn Lane

### **Instructors**

Kailee Brickner-McDonald, Ed.D. (Instructor, Center for Community Engagement Program Director)

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Gabriella Chalker '24 (Community Connected Project Assistant)

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*Office hours by appointment*

### **Learning Goals**

The primary learning goals of this course are to cultivate your understanding of community contexts and structures, build skills you need to effectively and appropriately contribute to communities, and to deepen your understanding of the values and perspectives that shape and inform your approach to community engaged work.

Developing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that support ethical and impactful community engagement is a life-long learning process, and none of these learning goals are a checkbox that can be completed during the course of one semester. Meaningful and measurable development will be our goal. You will be graded on your engagement in the process of learning these goals through your reflection and practice in your project.

*We will support your engagement in this learning through readings, discussion, activities, written reflection, and application to your project. Each learning outcome will be the focus of three of the course sections (one section for each of the competencies)-- so nine of the courses will be directly connected to a learning goal. We will also support you in this learning through your development of and reflection on an individualized plan related to your project.*

**Learning Outcome 1: Civic Knowledge.** You will develop, express and apply knowledge of community context, and how communities structure, govern and sustain themselves as they work toward their goals.

- 1a. Identify community structures relative to resources, services and governance
- 1b. Understand and describe the complex construction of the community
- 1c. Apply understanding of community to partnership work that centers community values and goals

**Learning Outcome 2: Civic Skills.** You will identify, develop and apply civic skills to effectively and appropriately contribute to communities through partnership and collaboration with community organizations and networks.

- 2a. Identify and describe habits and practices of collaborative community engagement
- 2b. Understand how civic skills are applied in a specific community context
- 2c. Apply civic skills in the context of specific collaborative community partnership work

**Learning Outcome 3: Civic Identity.** You will deepen your understanding of the values and perspectives that shape and inform your approach to ethical, authentic community engaged work.

- 3a. Identify and describe components of civic identity
- 3b. Understand and analyze how identity impacts and is shaped by community context, and the implications of this in specific project work
- 3c. Apply your understanding of identity, positionality and access to participation, in the context of your specific project, to ethical and equitable community collaboration

### **Community-Connected Project - Description & Expectation**

As a student in *Community-Connected Learning*, you are required to co-develop and complete community-connected project work in collaboration with at least one community-based organization or educational institution (non-profit organization with a community-focused mission). This project will be the organizing “thread” of your learning, and the most important “text” of the course. It will be connected to every other aspect of the course – including our weekly reading and media assignments; discussions/exchanges; weekly discussion sessions; personal reflections; the development of a project portfolio; final presentations, etc.. Your project should require approximately four hours of work per week (on average). If you would like to dedicate additional hours to your project work, that is fine. Contributing additional hours, however, will not affect your grade in the class.

Your project work should both demonstrate (and provide opportunity to develop):

- 1. Your knowledge of a community-connected social issue, and how this issue is being (and might be) addressed;
- 2. Your skills in community collaboration, project development, and project management;
- 3. Your understanding of the values and perspectives that shape and inform your approach to, and interest in, community-connected work - and your sense of civic identity and responsibility.

In short, your project work should provide you with the opportunity to further your learning and the evidence to demonstrate your development of these competencies.

We have very high expectations for your work and effort in developing and completing your project – and in collaborating with your community partner(s). **At the same time, the goal of this class is not to produce “showcase” projects.** We understand that this work can be messy (complex!) – and it is rarely linear. Ethical, effortful, thoughtful, engaged, and well-documented project work that does no harm, is focused on the public good, and provides identifiable opportunities for your learning will be the key elements of a successful project.

**Honor code:** It is your responsibility to adhere to the [Honor code and related academic policies \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

### **Course requirements, assessment and grading**

In general, your weekly class time will be divided among three categories: asynchronous work independently, synchronous meetings with your discussion section, and project work with your community partner.

