

Community Engagement Fellows: Year 2 Community-Connected Class Requirement

This project is intended to help second year CEFs (Community Engagement Fellows) make explicit connections between their coursework and their community experiences. There are three steps to this assignment:

First, reaching out to the faculty member teaching your selected course to let them know about the assignment and get their approval and to let the CEF Program Director (Sam) know which course you have selected for this purpose.

Second, during the semester (typically at least past week five of the semester), meet with the faculty member and CEF Program Director again to discuss the connections you are seeing between the course content and your experience at your community placement.

Finally, at the end of the semester you will submit a final reflection to the CEF Program Director in a modality of your choice (e.g. written reflection, newspaper/public media, zine, podcast episode/series, art piece, etc) and be prepared to discuss your insights with others during our final group meeting of the semester. You may also choose to expand upon your Community-Connected Class reflections to create a poster presentation for the Civic Engagement Symposium (held in April).

Below, you will find a template for faculty outreach (to be sent after course request) along with a reminder template (in the case, for example, that you get approval from the faculty member in early April, but will not meet with them until October), guiding questions for your discussion with the faculty member, and the criteria for the reflection assignment.

Reflection Assignment Criteria & Guidelines

In this reflection, you will choose a modality in which to reflect upon the connections you are making between your academic course content and your site placement. There are very few ways to do this wrong! You are encouraged to be creative and deliberate in choosing something that stretches your thinking. The only requirements for this assignment include:

1. A brief introduction to your course **and** your CEF community placement.
2. Reflection situated at the intersection of **both** your course and CEF community placement. For sample prompts to guide your reflection, see questions below.
3. One citation/reference from your course, which could be a course text, assignment, or concept discussed in class.
4. At least 600-800 words (or equivalence with regard to effort). For example, if you incorporate your reflections into a visual comic, you can pair your creative work with a short “artist’s statement” (~50-100 words) given the effort invested into the work otherwise.
5. One visual—a photograph, video, image—to accompany your reflection. It could be a photo of you at your site, a screenshot of something you helped to design, or a creative graphic you design.

Sample prompts:

- What is an incident, encounter, or interaction you've had at your community placement that has lingered in your consciousness—perhaps something about it prompted an emotion (indignation, despair, inspiration)—and what connections are you drawing back to your class?
- What is a course concept, phenomenon, or discussion that shows up in your placement? Did you confirm or challenge any of the theories and concepts you have been learning about?
- What did you learn about yourself this semester, taking both your academic and community engagement into account? (if you find this too broad, consider using a shorter time period – month, week, etc.) You could discuss how these experiences shaped your values, major, professional aspirations, purpose, skills, or approach to learning.
- What did you learn about the people you are serving or serving with this semester? (Clients/guests of the organization, members of the organization, peers, leaders at your site, other students). How did your academic and community engagement help you to deepen or nuance your understanding of this community?
- What did you learn about Carlisle/place in which you are working? How did you deepen your understanding about this organization and this local region?
- How has your understanding of a particular issue area or intersection of issues changed this semester, with relation to both your academic learning and community engagement?

The reflection should be at least 600-800 words (or equivalent with regard to effort) and include at least one citation/reference from course or related material. Be reflective and creative! Questions about the assignment can be directed to the CEF Program Director.

This assignment can also be paired with other potential engagements. For example, you could develop what you create into an eventual undergraduate research thesis, work with your professor to tailor one of your course assignments (e.g. a reflection paper, final presentation) to meet this criteria, adapt your piece for a public channel like the *The Dickinsonian* or the CCLA Newsletter, or expand upon your piece to present at the annual Civic Engagement Symposium.

For examples, check these out:

- [Cao-CEF Community-Connected Class Paper-spring 2023.docx](#)
- http://bonner.pbworks.com/w/file/fetch/119039016/CofC_16-17%20Capstones.pdf
- <https://pkgcenter.mit.edu/2020/08/27/social-impact-internships-following-up-with-julian-zulueta-23/>

Faculty Outreach Email Template

Dear Professor _____,

My name is _____ and I am registered in your _____ class for the fall/spring [year] semester. I am a part of the Community Engagement Fellows (CEF) at Dickinson, a two- year internship working with a local nonprofit in the area. You can learn more about the program [here](#). As a part of our second year in the program, we are required to make connections between our coursework and our community experiences. I am hoping to use your class to meet my Community-Connected Class requirement. For this assignment, I would meet with you during the semester (at least a third of the way through the class) to discuss the connections I am seeing between the course content and my work in the community. At the end of the semester, I will submit a reflection for the CEF program in a modality of my choice.

I wanted to reach out to you now to inform you of my assignment and that I hope to use this class as the course to connect with my work. Through CEF, I work at host organization, working primarily as/with (your main role at placement). I would appreciate your approval of using this course as a part of my assignment. Upon your approval, I will reach out again next semester to coordinate a meeting to discuss the assignment and connections between the course and my work through Community Engagement Fellows. If you have any questions, I'd be happy to connect you with Dr. Sam Ha-DiMuzio, who directs the CEF program and can chat more about this assignment.

Thank you very much and I look forward to being in your class!

Sincerely,
Your Name

Faculty Outreach Reminder Template

Dear Professor _____,

My name is _____ and I am in your _____ class. I reached out to you at the beginning of the semester to inform you about my work with the Community Engagement Fellows and my assignment to connect my coursework with community experiences. Now that I have spent some time in this course, I would love to meet with you to discuss the assignment and talk about how the course connects to my work at host organization.

I can stop by your office hours on _____.

(If office hours do not work, suggest additional meeting times) As I cannot make it to your regularly scheduled office hours here are some suggested times when I am available to meet: _____. Please let me know a time and date that would work for you.

Thank you and I look forward to meeting with you! Sincerely,
Your Name

This would also be a good time to set up a time to meet with Sam!

Guiding Questions for Faculty Meeting

Ahead of the meeting with your professor, consider these guidelines and guiding questions:

- Identify a concept from the class or reading that has relevance to something you have observed at your placement. Has your classroom knowledge changed your understanding of what is going on in the community? Has your community experience changed or strengthened your understanding of the concept from class?
- Are there additional topics or resources from class content that might be of interest based on your placement?
- What are the key takeaways from this class?
- How does the course content and service at my placement intersect/relate?
- What work/experiences from my placement do I see in the course content?
- How can I apply what I learn in this course to my work at my placement?