

Fundamentals of Community Engagement: A Sourcebook for Students

Checklist for Reflecting on the Six Principles

The following questions are intended to help you self-assess whether your community-based, experiential learning engagement is following McMaster's principles.

Respectful Relationships

- Have I taken the time to understand this community by reviewing publicly available materials prior to engaging the community partner? How?
- Am I listening actively to community partners? How?
- Have I been open and honest with my community partner about my skills, limitations, and the amount of time and energy I can devote to this project?

My checklist question(s):

Reciprocity

- How will I make sure that my engagement contributes something meaningful to this community?
- How have I considered the community partners' needs and expectations in my project plan?
- What can I do to ensure that I draw on community partners' time appropriately?
- What skills do I hope to develop throughout this experience? How can my participation in this project enhance those skills?

My checklist question(s):

Equity

- How do my identities (race, gender, sexuality, class) matter in terms of this work? How might community members perceive my participation?
- What broader power structures affect this issue and how does the community participate in this issue? What are common assumptions and biases about this issue? What perspectives may be missing and why?
- Is everyone able to participate equally in this process? What are the barriers and how can we use an equity approach to mitigate those barriers and ensure participation?

My checklist questions:

Continuity

- Are there opportunities to build on prior community-engaged learning with this community partner? What are they?
- Are there opportunities to develop future community-engaged opportunities with this partner? What are they?

My checklist questions:

Openness to Learning

- Are there elements of my lived experience that might make working and learning with this community partner difficult? What are they?
- What difficulties might I have when learning from and with individuals who are dissimilar to me?
- How have I demonstrated that I am listening to my community partner? What steps have I taken to ensure there is clear and honest communication with my community partner?
- How do I approach learning and growing from mistakes and misunderstandings?

My checklist question(s):

Commitment to Act

Do I have sufficient time and energy for this work? What steps will I take to ensure this?

What will I do if I need to exit the work early in the process?

My checklist question(s):