- **Attendance, participation, preparation 30%**
  - Attendance in the weekly discussion section (Tuesdays) is required. We will be considering your spoken contributions during sections as well as your effort to actively listen and pay close attention to your classmates and instructors. We'll create opportunities for participation in writing (with prompts in advance or in the moment), speaking in large groups, sharing thoughts in pairs and small groups, and in one-on-one conversations with instructors. Peer-to-peer learning is a core component of adult education; and we ask that you fully participate to best support your own learning as well as that of your classmates.
  - Participation also means being prepared! In order to make the most of our time together, we need everyone to be prepared by doing your prep work. Be sure to set aside sufficient time to complete readings, review media, complete weekly-specific assignments thoughtfully and thoroughly, and consider discussion prompts in advance of our weekly discussion sections. We know you will have great insights and we want to hear them! We will all have much to learn from each other.
- **Integrative weekly assignment: Reflective Practice Journal 30%**
  - Each week, you will connect your learning from your preparation/discussion session to your project work through a common reflective prompt. This will be in one running Google Document shared in Canvas with your instructor, to be named “[Your Name’s] Reflective Practice Journal.”
- **Integrative weekly assignment: Project Portfolio 30%**
  - You will create a Google Folder for your project documents. Over the first two weeks, you will engage in an initial assignment outlining your Project Proposal, in the form of a Google Doc within your Folder. Each week, you will further develop and revise this proposal, and it will become more of a Plan as you go. You will also keep project documents in your Folder (communications, project management tools, materials you are

developing, etc.). Mid-way through the semester and at the end of the semester your instructor and you will assess your learning and progress based on your weekly contributions to this Proposal/Plan and the additional, project-specific documents you compile in the Portfolio.

- **Final project presentation 10%**

- Each student will share their learning and project reflections in a final presentation. Presentation formats may vary by project and community partner. Final presentations should address how your learning and engagement evolved throughout the semester (informed by the original questions of your Project Proposal and your Reflective Practice Journal).

**Late work/absences:** In addition to your project work, it is important that you be present in class - which means actively and regularly engaging with course material, your classmates, and your instructor(s) - and completing assignments on time. If unusual circumstances indicate a reason for late submission of work or missing a class, a dean's excuse may be required. In such cases, please be in touch with an instructor to request an extension *in advance*. We can support you by helping you set priorities within the various aspects of this course so that you can be successful even if life circumstances make it impossible for you to follow the general plan-- but only through close communication. Missing more than two weeks will likely lead to failure of the class.

<i>Overall Average</i>	<i>Final Grade</i>
93.0-100%	A
90.0-92.9%	A-
86.0-89.9%	B+
83.0-85.9%	B
80.0-82.9%	B-
76.0-79.9%	C+
73.0-75.9%	C
70.0-72.9%	C-
60.0-69.9%	D
<60%	F

**Basic needs statement:** As a student at Middlebury College, and in this course, you are engaged in the important work of developing knowledge, skills and values that will help you lead lives of meaning and impact. As a residential school, Middlebury understands and makes every effort to center the importance of meeting basic needs, and to ensure that your learning is your primary focus. Especially in this time,

when we are in different spaces, facing different challenges, and with so many existential concerns weighing on us all, we know this semester will present multiple obstacles to that priority. If you are struggling with meeting basic needs this semester - food, health and health access, clothing, and safe and secure housing, we encourage you to reach out to your Dean and (or), if you are comfortable doing so, reach out to us. We, and the College generally, are committed to supporting you through this time and fostering the conditions that are necessary for you to reach your learning goals. You are important to us!

**Communication with instructor or Project Assistant:** If you have questions about the course please schedule a time to meet with Kailee or send Kailee an email. I will do my best to respond to email inquiries within 24 hours on weekdays and may not respond to emails on weekends so please take response time into consideration when sending emails. Gabriella will also be available for support of project work, and will respond within the week to emails (or forward them to Kailee to respond to, if necessary).

**Accommodations:** Students with disabilities who would like to request accommodations in the course are encouraged to contact Kailee early in the semester along with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC provides confidential services and reasonable accommodations for students who have needs affecting their learning, vision, hearing, speech, mobility, and physical and psychological health. Such services can include, for example, the assigning of note takers or readers or scribes, access to scanners, screen-reading software with voice synthesizers or large-print software, interpreting services, extended time on tests, and much more. Contact Jodi Litchfield, [litchfie@middlebury.edu](mailto:litchfie@middlebury.edu), or Peter Ploegman, [pploegman@middlebury.edu](mailto:pploegman@middlebury.edu) to learn more and get support.

