Community-Based Learning & Research:
A Faculty Handbook

Community Engagement & Volunteering Center
Clark University
Worcester, MA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART 1: <u>Introduction</u>

PART 2: <u>Community-Based Learning & Research</u>

- What Is Community-Based Learning?
- What Is Community-Based Research?
- Differences Between Community-Based Research & Traditional Academic Research
- History of Community-Based Learning
- Key Elements of Community-Based Learning
- Reflection is Key

PART 3: <u>Benefits & Models of CBL/CBR</u>

- Benefits of Community-Based Learning for Students
- Benefits of Service-Learning for Faculty and Communities
- Six Models of Community-Based Learning
- Experiential Learning Model
- Community-Based Research: Best Practices

PART 4: <u>Current CBL/CBR at Clark</u>

- Current Community-Based Learning & Research Courses at Clark
- Current Community-Based Research Projects and Resources
- Worcester Area Agencies
- Role of the CEV Center

PART 5: <u>Appendices</u>

- Appendix A: Student Interest Form
- Appendix B: Understanding The Community
- Appendix C: Student Evaluation
- Appendix D: Agency Evaluation
- Appendix E: Online Resources
- Appendix F: Books/Publications
- Appendix G: Frequently Asked Questions (Faculty)
- Appendix H: Frequently Asked Questions (Students)

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Dear Faculty,

Community-based learning and research is one of several high impact educational experiences that have been shown to be effective in promoting student learning and engagement. This handbook provides an overview of community-based learning and research and can serve as a resource for faculty interested in incorporating these activities into their teaching, scholarship and creative work. The handbook outlines different models of community-based learning and research, reviews some best practices, and provides templates that may be useful to faculty.

Community-based learning and research sits at the intersection of several signature features of scholarship, teaching and learning at Clark University. We are known as an institution that seeks to harness the scholarship and creative work of faculty, staff and students to make a difference in the communities of which we are a part. This commitment to making a difference intersects with our interest in inquiry-based teaching and learning, and embraces the diversity of our community. Community-based learning and research also fits well with new initiatives in use-inspired research supported by the Mosakowski Institute for Public Enterprise and other units on campus.

The recently completed report of the task force on undergraduate education provides another context for exploring opportunities in community-based learning and research. That report recommends that Clark University expand opportunities for students to engage in learning and development that takes place outside of the traditional frame of the classroom. The ideas and suggestions contained in this handbook serve as a resource for faculty interested in engaging in these opportunities.

My thanks to the staff and faculty responsible for preparing this helpful resource.

David Angel