

# QEP Topic Proposal Form

## Topic Working Title:

Community and Civic Engagement Pathways

## Values, Mission, and Strategic Plan

Community Engagement has been identified as one of four strategic priorities for UNCG according to the Chancellor's Strategic Framework. Indeed, CE is not an end point, but rather a strategy. Through community engagement, UNCG can build on its existing assets and reputation (one of 40 community-engaged, high research activity universities, as classified by the Carnegie Foundation), to meet the mission (The University of North Carolina at Greensboro will redefine the public research university for the 21st century as an inclusive, collaborative, and responsive institution making a difference in the lives of students and the communities it serves.) vision (As a public research university, our vision is to be a national model for how to blend access and excellence to transform students, the institution, and the community), enliven institutional values (equity, diversity and inclusion) and advance UNCG strategic priorities (distinction, student success, enrollment, community engagement).

Since 2008, UNCG has held the Carnegie Foundation's Community Engagement Elective Classification (reclassified in 2015, next reclass due May 2023). Our campus definition of community engagement follows Carnegie's: "Community engagement (also referred to as civic engagement) is the "collaboration (among) institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity." Through community engagement, community and university knowledge and resources are brought together in and out of the classroom, as well as on and off campus to "enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good." The "community" in community engagement is not defined by sector, such as private or public, for-profit, or nonprofit; rather, community is broadly defined to include individuals, groups, and organizations external to campus that use collaborative processes for the purpose of contributing to the public good.

In alignment with Minerva's Academic Curriculum (MAC), which focuses on the development of eleven foundational competencies that are important for learning in college and life, community and civic engagement meet many of the SLOs outlined in this curriculum. For example, in the "Foundations" competency, the following are SLOs:

1. Develop goals and plans related to personal purpose, interests, or values between self and community.
2. Build connections between self and community relationships with peers, faculty, and staff. (e.g., UNCG, college/student/department, special interest group, social/leadership/service initiative).

3. Critically evaluate information and media sources in a variety of formats. In each of the eleven competencies, there are multiple examples of how community and civic engagement fit into existing SLO's.

Community Engagement is enacted through teaching, research, creative activity, and public service; it can be curricular or co-curricular. Often, partnerships are engaged in more than one mode of engagement (e.g., research and teaching, teaching and service, teaching, creative activity, and service). "Increasingly, the academic learning potential of service-learning (a form of community-engaged teaching) is being leveraged at the curriculum-level through cross-course design, thematic pathways, and the integration of first year and capstone projects" (NCCC Civic and Community Engagement Primer).

Civic and community engagement (CCE), including service-learning, is being increasingly used as a strategic approach toward these ends [retention]. CCE can have a positive effect on grade point average (Lockeman & Pelco, 2013) and motivation to succeed in and finish college (Yeh, 2010; Yob, 2014). CCE has also been shown to improve student attitudes toward institution and learning (Lockeman & Pelco, 2013; Reed et al., 2015), thus contributing to an increased rate of graduation. Such outcomes of service-learning and other high impact practices hold for students from the full range of backgrounds and even more so for students from historically underserved populations (Kuh, 2008). (Note: This paragraph directly quotes the NCCC Civic and Community Engagement Primer)

## Student Learning Outcomes and/or Student Success

This QEP will focus on both student success and student learning. Through community and civic engagement pathways, more students can find relevance, meaning, competence, and confidence in their college degree and their ability to effect positive and respectful/equitable contribution/change/leadership in communities they belong to. UNCG would be better/more coordinated across departments and units as it relates to integrated (across courses) and community engagement partnerships (across community partners). This work is inclusive of teaching, research, creative activity, and service, and often integrates these roles and activities, in and out of the classroom, and on- and off-campus.

Because this is both a curricular and co-curricular focused QEP, every student (undergraduate and graduate) at UNCG can opt in to various components of the community and civic engagement pathways.

We seek to help students build lifelong capacities for personal, community, and civic participation and responsibility. Our overarching goal is to assist students in developing an appreciation for, and an ability to engage in, independent thought and action, while at the same time developing an appreciation of the extent to which our lives are interdependent, which involves a recognition of those benefits of society that can be fostered only collectively. This initiative also aims to develop the ability to interact with others to foster our collective wellbeing. In the end, we hope to enhance UNCG's efforts to develop informed,

engaged, socially responsible community members and leaders who think creatively and critically, work collaboratively, equitably, and ethically, and communicate effectively.