**Required Reading:** The following book is required for this course, all other readings will be found on the Canvas site: Donahue, D. M. and Plaxton-Moore, S. (2018). *The Student Companion to Community-Engaged Learning: What You Need to Know for Transformative Learning and Real Social Change* (1st edition). Sterling, Virginia: Stylus. This is available for free (e-version) from the Library.

**Detailed assignments:** You will find a *draft* of the integrative assignments and then the weekly topics and assignments outlined below. Full assignment details will be available on our Canvas site, where each week is set up as a module.

**Project Portfolio:** Create a Google Folder named “[Your Name’s] Project Portfolio.” Include your Project Proposal and Reflective Practice Journal documents. Add other relevant, project-specific documents (significant communications you sent/received, videos you recorded, readings you researched, materials you’re developing, etc.) that show your progress and engagement. Your instructor may explore your Portfolio any time, in support of your project progress, and will provide you written grades and feedback on your Portfolio at the middle and end of the semester. You will also assess your learning through exploration of your Portfolio at these times.

**Project Proposal:** Create a Google Document named “[Your Name’s] Project Proposal,” and store it in your Project Portfolio Google Folder. Write a few sentences for each each bullet, max, to begin, over the first two weeks of the semester:

- In a few sentences, identify what you understand your project to be about (what, with whom, where, etc.).
- Why does this matter?
  - Why do you care about this (personally, right now)?
  - How do you know that the social issue topic/focus of your project is relevant in our community and beyond (beyond your personal, existing understanding/care, show qualitative and quantitative evidence)?
- Describe your community partner and their approach to the community issue you and they are addressing.
- What do you hope to contribute through your work and learning this semester, specifically?
  - Share your strengths/experience that you bring into it.
  - Identify the scope of your project, based on conversations with and information from your community partner.
- What do you hope to gain/learn/develop through your project involvement? Share your learning goals in the following three areas, and use the course learning objectives to identify specifics.
  - Knowledge
  - Skills
  - Identities
- What will it take to accomplish your hopes, on a weekly basis?
  - Use this [action planning worksheet](#) (or similar system) of identifying your process/goals, breaking them down, and assigning them a timeline as best you are able (knowing this is only a first, evolving draft).

It will be a living document that you attend to weekly, to annotate with comments, additions, and changes as things evolve over the semester. Each week, read through your Proposal and make notes and/or annotations on your project plan from your progress this week via the Comment feature (or additive text). Has anything changed in your approach, understandings, and action steps? We also encourage you to use the last section of this as an agenda for your weekly meeting with your project partner, to check in on progress and get specific about expectations/accomplishments for your project work each week.

*Reflective Practice Journal:* Create Google Doc in your Project Portfolio, name it “[Your Name’s] Reflective Practice Journal.” Each week, make a ~500 word reflection that addresses the following:

- Identify two-three key take-aways (i.e. things you learned, deepened, or changed your understanding about, and/or questions/curiosities) from your readings and discussion section. How do these relate to your learning goals (knowledge, skills, identities) that you identify in your Project Plan? How do these relate to and inform your work/process in your project and partnership relationship?

*Weekly Details:*

**Week 1 – September 14** Welcome/Introductions

**Prep/Assignments**

- Read the introduction and chapters 1 and 2 of *The Student Companion to Community-Engaged Learning: What You Need to Know for Transformative Learning and Real Social Change*
- Review project options

**Week 1- September 16** Establishing partnerships

- Meet with Kailee 1:1 to discuss partnership selection
- Reach out to your partner to schedule a meeting to discuss your Project Proposal (provide availability for next week).

**Tasks to complete by end of Week 1**

- Create Project Portfolio Google Folder. Create Project Proposal and Reflective Practice Journal running documents within your Folder.
- Begin work on your initial Project Proposal document, once you have your project partner established.

**Week 2 – September 21** Our Space Together

**Prep/Assignments**

- Read chapter 3 of *The Student Companion to Community-Engaged Learning: What You Need to Know for Transformative Learning and Real Social Change*
- Meet with your community partner to discuss your Project Proposal, establish a weekly meeting schedule (including for Interview 1 in week 3).

**Week 2- September 23** Project Proposal

- Workspace for Project Proposal and prep for week 3.

**Tasks to complete by end of Week 2**

- Complete your first draft of your Project Proposal document, and share with your community partner and instructor.

