

# Community- Engaged Learning 101

Southwestern  
University  
CIVIC  
ENGAGEMENT

# Overview

Through this training, you will learn:

- About the Office of Civic Engagement
- What is civic engagement?
- What is community-engaged learning?
- How does community-engaged learning differ from other civic engagement programs?
- What are the common characteristics of community-engaged learning?



The background features a large gray trapezoid on the right side, which is cut off at the top-left corner. To the left of this gray shape is a yellow area composed of two overlapping triangles. The text 'WHO WE ARE' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font, slanted upwards from left to right, and is positioned over the white space between the yellow and gray shapes.

**WHO WE ARE**

# Office of Civic Engagement (OCE)

**Director**

**Dr. Sarah Brackmann**



**Coordinator**  
**Laurie Avery**

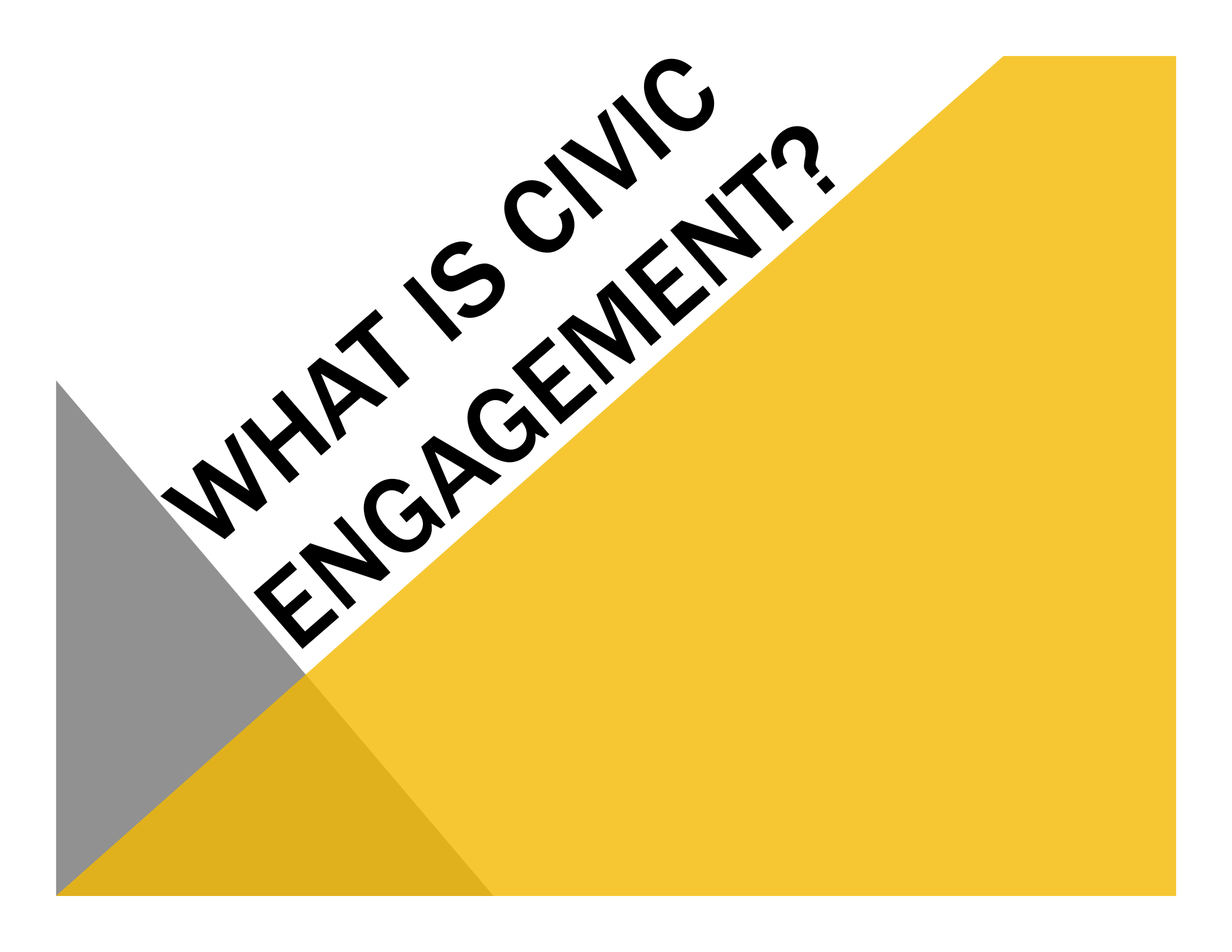
Prothro Center for Lifelong Learning, Room 243 & 245

# Engaged students, engaged change makers

## Office of Civic Engagement Mission

The OCE collaborates with students, faculty, and community organizations to develop community-engaged projects. These community projects bring together learning goals, passions, and local needs. We promote sustained, mutually beneficial collaborations that emphasize student learning and community benefits.