This will be done through scaffolded, intentionally designed, and community-engaged courses aligned to best practices in the field. A first-year student arriving at UNCG would enroll in a 100-level course that thoughtfully integrates (across all sections) service with the local community and course work. Some learning outcomes associated with this 100-level course might include:

1. Clarify and act upon personal purpose
2. Practice and learn firsthand about civic/community engagement
3. Engage in reflection [connected with the sense of agency and ownership over their learning + developing sense of belonging]

Continuing their education, students would enroll in the next level of moderately intensive community-engaged learning courses, which would primarily focus on collaborative assignments and projects that allow them to engage with community-identified priorities in groups. Some learning outcomes associated with these 200 level courses might include:

1. Integrate information from a variety of contexts (to frame problems for solving)
2. Apply and test understanding of civic/community engagement

In the most highly intensive community-based learning courses (300/400-level), students would participate in undergraduate research, public service internships, and capstone courses and projects. Through these practices students are expected to create a project, program, or facilitate research that integrates and applies what they have learned through their course of study.

1. Identify and provide possible solutions to complex problems
2. Communicate effectively and responsibly what they have learned
3. Reflect and reimagine civic/community engagement

Here are some SLO choices:

Understands the social, economic, cultural, historical, and political context of social issues.

1. Students will engage in constructive dialogue to build reciprocal relationships and/or community.
2. Students will think, communicate, and act critically/creatively and responsively as members of a community.
3. Students will employ communication, problem solving, and critical thinking competencies to address entrenched social or community problems (work collaboratively to address social or community problems).
4. By the end of the undergraduate experience, students will be able to articulate the connections between their academic curriculum and how community engagement contributes to a thriving democracy to address social or community problems.
5. By the end of the undergraduate experience, students will be able to articulate how community engagement competencies make them career ready.

6. Students will develop academic plans that incorporate personal purpose, interests, and/or values between self and community in relation to their student success.

What would success look like for the QEP being proposed:

1. More students are finding relevance, meaning, competence, and confidence in their college degree and their ability to effect positive and respectful/equitable contribution/change/leadership in communities they belong to. UNCG would be better/more coordinated across departments and units as it relates to integrated (across courses) and community engagement partnerships (across community partners)
2. Co-curricular and curricular programs and activities are more integrated/more porous
3. Faculty have a sense of the different strategies and types of community engagement, and see alignment with their scholarship (broadly defined)
4. Campus community understands that community engagement is inclusive of teaching, research, creative activity, and service, and often integrates these roles and activities, in and out of the classroom, and on- and off-campus.

What sorts of data would support our case for success?

1. Sharp increase in student voting rate (one indicator of civic engagement)
2. Students enrolled in courses that offer this curriculum
3. Surveys of students experiences and expectations for engagement at UNCG and beyond, civic attitudes, increased sense of belonging and connection (less social isolation), career clarification and readiness, intercultural awareness,
4. Student GPA and retention

What are some examples of SLOs/student success outcomes?

Literature broadly supports positive outcomes for students who participate in community engaged learning, including increased retention (Kuh et al., 2008), improved academic outcomes and development of study skills and habits (Song et al., 2017), greater levels of demonstrating socially responsible and collective leadership (Soria et al., 2013), and enhanced civic engagement and intercultural skills (Mitchell et al., 2011).

General Outcomes of Service-Learning (Curricular Engagement):

- Academic gains
  - a. Higher grades
  - b. Increased persistence & retention rates
- Increases in critical thinking and writing skills
  - a. Positive changes in civic attitudes
  - b. Greater tolerance and reduced stereotyping
  - c. Enhance community/civic literacy
  - d. Gains in moral reasoning
- Greater levels of civic behavior, social responsibility, social justice awareness, sense of self-efficacy, and belonging

- a. Increased interaction with faculty, peers, and community members
- b. Enhanced commitment to service-oriented career
- c. Approach community issues with cultural humility
- d. Reduced negative experiences/isolation due to orientation of service experience
- Moderating Variables
  - a. Characteristics of service experience (type, hours, contact, supervision)
  - b. Characteristics of learning experience (reflection, faculty connection of academic content to experience)

## Evidence of Need

CE is connected to enrollment (recruitment/distinction, retention, persistence), as well as a sense of connection and purpose (belonging, well-being), and DEI/anti-racism (IF done well).