**Week 3 – September 28 and 30** Civic Knowledge: Identify community structures relative to resources, services and governance (L.O. 1a)

**Prep/Assignments**

- Review [Social Change Wheel](#)

- Deep dive into your community partner! Interview 1 due.
- Network mapping Assignment 1: Map the work that you and your community partner are doing on your own version of the social change wheel to identify where you land as part of what it takes to create social change around your issue in your local context.
- Watch/read Give Police to the Grandmothers and Town Meeting articles. Be prepared to discuss how these two resources propose the ways that change happens. Does the work you're doing align more with one approach more than the other? We'll discuss connection and divergence points to different social change work.

### **Post-discussion Weekly Assignments**

- Write your weekly reflective practice journal.
- Annotate/update your weekly project plan/portfolio.

**Week 4 – October 5 and 7** Civic Skills: Identify and describe habits and practices of collaborative community engagement (L.O. 2a)

### **Prep/Assignments**

- Read chapter 4 from Community Engaged Learning (Responsibilities).
- Do your DiSC assessment.
- Watch Sheila Cameron's video to explore what your DiSC means, and bring your personal report to your discussion section.

### **Post-discussion Weekly Assignments**

- Write your weekly reflective practice journal.
- Annotate/update your weekly project plan/portfolio.

**Week 5 – October 12 and 14** Civic Identity: Identify and describe components of civic identity (L.O. 3a)

### **Asynchronous Prep/Assignments**

- **Consider** Learning Outcome 3 in the syllabus, on Civic Identity.
- **Consider** this definition of positionality: <https://www.arteachingcollective.com/positionality.html>
- **Read and Consider** *Identity and Social Action: The Role of Self-Examination in Systemic Change* by Tania D. Mitchell: <https://www.aacu.org/diversitydemocracy/2015/fall/mitchell>
- **Read and Consider:** *ALP journals* as an example of reflection from Bey that incorporates personal identity/perspectives and complex social issues.
- **Interview & Written Assignment:** Identify someone, a family member if possible, who has time to virtually “meet” with you for a conversation sometime in the coming week. The assigned focus of the conversation – an interview of sorts – is to have your interviewee choose a meal they feel really captures your family's culture; and to critically reflect on why they chose this meal. Think



about the questions you might ask to support this being a reflective discussion and not a list of food items. If you aren't able to meet with a family member for this conversation, who else could have insight on aspects of your identity that might surface when considering a topic as "simple" as food and how we gather around it. After your discussion, please complete the *Week 5 Identity Interview - Written Assignment*. And be prepared to share your take-aways in class.

### **Post-discussion Weekly Assignments**

- Write your weekly reflective practice journal.
- Annotate/update your weekly project plan/portfolio.

**Week 6 – (October 19 Fall Break, no meeting) October 21** Civic Knowledge: Understand and describe the complex construction of the communities of which they are a part (L.O. 1b)

### **Prep/Assignments**

- Further develop your social change wheel mapping assignment: What other organizations/individuals/networks contribute in various ways to address your issue-- locally (put most of your focus here), regionally, nationally, globally? How? Map these networks of change-making contributors on your own version of the Social Change Wheel with at least a few examples of each modality of social change-making.

### **Post-discussion Weekly Assignments**

- Write your weekly reflective practice journal.
- Annotate/update your weekly project plan/portfolio.

**Week 7 – October 26 and 29** Civic Skills: Understand how civic skills are applied in a specific community context (L.O. 2b)

### **Asynchronous Prep/Assignments**

- Read asset mapping article and make an asset and learning map for you in your partnership work ("Module 1"). Identify what you contribute and where you need support/learning. Identify who can support your learning/gaps. From the list of skills you'd like to develop, we'll see if there's overlap and offer skill-building workshop[s] in week 10 of our course.
- Write an imagined "future resume" entry for your project, highlighting transferable skills (especially if they're related to the 7 C's and 8 principles introduced in the readings) you are developing or using or foresee developing in your project work. Use this [CCI Resume Guide](#) (pages 5-7) for tips on describing an experience and to see an example of a resume entry.

### **Post-discussion Weekly Assignments**

- Write your weekly reflective practice journal.
- Annotate/update your weekly project plan/portfolio.

