WHAT IS CBL?
Community-based learning (CBL) happens when students and faculty enhance their course experience by applying the concepts and skills they have acquired in their coursework to a real-world context that meets a community need. A wide variety of possibilities exist for community-based learning collaborations between classrooms and community partners.

BENEFITS OF CBL
CBL can be accomplished in a number of ways:
- Individually or by an entire class (required for credit or optional)
- Direct service or indirect service
- Research or advocacy
- In the community, in the classroom or completely online

FACULTY BENEFITS
- Support retention and student success
- Build community partners and stakeholders
- Enhance pedagogy and develop creative and diverse teaching strategies
- Broader awareness of current societal issues as they relate to their academic areas of interest

STUDENT BENEFITS
- Deeper understanding of course content
- Explore majors and career options
- Enhance skills such as communication, critical-thinking and problem-solving
- Develop understanding of diverse communities and social issues
- Engage, serve and learn about the community
Jeffrey Howard’s Principles of Good Practice for Service-Learning Pedagogy is among the most widely accepted and adopted documents addressing service-learning practice. The principles were originally published in the Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning. They include the following:

1. Pre-Planning
2. Meet with Shannon Williams, CBL Coordinator
3. Refine and Plan
4. Prepare Students for Learning and Serving
5. Evaluation and Celebration

**PRE-PLANNING**

Before making decisions about what and how to include community-based learning into a course, consider these questions (adapted from University of Arkansas):

1. What are the key learning outcomes for the project?

2. How could a CBL project help achieve course objectives? For instance, how would it help students apply the skills that they are learning in class, reinforce understanding of concepts and theories, promote leadership skills or understanding of diversity, etc.? Try to be as specific as possible in your planning.

3. What course content will they need to have covered before they can serve? What level of mastery will they need to be successful in serving?

4. How will students’ work on the CBL project be evaluated? (How will you know that they have achieved the key learning outcomes?)

5. What reflection activities will be incorporated into the project?

6. What graded and non-graded assignments (including reflection) will be associated with the CBL project?

7. What would you consider a successful outcome for the CBL project?
After determining your answers to these questions, make an appointment to meet with Shannon Williams, Community-Based Learning Coordinator (swilliams@inverhills.edu).

If possible, send your pre-planning answers to Shannon in advance of the meeting. Plan to discuss these questions during the meeting.

Meeting time will be used to brainstorm potential community partners and project specifics. As a result of this meeting, Shannon will be able to establish a community partner and set up the logistics of the project.

Consider accessibility of the experience to students with disabilities, adult students, or students whose ethnic, racial, religious, sexual, or gender orientation might put them at risk in the service context.

**MEET YOUR CBL COORDINATOR**

Shannon comes to IHCC with a B.S. in Communication Processes and M.A. in Educational Leadership with an emphasis in Student Development in Higher Education. She has 10 years of experience working in higher education, including a position designing and coordinating the volunteer service program at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. Her passions include social justice and civic engagement. She is also a Gallup Certified Strengths Coach. Shannon lives in St Paul with her spouse, two kids, and two cats.
After the CBL Coordinator has one or more project/partner proposals, the Coordinator and faculty member will refine the parameters of the project and be able to finalize plans for the project’s integration into the course. Some considerations for this part of the planning process include:

How will learning be measured? Do not give credit for the service; give credit for the learning.

How will critical reflection of the CBL project be facilitated? Research shows that the benefits of CBL only occur if intentional reflection takes place.

If the entire class is working with one or two community partners (versus individual students finding individual placements), this would also be the time for the faculty member, ELC and community partner to meet to discuss expectations, timelines, etc.

**SYLLABUS RESOURCES**

Campus Compact - https://compact.org/resource-posts/

National Service-Learning Clearinghouse - https://gsn.nylc.org/clearinghouse
"PRE-FLECTION"

In order for students to get the most out of their CBL experience, it is important to prepare them for what they will do and how it connects to the course content. Before sending students to do their CBL project, give context to the issues they will be encountering and introduce them to the organizations where they will be serving.

Be clear with students about the intended learning outcomes, how reflection will be facilitated, what assignments are connected to the CBL project, and how their learning will be assessed.

LOGISTICS AND SUPPORT

The Center for Career Development will set students up for success by supporting them through the logistics of CBL. This includes:

How to select a service site that’s a good fit (if students have choices)

How to register with and connect to the Center for Career Development (this includes liability waivers and other paperwork)

How to reach out to community partners to set up their service

Talking through potential problems that may arise and what to do

Checking in with students and community partners throughout the experience

Staff is available and willing to come into the classroom to assist with logistics, pre-flection and reflection
Learning from a CBL project will not take place without critical reflection inside the classroom.

Critical reflection is "the process of analyzing, reconsidering, and questioning one’s experiences within a broad context of issues and content knowledge (Jacoby, 2015)."

Gateway Technical College has a comprehensive guide to service-learning reflection that can be used as a resource: https://www.gtc.edu/sites/default/files/files/documents/Service_Learning_Reflection_Toolkit.pdf

WAYS TO DEMONSTRATE LEARNING

**Verbal Demonstrations**
Give oral reports to your group.
Teach others what you learned.
Do public speaking about the project.
Plan a training session for other youth.
Testify before a decision-making or policy-setting group to educate and inform.
Lead a school education assembly.
Present at a conference or workshop.
Hold a press conference to highlight the cause.
Teach material to younger children.

**Written Demonstrations**
Write a letter to a community newspaper
Write an essay to inform or persuade others.
Create poetry about the issues.
Write briefing papers for policy makers.
Create fact sheets (or Webpages) on the issues and service opportunities that you addressed.
Create a booklet of reflective readings that includes journal excerpts and other writings about the experiences.
Submit an article to a newspaper or magazine.

**Artistic Demonstrations**
Develop and perform a skit or one-act play.
Write and perform music that addresses the concerns and issues.
Design a T-shirt, poster, or button that raises awareness of an issue.
Create a photo exhibit, and find place on campus or a local business (e.g., coffee shop) to display it.
Create artwork, posters, or bulletin boards.
Create a project mural in a public space.

**Tech Demonstrations**
Make, post, and share a video online.
Keep a blog throughout the project.
Create a Website about the topic.
Appear on a local cable TV show.

**Integrated Demonstrations**
Create and share portfolios (traditional or electronic).
Host a culminating event for the project.

EVALUATION

WRAP UP TO-DO LIST

STUDENTS:
Submit SIGNED time logs
Complete the CBL evaluation

FACULTY:
Facilitate final reflection with students (or ask the CBL Coordinator to come in and facilitate)
Provide feedback about the CBL project experience

CENTER FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT:
Provide feedback to faculty received from community partners
Provide information collected through student surveys
Formally thank our community partners

EVALUATE THE LEARNING

- Give grades based on the learning, not the service.
- You should not be more lenient because service learning takes more time. You don’t give breaks to students who spend many hours writing a research paper if it’s a bad paper.
- Did they write well, think well, argue clearly?
- Keep rigorous criteria, just as you would for a regular paper.
- Even if the student’s placement doesn’t turn out well, look at how well they analyze the situation and make suggestions for improvements.
- How well does the student integrate course theory with practice?
- How well does the student analyze the situation and understand the problem?
- Are they able to communicate this information?
- How well do they formulate conclusions and recommendations for solutions?
- The better your learning goals are formulated and communicated to students at the beginning, the easier it will be for you to evaluate and grade them at the end.

Source: Marquette University
http://www.marquette.edu/servicelearning/evaluating.shtml