Community and civic engagement are an integral part of UNC Greensboro's identity per the mission and vision statement. According to national statistics, individuals over the age of 25 with at least some post-secondary school education volunteer at noticeably higher rates than those without it. The same can be said for the civic engagement of others with similar educational backgrounds as there is a correlation between higher levels of education and propensity to vote. If UNC Greensboro wants to continue to make inroads with our internal and external communities, the university needs to continue to foster reciprocal collaboration across disciplines. The importance of tying in-class learning to real life experiences cannot be overstated enough. Indeed, doing so within a service-learning context dovetails seamlessly with the following MAC competencies: critical thinking/inquiry of social and behavioral sciences, global engagement, and intercultural learning, as well as diversity and equity. To embed social justice into our community/civic engagement we ought to be promoting culturally sustainable pedagogies and practices. These are practices and pedagogies that maintain heritage, values, cultural and linguistic pluralism (Caldera, 2021). It has the explicit goal of sustaining and supporting bi-/multilingualism and multiculturalism (Caldera, 2021). In doing so, public service and community engagement is situated in an asset centered approach rather than one focused on student and/or community deficits. It will require us to move from an axiom of "father knows best" to one where we respond to the invitation of community partners who say, "Ask us, we lay our heads down here at night." (Cantor, 2018).

This is particularly true in the focus area of government and public safety which, according to the UNC Greensboro Collaboratory report, only accounts for seven projects out of over 200. Government and public safety include citizenship, criminal justice/corrections, and public policy analysis. Given the university's status as a minority-serving institution as well as its role as the largest publicly funded institution in the area grounded in much research related to Greensboro's civil rights history, we have a responsibility to tackle the many inequities in local government policy. These government policies that impact our students and their families--particularly those from financially disadvantaged backgrounds. Per enrollment reports, roughly half of UNC Greensboro undergraduates are first-generation students, nearly

one third are from rural communities, and about half of them qualify for the Pell Grant. In thinking about how we can sustain and thus retain these students, taking steps to enhance the university's ability to effect change in local government policy seems a necessary step for meaningful community/civic engagement. Educating civic and community-minded student leaders in the age of COVID presents unique challenges that can be reframed as opportunities for research and growth.

While future community/civic engagement needs are difficult to predict at this stage, it goes without saying that UNC Greensboro will need to renew its Carnegie Community Engagement classification for strategic marketing purposes. As we face ongoing enrollment cohort drag in the coming years, the university will need to deploy every resource it has to remain competitive within a highly competitive higher education region. There are direct links from community and civic engagement to feelings of belonging, especially among students of color. Equipping students and empowering them to be active in their community allows them to not only create meaningful relationships with students and community members, but also gain the skills to continue this work beyond UNCG. Continued development of existing civic connections while exploring ways to leverage the experience and skills of our diverse students will be key as UNC Greensboro fulfills its mission, vision, and strategic goals.

Caldera, A. (2021, May). What the Term "Culturally Sustaining Practices" Means for Education in Today's Classrooms. IDRA Newsletter. <https://www.idra.org/resource-center/what-the-term-culturally-sustaining-practices-means-for-education-in-todays-classrooms/>

Cantor, N. (2018). Of mutual: benefit democratic engagement between universities and communities. *Liberal Education*, 104(2), 6–13.

Clark, J., Garza, A., Fulkerson, B., Murrieta, L., Bastien, M., McBride, M. (2020). Civic Engagement for Empowerment and Belonging. Othering & Belonging Institute UC Berkeley, 1-42, [https://belonging.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/civic\\_engagement\\_paper\\_collection.pdf?file=1&force=1](https://belonging.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/civic_engagement_paper_collection.pdf?file=1&force=1)

## Resources

The resources needed for this topic are indicated (rough estimate). To explain each component in greater detail, please see descriptions below.

Student Reflection Leader Support: A primary goal with this topic is to improve student learning and success. One way to ensure this is by empowering students to take leadership roles in the classroom and support faculty in well-designed service-learning and/or civic engagement designated courses. The Student Reflection Leader position is a paid position in which students undergo training on creating, sustaining, and evaluating community partnerships. They are also trained on conducting presentations in class assisting students in critically reflecting on their learning and assessing impact. This is a professional

development opportunity for students and can serve as a marker on their academic transcripts and resumes.

Faculty and Staff Support/Curriculum Development/Faculty Champions: To effectively impact student learning, modules must be designed with the interests of both students and the community in mind, fully integrated into the curriculum, and delivered in a culturally competent manner. This program will a) work with faculty to identify and support existing civic engagement (including service learning) activities; b) compensate faculty for the extra time and effort required to design these experiences; c) establish a Faculty Civic Engagement Champions program that recruits and compensates a select group of willing faculty to undergo extensive training and actively support their peers in the design and delivery of these opportunities; d) help connect faculty with community partners; and e) support a campus-wide review of Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion language and faculty support policies to ensure that community engagement is valued, recognized, and rewarded.

Civic Engagement Grants and Community Recognition Program: Grants will fund programmatic elements of civic engagement and provide some compensation for the time community partners spend designing and conducting these activities. This program will also include the establishment of an Engaged Partner Recognition awarded by the university.