# WHAT IS CIVIC ENGAGEMENT?

# Civic Engagement Defined

Civic engagement is acting upon a heightened sense of responsibility to one's communities. Civic engagement encompasses the notions of global citizenship and interdependence. Through civic engagement, individuals—as citizens of their communities, their nations, and the world—are empowered as agents of positive social change for a more democratic world.



*Coalition for Civic Engagement and Leadership*



# Civic Learning Goals

**Diversity of Communities and Cultures-** Working within and learning from diversity of communities and cultures encourages students to consider their own attitudes and beliefs.

**Analysis of Knowledge-** Through community experiences, students connect and extend knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) from their academic courses.

**Civic Identity and Commitment-** Civic engagement encourages students to clarify their sense of civic identity and commit to continued public action.

**Civic Action and Reflection-** Students involved in civic engagement show initiative in team leadership, accompanied by reflective insights or analysis about the aims and accomplishments of their actions.

**Awareness of civic contexts/structures-** Collaboratively work across and within community contexts and structures to achieve a civic aim.





**COMMUNITY-  
ENGAGED LEARNING**

# Community-Engaged Learning

Community-Engaged Learning is one example of civic engagement whereby students apply academic skills and knowledge to enhance student learning and address a community need, issue, or problem.

Includes:

- Structured service and action that is responsive to community needs
- Provides mutually beneficial experience for students and community partners
- Critical analysis and reflection linking service to academic, cluster, and discipline specific learning goals.



# What's in a name?

- Volunteerism
- Service-Learning
- Community Service
- Experiential Education
- Community-Based Learning




# What's in a name?

- **Volunteerism:** refers to people who choose, on their own, to perform service to others without pay
  - Community-Engaged Learning
  - Community Service
  - Experiential Education
  - Community-Based Learning



# What's in a name?

- Volunteerism
  - **Community-Engaged Learning (aka Service-Learning):** particular emphasis is placed on the learning that occurs through service; often connected to classroom objectives; may be eligible for academic credit
  - Community Service
  - Experiential Education
  - Community-Based Learning
- 

# What's in a name?

- Volunteerism
- Community-Engaged Learning
- **Community Service:** general term for work without pay in the community; also used as form of punishment, which can create misunderstandings
- Experiential Education
- Community-Based Learning



# What's in a name?

- Volunteerism
- Community-Engaged Learning
- Community Service
- **Experiential Education: broad term for various teaching methods that emphasize hands-on learning; includes CEL, but not all experiential education is CEL**
- Community-Based Learning





# What's in a name?

- Volunteerism
- Service-Learning
- Community Service
- Experiential Education
- **Community-Based Learning: any learning experience that occurs in the community (as opposed to in the classroom), can include CEL, field trips, internships**



# Volunteer example

**If students remove trash from a streambed:  
they are providing a service to the community as  
volunteers**



# Community-Engaged learning example

When students remove trash from a streambed,  
analyze what they found,  
share the results and offer suggestions for the  
neighborhood to reduce pollution,  
and then reflect on their experience

