



# Community Partner Guide

For Student Experiential Learning Placements

**Community Engagement Center  
@ Sacramento State**

## **Community Engagement Center (CEC) Role**

### **What We Do:**

#### **Support Faculty**

...to develop & incorporate community-based learning experiences for students

#### **Facilitate & Develop Community Partnerships**

...to foster mutually beneficial collaborations and experiential learning opportunities

#### **Showcase & Evaluate Community Engagement**

...to highlight and better illustrate overall impact

#### **Coordinate Service Opportunities**

...to connect our students and campus to the local community

## **Academic Terminology**

**To effectively communicate with faculty, it's important to understand some academic terms such as:**

#### **Community Learning Agreement**

- The legally binding agreement between Sacramento State and a Community Partner. This agreement is beneficial for all involved parties as it sets expectations including site responsibilities, student responsibilities, and risk/liability.

#### **Learning Objectives**

- The specific skills or knowledge to be gained from a course. For example, in writing courses learning objectives might be to analyze the style of a text, write arguments targeting an audience's interests; evaluate outside sources for documentation.

#### **Curriculum**

- The readings, assignments, and activities that help faculty meet the learning objectives of a course.

### **Direct Service**

- Working directly with clients at a community partner site for a set number of hours per week during the semester (e.g. tutoring/ mentoring students in an after-school program, helping in a homeless shelter).

### **Project Based**

- Developing projects for the agency (e.g., creating a website, grant proposal, design plans, research project).

### **Assessment/Evaluation**

- There are Community-Engaged Learning/Academic Internship surveys that students complete at the end of each academic semester. These evaluations are managed by the Community Engagement Center.

## **Community - University Partnerships**

The Community Engagement Center creates and sustains partnerships with local and regional agencies for curricular and co-curricular engagement. These collaborative partnerships prepare our students to be engaged and productive members of society, who make civic-minded decisions and contribute innovative solutions that address the complex social, health, economic, scientific, and civic issues.

There are many ways to engage with our campus community and to share your different types of opportunities with our students. Participation will vary based on student interest, requirements, and availability.

### **Universities/Colleges can share...**

- a knowledge of processes (e.g. economic development) and technical expertise (e.g. research skills)
- access to technology
- multiple perspectives to the many issues facing community agencies
- the 'right questions' to focus an issue (e.g. leadership)
- the next generation of staff, workers, administrators, voters...

### **Faculty in Universities cannot...**

- quickly change curriculum or activities/school calendar
- provide unlimited resources
- ensure stable course offerings/enrolments
- ensure stable/supportive leaders

## **Four Types of Student Placements**

### **Academic Internship**

A comprehensive set of activities/projects that facilitate students' structured application of academic learning to career-aligned professional experiences. Students must complete required internship hours (determined by department/major). May be paid (e.g., salary, stipend) or unpaid.

### **Service Learning**

Short-term activities/projects that foster reciprocal partnerships that enhance student contribution to the common good and attainment of both civic learning and academic goals. No hours requirement and possibly paid.

### **Curricular Community-Engaged Learning**

Short-term activities/projects that foster reciprocal partnerships that enhance student contribution to the common good. No hours requirement and typically unpaid.

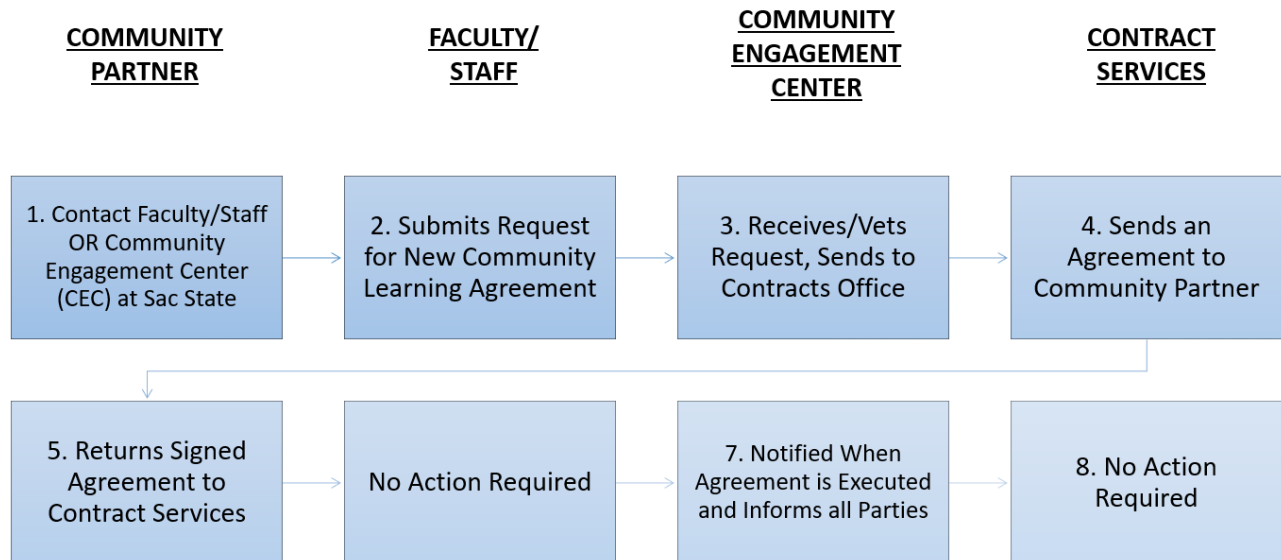
### **Community-Engaged Research**

Short or long-term activities/projects whereby students support the analysis/research of community-identified issues. May be paid or unpaid. May have an hours requirement or may not.

## **Community Learning Agreement**

The legally binding agreement between Sacramento State and a Community Partner. This agreement is beneficial for all involved parties as it sets expectations for many important subjects, including site responsibilities, student responsibilities, and risk/liability.

Here is an overview of the agreement process, including all the stakeholders involved:



## Guiding Principles to Reduce Risk

The following guiding principles apply to staff, faculty, community-based organizations and students.

Since each learning placement is different, these guidelines are not intended to be all encompassing but apply to most situations. The intent of these guidelines is not to prohibit community-based learning experiences, but rather, to provide best practices that allow for safe and positive environments where the risk and liability have been minimized.

- **DO** assign a site supervisor for your site(s)
- **DO** thoroughly review the Community Learning Agreement to understand the roles and responsibilities of all parties
- **DO** provide a student orientation to your organization and its policies, procedures, clientele profile, and emergency procedures. This will ensure that students act in safe, positive, and productive manners during their placements
- **DO** make sure you can attest to how many total hours students completed while placed with your organization
- **DON'T** arrange travel for students. Liability is greatly reduced if students are responsible for their own transportation to and from the service site. If the project, activity, or internship includes mobile services such that students will be in a

van/vehicle to deliver services, there should be more than two people in the vehicle.

- **DON'T** assume that any final products produced by students are the sole property of the community-based organization. The final products are the property of the student, but often, the student can grant product rights to the community-based organization.

## CEC Contact Information

***Main Office – this is a great place to start!***

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