\*This is a mock template that includes existing/internal and external funds, including grants.

\*These figures are all estimates.

*Five Year Budget Overview*

Budget Category	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Personnel (Program Director salary + benefits)	\$84,000	\$84,000	\$84,000	\$84,000	\$84,000
Supplies and Materials	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Marketing and Outreach	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Travel (local and conference)	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Faculty and Staff Support/Curriculum Development	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000	\$55,000
Faculty Champions Program	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Civic Engagement Grants	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000

Student Reflection Leaders	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Evaluation	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Total:	\$344,000	\$334,000	\$334,000	\$334,000	\$334,000

\*This chart was adapted from UNC Wilmington, cited below.

#### Additional Resources from other colleges/universities

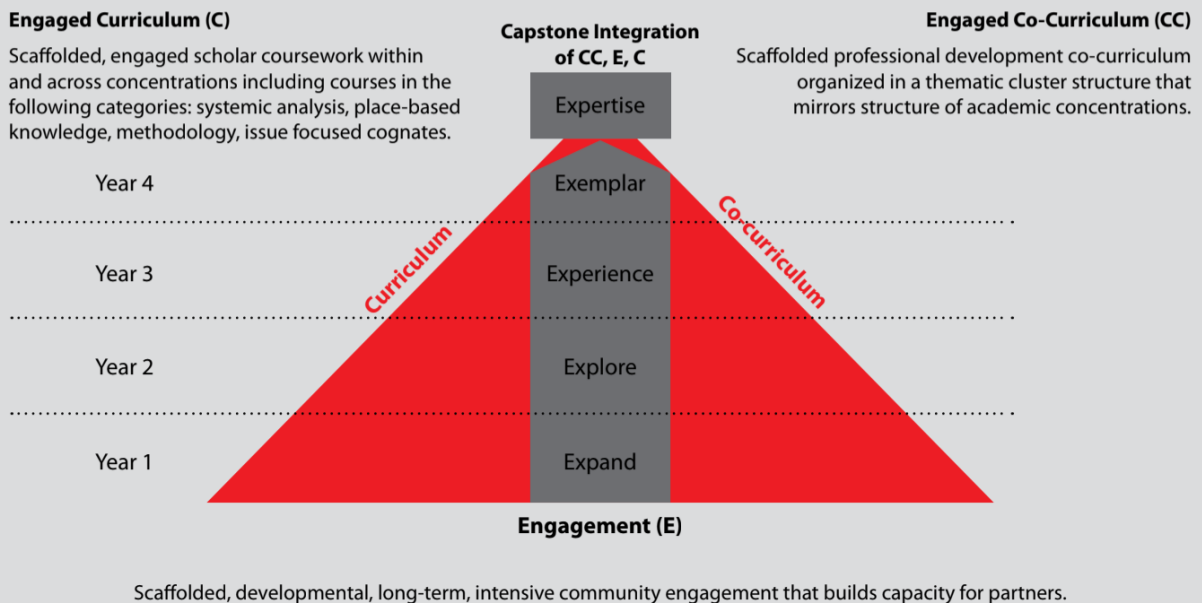
Some QEPs that contain some Community Engagement- like SLOs

- Clayton State University - [Partnering Academics with Community Engagement \(PACE\)](#)
- UNC Wilmington - [Community Aligned Learning Collaborative: Supporting Student Success, Faculty Development & Community Engagement by Improving the University Service-Learning Model Proposal](#)
- Western Carolina - [Integrated Learning](#)
  - The overarching learning goal of the QEP is one where students will synthesize knowledge and skills from their academic and co-curricular experiences to become intentional participants in their own learning. Specifically, students will:
    1. Identify their aptitudes, abilities, and interests and articulate their future goals and aspirations.
    2. Modify behaviors and values in response to knowledge and skills gained from their academic and co-curricular experiences; and
    3. Recognize the synthesis of their university experiences and evaluate those experiences relative to their future education and career goals.
- George Mason - [Transformative education through anti-racist community engagement](#)
- Piedmont Virginia Community College - [Civic Sense - engaging student in the civic life of their communities](#)
  - Seeks to build student leaders who have a strong commitment to democracy and diversity, and who engage in the civic life of their communities through collaborative, creative, and critical problem-solving.
  - Student Learning outcomes
    - Graduates will actively participate in civic life by voting in local, state, and federal elections
    - Graduates will actively participate in civic life by engaging in public service or other activities that improve the condition of communities and/or quality of people's lives
    - Graduates will evaluate multiple perspectives to think critically about issues of public consequence.