**THAT is community-engaged learning!**



# Community-Engaged learning is not:

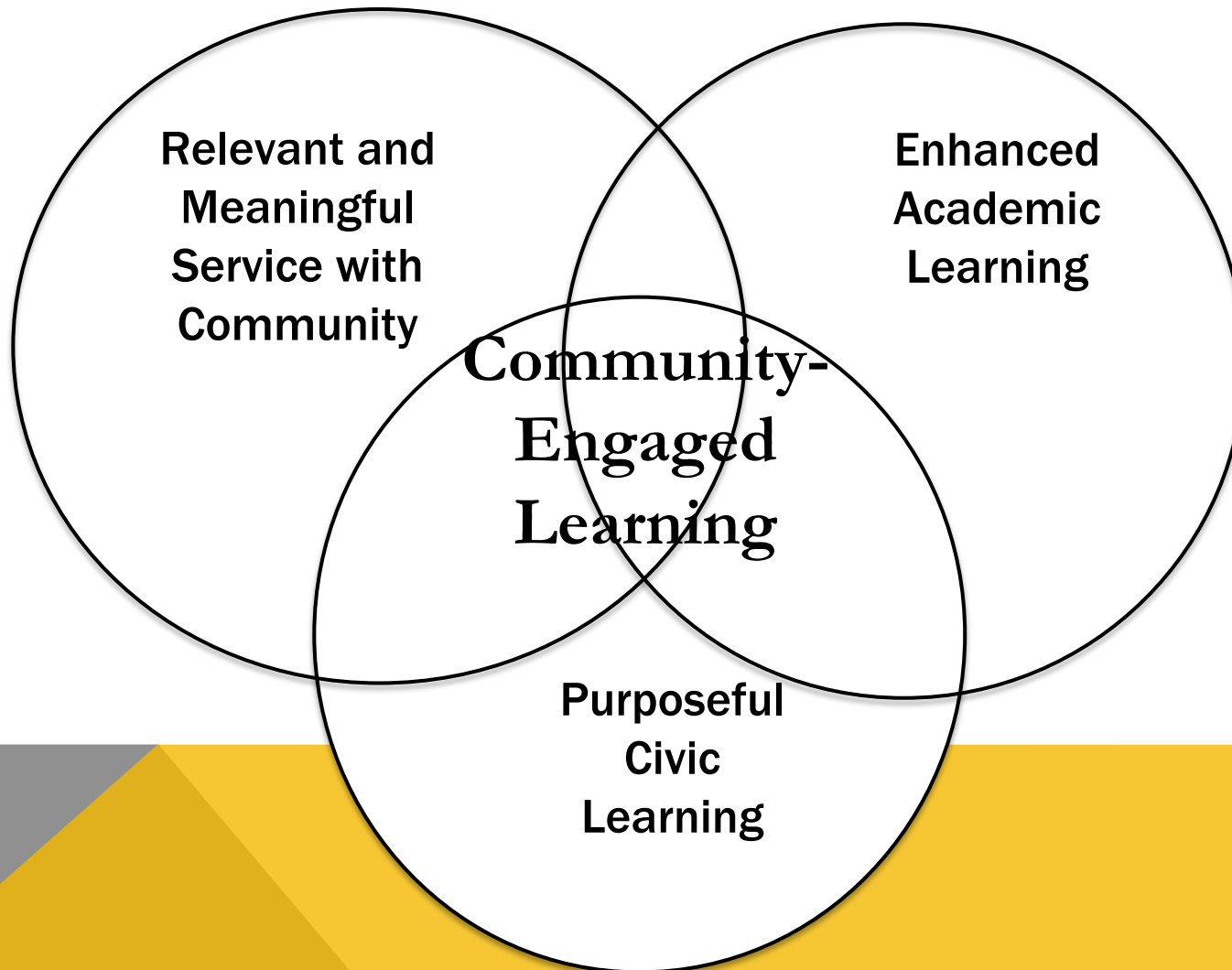
- An episodic volunteer program
- An add-on to an existing course
- Completing minimum service hours in order to graduate
- Service assigned as a form of punishment
- Only for high school or college students
- One-sided: benefiting only students or only the community

NOTE: These may be elements of a successful comprehensive Community-Engaged learning project, but they do not qualify as Community-Engaged learning on their own

# Characteristics of Community-Engaged learning


- Connected to specific learning outcomes & meets community-identified needs
- Cooperative rather than competitive experiences; promotes teamwork and civic learning
- Addresses complex problems in complex settings rather than simplified problems in isolation
- Characterized by student participation in an organized civic engagement activity
- Provides structured time for students to analyze and connect the civic engagement experience to learning through critical reflection

# Three Necessary Criteria



# Benefits for Stakeholders

When properly designed, Community-Engaged learning partnerships offer substantial benefits to everyone involved:

- Access to eager volunteers who are well-prepared and frequently bring several skill sets from academic studies
  - An opportunity to shape students' educational experiences and prepare them for a life of civic engagement
  - An opportunity to mentor and inspire students interested in establishing non-profit organizations
  - Additional resources for service and outreach, i.e., *capacity building*
  - *Increased awareness* about the community partner's programs and services.
- 



# Your partnership is important to us!

Without your partnership and continued efforts, the OCE wouldn't be where it is today. We would like to **THANK YOU** for providing opportunities for students, faculty, and staff at SU that allow us to promote civic learning through experiences with your organization.



# Contact Information

**Dr. Sarah Brackmann**

Director of Civic Engagement

[brackmas@southwestern.edu](mailto:brackmas@southwestern.edu)

512.863.1987

**Laurie Avery**

Coordinator of Civic Engagement

512.863.1215

[averyl@southwestern.edu](mailto:averyl@southwestern.edu)

**website:**

<http://www.southwestern.edu/offices/civicengagement/>