**Week 8 – November 2 and 4** Civic Knowledge: Apply understanding of community to partnership work that centers community values and goals (L.O. 1c)

### Prep/Assignments

- **Read and Consider** [The Challenge of Short-Term Service Learning](#) (Tyron, et al.)
- **Watch, Explore, and Consider** one of these three:
  - [University as Neighbor – Scholars for Social Justice](#)-- no longer work
  - Oakland Encampment articles: “No more about us without us”
  - [RadiAid website](#) (Read the “Home” [choose 4 videos to watch, including main one], “About,” and “Social Media Guide” pages)
- Be prepared with a few written take-away notes for class about your article, to share with others.

### Post-discussion Weekly Assignments

- Write your weekly reflective practice journal.
- Annotate/update your weekly project plan/portfolio.

**Week 9 – November 9 and 11** Civic Identities: Understand and analyze how identity impacts and is shaped by community context, and the implications of this in specific project work (L.O. 3b)

### Prep/Assignments

- Listen to at least three *This I Believe* statements at [thisibelieve.org](http://thisibelieve.org).
- Write your own *This I Believe* statement, using guidelines from [This I Believe Essay Writing Suggestions | This I Believe](#).
- Share yours with your community partner. Ask your community partner about their beliefs/values and how they inform their work, and when/how they deal with conflicting priorities, and come prepared to class to share your reflections on this conversation.

### Post-discussion Weekly Assignments

- Write your weekly reflective practice journal-- how your beliefs/values connect to your project, and its implications on your role/work.
- Annotate/update your weekly project plan/portfolio.

**Week 10- November 16 and 18** Civic Skills: Apply civic skills in the context of specific collaborative community partnership work (L.O. 2c)

### Prep/Assignments

- Participate in skill building workshop by request [navigating conflict, time/project management, Oratory?]

### **Post-discussion Weekly Assignments**

- Write your weekly reflective practice journal.
- Annotate/update your weekly project plan/portfolio.

**(No classes November 23 and 15)**

**Week 11 – November 30 and December 2** Civic Identities: Apply your understanding of identity, positionality and access to participation, in the context of your specific project, to ethical and equitable community collaboration (L.O. 3c)

### **Prep/Assignments**

- **Read and Consider:** Chapter 5 from the Community Engaged Learning book: *Transformations*
- **Review** your journals and written assignments – or any other “recordings” of your project experience. Consider these questions as you review your materials:
  1. How have you addressed equitable access to a) participation, b) the defining of goals, and c) assessing the outcomes of your community-connected project? Where was this lacking? What would you do differently if you were “starting over”?
  2. How have the values that bring you to this work been present - and transparent – in the ways you engage with your project partners? Where was this lacking? What would you do differently if you were “starting over”?
  3. How have you engaged diverse perspectives and experiences in your community project, and addressed the implications of inequity in your project work and goals. Where was this lacking? What would you do differently if you were “starting over”?
- **Writing Assignment:** After thoughtful consideration, please choose one of the three questions and write a response to it in your reflective practice journal. This is an opportunity for you to identify and reflect upon how these civic competencies have been a part of your work; and how they haven't. The goal is **not** to show perfection, but to reflect upon your experiences so you learn from them – from what you feel super pleased about and what might not feel good at all. Unpack the learning held in your experiences and apply and build upon this learning moving forward. You will be asked to discuss your reflection in your upcoming class.

### **Post-discussion Weekly Assignments**

- Write your weekly reflective practice journal.
- Annotate/update your weekly project plan/portfolio.

**Week 12 – December 7 and 9** Prep for Presentations/Wrap up

### **Prep/Assignments**

- Fill out final presentation spreadsheet (including 1:1 meeting time with Kailee/Gabriella in advance)

### **Post-discussion Weekly Assignments**

- Organize, edit, and submit your final Weekly Practice Journal and Annotated Project Portfolio documents.
- Write a reflective blog-style post (~750 words) to summarize your learning, as captured across your integrative assignments (Reflective Practice Journal, Project Proposal). Highlight surprises, areas of ease, and areas of challenge in your learning and practice. After writing, we may ask if there is an edited version (remove aspects you'd like to keep between you and your instructor) that the Center for Community Engagement could use to share stories of your work with the public.

### **Week 13 – Week of December 13 (Finals week) Final Presentations**

#### **Prep/Assignments**

- Present your project.
- Watch at least three others' presentations.