- *Brown University* - [Student Learning Outcomes for CE](#) , [CE Values](#), [CE strategic goals](#) , and [plan](#) - integrates Curricular and Co-Curricular Engagement
  - **Curriculum:** Scaffolded, intentionally designed, and community-engaged courses aligned to best practices in the field; from entry level to advanced.
  - **Co-Curriculum:** Sequential, competency-based trainings and intensive advising and mentoring for students aligned to clearly articulated learning goals and rigorous assessment of these outcomes
- *University of Michigan* - [Public Engagement Framework](#); [Public Engagement Framework “Explainer”](#) (explains relationships, stakeholders, contexts/domains); [Public Engagement Reflection “Decks”](#) (helps with relationship-building and planning)

**Figure 1: Integrated Community Engagement Model**



**Community-Engaged Courses** - Community-engaged courses integrate the application of academic knowledge to directly impact a public good within the context of a specific community, and with community stakeholders as the partners. Community engaged courses fall into one of the following four types.

- **1. Place-based** courses have a significant focus on place-based knowledge and challenge students to systemically analyze societal problems and challenges faced by communities. By “place,” we mean a specific delimited location — virtual or physical — that a group of people identify as a community to which they belong.

- **2. Issue-based** courses have a significant focus on issue-based knowledge (i.e., education, health, climate, etc.) and engage students in examining the specific challenges faced by people and communities dealing with the issue.
- **3. Methods of Community Inquiry and Innovation** courses initiate students into the theory and practice of disciplinary and interdisciplinary research methods appropriate to understanding and analyzing societal problems and community challenges. A particular focus of these courses is on the role of community members as collaborators and on the ethics of research methods.
- **4. Project/Partnership-based** courses integrate a community partner/project deeply into the course pedagogy and content. These courses build on introductory and methods courses and ideally involve longer-term community partnerships developed by departments, faculty members, or the Swearer Center. Capstone courses (for seniors) that feature advanced investigations of particular community/social issues in collaboration with partner organizations are frequently included here.

The community engagement will vary from course to course. Some examples of course-based community engagement strategies include:

- Case studies investigating local communities, organizations, or challenges.
- Community practitioner speakers or panels representing relevant community knowledge.
- Site visits to organizations, neighborhoods, project events, and exhibits.
- Community-focused investigations involving field assignments.
- Experiential learning opportunities (e.g., practicums, apprenticeships, internships).
- Team-based research projects developed in partnership with community organizations; and
- Reflective practices aimed at exploring: students' positionality and agency in community; gaps between theory and practice; the limits of specific disciplinary practices; or specific modes and strategies of social change.

- Purpose: What are the key features of the thriving democracy we aspire to enact and support through our work?
- Learning Outcomes: What knowledge, skills, and dispositions do people need to help create and contribute to a thriving democracy?
- Pedagogy: How can we best foster the acquisition and development of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for a thriving democracy?
- Strategy: How can we build the institutional culture, infrastructure, and relationships needed to support learning that enables a thriving democracy?

The theory of change also suggests that campuses consider how to best construct campus cultures and contexts that foster...

- Civic ethos
- Civic literacy and skill building
- Civic inquiry
- Civic action
- Civic agency

**AAC&U Civic Engagement Value Rubric**

- *Diversity of communities and cultures, analysis of knowledge, civic identity and commitment, civic communication, civic action and reflection, civic contexts/structures*
- **From Western Carolina:**  
*The overarching learning goal of the QEP is one where students will synthesize knowledge and skills from their academic and co-curricular experiences to become intentional participants in their own learning. Specifically, students will:*
  1. *Identify their aptitudes, abilities, and interests and articulate their future goals and aspirations.*
  2. *Modify behaviors and values in response to knowledge and skills gained from their academic and co-curricular experiences; and*
  3. *Recognize the synthesis of their university experiences and evaluate those experiences relative to their future education and career goals.*

**Identification of Potential Design Team Leaders and Members**

We want to identify potential design leaders that may emerge from the collaborative process or other potential content leaders we may want to reach out to as a lead/collaborate with on a QEP topic proposal. If you are interested in this role, as a part of a collaborative team, or have a team in mind, please share by filling in each person’s name, department, and email. In the *Interest* column, please enter one of the following three phrases to indicate whether the person has **Confirmed** their willingness to be on the Design Team, has been **Engaged** in the topic development phase, and may be willing to continue, or is being **Nominated** as a content expert.

Name	Department	email	Interest
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Emily Janke	ICEE/Peace and Conflict	emjanke@uncg.edu	Engaged
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Jannifer Pastorick	CNNC	Jmpasto2@uncg.edu	Nominated

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